Upon This Rock

Upon

"The Rock was the divine revelation and the mutual knowledge that existed between Jesus and the Disciples."—
(From "The Glorious Church of God" By Bishop M. A. Tomlinson.)

This Rock

by C.T. Davidson

Church Historian

White Wing Publishing House and Press
Cleveland, Tennessee

UPON THIS ROCK

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Cleveland, Tennessee

VERY SPECIAL RESPECT

Is hereby paid those who have so willingly assisted in the preparation of this volume. The faithful services of my secretary Mrs. Avonelle Cox, and my companion, Mrs. Pearle V. Davidson have been indispensable. Appreciation is extended J. R. Kinser, B. M. Johnson, Leonard Kendrick, F. F. Johnson, Joe C. Crews and many others for helping me.

. . . The Author

CHRONOLOGY IS SOMETIMES UNCERTAIN

All chronological data is not uncertain but some of it is. In view of calendar changes, the reckoning of years by different kingdoms and nations, and other inconsistent occurrences it is sometimes difficult to coordinate or certify some chronology, even in the early days of Jesus and Christianity. By associating some Biblical events with events of contemporary history, or comparing them it is possible to often arrive at some satisfactory solution, or conclusions.

It certainly is rewarding to the person that spends most of his life doing exhaustive research to make a contribution to history. Many competent scholars have spent years of research and study in an effort to correlate the precious meager accounts of epochs and eras in their endeavor for contribution. Without such noble ambitions this account, and many, many others would never be written. These faithful ones are to be commended, appreciated and eulogized by entry into the archives of world history.

What we have written may conflict with your views of event, place and time, but we have done this to attempt to be of some help, inspiration or guidance. God grant us grace to indulge conflicting data and opinions, and see and realize the actualities of the events and occurrences as they occurred, without feeling any tinge of prejudice or bias.

AN ATTEMPT AT EXPLANATION . . .

Some readers may assume this apologue to be an exact, precise, thorough-going, didactic narrative—faultless and consistent in all established chronology and certainty—but it is not. With our meager and limited Biblical exposition, and related materials no one can be exact in ancient chronology, dates and narration. Most historians try to do the best they can as they glean materials from every available source. This is only an effort to give consideration to reasonable and basic study of the events that have occurred, in the light of the best knowledge now available from materials that have been screened unbiasedly.

Lest some unwise and unwarranted attempts are made to expurgate essential and reflected Biblical suggestions, assumptions of ill-explained events, and generally opinionated viewpoints necessary to more fluid narration, this writer begs your indulgence. Maybe his viewpoints do not coincide with yours . . . if not, bear with his explanations as best you can, for it won't be the last time opinions will cross. What he has written he has written to help those whose studies of the precious Book are rewarding and always a blessing. May God be with you is our prayer.

C. T. Davidson
Roanoke, Virginia
December 12, 1972

To Bishop M. A. Tomlinson, General Overseer, whose life, spirituality and zealousness have gone far to bless many.

VOLUME ONE is a compendium of historical events concerning mankind . . . the Chosen Family . . . the Seed of Promise . . . the Messiah . . . and the establishment of the Church of God of the Bible, and its continuation.

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FOREWORD

For several years there has been a growing need for an official historical work on the Church of God prepared in the light of the Church's stature in these last days. Historians have written of the early Church period, from approximately A.D. 28 to A.D. 325. However, their writings leave us with the feeling that they were lacking in spiritual vision as far as the divine revelation of the Bible Church is concerned. Therefore, we have longed to see the Church's history compiled into one or more volumes, the spirit of which will witness with our spirits as to its inspiration and accuracy.

"UPON THIS ROCK" is the result of the Church's request for such a history. The author, Bishop C. T. Davidson, was assigned this task at the Church's 65th Annual General Assembly, on September 7, 1970. Having been a faithful member of the Church since 1932, and active full time in its ministry these many years, he already had an extensive mental reserve of firsthand knowledge and information of the Church's activities in these last days. And, being a diligent student of the Bible and Bible-related literature, he was willing and eager to render this valuable service for the edification of the body of Christ and the glory of God.

C. T. Davidson has authored other valuable books for the Church. He has an unique writing style which will be recognized and appreciated by those who have read his earlier works. His exhaustive research has brought together a comprehensive account of the thread of Church history through all dispensations of time.

In this first volume it was thought best to go back to the beginning of God's creation and the history of man. Christ, the Head of the Church, was first promised in Genesis 3:15, and it must be conceded that the Church was in the total plan of God from the foundation of the world. This early part of the story is not new, but the reader will enjoy the author's fresh and vivid presentation.

The prophetic "falling away" of the Church in A.D. 325 will seem new to some, as will, therefore, the "Arise, shine" in 1903. But these things could not be written by men of other ages, being reserved for revelation in God's own time. Bishop Davidson has given thorough treatment to these two major events; and from 1903 the history becomes the "Acts" of God's Church in these last days.

The detail material is of significant import to many who will

read this book; especially to the membership of the Church of God, many of whom will recall the events recorded. Then, those thousands of members who have come into the Church in later years will be made to appreciate their heritage more as they read of the struggles and victories of the past.

Near the end of this volume the author divulges information concerning one of the Church's most critical periods. Much of this information has not been published in aggregated form before. It will be of particular interest to many, both inside and outside the Church, who have heard many things by word-of-mouth only. The author has been frank in his presentation, and has set forth the convictions of thousands who lived in that era.

Bishop Davidson is to be highly commended for a task well done. Many will be blessed and enlightened through his efforts.

M. A. Tomlinson
General Overseer

It All Started With God

1

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THE BEGINNING OF THINGS

It is doubtful if man will ever know when God created the universe, for it was done without us. Many scholars and authorities agree that it was a long time before He created man, but how long is plainly conjectural. Geologists and others who probe the surface of the earth seem to feel that the world has been in existence for thousands of years, even millions of years. Opinions differ broadly at times, and some seem to run wild and rampant when fostered by prophetic or scientific theoretic panaceas for gauging the time. But who knows? It is still a mystery—a divine entity reserved by the Creator Himself. (1)

The very first day of the creation God said, "Let there be light . . ." (2)

The light He called Day, and the darkness He called Night. Daylight and darkness may vary in length in the different areas of the world, but there is still light and darkness. While visiting Alaska in the latter part of May, 1971, I heard the news commentator say that sunrise would be at 3:42 a.m. and sunset at 10:14 p.m. that day—a long day but a short night. What of the land of the "midnight sun"? Still day and night—light and darkness as God had said.

Though divided in various lengths our day and night is measured in a span of twenty-four hours and is referred to as a Day. While time is God's own prerogative to lengthen or shorten at will man is inclined to justify belief that God measures His scope of time in the same pattern of twenty-four hours for the Day. Perhaps this is strikingly important. No injustice is done God's will by measuring our Day in twenty-four hours each—embracing both daylight and darkness. God has His own prerogatives though . . . remember?

Because of the prayers, the supplications and intercedings of

1. **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void . . ." Genesis 1:1, 2.**

2. **". . . And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light . . . and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Genesis 1:2-5.**

His children in distress and need God may change the course of time, the light and the darkness, lengthen or shorten it to benefit His people. An early event recorded in the Bible where God changed time to favor a man, a time when His people were in a fierce struggle and battle with the Amorites, is found in Joshua 10. Joshua needed time to avenge God's people and he spoke with the Lord, crying out, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." (3)

Another time, when King Hezekiah of Judah was sick unto death God sent His prophet Isaiah to the King with a message, ". . . Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." Isaiah left him and the King turned his face to the wall and prayed and cried. He reminded God how he had walked in truth and with a perfect heart before Him, and had done that which was good in His sight. God stopped Isaiah in the middle court, sent him back to Hezekiah with another message to tell him that his prayer had been heard, his tears seen and that He would lengthen his days fifteen years. (II Kings 20:1-6).

Then the King wanted a sign that God would heal him, and he said to the Prophet Isaiah, ". . . let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz." II Kings 20:10, 11. (4)

As aforesaid, God keeps His own reservations of time, but we measure our days according to the calendar . . . twenty-four hours per day—including day and night—and many of us would feel mistreated to neglect or ignore the Gregorian Calendar of 365 days per year, and 366 days every fourth year. It has become a part of our life, and our thinking, with no intentional injustice to be done the sun-dial, or other calendars or reckoning of days, times and seasons. This is done until something better or different may be offered and accepted. The Apostle Peter, a foremost disciple of Jesus, lends credence for leeway and consideration by saying, ". . . one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." II Peter 3:8. This is commonly accepted at face value by Bible readers regardless of acquired knowledge or

3. ". . . So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man . . ." Joshua 10:13, 14.

4. Adam Clarke says that the SUN-DIAL of ancient times was in a public place, was formed of steps like stairs, each step indicating by its shadow one hour, or such division of time as commonly used in the particular country. Hence the "dial of Ahaz." Consider the "hour-glass."

reservation. Even the soon coming of the Lord is prophesied of, presaged by comparing one day with the Lord as a thousand years, and vice-versa.

Following the creation of the universe, and other acts of creation, man was created last of all. Somewhere within this immeasurable span of time Satan was cast out of heaven. (5) In the beautiful garden he was readily available to tempt the very first man and woman whom God had created for His glory. (Genesis 3) He was the prince of the powers of the air. (6) He led a league of angels to their fall. (7) As previously referred to, chapter three of Genesis tells of Satan (the serpent) transforming himself into a knowledgeable creature, with clever, skillful, ingenious tactics of temptation, and overcame the first man, causing him to fall from his holy estate with God. Adam's disobedience plunged the whole race of man into universal wickedness. As a result of this treacherous event it made man an imposter and intruder of the place of punishment prepared for the devil and his angels. (8) This is according to Scripture whether or not it is believed by everyone.

After all, this is not intended to be a dissertation to attempt to sway the minds of all peoples of every nation, kindred and tongue, but just an effort to assist in the Biblical conformity of the truth as revealed.

Century after century some forces have sought to denounce and destroy the Word of God and all miraculous occurrences. They seize onto any inference of inconsistency, questionable data, chronological differences, any suggestion of error in translation, and anything else that lends a clue for criticism. They seem to gloat in their efforts to flay, belittle and abuse and destroy the Bible's divine concepts. Some do it honestly, not understanding, and others do it ignorantly, or for various personal convictions mostly inexplicable. Yet, in spite of it all the great Book of Books has weathered the storms of protest, criticism and all effort to destroy the Holy Writ, and lives on and on to bless the millions of Bible readers who believe and practice her precepts, while

5. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . . I will be like the most high." Isaiah 14:12-14. See Luke 10:18, 19 and Revelation 12:7-9.

6. Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12.

7. ". . . God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell . . . reserved unto judgment . . ." 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6. The devil tempted Judas to betray Jesus. St. John 13:2.

8. Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43, 44.

unbelievers and those who would destroy her precious pages, and their evil conceits lie buried in the grave dust of their forgotten yesteryears. The wise Solomon once said, "And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done . . ." Ecclesiastes 8:10.

FURTHER PURSUIT FOR CONSIDERATION

Today man has a golden opportunity to know the world in which he lives. Great libraries are at his fingertips for exhaustive research and study; artifacts are in museums and halls of archives everywhere; mounds or "tells" virtually teem with thousands of historical mementos in the Biblical lands of the East, and places of interest elsewhere.

Archaeology has uncovered a myriad of truths that serve to authenticate Biblical miracles and happenings—things that seem to help make the Bible "come alive" to those whose works and lives are already stimulated with strength from perusal of the Holy Writ. Opposition forces are sometimes convinced today by the masterly proofs unearthed by archaeologists before their very eyes. (9)

In one way or another every profession, every occupation, facet and phase of life centers around mankind. Why? Because he is a living soul! Look at these Scriptures: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . ." (Genesis 1:26) and ". . . the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7). Without overindulging semantics and religious cliches he is man as God made him—spiritually possessed . . . intellectually inclined . . . physically strong . . . mentally alert. He is no robot or "dummy," beast or brute, but a man, a person who is able to communicate with his Creator as he moves across the scene of life.

Throughout the ages that have come and gone certain forces and powers have sought to re-create him, make him over into something else. But, he remains the man God created in His likeness—the created that God made a living soul. There is no way to change it! There was no promise of redemption to the other creatures—beast, brute, aquatic, fowl or other—none, at all. The

9. Reference: "ARCHAEOLOGY AND BIBLE HISTORY" by Joseph P. Free. "THE BIBLICAL WORLD" by Charles F. Pfeiffer. "DIGGERS FOR FACTS" by J. O. Kinnaman.

decisions were His, interestingly apropos and final. So, man is just what he is, the way God made him, a living soul with power to choose for himself. It is surprising that in his liberty of choice he is often obstinate, unconcerned, and even repulsive to conviction and penitence, both of which are conducive to righteousness. To recognize the Power higher than himself, worship and adore Him, has been man's battle of the centuries, and still is, for he is a living soul headed for destiny, somewhere. Hence the reason for this publication.

It is reasonable to expect some uncertainty and inaccuracy in ancient chronology in places for lack of documented evidence perhaps; and sometimes such chronology may be misunderstood, but this is no warranty to justify condemnation. Much revered reliability has been substantiated by discoveries and recent findings of ancient civilizations that left behind them artifacts and historical data. We do not pretend to justify inaccuracies at all, but it seems wisest to pursue the "received," the general or "accepted" chronology, until such a time that something better or more accurate may be found and established. By accepting the best we now have established lends itself to credulity and enhances one's study of the Scriptures. Students usually try to equate people and events with time and place, and the "received" or "accepted" chronology tends to support better religious, social and cultural amenities in spite of caustic accusations and assaults by unbelieving critics.

Our parallels are with those of the King James Version of the Bible, scripturally, and the reader is asked to indulge some variation and reservation pertaining to prehistoric man or questionable data not exactly corresponding thereto. The pursuit of this system of study with the "received" or "accepted" chronology has certainly helped more Bible readers than any other system offered thus far . . . because nothing better has been established as yet. Why parley over variations and suppositions of antiquity hard to justify when the "accepted" or "received" chronology furnishes a reasonable approach for the masses that care less about exactness and disputed data than spiritual revelation. However, open-mindedness is rewarding, for where findings merit them corrections are suggested, but never to forbear knowledge or truth. In the great Christian warfare of today caution does no injustice to the progress of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are books and documents galore covering the history of early civilizations, their environments and their contributions to

the human race, and there is no need to rehearse them here. To do so would make the preparation and publishing of this volume prohibitive. The Bible student whose pursuit of further study of ancient civilizations leads him into such specific concentration should search the field and acquaint himself with these histories.

It is not possible to offer cues to every prophetic utterance, or delineate the genealogies of all the different families, tribes and nations listed in the Bible. It is unreasonable to expect it. However, it appears that a reasonable approach would be to trace some of the chosen ancestry from Adam and Seth, through Abraham, culminating with the advent of Jesus the Messiah, and the establishment of His church. After all, this seems to be man's revered hope of spiritual rehabilitation to enjoy fellowship with Christ, the Son of God. (10)

10. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him . . ." Ephesians 1:22, 23.

Man Fell From God's Righteousness . . . Lost!

2

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CHOSEN ANCESTRY

(figure one)

NAME	AGE WHEN SON WAS BORN	NAME OF SON	DATE SON'S BIRTH	DATE SON'S DEATH	AGE OF SON	REFERENCE IN THE SCRIPTURES
ADAM . . . CREATED (4004) B. C.				3074	930	Ge. 5:5
1. ADAM	130	SETH	B.C. 3874	B.C. 2962	912	Ge. 5:8
2. SETH	105	ENOS	3769	2864	905	Ge. 5:11
3. ENOS	90	CAINAN	3679	2769	910	Ge. 5:14
4. CAINAN	70	MAHALALEEL	3609	2714	895	Ge. 5:17
5. MAHALALEEL	65	JARED	3544	2582	962	Ge. 5:20
6. JARED	162	ENOCH	3382	3017 Translated	365	Ge. 5:21-24
7. ENOCH	65	METHUSELAH	3317	2348	969	Ge. 5:27
8. METHUSELAH	187	LAMECH	3130	2353	777	Ge. 5:31
9. LAMECH	182	NOAH	2948	1998	950	Ge. 9:29
10. NOAH	500	SHEM	2446	1846	600	Ge. 11:10, 11
DELUGE was 2348 B. C., when NOAH WAS 600 YEARS OLD.						
11. SHEM	100	ARPHAXAD	2346	1908	438	Ge. 11:12, 13
12. ARPHAXAD	35	SALAH	2311	1878	433	Ge. 11:14, 15
13. SALAH	30	EBER	2281	1817	464	Ge. 11:16, 17
14. EBER	34	PELEG	2247	2008	239	Ge. 11:18, 19
15. PELEG	30	REU	2217	1978	239	Ge. 11:20, 21
16. REU	32	SERUG	2185	1955	230	Ge. 11:22, 23
17. SERUG	30	NAHOR	2155	2007	148	Ge. 11:24, 25
18. NAHOR	29	TERAH	2126	1921	205	Ge. 11:32
19. TERAH	130	ABRAHAM (Abram	1996	1821	175	Ge. 25:7
20. ABRAHAM	100	ISAAC	1896	1716	180	Ge. 35:28
21. ISAAC	60	JACOB	1836	1689	147	Ge. 49:33

NOTES OF SUMMARIZATION

These summary notes, relating to the generations of primeval families, have unquestionable significance for they contribute to occupied period delineation. This is helpful in the studious pursuit of different eras and epochs that some of us bypass for lack of time and personal convenience. Figure One does not list every genealogy of ancient man, but seeks to depict by graph the chosen ancestry until Jacob, without listing the twelve tribes for which motivation is reserved at this time.

Adamic Nature Instituted

God created Adam and endowed him with righteousness. He possessed a super-closeness and attachment as a direct protegé of his Creator. He was the very epitome of dignity and consecration, of humility and respect and all goodness, knowing no evil whatsoever, for he was in the likeness of God. God gave him understanding, knowledge and wisdom to name the cattle, the beasts of the fields and the fowls of the air, and gave him dominion over all.

God placed him in the garden of Eden to dress and keep it, and gave him an helpmeet whom Adam declared ". . . she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23) Eden was a paradise for the newly created couple, a paragon of grandeur and beauty. It must have been almost like heaven itself! They communed with God, and He visited them in the "cool of the day" when communication and fellowship were highly appreciated.

Since man's inherent desire is a quest for knowledge, equipoise with the commitment God had given, Adam was soon to be challenged by the wizard of deceit, lies and seduction—Satan himself. Once an occupant in God's domain Satan became exalted, created riot against the righteousness of God and he and the angels that followed him were cast out of heaven because of their sin . . . and a place of punishment was prepared for them, as mentioned in Matthew 25:41: ". . . Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Now, since Satan had become the prince of the power of the air and wielded tremendous power (Ephesians 2:2; 6:12), it was again his desire and aim to create riot and revolution in the mind, heart and soul of God's very first earthly man and woman and change the atmosphere of their consecrated and peaceful communion into vicissitudes of evil.

God's commission was to the man . . . not to the woman; she was given as a helpmeet. Satan realized he could not tempt God with evil; he had been cast out of heaven for trying it. He had to devise an approach more conducive to his aim and plan. Adam was God's man—His own creation, in His own likeness, possessed of righteous faculties, and Satan's evasiveness of direct confrontation with Adam is easily seen.

The woman was Adam's bosom companion, adorable, loving and lovable, beautiful, affectionate and alluring and was closest to the heart of her husband, second only to God Himself. Adam said when he had called her woman, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:23, 24) This was no presentiment of Adam's for God had commissioned his posterity as recorded in Genesis 1:26-31. Nor did Adam presage suffering at childbirth at this time, for suffering was unknown. Woman was the glory of the man. (I Corinthians 11:7) He appreciated her, loved her, cherished her, took her into mutual confidence for she was a part of him . . . they were together as one. For this very reason it appears most likely that she would be more susceptible to the approaches of Satan through flattery and argument since she was so highly esteemed by her husband. God had given her, the helpmeet, as a counterpoise to man's aloneness. So Satan aimed his fiery darts of evil in her direction, and at her, and through her eventually reached God's covenanted man.

Satan's great move was to formulate a plan of deception. He knew that as long as Adam and Eve depended on God they could not be enticed, deceived and seduced to sin. He had to discover avenues for mutual exchange in conversation in order to inject doubt, and challenge God's covenant. He had to create within them a great propensity for knowledge and learning and induce them to believe they could be equal to God in knowledge and potency. In argument he was a master-mind . . . in deceit a champion . . . in discord and evil concoctions a wizard.

Satan associated himself with the serpent, the most subtle and cunning beast of the field, and evidently the most likely one in which he might conceal himself and his evil approaches. Probably the serpent was beautiful as are some today, but some commentators have gone to great length of verbiage to explain and justify their imaginative concepts of the serpent . . . have inferred it to be nearly human, possessed of faculties of speech, intelligence, understanding and wisdom. However, he was so named by Adam, and with no intention of subterfuge, refutation

or injustice of stipulated views conceded by some, the serpent was just a serpent, innocent at the time but sinuous, and eventually camouflaged by the deception of Satan, and least suspected.

As an instrument the serpent was activated by the very voice of Satan himself that used it to foster his nefarious scheme to destroy man's righteousness. From time immemorial he has used different things, in different ways, to promote and propagate his evil. In the country of the Gadarenes when Jesus rebuked him, he cried out: ". . . Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them." Full account of this story is given in Mark 5:1-13 and Luke 8:26-33. The story shows unquestionably what happened to the swine.

In other places we find Satan speaking through man to contest the presence of Jesus, the Son of God . . . the "One stronger than he." When Jesus entered the synagogue at Capernaum a man with the spirit of an unclean devil cired out with a loud voice: ". . . Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? . . ." Luke 4:31-35.

In Eden, Satan's deception succeeded . . . and man fell from his holy estate. The woman blamed the serpent, and the man blamed the woman, and in a way tried to blame God by saying, ". . . The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." (Genesis 3:12) Oh . . . what a fall! It plunged the whole human race into sin . . . universal wickedness . . . depredation and ruin. The guilt and disobedience of the couple condemned them. They were ashamed of their nakedness within and without, but how could the guilty condemned culprits hide in the sanctuary of God? Their confessions were made, the verdict rendered, and they were evicted from the Paradise of God. Adam called his wife Eve (Genesis 3:20) and he went out to till the ground from whence he was taken, to labor in the sweat of his face, "till he return unto the ground." To the woman God said, ". . . I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Genesis 3:16. God heard no confession from the serpent but He put a curse upon him above all cattle and every beast, and promised him dust only all the days of his life.

The serpent—Satan—was doomed, but since God had made man in His own image He still provided chance for choice for the transgressor who now possessed the knowledge of good and evil. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt

bruise his heel." Genesis 3:15. Otherwise, someday . . . out there within the great scope of time God would have a plan to reverse the allegiance that had now been transferred to Satan and his forces and reconcile man to Himself, redeem his holiness and make his glory to be heralded throughout the universe.

While there is no proof to justify the date of the Fall of Man, yet his ultimate redemption is assured through Jesus Christ whose first related prophecy is found in Genesis 3:15.

DESCENDENTS OF ADAM

There seems to be no proof of the date Cain and Abel were born, except that the event follows the expulsion of the first family from Eden. Since the Bible lists conception only once in behalf of the birth of Cain and Abel, it is thought that they were probably twins. (Genesis 4:1, 2) The Bible tells us in Genesis 4:5 that the first family also had other children, but it does not say how many. Inferred, but without absolute scriptural proof except the progeny of early man, Cain and Abel were both married men; this seems to be the consensus of opinion of many scholars and students of the Bible. Adam was created as a full-grown man, and Eve was a full-grown woman, and sometime, no dates are suggested, they had daughters as well as sons; would God forsake His protegé after making a sincere promise or commission as recorded in Genesis 1:28? Assured of this we believe and accept the story of the creation and realize that the offspring had to intermarry to have families of their own. Hereditary complications from consanguinity were unheard of, and certainly not indicated at this early stage of family development.

Cain and Abel were not adolescent youths, as some may surmise, when the first murder took place. They were apparently of age, men of concern and gravity and able to shoulder the responsibilities and cares of life devolving upon the head of a family. Cain was a tiller of the ground; that is, he worked to furnish a livelihood from the soil—the very ground that God had cursed with thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:17-19) because of Adam's transgression. Abel was a keeper of the sheep, and undoubtedly he spent many hard days of labor to raise his flocks on the same kind of ground. It is reasonable to expect them to be acquainted with the story of the Fall of their parents from their holy alliance with God. Doubtlessly Adam and Eve had rehearsed the story over and over in grim retrospect and remorse, and had

warned and admonished their sons of the pitfalls and terrors and wrongs of sin. They could never forget their transgression.

Familiar with the situation the two sons became accustomed to the cares, the throes and worries of life, as they sought to succeed in their particular livelihoods. Environmental conveniences would indicate family associations, visiting one another and exchanging opinions and viewpoints. They were just people, living within their own realm, human nature itself providing ways and means of communication. Under any circumstance, among all peoples a way of communication is usually found in the course of time. It would seem unfair to suggest otherwise with Cain and Abel and their parents.

Probably Adam and Eve encouraged their sons to bring an offering and present it to the Lord . . . it stands to reason though the Bible is silent concerning this. Just how long the two brothers labored in their particular field of endeavor before bringing an offering and presenting it to the Lord is uncertain. There is no record of an actual feud existing—nothing written that implies malice, envy, hatred and strife between the two men at the time.

However, Satan laid his own plans, and when the two brothers brought their offerings to the Lord actual trouble began. Genesis 4:3 tells us that ". . . in the process of time it came to pass . . ." How long was this process of time? The record is silent. God had respect to Abel's offering but not to Cain's offering. Why was this? One may interpose with opinions of his own, others may suggest phases of theory and practice, but basically the Scripture lends credence to the real cause—Cain was of the wicked one. (1)

These men were brothers. They had labored together for livelihood. Probably, in this early state of man, their ambitions were somewhat distorted, their desires varied and their consciences differed. But each had a choice—blessed with this divine attribute of God. Choice then manifested decision, and decision revealed position for the two. Cain chose evil . . . Abel chose righteousness. Each was to receive the reward for his choice.

CAIN WENT OUT FROM GOD'S PRESENCE

There seems to be no proof that Satan molested Adam and Eve

1. **"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it being dead yet speaketh." Hebrews 11:4. "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous." I John 3:12.**

after he had seduced them to transgress. He immediately set out to devise plans to wreck the chosen dependent for the promotion of God's kingdom—his whole aim to destroy the kingdom of God and His righteousness. This same spirit is evident in his followers. It cropped out in Cain, the very first offspring of the man whom God had created for His own glory. Cain was Satan's "follow-through" vessel to support sin, obvious in his personality and approach. He was very wroth, disturbed, distressed and countenance-beaten, and these cruelties to human disposition and poise manifested the outcroppings of evil from the Fall.

The Lord said, ". . . Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." Genesis 4:6, 7.

Probably Cain gave serious consideration to what God had told him in spite of the forces of evil that warred within him. He talked with Abel his brother, but from all indications he could not forget the plight of his own sacrifice, nor could he forestall envy and jealousy that accelerated the growing hatred of his brother. It was an evil that seized him and disconcerted him, and his only recourse was violence. A New Testament writer sums up such seducing temptation and uncanny wickedness. (2)

God's assurance to Cain in Verse 7 should have arrested his anxiety for acceptance. The promise "thou shalt rule over him" should have quieted his fear of being subservient to his brother: but it did not. It is clearly seen that he entertained the kind of distrust that lends itself to violent reaction as the sole approach to recompense. Satan had blinded him to reality and truth. He could not seem to understand the voice of the Lord, nor foresee benefit. Perhaps he visualized himself as the head of a powerful and wealthy kingdom, the lone survivor to reign unopposed. Could such implied supremacy be misconstrued? Throughout the transpired ages of man, and even today, he has faced a supreme test of self. Jesus faced it, too. (3) All mankind face it!

The forces of evil had so subsidized Cain's motives and life that

2. ". . . man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:14, 15.

3. "And he . . . prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Mark 14:35, 36. "And the devil . . . showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world . . . And . . . said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them . . . if thou wilt . . . worship me, all shall be thine." Luke 4:5-7.

when they were in the field he rose up and slew his brother Abel. With his awful scheme of sin, Satan used Cain as his "follow-through" vessel. It seemed to be Cain's only course since he was under the control of the sin-power. God had not repudiated his sacrifice—it had its place perhaps—but Cain entertained a sense of repugnance; what equation could he now expect? He lied to the Lord about his brother and his contempt of guilt prodded him to arrogance, leaving him dangerously receptive to satanic suggestions.

The Book says: "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth . . . a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugative and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord." Genesis 4:9-16.

Different scholars suggest different dates for Cain's murder of Abel, and while accuracy cannot be maintained, the commentary of Adam Clarke suggests that the unfortunate incident took place about the year of 128 or 129 of the history of the world.

When "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord" it left him separated from righteous influence; he became a main shareholder in the omens of sin. He set forth to build an empire in the land to which he had gone. It is unwise to attempt to judge with accuracy the developments of early man from the meager accounts given in Genesis 4, for the lapse of years enshroud concealed records, some of which are very briefly inferred by the Scripture. As to the number of people living at the time of the murder of Abel there are differences of opinion, though many scholars feel justified in believing there were many—some think there were hundreds, and others think there were thousands. They look at Genesis 5:3, 4: "And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters."

Close scrutiny of the Scripture does not suggest that Adam and Eve had no other children, especially daughters, until after the murder of Abel. Let us remember too, that the life span of the

ancients was not measured by the brevity of today's life span, but in the hundreds of years. Then too, Adam had been commissioned to "replenish the earth." How was this to come about without descendants?

There are great gaps of history in the Book of Genesis, and it seems not intended that historians authenticate everything, strange as it is. Bible students differ on dates and theories and suppositions of the context . . . the first few chapters affording grounds for criticism, debate and attack. But it still stands the storm. It is not intended to be a book on chronology, but the "spirit of the whole work of God" is sustained.

Sure, there are grounds for controversal discussions by those not possessed of the spirit of it. Critics sometimes ask who was Cain's wife, the woman he married in the land of Nod. There seems to be no record of his marriage to anyone in Nod. The Bible only says, "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." Genesis 4:17. This Scripture implies that Cain performed his customary husband to wife relationship with the wife he already had, and she conceived, and in due time her son Enoch was born. Nor was his wife an ape-woman as has been suggested by unbelievers.

Every chronological iota and every family transition and bearing of children are not explained in the Bible, and to some readers the accounts appear to be a sort of simulacrum with a vague appearance of truth and reality; but it should not be so. As stated, there were other people at this time besides this first son we have record of being born in the land of Nod. Otherwise, who helped Cain build the city? We avowedly believe God's creation of man and we feel it reasonable to expect several generations in the span of so many years. As aforesaid, complete delineation of chronological events, so briefly given, is next to impossible without some imaginable pursuit in the history of man. This theoretical approach seems most likely since God commissioned man to multiply and replenish the earth, referred to in Genesis 1:28.

Sin and evil continued to filter down through the lineage of Cain. One of his descendants, Lamech, became the Bible's very first bigamist, as well as a murderer himself. (4) Lamech knew about his ancestor's sin according to Genesis 4:24. Though Cain's

4. **"And Lamech took unto him two wives . . ." Genesis 4:19. "And Lamech said unto his wives, Ada and Zillah, Hear my voice . . . I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt." Genesis 4:23.**

descendants were artisans and geniuses of trade and craft sin was prevalent, and took heavy toll in every facet and phase of the Cainite culture. Because of the sin-plight his multitudinous offspring may well be properly referred to as "the daughters of men" of the Bible. Banished from contact with God! Seems terror-strickening!

After Cain slew his brother Abel and "went out from the presence of the Lord," only eight verses of Scripture (Genesis 4:17-24) refer to his posterity that existed until the Deluge—more than 1500 years. This apologue reveals a sinister chapter in the history of man, and everywhere there are yet pathetic laments, but in vain. His was a choice.

CHOSEN ANCESTRY . . . THROUGH SETH

With the death of Abel, and Cain "gone out from the presence of God" it seemed to leave godliness without a real protagonist among men. So, in order to respect and coerce obedience to the dispensational prophecy of Genesis 3:15, and a return to godliness, man and God coacted to procreate an heir of godliness through the progeny of the man God had created—the "starting again" with an heir apparent.

Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born. Elated over the birth of her son Eve said, "For God . . . hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." (Genesis 4:25) Evidently the comfort of this birth transcended the sorrow over the death of Abel, though God had said there would be sorrow.

Probably as soon as Seth was old enough to understand he was briefed on the events in the beautiful Paradise of God, on the transgression of his parents and their expulsion from Eden. Undoubtedly he had heard the episode, time and again, rehearsed by his father Adam who lived eight hundred years after he was born. (Genesis 5:4)

Evil prevailed everywhere. Common sense would indicate an interchange of visits between the early families, though the Bible is silent along these lines. Man's conscience, his desires and basic morals had been torn apart, and the resources of his godliness prostrated by the invasion of sin. His plight was not psycho-neurotic; it was a real "fight-to-death" struggle between the forces of good and evil. Abel, the heir apparent, had been slain by like forces that induced transgression in Eden, and man's world again reeled and rocked with tremor from the impact of evil. Oh,

where were his guidelines, his hopeful assurances?

Then Seth was born, and godliness came alive again, if only as a newly lighted flickering candle. It was life again! Darker the night the brighter gleams a tiny flame.

Seth grew up, took unto himself a wife, and in the course of time a son, Enos, was born. Genesis 4:26 tells us, ". . . then began men to call upon the name of the Lord."

Seth saw his own posterity—Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch—assume their role in the epilogue of God's drama of the chosen ancestry, though perhaps unawares. Seth, who knew the terror of Adam's transgression, was privileged to see one of his own offspring, Enoch, walk so closely with God that God took him. (5) He never tasted death in his miraculous translation . . . his was the "*ne plus ultra*" of every man's godliness. "And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Genesis 5:23, 24)

He was the seventh descendant from Adam through the godly line of Seth, and obviously the best, most godly man alive when he went home with God. His whole desire and delight were in the Lord, and assuming that he was closer to God than to man he went to be with his Master. He was a prophet of God (Jude 14, 15). Of the antediluvian patriarchs his life span of years was shortest, 365 years. Adam was contemporary with him for about 308 years, but died 57 years before Enoch was translated. Yet, seven of the antediluvian patriarchs lived to behold the translation.

Enoch was the father of Methuselah who lived to be 969 years old—history's oldest man. Adam was contemporary with him for 243-246 years, depending on chronology. As a matter of thought and concern the whole human era from the creation of man to the deluge—1,656 years—was spanned by the lives of two men, Adam and Methuselah. It appears that Adam lived to see his ninth generation, but died in the fifty-sixth year of Lamech's life. Adam was the first man to live, the first to sin, and the first to die a natural death. Abel's death before him was a violent murder, and there was no chance to live out his life. Adam first tasted the pangs and horrors of natural death ushered to man by his transgression, and this has been the terror of the human race since the fall. Enoch escaped this awful thing by walking with God, though he was the next descendant to follow the death of Adam,

5. . **"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5)**

and leave this world. What a contrast to the death of Adam!

Pursuing the Bible's selective genealogies of the chosen ancestry there were Methuselah the father of Lamech, who was the father of Noah, who was the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth. Noah was 500 years old when his first son Japheth was born. Japheth was eldest of three sons, Genesis 10:21, though Shem was listed first. In I Chronicles 1:5 Japheth holds age precedence. Sometimes, and in some periods of the Bible, the younger son is listed first as a matter of family dignity and concern, as Jacob is listed before Esau, and Moses before Aaron, though Aaron was three years older than Moses (Exodus 7:7).

Methuselah, contemporary with Noah for 600 years, died probably in the first month before the flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month in 2348 B.C. By now nine pre-diluvian patriarchs had bidden adieu to the perverse, sinful and wicked world whose moral depravity, wickedness and violence were strangely appalling and utterly unbearable, and growing worse by the day.

COMPARING THE SEVENTH GENERATIONS

It is enlightening to see the difference in the "seventh" from Adam through Cain, and the "seventh" from Adam through Seth, though they were brothers and had the same mother and father. Remember that Enoch's grandson, Lamech, was Noah's father. But wicked Cain also had a son named Lamech, the "seventh" from Adam, and he portrayed the like sinfulness and wickedness of his father. He was a bigamist and a murderer (Genesis 4:19). He desecrated the morals of decency, promoted sin, violence and disrespect for others, and seemed to revel in his despicable deeds (Genesis 4:23, 24). There is no record of his descendants this side of the Deluge.

Enoch was the "seventh" from Adam through righteous Seth. He lived about 308 years before Adam died. Doubtlessly he had heard his ancestor Adam speak of his transgression in Eden, and had heard of kinsmen the terrible murder committed by his ancestor Cain. He was probably well acquainted with Cain and his descendants . . . just as families may be today. Distance separating them was not prohibitive for visiting each other in the course of their long lives. Family association was not forbidden, except by the virtues of godliness conflicting the terribleness of sin and wickedness. These suppositions may not be entirely accurate but they are certainly reasonable. The terror of evil

among his kinsmen probably stirred Enoch, for it seems evident that some of the godly lineage intermarried with the ungodly lineage, and sins multiplied. There were many temptations in Enoch's day but he withstood forces that would destroy him. The Bible says, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Genesis 5:24. He did not die. His life was a testimony that pleased God.

What a difference, the two "sevenths"!

The Bible has concluded Cain's lineage to be utterly sinful. His generations were corrupt, wicked and violent. It is thought that because of this extreme enmity existed between man and beast for survival, and viciousness, hatred and ferocity abounded everywhere. The era was a furor of evil. To paraphrase the indictment it was a "literal fury" for mankind, in spite of the ardent penchant to be artisans, craftsmen, braziers, mechanics in iron, instructors, fieldmen and herdsmen; in such arts and achievements these evil, yet powerful people excelled. (6) Yet, with all their skill and accomplishments they forgot God . . . and lost. As aforesaid, there is no record of their posterity this side of the Deluge.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD

It has been suggested that the antediluvian lands were connected (Genesis 1:9, 10). This may have been, and if it was then prehistoric man, in the course of time, encountered little difficulty migrating to the different parts of the world. In this magnificient world God had created were lush lowlands and green fields; here and there were meadows, valleys, hills and mountains; dotted here and there with forests of majestic trees and fruit-bearing shrubs. But for the thorns and thistles that cursed the ground it must have been a virtual paradise (Genesis 3:18).

Man was not confined to Eden, the land of Nod, Mesopotamia, or the Tigris and Euphrates valley. He obviously migrated to the rest of the world, where he continued to have access to the abundant and uncontaminated food reserves that provided vigor, vitality and health, and contributed to his long life span of hundreds of years.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN POPULATION

No one can estimate with any degree of certainty just what was

6. **Genesis 4:20-22; Genesis 6:4.**

the population of the antediluvian world. However, speculation seems fair to present some estimates in view of the long life span of the prehistoric people. Let us remember that according to recorded chronology seven of the antediluvian patriarchs lived more than nine hundred years—Methuselah 969, Jared 962, Noah 950, Adam 930, Seth 912, Cainan 910, Enos 905, and the other two never died young, for Mahalaleel was 895, Lamech 777, and Enoch was 365 when he was translated. This cannot be compared with the short life span of today (Psalm 90:10).

From Adam (4004 B.C.) to the Deluge (2348 B.C.) embraces a period of 1656 years, and provides ample time for great population growth. Comparing this number of years with an equivalent number of years in today's world would flash back to about 312-313 A.D. when Constantine embraced Christianity, following his victory at Milvian Bridge about two miles from Rome, and ending with 1969 A.D. Yet, in spite of today's short life span (not many live beyond 100 years) and the great wars, accidents and hazards of different kinds plaguing today's world our population has skyrocketed. The Population Reference Bureau estimated that by July 1, 1969 there were 3,550,000,000 people in the world, that the population doubles in from 15 to 20 years, and by 2000 A.D. there would be 7,000,000,000 in the world, notwithstanding the efforts of birth control by various nations.

It has been assumed that from Adam to Noah there were multitudes of people, some estimates running from two billion upward. While this is speculation of course, since no one actually knows, it lends opportunity for thought, study and consideration. Suppose the offspring of each generation produced eighteen or more children, and half of these were producing males. Calculations are impressive when we look at the following graph:

First Generation	2
Second Generation (18 plus 2)	20
Third Generation	180
Fourth Generation	1620
Fifth Generation	14,580
Sixth Generation	131,220
Seventh Generation	1,180,980
Eighth Generation	10,628,820
Ninth Generation	95,559,380
Tenth Generation	860,034,420

If we calculated eight producing males in each generation there still would be a tremendous population—268,435,456. If with ten producing males (certainly reasonable) there would be about

2,000,000,000 of the Chosen Ancestry of our Selective Genealogy, and with all of Cain's generations it would certainly cause us to arrive at a tremendous total of people on earth when the flood came. Let us remember too, that Adam had other sons and daughters; just how many we are at a loss to know, though tradition infers that he had thirty-three sons and twenty-three daughters—fifty-six in all. (7) Historians differ on this conjecture though the Bible does say he had other sons and daughters including Cain, Abel and Seth.

NOAH PRESERVES LINEAGE

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. (8) And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Genesis 6:1-8.

The children of God were no longer guided by the Spirit of God after they intermarried and merged with the children of men. They absorbed the philosophies, customs and practices of the children of men, and became lustful, carnal and worldly, and gave way to unrestrained freedoms, and excesses. Except for Noah and his family, and some of the surviving patriarchs, an ungodly generation or race was all that was left. They banished God from their thinking, entirely . . . idolatry was unheard of at this time. They were a master race in the affairs of the world—a cultured,

7. Flavius Josephus' "The History and Antiquities of the Jews" Page 31.

8. Sons of God were human descendants of the godly Seth, and not angelic or celestial deities as supposed by some. (See I John 3:1, 2; Luke 3:38) Daughters of men were perhaps members of the Cainite culture and tribes—antagonists of everything godly or righteous.

progressive, enterprizing people that prospered at craft, art, trade and exchange. Their philosophy of life was wholly materialistic and carnal, for they were a wicked, arrogant, lawless, violent and godless race. And because of this, judgment was pending completion of the ark.

Noah, the tenth from Adam through godly Seth, being a just man and perfect in his generation found grace in the sight of the Lord. He had kept the spark of godliness, and the hope of the promised Seed—the Saviour—alive against this day. To him God spoke and entrusted His divine plan and aim.

"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood . . ." (Genesis 6:13, 14) (9)

The fundamental issues devolved upon Noah were the preservation of life and continued godliness that had all but disappeared into apostasy. But when man's hope and faith are nearly lost God has His own way to adjust things. He had no reason to remember the sin, the wickedness and the violence of the godless race; it was ever before Him. But God watched Noah whose faith made him heir of the promise. (10) God's eyes are always upon the righteous. In order to prevent the extinction of human life, and to preserve His own creation, God said to Noah, ". . . with thee will I establish my covenant . . ." (Genesis 6:18)

Undoubtedly Noah was well acquainted with the story of Adam's transgression, and perhaps it was a tradition among many of the descendants. However, the account was not too far-fetched for Noah. After all Adam died just 126 years before he was born; Enoch was translated only 69 years before he was born; and Adam's son Seth, from whom the godly lineage came, had been dead only 14 years when he was born. And Noah was alive during part of the lifetime of the other patriarchs.

Though Adam fell by transgression God was mindful of His creation and planned for the preservation of mankind through the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). Since through her Satan had tempted man to fall by transgression, also through her would come the Seed—the Saviour of mankind, and He would lead mankind back to God and with His blood eradicate the Adamic

9. The ark was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. A cubit is the distance from elbow to the tip of the middle finger—from 18 inches to 22 inches. Some sources seem to feel that it was almost 24 inches.

10. Genesis 6:14-21; Genesis 7:2-9; Hebrews 11:7.

nature placed in man by the fall in Eden . . . merciful and a Saviour to the believer, but to those who reject and disbelieve Him a severe Judge.

He called on Noah, a preacher of righteousness, (11) to warn the wicked, sinful and adulterous people of the impending catastrophe. Noah worked on the ark, reasoning of righteousness and judgment to come, and hoping for a revival of godliness among the people; but alas, it was heedlessly trampled down to almost total apostasy, except for him and his house. (12) He was alarmed by their apathy but faltered not in his mission.

Noah was an humble servant of the Lord, and in no way a megalomaniac. He wisely pursued the commission given him and built the ark according to the specifications God had outlined. He did no works of supererogation; just followed instructions. He never went fowl hunting or animal herding to bring in the members of these kingdoms. God brought them in. He got in touch with them and started them "on the move" so they would reach the designated place at the proper time. It took time to reach the ark so they got "on the move."

Noah was 600 years old when the ark was completed and ready for occupancy, and he, his wife and three sons—Shem, Ham and Japheth—and their wives, and all other life God wished to preserve by the ark entered safely. Then "THE LORD SHUT HIM IN" (Genesis 7:16). Then came the flood!

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth . . ." Genesis 7:11, 12.

No single event in the history of the world has ever claimed such catastrophic results. God meant to destroy the world! It seems reasonable that He would unleash such latent forces as earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, monsoons and violent winds with the torrential downpour of rain to bring this great convulsion to the earth. Such had never been experienced. Though this view may seem speculative and suggestive the assumption may be tenable and justified when one

11. "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." (II Peter 2:5)

12. "Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (I Peter 3:20)

can observe the once orderly earth now in such disarray—a virtual mish-mash in places with rugged phenomena.

The Deluge was not confined to the Mesopotamian area; it was a world-wide calamity, and is remembered in one way or another, by the people of practically every nation, tribe and clan, by either legend, story or reference. There is little room for doubt in view of the findings of geologists and archaeologists who probe the surface of the earth. (13)

Bone findings and fossil evidences attest to the proposed geographical disposition of the antediluvian race. More fossilized remains are being found regularly to supplement this proof. Excessive deposits of flora and fauna in various parts of the world seem to point with certainty to a world disturbance of calamitous proportion, and a tremendous and gigantic upheaval. This terrible disaster which destroyed life then existing, except those sheltered by the ark and marine life, seemed to have occurred more than 4,300 years ago.

POST-DILUVIAL PERIOD

Record of the great flood is found in Genesis, chapters seven and eight. We are told that it began on the seventeenth day of the second month, in the six hundredth year of Noah's life (Genesis 7:11), and ended when he disembarked on the twenty-seventh day, of the second month, in the six hundredth and first year of his life (Genesis 8:13-14), a period of about 370 days.

Our aim here is not to relate in depth the ark, the flood or Noah's family progression, but rather to climax the episode in evidence with judgment of the wicked, and the phenomenal deliverance of Noah and his house. The world after the flood provided a more genial atmosphere, and gave way to better and more pleasant conditions under which to multiply and replenish

13. Bones and skeletons of prehistoric man and fowls and animals are found in numerous places throughout the world, especially in England, Russia, Africa, Kansas, North and South America and elsewhere. The "Badlands" of South Dakota as well as Alberta have contributed excellent discoveries. In August 1967, this writer saw quarrymen chiseling bones and skeletons of prehistoric animals from the rock face of the dinosaur quarry, located nearby the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum . . . bones embedded in rock. Such animals once roamed the continents, and a study of them is most interesting. A rewarding visit is sure when time allows anyone the privilege to see such things in the Museum of Mines in Rapid City, the Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institute) Washington, D. C., or the American Museum of New York. It is certainly enlightening.

the earth, with people who would respect godliness and worship the Creator.

As soon as he disembarked Noah built an altar to the Lord (Genesis 8:20-22) and offered of every clean beast and every clean fowl burnt offerings upon the altar. This is the first recorded incident of burnt offerings. The Bible does not say whether or not Abel's offering was a burnt offering, or just a presentation to the Lord, though his best. It seems reasonable to believe the practice of bringing an offering to the Lord had been kept alive, since Abel, by the antediluvian patriarchal fathers in communication with God, and perhaps Noah followed the traditional custom. If not, then he revived the giving of an offering to the Lord which began with Abel over 1,500 years before. Scriptures indicate that Seth would take the place of Abel, and that men would call upon the name of the Lord. (14) After Noah presented his offerings to the Lord, God was pleased, and He assured him of His blessings.

Except for the marine life and those sheltered in the ark the first world was destroyed. However, Satan, the troublemaker and his angels were not destroyed. He is still "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). We have no record that God allowed him or any of his angels to enter the ark, but as soon as disembarkation was completed he manifested himself to harass the soul of man.

Since then Noah, the chosen ancestry, and his decendants have moved continually toward the fulfillment of the brief but powerful prophecy of Genesis 3:15. In every era man has sought justification through offerings and sacrifices, yet, no offering or sacrifice of beast or fowl was able to eradicate the Adamic nature left in him by the fall in *Eden.* The culmination of that first prophecy—true redemption through the shed blood of Jesus the Christ—is strongly supported by the Apostle Paul and other Biblical writers.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." (Romans 6:6, 12)

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so

14. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel . . . "To Seth . . . was born a son . . . called . . . Enos: THEN BEGAN MEN TO CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD." (Genesis 4:25, 26)

by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:19)

The journey to man's ultimate redemption was a long, hazardous and treacherous one, and while he could not foresee the finale, he continued to hold to the Guiding Hand that held prophecies together. Hosea 6:3 assured him of his eventual insight by declaring, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord . . ." And the Psalmist offers great encouragement by saying, ". . . no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Psalm 84:11)

Let us remember that Noah and the ark is a type of Christ and His Church. Noah preached righteousness while building the ark, and eight souls were saved. Christ preached salvation and redemption while establishing His Church, and building it for the redeemed of the Lord. As the ark stood for protection and safety from the storm and water, so the Church will protect from fire and destruction. Noah was persecuted and violently opposed while preaching and building the ark; so is the Church persecuted and opposed while being built, and her ministers often mistreated. But God never forsook Noah, nor will He forsake His church. It is to be presented to the Lord, a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle . . . God's final effort to redeem His creation.

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matthew 24:37-39)

God was careful and considerate to establish His covenant with Noah for the chosen descendants that followed (15) He guaranteed seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night (Genesis 8:22), and instituted the first moral laws as recorded in Genesis ninth chapter, before He proceeded to establish His covenant.

THE TREND OF EVENTS

Only a thumbnail sketch has been given of the episodes and meanderings of prehistoric man, some of it with a degree of

15. **"And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off anymore by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth." (Genesis 9:11) "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." (Genesis 9:13)**

uncertainty. Further study of the cataclysmic destruction of the world by water in Noah's day can be as exhaustive as desired, and one's vistas as expansive as he wishes to explore. By studious and persistent search the determined student can always find additional scriptural equities, entities and abounding enrichment. Eras, epochs and episodes should be perused for their worth in research and study.

However, a thorough study of any scientific or religious entity of the age does not license one to believe all books, theories and documents that to now have reached monumental proportions. Without apology in the least, choice and direction serve as vanguards for outreach and growth. Books, documents and other literature are for educational enlightenment. One may be forced to concede some self-esteem for more knowledge and understanding but doing so should never imperil his composure or disturb his equanimity.

Provisions have been made for the Bible plan of salvation for those who believe and accept God. Yet . . . in spite of the rich spiritual emphasis, the Biblical and historical evidences and truth, some people are inclined to ignore them and cling tenaciously to certain philosophies, theories, principles and practices, opinionated by those who may not believe God or any part of His Book. Different reading and study may be interesting for pastime and acquired knowledge, and one does not have to believe such things to read them. Most of us have read things that we never believed though they made interesting reading at the time. After all, who can be so unwise as to trust his soul—his only personal possession that he is licensed to protect—in the hands of people who push God aside and disbelieve His Word?

This history is not a religious digest by any means . . . it is not meant to be. Nor does it propose to delineate the progeny of man from his early beginning, though some short reference is suggested. Those interested in a further study of the Paleolithic Man, the Neanderthal Man, and other prehistoric earth-dwellers, so vividly painted and pictured by scientists and geologists, should resort to the study of Paleontology, or relating branches of study of the suggested eras and ages, and not attempt to confuse these with the creation of man, and his destiny.*** God's prerogatives, and miraculous events and occurrences "on the spot" put to flight the puny philosophies and suppositions of those who oppose. The Wise Man said in Ecclesiastes 8:11, ". . . sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

***Hoaxes are not unusual in theories regarding the study of so-called ancient man. The Piltdown Man, supposedly discovered at Piltdown, England, in 1912, was a complete hoax—nothing less.

So was the twelve-foot tall, four-foot wide stone giant, discovered several feet deep on a farm at Cardiff, N.Y. in 1889. It was the inferior work of a Chicago sculptor for a tobacconist at Cardiff. Because he lost an argument with an evangelist he had tried to get even by creating the stone giant. Nothing but a hoax! No hypothetical theories and hoaxes ever created a man with a soul . . . only God could do that.

Perusing In the Realms of Thought 3

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POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Some events that transpired in the delineation of the chosen, or accepted, genealogies lend credence to provocative thought, study and pursuit. One may become irritated and confused when studying about them in the Bible unless he is able to properly decipher events rather than specific dates. Dates are sometimes suggested to ease the basics of Bible study, although authorities may differ on some of them. Exactness is not necessarily the product of the pen and the student should not lose control for lack of it, but cling to the best available.

Things may not be as clearly defined and elucidated perhaps as some may prefer or expect. It is necessary to reflect upon different commentaries, Bible dictionaries, Bible digests and Bible histories, as well as other helps, and even opinionated materials relative to Bible study. Some of them may differ in sequence of events and connecting dates, in suppositions and interpretations, and even in opinions, but in many respects and most cases they contribute to reasonable study and better understanding. After all, diligent study does no injustice to knowledge.

Some recent discoveries by archaeologists have contributed to better understanding of place, time and purpose of civilizations that existed centuries ago. Every suggested date may not be accurate but it is the best obtainable at this time. History should never be termed as a kind of negation for effort, adventure and enterprise . . . it is an account of them in their proper perspectives. The size of seas, rivers and other water courses vary or change with time and conditions, and the student must invariably submit to established records unless he himself has taken time and effort to measure them more correctly. As a rule such things are left to those who are prepared to dispense with this responsibility. Boundary lines cross and crisscross, or merge to the dream of the conqueror, but the student's concern is for the basic actualities suggested.

Think of the rainbow as an example. God made a covenant with Noah, and every living creature, that the earth would never be destroyed again by water (Genesis 9:16). This Noahic Covenant has bonded the faith and confidence of civilizations for over 4,300 years, for the rainbow is still seen. There is no record to show the

rainbow ever existed before God's promise to Noah, for Genesis 2:5, 6 remind us that a mist watered the "whole face of the ground." No theory has ever supplanted this truth . . . still so real and assuring!

THE YOUNGER AND THE ELDER

Today, people as a rule are prone to accept the first-mentioned child as the oldest, for it is our custom now. Without delving into the family customs of different eras, it seems that the early progenitors listed their offspring differently. Commentators claim that the younger is often mentioned first and the elder is listed last. In the ancient days the elder son usually received the blessings of his father, the great inheritance due him when he assumed leadership of the family or clan. Therefore, as a matter of dignity, respect and concern for the younger son, his name is often mentioned first in many cases as borne out by the Scriptures.

Genesis 6:10 says: "And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth." Immediately most of us would assume that Shem was the oldest, since his name is mentioned first. But Genesis 10:21 tells us, "Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the BROTHER OF JAPHETH THE ELDER, even to him were children born." In I Chronicles 1:5-17 the chronicler lists the sons in proper sequence.

Genesis 11:26 says: "And Terah lived seventy-five years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." Haran died in Ur of the Chaldees, but his son Lot went with Terah's family to Haran in Mesopotamia. Genesis 11:32 tells us that Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died at Haran. Genesis 12:4 says: ". . . and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." Accordingly, Terah was evidently about one hundred and thirty years old when Abram was born . . . not seventy years old as may be assumed. So Haran (last-mentioned son) was born when Terah was seventy years old it is assumed. Nahor was born later, and Abram much later. Remember too, Haran's daughter, Milcah, married Haran's brother Nahor—who was the father of Bethuel, the father of Rebekah, Isaac's wife (Genesis 24:15; 25:20). This leads one to believe that Haran was about sixty years old when Abram was born. Lot was evidently older than many surmise, when they departed from Ur of the Chaldees.

Moses is mentioned before Aaron, although three years his junior. Exodus 7:7 says: "And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharoah." Jacob is mentioned before Esau, though Esau was first

born. Ephraim was preferred before Manasseh according to Genesis 48:17-20. God has His own prerogatives.

Period of the Patriarchs



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PROMISE THROUGH ABRAM

In the very beginning God told Adam, ". . . Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it . . ." (Genesis 1:28) After the transgression God gave His first prophecy of the Deliverer who was to come, as recorded in Genesis 3:15. Noah, the tenth generation from Adam, found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8) and built an ark for the saving of his house. When the waters of the great Flood had abated and Noah disembarked, God spoke to him and said, ". . . Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Genesis 9:1. It was in Genesis 9:6 that the first sound moral law was instituted; God gave it to Noah who was to start building again the civilization of man . . . hoping for righteousness, and trusting for progress as an option of the providences of God.

The chosen lineage from Noah—Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah—terminates with Abram, the tenth generation from Noah. Abram was born 1996 B.C., two years after Noah died, and about 352 years after the Flood. Terah and his family, including Abram, were resident of Ur of the Chaldees, located near the northern end of the Persian Gulf on the Euphrates River. It was a magnificent city, of mostly two-storied dwellings, carefully planned, with well-defined streets and passageways. Learning may have attained great degrees vested in the best libraries of the period. No illiteracy seems to have existed there. People had access to source materials for study in law, politics, theology, medicine, grammar, annals, dictionaries and encyclopedias, and books of all kinds, that a prosperous civilization might require in Abram's time. Judging from the meager accounts given in the Scriptures, and according to recent discoveries, the family possessed wealth and lived comfortably.

Genesis 13:2 tells us, "And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." Much of this was obtained while at Ur of the Chaldees. In pursuit of his qualifications he was a reasonably wealthy man, a powerful chief, a breeder of cattle and camels on a large scale, a master of caravans, and with a retinue sufficient to engage a small army. Genesis 14:14 tells us he armed 318 of his trained servants, and pursued the kings who had captured Lot, his nephew, until Lot and all the goods were redeemed. And it appears

that Abram was a well-educated man. (1)

Abram was a citizen of a select civilization. Historians infer that the family of Terah were moon-god worshippers. This may well have been. Sir Charles Leonard Wooley's expedition in the Spring of 1929 unearthed King Ur-Nammu's ziggurat. It contained five temples in a semicircle, the largest of which was 100 yards by 60 yards, and was dedicated to the moon-god. (2) It is amply rewarding to consider their long trek back to godliness. They were, to some degree, deprived of the approaches that today's civilization enjoys. They were building again from the ruins of a world catastrophe. They needed inspiration and courage from some source or deity higher than themselves. So, they deified the moon to help them build as well as to assuage their difficulties. It was their religion, though contrary to the righteousness of Noah, their progenitor. They were not an enclave in a battered world . . . they were a part of the world itself.

THE CALL OF ABRAM

Opinions differ concerning the call of Abram. Most Bible readers and scholars are secure in the Scriptural references themselves, that he was first called while residing at Ur of the Chaldees, and the call may have been renewed again after the death of his father Terah at Haran. This seems documented, to some extent, by Genesis 12:1, which says: "Now the Lord HAD SAID UNTO ABRAM, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." The word "had" is past tense and signifies it had already been done. This viewpoint is further documented by the Scriptures.

> ". . . The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, (Haran)
>
> "And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.
>
> "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." Acts 7:2-4.

A reasonable approach allows one to believe the call did not have to be repeated at Haran; that Abram embraced it gladly

1. Diggers For Facts (Pages 69-79)
2. The Bible As History (Page 18)

while residing at Ur of the Chaldees, and his trip to Haran was merely a leg of his journey, just a delayed stopover, enroute to the land of Canaan. But it is conjectural.

RELATED TO THE CALL

Some informative sources feel that Abram was about fifty years old when he left Ur of the Chaldees to go to Haran. Opinions vary on this, and the Bible seems silent about his age. It is to be expected, however, that he was a man of age, well able to trade cattle and camels, and transact business of different kinds in order to accumulate wealth. Archaeologists aver that he was a learned and wealthy man at the time. As a matter of fact, he seems to have prospered at Ur of the Chaldees, at Haran and in other places to which he journeyed. Otherwise, how could he have supported his large clan of retainers in southern Canaan? So, as to just how long it was from the call of God to Abram's departure from Ur of the Chaldees, the record seems silent. Circumstances involving the move might have delayed their departure, considering their comfortable living and well-being in an established home, with a burial vault, among their kindred and homes.

From Ur of the Chaldees, up the Euphrates Valley, to Haran in Mesopotamia is said to be approximately six hundred miles. (3) Others think it was less, depending upon the route taken. Notwithstanding, their trek was within the rim of the "Fertile Crescent," an arable, inverted half-moon-shaped boundary of land reaching from the Persian Gulf to the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes, located near the present site of Qena (or Qina). Of course, the land of Canaan was included in this boundary.

Terah died when he was two hundred and five years old. (Genesis 11:32) If Abram had entertained any doubts of his call by the Lord while he resided at Ur of the Chaldees, or even at Haran, they were now brushed aside . . . the love and respect and home ties were severed . . . no reason for his hesitancy now. Supposition has her labyrinth . . . why did not Abram leave father, home and kindred when God's call came at Ur? Were home ties too binding? Did desire for wealth hinder? Did kinsmen influence his decision? Was education a contributor to his prestige? Was moon-god worshipping too highly esteemed to permit freedom of thought and conscience? Were social demands too pretentious? Was he too grossly involved in occupation and livelihood? Opinions suggest many questions, some of which may tend to

3. Archaeology In Bible History, By Joseph P. Free (Page 51).

satisfy some people. But logic implies that Abram left Ur of the Chaldees as soon as possible after his call from God came so forcefully, and his journey to Haran was just a part of his trip to the land of Canaan. Romans 4:20 says: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." He believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness. God's call demanded response, obedience and faith.

> ". . . Get thee out of thy country, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.
> "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
> "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:1-3.

In Abram God found His choice—a man of means, education, willing obedience, and one whose ultimate faith was accounted for righteousness.

REASON FOR THE CALL

From his fall by transgression in Eden, man has espoused an indubitable need for redemption. In every age and era since, the sight of the sad sequence is inevitable whether in hovel or mansion. God repented that He ever made man . . . He abhorred man's predicament. But knowing his plight God left him an encouraging refrain of redemptive effort through the "seed of the the woman" as referred to in Genesis 3:15. The prophecy is powerfully possessive even to the bruising of the serpent's head—true representation of good against evil—enmity instead of amity. Right when evil had seemed to triumph over the godly ancestry the great ante-deluvian patriarch, Enoch, proved faith and righteous living could be exalted among the heathen, and because of his righteousness God took him.

Sin waxed worse and worse, and every thought in the mind of man, and in his heart, was evil continuously. But Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord, and God asked him to build an ark for the saving of his house. God desired to preserve a remnant of His creation and provide for a kind of rebirth of His righteous procedures, and arrange for man to live under better conditions. Then came the second major crisis in the history of man, a cataclysm that nearly erased him from the face of the earth. But Noah had found grace and believed God for the saving of his own, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith (Hebrews 11:7).

ABRAM MOVES OUT FOR GOD

The challenge this time was to Abram. God never told him where He would lead him, never explained everything at all. He merely told Abram to get out from his kindred, from his people, from his father's house, and go to a place He would show him. His pursuit of God's call evidenced remarkable faith in Abram, for the Scriptures say, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11:8-10.

This outstanding exemplification of faith preempted the promise of righteousness that was to be transmitted like an underlying connecting cord, through the epochs of history that followed, to the actual coming of the Messiah. The faith exercised by Abram was pure, yet simple trust in the voice of God, and His promises. Apostle Paul emphatically states: ". . . Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans 4:3. Other references from the Bible document his sublime faith. (4) But his faith in God was not without trial and test. As a matter of fact, the excessive trials and tests of one's faith harbinger unparalleled confessions of it.

God selected an individual who believed, and subjected him to the essential instruction, experience and assurances to epitomize the spirit and motives of His redemptive purposes, which clearly indicate the unfolding of the Messianic prophecies. Abram received the divine call . . . not Terah and the whole family. Scriptures infer that other members of the family clan, as well as Terah himself, served other gods, suggested by Joshua 24:2, and Genesis 31:30 when Laban accused Jacob of stealing his gods.

About 1921 B.C. Abram left Haran in obedience to his call from God. It was the final leg of his journey to the land God apportioned him. Traveling the caravan road perhaps he probably went by Damascus before heading farther south to Sichem (Shechem) in the plain of Moreh, where he built an altar to the Lord. From thence he moved on to Bethel, where he built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord. Though this was the land of Canaan, and the Canaanites were there, God appeared to Abram and said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land . . ." Genesis 12:7.

4. Galatians 3:6; Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:9, 13, 14, 20-22.

Canaan was a strip of land west of the Jordan river, and was later referred to as Palestine. Abram went on farther to the South land (now Negeb) and because of a famine there he migrated to Egypt . . . Genesis 12:9, 10.

Because of difficulties over Abram's wife, Sarai, in Egypt, and the plagues suffered by Pharaoh and his house, Abram and his whole retinue became the very first to be deported from a foreign country. Back to Bethel they went and Abram again called upon the name of the Lord. It is not known just how many of his family, his servants and retainers embraced the belief of Abram who had changed deities, though they followed him and were obedient to him as sheikh, or Master leader of the family clan.

LOT SEPARATES FROM ABRAM

Lot traveled with his uncle, in the same clan, but he gained in substance and accumulated some wealth. Genesis 13:5 says: "And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents." Probably Lot had entertained the idea of "going on his own" after leaving Egypt, as some may surmise. Doubtless Lot knew much about the terrain of this particular part of the country . . . some of it arable and some of it very arid.

Back at Bethel, on the plateau of Judaea, around and near Hebron, the mountainous region seemed incapable of supporting the herds of both Abram and Lot, and there arose strife between their herdsmen. In his offer of an appeasement Abram gave Lot his choice. Knowing something of the land perhaps, and picking what he thought was best, Lot chose the well-watered plains of the Jordan, east of Bethel, and pitched his tent toward the city of Sodom. Genesis 13:11, 12. Verse 13 says, "But the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly."

ABRAM FOLLOWS VOICE OF GOD

Abram chose to dwell in Canaan in the mountainous area . . . special place for him . . . a hallowed and reserved spot as God had so willed. After Lot had separated from Abram, God appeared to Abram and renewed His promise . . . this time comparing his seed to the dust of the earth for multitudes. Lot missed Abram's godliness when he separated from him, but Abram drew closer to God, who said:

> ". . . Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and

westward:

"For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever.

"I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

"Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Genesis 13:14-17.

This was one of the many times the promises of God to Abram had been repeated to encourage him and bolster his confidence in the voice of God. His deity was another until the voice of God rang in his ears and told him to leave home, kindred and people, and go to a place He would show him. When Abram listened and believed, it became righteousness to him by faith. When he questioned God about offspring he was challenged to count the stars of heaven if he would be able to count his seed. Genesis 15:3-6. He later challenged him to count the sand of the sea shore if he was able to count his seed. In the same verse God assured Abram that his seed would possess the gate of his enemy. Genesis 22:17. Nor should it be forgotten that prior to His repeating the promises to Abram at another time, God presaged to him the departure of his seed—that is, the Children of Israel, or Jacob's offspring—to Egypt where they would be in bondage, but would come out in the fourth generation. Genesis 15:13-18. Yet, neither Isaac nor Jacob had been born. Abram believed God!

DESCENDANTS MOVE ONTO THE SCENE

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Genesis 17:1. The Promises were again repeated to Abram, and stronger terms and provisions emphasized. God told Abram that his name would no longer be Abram but Abraham, for he had made him a father of many nations. Genesis 17:5. Henceforth he is to be known as Abraham. God told him that he would be the father of nations, and kings would come out of him. Genesis 17:6.

At this time (Genesis 17) God initiated the covenant of circumcism for Abraham and males of his family and entire clan, and that self-same day when Abraham was ninety-nine years old all the males from eight days hence were circumcised. From that day forward Abraham and his seed were set apart by God as a different and distinct people, and exclusive in a myriad of aspects,

contingent upon position, time and place.

It is in this same chapter (Genesis 17) that God promised Isaac to Abraham as the true and undeniable progeny. God changed Sarai's name to Sarah, and promised her a son by Abraham; God named the son Isaac. He then promised to establish His covenant with Isaac as an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. Genesis 17:19. This promise of Isaac was when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, and Sarah was ninety.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH DESTROYED

At Mamre, while Abraham sat in his tent door in the heat of the day, God appeared to him in the person of three men. Since Abraham believed and followed God, it seems reasonably certain that he felt and recognized the fellowship of the men sent by God. He made hurried plans to entertain them, hoping that he had found grace and favor in their sight. By his overtures of kindness, friendliness and hospitality the Lord favored him by revealing the forthcoming disaster of Sodom and Gomorrah. Reason for the destruction is explained in Genesis 18:20: "And the Lord said, because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."

History infers that Sodom and Gomorrah had sunk to the lowest depths of degradation and degeneration. There seemed to be those who practiced sodomy and bestiality without restraint, and other weird antics fresh from the depths of inferno itself . . . nothing too evil for them.

Their evils became a foul odor and stink to God, and He sent two angels to wreak judgment and destruction upon them. Abraham had begged mercy to spare the cities if righteous people could be found therein . . . first fifty, then forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten . . . and assurance was given if even ten righteous could be found. Proof is seen by the horrendous destruction. But for Abraham's sake the angels made plans to rescue Lot and his family. The sons-in-law disregarded Lot's admonition and rejected him. The angels led Lot, his wife and two unmarried daughters out of the city to safety. God then rained brimstone and fire upon the cities of the plains, Sodom and Gomorrah, and destroyed them. Doubtless it was a terrifying sight! Genesis 19:26 says that Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Lot wanted to flee to Zoar to escape the destruction, against the first advice of the angels, but soon fled from Zoar to a cave in the mountains where he dwelled with his two unmarried daughters. Fearful lest they

have no seed of descendants (God overthrew the cities where Lot and his folk lived, Genesis 19:29) each daughter lay with her father while he was drunk, the firstborn first. She became mother of Moab, who was father of the Moabites. The younger daughter was second, and she became mother of Benammi, who became the father of the children of Ammon. Genesis 19:31-38. Such incest was perhaps a minor evil in Sodom, if any evil at all, since consanguinity was obviously unheard of, in respects.

ISAAC THE PROMISED SEED

This is not intended to be a narrative only of the events and occurences in Abraham's sojourn in the land of Canaan, or the Promised Land. It seems more convenient to focus the spotlight of the episode on the Messianic lineage through the seed of Abraham. The germ prophecy alluded to in Genesis 3:15 reached its finale at the appearance of the Messiah. Meanwhile, it seems reasonable to expect some assumptions, or speculative derivations, to be more compatible with prophetic evidence than others perhaps. This could account, to some degree, for the limited reference accorded Isaac as the promised seed, though assured high respect.

However, there are two impressive narratives concerning Isaac that represent the fine arts of Biblical narration, both of which hold high respect of pulpit and pew alike. One is Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son Isaac (Genesis 22:1-18), and the other is the dramatic story of the sacred and revered betrothal of Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 24).

Speaking of Isaac, and the attempt to sacrifice him, one should keep in mind the reference in Genesis 22:17, 18: ". . . and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed . . ." Opposition is readily suggested when referring to "the gate," and may well include inestimable hindrances with all strength, whether by troops, fortifications, walls, barricades or other inanimate objects incorporated in defense. Yet, in spite of pre-arrangements, preparation and defense strategy nothing could prevent the possession of the lands promised the seed of Isaac. Spiritual imphasis is foreseen! The covenant could not be disallowed.

> "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the HEIRS OF PROMISE the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable (unchangeable) things, (God's promise and His oath—Hebrews 6:13) in which it

was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast . . . Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus . . ." Hebrews 6:17-20.

Next, let us examine a partial fulfillment of the prophecies relevant to the seed that was to come to effect through Jesus Christ, when He said, ". . . thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the GATES OF HELL shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. Obviously, Jesus presaged opposition by the powers of darkness, evil principalities and forces, spiritual wickedness in high places, counsels and stratagems against the Church He built, but He boldly declared they shall not prevail, or overthrow it. When God spoke to Abraham He may have had this spiritual posterity in view, for it is borne out by the Scriptures, and by sound spiritual analysis, that Isaac was a type of Christ.

Isaac's birth was miraculous since Sarah was past child-bearing age. The birth of Jesus, the Christ, was also miraculous . . . born of a virgin. Both of them were circumcised when eight days old—Isaac (Genesis 21:4) and Jesus (Luke 2:21).

At Beer-sheba Abraham was told to go to the land of Moriah and offer his only son as a burnt offering. Ishmael, his son by Hagar, and his mother had been separated from Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac, for several years, and Ishmael had married a wife and lived in the wilderness of Paran which was in the East central region of the Sinai Peninsula. It was more than forty miles to the designated area, but Abraham and Isaac arrived there the third day for the sacrifice.

Josephus suggests that Isaac was perhaps twenty-five years old, and Adam Clarke settles on the age of thirty-three years . . . though still called a lad by his father.

The move, or commission, was absolutely no deterrent to the faith of Abraham for he moved toward the bright "dawning of the Sun of Righteousness." Genesis 22:5 says, ". . . I and the lad will go yonder and worship, AND COME AGAIN TO YOU." This did not leave room for doubt to raise Isaac from the dead if he did sacrifice him as a burnt-offering. Hebrews 11:17-19 explains it: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead . . ."

Isaac carried the wood, that was to consume his life, to the altar

of sacrifice, and questioned the whereabouts of the sacrifice. Abraham assured him that God would provide it, and bound his son and placed him upon the altar. There is no record of resistance or violence, but out of his piety, his filial affections, unmatched respect and obedience, Isaac yielded of his own accord. But when the angel of the Lord stayed Abraham's hand from slaying his son, Abraham looked and saw the sacrificial ram that God had provided.

How typical of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Jesus carried the wooden cross, the object of his physical destruction, to the place of crucifixion, some eighty miles from Nazareth, and willingly yielded his life as a ransom for the souls of man. He was the sacrifice furnished by God, the Father . . . without resistance or violence. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:9. And again, ". . . Lo, I come to do thy will, O God . . . By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . . this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Hebrews 10:9, 10, 12.

Just as Isaac was set free on the third day, so did the Lord Jesus Christ arise from the sepulchre the third day. Jesus foretold this event: "And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again . . ." Matthew 17:23. Paul corroborated the words of Jesus in I Corinthians 15:3, 4, when he said, ". . . Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and . . . was buried, and . . . he arose again the third day according to the scriptures." What greater support can be given, what more sure word of proof can be given, than the Scriptures? They are life! "For if . . . we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Romans 5:10. Through Jesus the Son of Righteousness reached the meridian of splendor and glory and unparalleled rapture!

AS A TYPE OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

The short analogy of Isaac and Rebekah with Christ and the Church is interesting and decidedly impressive, especially when reviewing types and shadows of the Old Testament.

1. Abraham the father was a type of God the Father.
2. Isaac—Abraham's son—the proper seed of promise, was born under peculiar and miraculous circumstances . . . Sarah was past childbearing age.

Jesus—God's Son—the proper Seed of Promise, was also born under peculiar and miraculous circumstances . . . of a virgin.

3. Bride of Isaac was to come from his father's people.
   Bride of Christ taken of the people of God.
4. Rebekah the bride is a type of the Church, the bride.
5. The servant is a type of the Holy Ghost. Well qualified, he loved, respected and enjoyed benefits and luxuries of his father's domain. Dispatched with a message from his master in search of a bride for Isaac the son, gained the favor and blessings of Rebekah's people, and assisted her throughout the journey. (Genesis 24:49-61) The Holy Ghost came from the celestial glories and glamor to find and help prepare a bride for Christ. He serves to acquaint people with the requirements necessary to become the Bride, and with Jesus the Lord. I Corinthians 12:3. He will guide and direct procedures to ennoble the Bride's pursuit. St. John 14:26; 15:26, 27; Luke 12:12.
6. Rebekah dressed herself for the occasion . . . for the bridegroom. The Church must dress herself to meet the Bridegroom . . . Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 6:11-18; Revelation 19:7, 8).
7. On the journey, enroute to meet the bridegroom, Rebekah kept her veil lifted . . . nothing to obstruct her view and mission.
   During her journey here the Church—the Bride of Christ—is endeavoring to fulfill the great commission given by the Lord Himself in Matthew 28:19, 20, fearing lest she fall short in the least of the commandments and instructions left her.
8. When Rebekah met Isaac she covered herself with her veil—an act of unreserved submission . . . her love, her undying affection, and complete devotion were his. She belonged to him! When the Church—the Bride of Christ—has fully prepared herself, and has made herself ready for presentation (Revelation 19:7), all her love, devotion and affection will be on the "things above" where Christ is on the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 6:1; Ephesians 5:27). It requires time for complete subjection.
9. Nothing is said of a hilarious celebration, or even a reception, when Isaac took Rebekah to his mother's tent; if there was much done about it the record is silent. Sarah had been dead about four years perhaps, and Rebekah was a great comfort to her husband at this time.

In contrast the Church—the Bride of Christ—will enjoy the greatest celebration ever accorded mankind. She will "be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Revelation 19:8) The Church will be ready when the trumpet sounds . . . the dead in Christ will rise first, and those who are alive and still remain will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. (I Corinthians 15:51-55; I Thessalonians 4:14-17) Nothing equal to this has ever been reported in the annals of the human race.

Students may prefer other tangents to types and shadows of the Old Testament beside those suggested here or there in this history. They thread the text of Old Testament Scriptures and have played an important and impressive role in man's pursuit and comprehension of godliness. Some have helped to unravel erstwhile difficult passages in certain areas that seemed vague for lack of more detailed explanation. However, some of them may appear to be mere apologues of insignificance and haze, but when understood, seen and properly deciphered they seem to "come alive with imaginative glory" as God moves among His people. Types and shadows are not church doctrines, nor are they meant to be documents in evidence. Some of them seem to be allegorical in nature, but students profit by them, giving thought and study to them as types and shadows.

AS SEEN IN ISAAC'S TIME

The most beautiful and intriguing episode of Rebekah's betrothel was the reception she gave the servant, and her willing acceptance of his clever explanations and betrothal gifts from Abraham. The servant was well pleased, but Rebekah was thrilled. He "ran to meet her" and she "ran to the well for water" which was a chore. So strange, but fifty-one verses deal with the betrothal, and only six with Isaac and his wife.

Rebekah was a beautiful woman, and at Gerar, Isaac told King Abimelech she was his sister, fearing lest the king have him killed if he told him she was his wife. (Genesis 26:7) A custom in many Eastern countries in those days was to involve in the king's harem many beautiful women. Abraham had done the same thing to Abimelech, a predecessor, many years before. Abimelech saw Isaac sporting with his wife (Genesis 26:8, 9), called him in counsel, reproved him and asked him to leave.

Isaac dug two wells and lost them to the herdmen of Gerar, and he re-opened the one at Beer-sheba and they strove not for it. He

made a feast for Abimelech and they covenanted together for peace between them, for Abimelech acknowledged that God was with Isaac. Genesis 26:28.

A PARTIAL REVIEW WITH ESAU

The birth of Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25:25, 26) was a strange event, and Isaac loved Esau but Rebekah loved Jacob. In view of Genesis 25:23, some speculation is justifiable and is to be expected.

The birthright belonged to the proper firstborn (Deuteronomy 21:15, 16) but was obviously transferable in view of this transaction. It carried a double portion of the inheritance (Deuteronomy 21:17). It carried royal succession with dignity (II Chronicles 21:3). It bore honorable reference (Exodus 4:22; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 1:5). It provided authority to administer the government of family or clan, and the exclusive right to conduct God's services for them.

Hungry and famishing, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for pottage, or a morsel of meat, and afterwards despised it. He foresaw no material benefit to be derived from its possession. This was sufficient evidence that he was not spiritual-minded, for had he properly appraised its worth he would rather have perished than dispose of his valuable possession.

By selling his birthright Esau lost the ancestral privileges of the Chosen Family. His unwise decision removed him from the sacred influence of the covenant, and he could not expect to share in its blessings. He invoked the frown of God upon him by the foolish act and definitely alienated himself from the important spiritual position in the primo-geniture.

> ". . . Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright . . . afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Hebrews 12:16, 17. And Malachi 1:2, 3, corroborates this sentiment: ". . . Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste . . ."

In view of the above Scriptures it may seem convenient to prejudice Esau, unless we carefully study Genesis 25:23. Herein lies ample room for conjecture. Referred to as a "profane person" and as being hated suggests one of unlimited evils, yet neither implies that he was an immoral, malicious, murdering sinner above all others. Records show him to be a plain, honest, generous

man, able to control his temper at times and the possessor of a forgiving spirit (Gen. 33:4). But . . . he was in serious trouble with God.

There is no record that Isaac concurred in Esau's sale of his birthright . . . it is doubtful if he had ever heard of it until Esau sought his blessing. It had no concord with the ancestral heritage though evidently permissable at this time. Esau was not spiritually inclined, yet he was never exiled from the family—only from the covenanted progeny.

Because of his foolish act he suffered remorse and grim retrospect. Perhaps his "inheritance trauma" tempted and induced closer association with the people of the land, and in an effort to avenge his loss he took wives of the Hittite women, and soon became enmeshed with the affairs of the people.

When he was forty years old Esau took to wife the two Hittite women (Genesis 26:34, 35). This brought disappointment and grief to both Isaac and Rebekah since it was contrary to the instructions God had given their father Abraham. These two wives are referred to under different names (Genesis 28:9; 36:2). Name variations are not easily accounted for since some people and places are sometimes called by different names . . . we list ten below:

1. Genesis 5:3 Seth or Sheth ..... I Chronicles 1:1
2. Genesis 5:6 Enos or Enosh ..... I Chronicles 1:1
3. Genesis 5:15 Jared or Jered ..... I Chronicles 1:2
4. Genesis 5:18 Enoch or Henoch ..... I Chronicles 1:3
5. Genesis 10:24 Salah or Shelah ..... I Chronicles 1:18
6. Genesis 29:6 Rachel or Rahel ..... Jeremiah 31:15
7. Genesis 36:36 Saul or Shaul ..... I Chronicles 1:48
8. Genesis 11:31 Haran or Charran ..... Acts 7:4
9. Exodus 1:11 Raamses or Rameses ..... Exodus 12:37
10. Numbers 13:16 Jehoshua or Joshua ..... Numbers 14:6

Missing the providences of God Esau seemed destined a loser. Though devoting his prime interests to the accumulation of worldly possessions, he still had a desire to please his parents. So he took to wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, his father's niece (Genesis 28:8, 9). His ingenious move put him and his wife—niece of Isaac's—in as close family relationship as Jacob would be when he married his mother's niece. According to common computation Ishmael had been dead about fourteen years when Esau married his daughter. (5)

5. Adam Clarke's Commentary on Genesis 29:9

A PARTIAL REVIEW OF JACOB

These references and historical sketches may not be the complete exegesis to satisfy tyro and pundit alike, but they will assist in better understanding of Bible directives and narration.

Isaac loved Esau, with his virility, for he was a cunning hunter and a man of the field. Rebekah loved Jacob for he was a plain man and dwelled in tents . . . around his mother most of the time perhaps. (Genesis 25:27, 28)

If Nahor's offspring embraced the monotheism of Abrahamic worship the record seems silent. God's covenant was with Abraham, not with all his brothers and kinsmen. It is suggested that Rebekah followed her own kinsmen in worship until she was able to embrace the worship of the true God, whose covenant was continued through Isaac, her husband. She perhaps sensed the value of the birthright, and might have coerced Jacob into demanding it in exchange for a mess of red pottage. However, this is speculation in exchange for better comprehension.

Mystery surrounds the scene, and poses questions. Why did Jacob have his pottage ready at the opportune time when Esau came from the field faint and famished? Was this a family routine—each feeding himself? Esau was a hunter and probably furnished his father's family with venison and other meat; and did Jacob eat of it without price? Why did Jacob now request the sale of his brother's birthright? Maybe, in spite of suppositions, the only satisfactory answer is silence!

Somewhere, prenatal or otherwise, Jacob manifested a rational understanding of important values. He never stole the birthright . . . he bought it outright. He was a hard bargainer, consenting only to his own ultimate conclusion. His advance revealed persistent aggressiveness. His bold perseverance exemplified unwavering courage that proved conducive to his active progressiveness. He was quick to perceive expediency at the expense of Esau's perfunctory sale of his birthright. He evidenced skillful tactics, courage and arrogancy in his demands. In spite of any moves to condemn Jacob as unjust and unfair the problematic opinions seem insoluble, since God found something in Jacob He could use for His own glory. He found human materials to develop . . . an agent of His upon whom He would bestow unheralded blessings.

It is uncertain just what prompted Jacob to request the sale of the birthright, nor is he to blame for purchasing it though his tactics of approach were strange and skillful. Esau agreed to the

sale. Jacob did not steal it as has been suggested by some people. Apparently Jacob appreciated it more than did Esau, and God foresaw that He had in Jacob a posterity through which He could transmit the issues of the chosen ancestry and the Seed of Promise.

Notwithstanding, some people feel that Jacob, in buying the birthright under the prevailing circumstances, was as guilty as Esau who sold it . . . but it is a personal opinion without any Bible support whatsoever. He doubtless evidenced his right to the name "supplanter" without reparation, and this might have acted as a precedent of events that transpired in his later years. However, to be exhaustive in the study of his ills and woes, and his successes and whereabouts, is prohibitive, except some relative issues.

> ". . . When Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him . . . Now therefore take . . . thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die." (Genesis 27:1, 3, 4).

Rebekah overheard Isaac's conversation with Esau and knew the plan. She was not pragmatic in any sense, but she loved Jacob. She coerced him in deceiving his blind father for the ancestral family blessing. Perhaps she knew all about the sale of the birthright. Jacob exhibited fear of his mother's scheme . . . afraid he would be accursed by the effort, but Rebekah volunteered to share the curse herself. Thus Jacob became a supplanter for the second time. Through deceit and falsehood he stole the blessing that rightfully belonged to the firstborn.

The sequence of this foul play is certainly baffling to those who try to understand how and why God chose to use Jacob, whose conduct was obviously reprehensible. However, fine lines of supposition and reason may be conclusive in assuaging the difficulties. Through the basics of Bible relief and better understanding, and tolerance of some things not yet understood, scholars forbear and acquiesce in efforts to forestall distrust. It is apropos safety! There is an inner man who believes . . . an inner man whose convictions are sustained in spite of philosophical entities.

In Genesis 25:23 it says simply, "the elder shall serve the younger." This was before Esau and Jacob were born. Was this a prophetic destiny for Esau? Was it a prime factor suggesting the permissible will of man to operate at random, or as he was moved

by the Spirit of God? In the above quotation the word "shall" is a strong term, but does not imply predestination in the sense that the two sons were born for this and this alone. It seems evident that in the light of other Scriptures choice is inferred . . . he would have afterwards repented.

God has reservation of will and prerogatives. As man becomes qualified and susceptible to spiritual guidance God dispenses to him the portion of responsibility with which he may be entrusted. Persistence and commitment never dissuade God from carrying out His will through His chosen people . . . and now Jacob was the man! He had obtained the birthright with all its privileges and responsibilities. Now, that the blessing of the covenant was to be transmitted from father to son, through whom the Promised Seed was to come, it was not fitting that Esau receive it. Such a move would have divided and injured the sacredness and influence of the Abrahamic covenant.

A way had to be devised through the agency of man, and Rebekah answered the call with peculiar arrangements for Jacob's family coronation. The prayer of Isaac was real, honest and powerful to bless Jacob who received it by deception. Genesis 27 is filled with glamor and real excitement, and is one of history's most publicized narratives, whether oral or written. It contains an unparalleled episode . . . difficult to see through, but thoroughly dependable. God saw that He could rely on Jacob, especially after his private storm had abated.

When Jacob supplanted Esau and got the blessing, Rebekah was grievously tormented by family trouble. In a burst of fury Esau had declared he would slay Jacob soon as the mourning for his father had passed. Rebekah warned Jacob to flee until Esau's anger had subsided, and she said, ". . . then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?" (Genesis 27:45) Anguish troubled her, and she went to Isaac and complained of the daughters of Heth, that should Jacob take a wife of them what good would her life be. Only Isaac could assuage her troubles.

Isaac charged Jacob to go to Padan-aram (Haran in Mesopotamia) and take a wife of the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother, praying again to bless him with enlightment of his mission, then sent him on his way.

Jacob traveled hard from Beer-sheba to the area of Luz, some forty miles away (Genesis 28:19). Jacob called the place Bethel, for it was the place where he had his renowned dream of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and angels ascending and de-

scending. He thought he was at the House of God, for God had spoken to him to confirm the prayer of Isaac. When he awoke he took the stone he had used for a pillow and set it up for a pillar to mark the place where God had talked with him. This remarkable dream is recorded in Genesis 28. (6)

Jacob finally reached the well at Padan-aram where he met Rachel, and later the father and family. He worked for Laban, and later married both Leah and Rachel (Genesis 29:16-30). Leah gave birth to several sons, but Rachel was barren. There was strife between the wives, though sisters, but Jacob loved Rachel. To be barren was almost unbearable for Rachel, and once she cried out to her husband, "Give me children, or else I die." This statement is still an axiom of evangelistic fervor, today!

Laban was an extremely covetous person and perhaps practiced idolatry (Genesis 31:19, 30-34). Jacob served him faithfully, and his flocks and herds increased surprisingly fast. Laban tried to alter Jacob's departure from Padan-aram and Jacob invoked the respect for the God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac, and they made a covenant against trespassing. They set up a marker or memorial to witness the covenant, and called it Galeed. And Laban and his retinue allowed Jacob to depart.

Jacob had accumulated flocks and herds and a large group of retainers while serving Laban in the Haran area (Genesis 31:41), but there are differences of opinions on the length of time he served Laban. (7)

Enroute from Haran to Isaac's home at Hebron (Genesis 35:27) Jacob was uneasy, afraid and distressed when his messengers returned and told him that his brother Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. His prayer in Genesis 32:9-12 is impressive, honest and sincere as he acknowledges his worthlessness. He arranged gifts of restitution for his brother, and when they had been taken to him, Jacob found himself alone . . . a worthwhile time to be alone! He wrestled with a man all night, wanting assurance, a blessing. The angelic being wanted to go but

6. Tradition says that Jacob's "pillow" or "pillar" stone was finally brought to Jerusalem where it remained for a long time. It was brought to Spain, next to Ireland, thence to Scotland, and finally Edward I had it brought to Westminister (England) and placed beneath the seat on which the King or Queen sits . . . (Clarke's Commentary, Page 177, Volume 1).

7. It is the opinion of some that Jacob served Laban twenty years, caring for his flocks and herds, under risk, bearing the loss himself (Genesis 31:38-40). They feel Jacob served fourteen years for his two wives, and six additional years for his cattle (Genesis 31:41). This may be a point of conjecture, since chronology seems uncertain.

Jacob held on and said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Jacob feared lest Esau destroy him and his whole retinue. Though it had been perhaps forty years since Esau had vowed to slay him, Jacob wondered, without doubt, if his brother still held his grudge. He needed strength and assurance of protection from this man with whom he wrestled. Then all of a sudden Jacob's name was changed to Israel by the man with whom he was wrestling, and who said that Jacob had prevailed and as a prince he would have power with God, and with men.

This changed Jacob! He was no longer the "supplanter" but was Israel . . . the man who had prevailed with God had met God face to face (Genesis 32:30). Jacob was a new man . . . his character, his heart, his life, and his name had all be changed. God had given him a new nature, while he prayed and wrestled with the angelic being at Peniel (Penuel) on the picturesque Jabbok River of Jordon.

Jacob's life and his maneuverings are not covered in detail in this reference; only those thought to be expedient. Readers agree that some of his maneuverings were strange, maybe exclusive, but God used Jacob. Sometimes, God takes those, in whom man sees little hope for good, and transforms them into outstanding leaders and guiding lights for the throng that becomes followers. He has a way of converting people from the error of their wicked ways . . . only God can do it! He changes their whole life—character, morals, the entire outlook—vitalizing and revivifying them by the power of His Spirit, until they are fully able to conform to the commission for which He has called them.

This is exactly what happened to Jacob at Peniel, when he prayed and wrestled with the Angelic Being all night! It was "the Jacob" who left his father's house to escape destruction, and to get a wife, but it was "the Israel" who now was returning to his father's house at Hebron, about forty years later. As Jacob he proved himself adept at handling his own affairs, and now as Israel he was ready to submit and conform to the guidance of the Lord. Opinions of him now differ to those that may have been formed earlier when he deceived his aged father for his brother's blessing . . . God had the way planned to use him for His glory. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart (I Samuel 16:7; II Corinthians 10:7).

Not the Jacob he had vowed to slay, it was now Israel whom Esau met with four hundred men. Doubtless the praying and wrestling all night with the Forces of God left Israel surrounded by a protective force from God, for the Sun of Righteousness

hovers low over the horizon of men to bless those fortunate enough to behold His glory. This was man's first real test of Bible "restitution where possible." With the good graces of God prevalent everywhere, seemingly, Esau, who had suffered ultimate wrong, forgave and forgot and willingly vindicated his brother of evil. This took more than the natural instinct in man; more than any natural qualities one may possess.

Esau's noble respect for his brother exhibited fortitude of character, sincere humility, integrity and penitence of heart and soul . . . the highest of human values that predicated an unparalleled expiation for past angers, fury and quarrels. Forty or more years had come and gone since he had threatened to slay his brother—gone forever now . . . forgotten. Isaac, the father, was still alive!

Genesis 33:4 relates one of history's most thrilling, yet amiable reconcilements: "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept."

What a meeting! What an unmatched paragon of oblivion! Esau accepted the gifts from his brother (Genesis 33:8-11) and complete family amnesty was restored. Esau went to Seir. Jacob stopped over at Succoth, near Peniel—the place of his all-night prayer meeting—thence to Bethel where God repeated His promises to him as the immediate ancestor of the Hebrew people. Near Ephrath (Bethlehem) Benjamin was born, and Rachel, who expired with childbirth, was buried close by. Isaac died at 180 years old and he was buried by Esau and Jacob in the cave at Machpelah.

THE SONS OF JACOB

By Leah	Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah
By Bilhah (Rachel's maid)	Dan and Naphtali
By Zilpah (Leah's maid)	Gad and Asher
By Leah	Issacher and Zebulun
By Rachel	Joseph and Benjamin

(Listed in Genesis 29, 30, 35)

THE PATRIARCHS DESERVE HIGH RESPECT

The Lord Himself actually apprehended the patriarchs. He told Abraham to go to a land He would show him, and Abraham left home to follow God. He believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. The blessing of the Abrahamic covenant was transmitted to Isaac, thence to Jacob. They grasped the bud of

faith and watched it grow and expand like the primeval cedars of Lebanon. They staggered not at the promises of God. They saw simple faith in Him permeate opposition and subdue it.

They saw their dawn of hope transfigured with the Sun of Righteousness, and their faith illuminating other places. In an unmatched challenge they moved steadily toward the great utopia God has promised.

They became the Hebrews, the Israelites, the Jews . . . a chosen people, but a strange people set apart with a special blessing from God. They found themselves hating and being hated . . . sometimes merciless and receiving no mercy . . . divided and dividing . . . slaying and being slain . . . infiltrating most nations of the world. They have sustained unparalleled perseverance in their quest for the boundary of land God promised to their eponymous ancestor, Abraham—the land from the river of Egypt to the great Euphrates River (Genesis 15:18).

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

The twelve sons of Jacob (Israel) became the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel. The family of Jacob was never a closely-knit group by any means. Hatred, jealousy, envy, strife and many strange inconsistencies plagued them from time to time. Some seem to think part of this was a feed-back from Jacob's own exotic living. He loved Joseph best (Genesis 37:3, 4), and this brought down wrath from the other brethren. They hated Joseph, and none of them treated him kindly, unless it was Judah.

When he was seventeen years old Joseph's peculiar dreams stirred more hatred and stife and envy among his brethren. He suffered a stern rebuke from his father (Genesis 37:8-10). The sons of Jacob were watching the flocks that fed at Dothan, near Shechem, when Jacob sent Joseph to visit and check on their welfare. When they saw him they criticized and maligned him and immediately formulated plans to destroy him. They cast him into a pit, and when some merchants came by they sold Joseph to them; and when they reached Egypt the merchants sold him to Potiphar, an officer in Pharaoh's guard (Genesis 37:12-36).

He was soon ranked next to Potiphar in the captain's house. Later, out of filial respect, when he refused to be induced to wrong in his master's home, he suffered rancor and vile aspersions by the wife of Potiphar, and was imprisoned. (Genesis 39) Sometime later Joseph was taken from the dungeon (Genesis 41:14-16) to interpret Pharaoh's dream relative to the oncoming famine. His interpretation was remarkable, and he became prime minister

under Pharaoh when he was thirty years old (Genesis 41:46), and had control of the food supply in Egypt during the severe famine (Genesis 41:37-57). (8)

The famine waxed sore in the land of Canaan, and elsewhere, as the days passed. Two years had slipped by, and still there were five years left of the famine presaged for seven years. Jacob bade his sons return to Egypt for "a little food." Joseph had kept Simeon in Egypt, and Jacob felt that he could not sacrifice Benjamin in addition to his loss. But the sons would not return to Egypt, for fear of what Joseph had said, unless Benjamin went along (Genesis 43:1-15). It was Judah who stood for Benjamin's surety (Genesis 43:8, 9), and Benjamin was allowed to go.

When he saw Benjamin the tender heart of Joseph was greatly touched and he went to his chambers to weep. Joseph requested the brethren to dine with him, and he showed special respect to Benjamin. Joseph knew his brethren, and probably the reflections of the past requested further subjection and discipline; and, following his lengthy and peculiar ruse, Joseph revealed his identity, and sought to exonerate his brothers from all blame of selling him into Egypt.

> "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you: and they came near: and he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God has sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt." (Genesis 45:4-8).

Scholarly opinions may differ as to why Joseph preferred to remain in Egypt as a bond-slave rather than return to Canaan as a free man, but God had spoken in Genesis 15:13, 14, and told Abraham, ". . . Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years . . . and afterward they shall come out with great substance."

Lest they develop a spirit of envy, hatred and strife among

8. **This was probably during the time the Hyksos, or shepherd kings, ruled Egypt until about 1570-1580 B.C. . . . foreign invaders who had to pass through Palestine enroute to Egypt . . . later overthrown by Egyptian dynasty. (Bible History Digest—pages 20, 21)**

themselves Joseph warned his brethren, ". . . See that ye fall not out by the way." (Genesis 45:24). So the sons of Jacob took the Egyptian wagons and other vehicles which Joseph had provided, and went to Hebron for the migration of their father's household.

ISRAEL JOURNEYS TO EGYPT

It was a long trek, perhaps, but Jacob and his retinue left Hebron for Egypt. Jacob stopped at Beer-sheba to offer sacrifices to God. It was a consecrated place. Here God had appeared to his grandfather Abraham (Genesis 21:33), and to his father Isaac (Genesis 26:23, 24). When there was a famine, God had forbidden Isaac to go to Egypt (Genesis 26:1-3). Now that he was heading for Egypt, Jacob needed encouragement and assurance from God, without which it is likely that he might have hesitated to continue his journey. Perhaps he had heard of the prophecy to Abraham, that his seed would go to a strange land and there be afflicted (Genesis 15:13, 14). As Israel, Jacob had become a very consecrated Patriarch, but he desired explicit directives to pursue his journey. So . . . God met with him at Beer-sheba, and (Genesis 46:3, 4) he received comfort and assurance from God:

1. Fear not to go down into Egypt.
2. I will there make of thee a great nation.
3. I will go down with thee into Egypt.
4. I will also surely bring thee up again.
5. Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

This was the comfort and assurance that Jacob needed and required; actually the last meeting of its type he had with God. Whether or not he was fully aware of all the prophetic utterances to his forebears he moved steadily toward the goal—the predicated period when the Promised Seed would come to effect in Jesus Christ.

He never hesitated to journey on to Egypt . . . he fully trusted God to make the way pleasing to the will of the Lord. Goshen, in northeastern Egypt, was designated as the site for their habitation, and this phase of the Abrahamic prophecy was fulfilled (Genesis 46:26-34). Judah was sent ahead to meet Joseph and make arrangements (Genesis 46:28). Israel and his offspring are listed in Genesis 46:26, 27, as seventy souls. These are listed in Genesis 46:9-24, as follows:

1. Jacob and one daughter 2
2. Reuben and sons 5
3. Simeon and sons 7
4. Levi and sons 4

5. Judah, three sons and two grandsons 6
6. Issachar and sons 5
7. Zebulun and sons 4
8. Gad and sons 8
9. Asher, four sons, one daughter, two grandsons 8
10. Dan and son 2
11. Joseph and two sons 3
12. Naphtali and sons 5
13. Benjamin and sons 11

By listing the wives of some of the sons of Israel, it tends to justify the reference in Acts 7:14. Israel was one hundred and thirty years of age when he stood before Pharaoh (Genesis 47:7).

Israel blessed Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's sons, placing Ephraim before Manasseh, contrary to the wishes of their father. They were to share in the inheritance. He blessed Joseph with an extra portion, then called in his other sons, offered a prophetic character analysis, and gave each of them a blessing. He had lived in Egypt seventeen years, and died when he was one hundred and forty-seven years old. According to the prearranged plans, he was taken back to the land of Canaan and buried in the cave of Machpelah.

REVIEWING JUDAH THE FOURTH SON

1. Scholars say the Jews got their name from him.
2. Except for Joseph, more character traits are preserved of him than any of the other sons.
3. He forestalled the slaying of Joseph, and unconsciously helped make arrangement for Joseph to go to Egypt (Genesis 37:26-28).
4. He promised to be surety for his brother Benjamin in Egypt.
5. He was leader and spokesman to Joseph for the group.
6. His tribe reserved significant respect among the other tribes.
7. In entering the Promised Land, Judah numbered 76,500 (Numbers 26:22).
8. When the kingdom was disrupted, Judah stood with David; Benjamin followed shortly thereafter.
9. Israel's blessing to Judah was impressive. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; AND UNTO HIM SHALL THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE BE." (Genesis 49:10). Simply meaning that Judah was to be an influential and distinct tribe until the Messiah, the Seed of Promise, came. Jesus the Christ, first prophesied of in

Genesis 3:15, came to fulfill those promises made by God to the chosen ancestors. Judah's tribe became the real progenitors of the line of Boaz, Jesse, and David through which lineage came Jesus Christ (Luke 3:33 and Matthew 1:2).

Through Jesus the Christ, the Seed of Promise, terminated the ancient lineage and primo-genitors of the covenanted ancestry . . . His record is authentic. It is said that the Jews are few, if any left, who can trace their ancestry to David, since all records were destroyed when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. It is significant to know that the Book of Hebrews emphasized the brilliant light of salvation to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews . . . Jesus tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9).

Partial Review of Period of Patriarchs

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1. Summary of Important Events 78

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

Since this section of our study has dealt with the Chosen Family—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—it seems necessary to offer a summary of some of the most important events that occurred in their immediate tenure of office and prophecy, though everything is not included.

1. Abram's wife was named Sarai . . . Genesis 11:31.
2. Abram married his half-sister . . . Genesis 20:12.
3. Abram was called by God while living in Ur of the Chaldees . . . Genesis 12:1; Acts 7:2-4.
4. Abram obeyed the call of God to leave home, kindred and his people . . . Genesis 12:4, 5.
5. In Egypt Abram troubled Pharaoh over Sarai and was deported . . . Genesis 12:14-20.
6. Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran . . . Genesis 12:4.
7. An heir was promised Abram . . . Genesis 15:4.
8. Abram was in Canaan ten years when he took Sarai's Egyptian maid, Hagar, to wife . . . Genesis 16:3.
9. Hagar was given prophecy of her son Ishmael . . . Genesis 16:11, 12.
10. Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born . . . Genesis 16:16.
11. Abram was 99 and Sarai 90 years of age when God promised them the son Isaac . . . Genesis 17:1, 17. It is evident that Abram's birthday of 99 was nearing its close—that his 100th birthday was near at hand, according to verse 17.
12. Abram was commanded to be perfect . . . Genesis 17:1.
13. Abram's name was changed to Abraham . . . Genesis 17:5.
14. Covenant of circumcision first instituted . . . Genesis 17:11-14.
15. Sarai's name changed to Sarah . . . Genesis 17:15.
16. God named Isaac the seed of promise . . . Genesis 17:16-19.
17. Circumcision first observed, or practiced . . . Genesis 17:23-27.
18. Abraham entertained the three men from God . . . Genesis 18.
19. Abraham troubled Abimelech over Sarah . . . Genesis 20.
20. Abraham referred to as a prophet . . . Genesis 20:7.

21. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born . . . Genesis 21:5.
22. Abraham was asked to offer Isaac as a burnt-offering . . . Genesis 22:2.
23. Abraham and Isaac journeyed to land of Moriah (three days) . . . Genesis 22:3, 4.
24. God provided sacrifice for Abraham and Isaac . . . Genesis 22:13.
25. Abraham's family were friends to sons of Heth . . . Genesis 23:5, 6.
26. Sarah died at Hebron when she was 127 years old . . . Genesis 23:1.
27. Abraham bought Machpelah at Mamre for 400 shekels of silver, for a burial ground . . . Genesis 23:16.
28. Those buried in cave at Machpelah . . . Genesis 49:31; 50:13.
29. Isaac's bride to be from Abraham's kinsmen . . . Genesis 24:3, 4.
30. Isaac not to return to home of Abraham's kinsmen . . . Genesis 24:6, 7.
31. Rebekah was daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son . . . Genesis 24:15.
32. Abraham married Keturah and had six sons . . . Genesis 25:1, 2.
33. Abraham gave all inheritance to Isaac . . . Genesis 25:5.
34. Abraham sent away offspring of concubines, with gifts . . . Genesis 25:6.
35. Abraham died at 175 years of age, and his sons, Ishmael and Isaac buried him . . . Genesis 25:7-9.
36. Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah . . . Genesis 26:20.
37. Ishmael died when he was 137 years old . . . Genesis 25:17.
38. Isaac was 60 years old when Esau and Jacob were born . . . Genesis 25:26.
39. Jacob bought Esau's birthright . . . Genesis 25:30-34.
40. Abimelech troubled over Rebekah, Isaac's wife . . . Genesis 26:7-16.
41. Through deception Jacob got Esau's blessing . . . Genesis 27:18-30.
42. Jacob flees from the anger of Esau . . . Genesis 27:41-45.
43. Jacob's wife to be of daughters of Laban . . . Genesis 28:1, 2.
44. Jacob's renowned dream . . . Genesis 28:10-22.
45. Jacob serves Laban, gets Leah for wife . . . Genesis 29:20-25.
46. Jacob serves additional seven years for Rachel . . . Genesis

29:30.

47. Rachel's extreme agony . . . Genesis 30:1.

48. Rachel stole her father's gods (inheritance symbols) . . . Genesis 31:30-32.

49. Jacob's name was changed . . . Genesis 32:28; 35:10.

50. Jacob's twelve sons . . . Geneses 35:23-26.

51. Isaac died when he was 180 years old . . . Genesis 35:28. He was buried by his sons, Jacob and Esau . . . Genesis 35:29.

52. Joseph was 17 years old when sold into Egypt . . . Genesis 37:2-28.

53. Joseph imprisoned through deceit of Potiphar's wife . . . Genesis 39:14-20.

54. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream . . . Genesis 41:17-32.

55. When 30 years old Joseph appointed overseer by Pharaoh . . . Genesis 41:39-46.

56. Joseph admits that God sent him to Egypt . . . Genesis 45:5-8.

57. Jacob migrates to Egypt . . . Genesis 46:1-7.

58. Number in Jacob's family migrating to Egypt—66. Including Jacob and Joseph and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh—70 . . . Genesis 46:26-27.

59. Jacob lived in Egypt 17 years . . . Genesis 47:28.

60. Sons of Joseph were blessed by Jacob . . . Genesis 48:13-19.

61. Jacob died at 147 years of age . . . Genesis 47:28; 49:33.

62. Jacob was buried by his sons at Machpelah . . . Genesis 50:13.

63. Penitent spirit manifested and mercy shown by brethren . . . Genesis 50:17-21.

64. Joseph took oath of his brethren to take his bones from hence . . . Genesis 50:24, 25.

65. Joseph died at 110 years of age . . . Genesis 50:26.

66. Joseph's bones were removed from Egypt by Moses . . . Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32.

67. It may be well to check that the history of Esau seems to end with Genesis 36:43.

God repeated His promises to Abraham ten times—Genesis 12:1-3; 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:5; 15:13-16; 15:18; 17:1-16; (18:18) 21:12; 22:17, 18; 24:7. The promises were repeated to Isaac at least two times—Genesis 26:3, 4; 26:24; and to Jacob at least three times—Genesis 28:13-15; 35:11, 12; 46:3, 4. For multitude he compared Abraham's seed to "the dust of the earth" (Genesis 13:14-17), to the "stars of the heavens" (Genesis 15:5), and to "the sand of the seashore" (Genesis 22:17).

Reflecting Upon Miracles Wrought During the Exodus

6

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MIRACLES WROUGHT DURING THE EXODUS, AND OTHER

This is not intended to be a narrative of the Exodus. Nor is it intended to detail the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the Wilderness and their final occupancy of the promised land. It is not a treatise dealing with the period of the Judges in Israel, their kings and rulers and the miracles and happenings of their particular eras. Nor is it an attempt made to indulge the rhetoric of the suspense and thrills, the discouragements, disasters and destruction sustained with God's enactments of mercy and judgment. The 400 years of Biblical silence from Malachi to the New Testament are best known with the study of contemporary history . . . treated elsewhere in this history.

However, a short reference to the Exodus may help to correct certain assumptions, one of which is dealing with the years of oppression of God's people. Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6 mention 400 years, while Exodus 12:40 and Galatians 3:17 specifically state 430 years which view is commonly accepted. Most scholars believe that the sojourn began when Abraham was called by God to go to a land He would show him, and the Patriarch and his descendants underwent oppression all along until they left Egypt.

God visited His people as He had promised (Genesis 15:14; Exodus 6:6, 7). God chose Moses to lead His people out of Egypt (Exodus 3). Moses was 80 and Aaron 83 years old when they stood before Pharaoh to plead for the release of the Children of Israel (Exodus 7:7). God allowed judgments by plagues to come upon Pharaoh and the people of Egypt, and the last one—death of the first born—came the night the first Passover was instituted by which He passed over the homes of the Israelites and their families (Exodus 12:29-33).

When the Children of Israel left the Land of Goshen, near Rameses, via Succoth and the Red Sea they were well organized and prepared for the Exodus. As to the exact number leaving Egypt the Scripture seems silent, save it states "six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children" Exodus 12:37. Perhaps those males not yet 20 years old may have been classed as children, or in the number with the children. Of course, the men did

not leave their wives and women behind in Egypt. The Bible says elsewhere (about 13 months later) there were 603,550 men from 20 years old upward (Exodus 38:26; Numbers 1:45-49). This number did not include the Levites, nor the women and children. Neither did it include the mixed multitude that followed along with the Israelites, but were not Israelites, and who traveled in the Exodus, perhaps to see more manifestations of the miraculous power of God among His chosen people. Opinions differ on a calculated figure. Peloubet's Bible Dictionary seems to imply there were about 1,000,000; Matthew Henry suggests nearly 2,000,000, but Adam Clark's Commentary alludes to the probability there were about 3,263,000 in the number. The Bible lists the men of fighting age principally.

There are different theories advanced concerning the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites, and some of them may appear reasonable to those who are skeptical of the miraculous movements of God. Some seem to feel the Israelites had the convenience of marshlands and the low tide of the Red Sea neck where the crossing took place. Others give credit to the change of the moon, and since the waters were low the children of Israel waded across and took care of themselves and their flocks and herds and cattle. Assumptions credible to convenience seem reasonable to some people, and it may be expected. Yet, people should be just as willing to accept the Biblical narrative as they would the opinions of those who devise other theories to oppose this miracle of God. The Biblical narrative is simple and plain.

> "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." Exodus 14:21, 22. (Read Exodus 14:24-31)

The Bible states emphatically ". . . and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." This gives the moon no place in this miracle. If the waters were low, or shallow, they had to be divided so that the dry land would appear, which assertion discredits other man-made theories that hesitate to recognize the miracle.

Hundreds of years later the Psalmist recognized the omnipotence of God by declaring, "He turned the sea into dry land . . ." Psalm 66:6. This is supported again by Psalm 106:9 and Exodus 15:8. The miracles of God are not measured by the philosophies of man!

When Joshua and the host of Israel started to cross the Jordan River near Jericho, the priests put their feet into the waters and they parted asunder. Probably the Jordan River was overflowing right at the time, but such could never obstruct the power and the presence of God. The priests stood upon dry ground right in the midst of the river, and the Israelites went across on dry ground (Joshua 3:15-17). There were about 50 fords, but Joshua never used them it seems.

Just prior to the "chariots of fire" experience of Elijah, he smote the Jordan River with his mantle and the waters separated for him and Elisha to cross (II Kings 2:8). Elisha took the mantle of Elijah, smote the waters of the Jordan and they separated for him (II Kings 2:14).

Here are four direct references where God moved to separate or part the waters for men who needed God's help. Regardless of assumptions or theories, and the variety of opinions relative to this, it seems very logical that students and scholars would desire to accept the Biblical accounts of these miracles without reservation. A ferry-boat is even referred to during the time David was on his way back to Jerusalem after Absalom was defeated (II Samuel 19:18). Why not give praise to God? Render to Caesar the things that belong to him, and to God those things that belong to God. These are just bare thumbnail sketches of some miracles.

The Israelites met opposition and had to fight hard for possession of the land promised them. Some of them seemed to fatigue from the continuous war and struggle and apparently forgot the admonitions, the warnings, as well as the promises of God (Deuteronomy 20:16-18). Instead of subduing them as God had instructed they sought to live in coexistence with the native people. Their intermingling and social aspects of life, along with the constant exposure to damaging idol worship, proved too much for the Israelites. The Scriptures indicate these things were a "thorn in the flesh" to God's people who had been forewarned of the evils. This atmosphere provided leeway for religious deception without cogitation, and plagued the chosen people of God much of the time during their invasion and occupancy of their promised land.

Historical Flashes From Malachi to the New Testament

7

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WHY THIS CHAPTER OF HISTORY?

The Bible is silent for nearly four hundred years, from Malachi to the New Testament era. However, the land of Palestine, and her Jewish inhabitants and others, lived on in the annals of contemporary history. Temple worship had been revived, and they struggled for independence, and for privileges of religious liberty.

It was the "land of promise" God gave to Abraham centuries before as an inheritance. God promised to bless and make of them a great nation if they walked in His counsel and obeyed His voice. He further said, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:3. The Jews experienced many troubles, curses and losses through their disobedience, but regardless of how much they were punished, persecuted, abused, mistreated, and as a people nearly destroyed at times, their homeland as their inheritance could not be denied them.

Nations with ruthless leaders, tyrants and despots—ungodly people—have sought time and again to completely extirpate the Jews, and even by such brutal murderings and non-expiable sins and maltreatments as were seen during the World War II period, but the ambitious and courageous people "bounced back" and established in the homeland God had given them the nation of Israel in 1948. Their formidable force and tactics spoke for themselves in a recent five-day war (June 5-10, 1967) with the Arabs.

We have therefore scanned about four hundred years of contemporary history of these silent Biblical years, in an effort to trace world events that shaped up things for the advent of the real Seed of Promise—Jesus Christ, and man's Redeemer, who was to come through Abraham.

SHORT SKETCH OF INTERVENING HISTORY

About 599 B.C., near the turn of the century, the weeping prophet, Jeremiah, presaged the final overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem, and the exile of the Kingdom of Judah to Babylon of the Chaldeans. He had warned the kingdom of the impending fate,

and prophesied boldly against the pollution of the temple worship which had apparently fallen to a low ebb of religious influence, recognition and worship. Many of Judah's kings had followed the trend to do evil in the sight of the Lord, and the shepherds of God's flocks had led them astray (Jeremiah 23:1, 2). The prophet declared they would be captives in Babylon seventy years (Jeremiah 29:4-10), but he assured them they would return to Jerusalem after the seventy years had expired (Jeremiah 29:10-14).

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded and destroyed Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah 587-586 B.C., and carried into captivity the best and most learned, ambitious and proficient of the citizens (II Kings 24th, 25th chapters, and II Chronicles 36th chapter). Before razing the temple of God he stripped it of all the vessels of gold and silver, and the pillars, chapiters and articles of brass (I Kings chapter 7; II Kings chapter 25), and took them to Babylon. It was the most terrible disaster yet suffered by the Jewish people . . . vengeance wreaked upon a "kingdom that forgot God." It is certainly easy to see the ruin, the devastation and misery to which the Kingdom of Judah had been reduced because of their unmatched ingratitude to God, and their numberless backslidings and unreasonable rebellions.

The Assyrians had subdued and carried into captivity the Kingdom of Israel (Northern Kingdom of the ten tribes) in 722-721 B.C. and from chief sources of history these Jewish people perhaps amalgamated with the heathen nations, and disappeared in the blood-stream of the Gentiles—now indistinguishable it appears, though some people in various countries claim identity.

But the impending fate of the Kingdom of Judah—keepers of the House of God—was not so harsh and intensely drastic as was the Kingdom of Israel, though subdued to heathen influences. The exile in Babylon ended forever the Kingdom of Judah that had been standing about 387 years since the death of King Solomon, and 134-133 years since the Assyrians carried the Kingdom of Israel into captivity. For Judah, the period was extremely devastating at the time, and seriously demoralizing but for the encouraging words of the prophet (Jeremiah chapter 30), that left hope for their return to Palestine where they were to be enlarged, and blessed.

During the seventy years of captivity God used four men to manifest His omnipresence . . . Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Ashpenaz, prince of the eunuchs in the house of King Nebuchadnezzar gave each of them a Chaldean name: Daniel was Belteshazzar, Hananiah was Shadrach, Mishael was Meshach and Azariah was Abednego (Daniel 1:6, 7). Rather than take a chance of polluting themselves and their faith by partaking of the meats, the wines and delicacies from the king's table they chose pulse and water. Pulse was vegetables such as lentils, peas, and seeds of grain such as wheat, rye and barley, etc.

God used these men, and their thrilling and unparalleled exploits emblazoned their names on the pages of the Holy Writ as well as on the sacred marquee of every "blood-bought" soul today. Their unfaltering faith and decisions stimulate pulpits and pews in all Christendom.

NOTE: During his first year's reign as king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem. It was in the third year's reign of Judah's king Jehoiakim and Daniel was among the very first to be exiled to Babylon, prior to other invasions of their land and the final destruction of Jerusalem some years later. (1) It seems logical to check the Bible records on II Kings, 24th and 25th chapters. Daniel lived to see the great kingdom of Babylon in the heights of her glory and splendor and preeminence . . . saw her great kings plunge into the depths of unreasonable immorality . . . and finally witnessed the fall of the great Kingdom to the Medes and Persians, following the "handwriting on the wall of the palace."

God moved upon Cyrus, king of the mighty Persian empire, and he issued a proclamation to build again the "House of the Lord" (temple) at Jerusalem (II Chronicles 36:21-23; Ezra 1:1-3). About seven months later when the children of the captivity were returning home they set up their huts and tents and erected an altar of sacrifice and God came down among them and they shouted and wept for joy.

But when Zerubbabel and those in charge of the construction denied their adversaries—the Samaritans and other people of mingled origin—the right to participate in the building of the temple the adversaries hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose. They even petitioned the king, Artaxerxes, by letter to stop the Jews from finishing the building, which the king did until the second year of the reign of Darius (Ezra 4:17-24).

Then came Haggai and Zechariah the prophets to encourage the resumption of the work and Zerubbabel and his co-workers

1. Matthew Henry's Commentary says about nineteen years later. (Page 1237) Others seem to think differently it seems, though it was several years later, following the first invasion.

proceeded to erect the temple of God. Governor Tatnai and others wrote a letter to King Darius, soliciting his search for the decree that Cyrus, king of Persia, had made years before. The King found Cyrus' decree, then made a decree himself authorizing the hurried construction of the House of the Lord, and that no one attempt to obstruct its progress. So, the temple was completed, and the worship of God and sacrificial offerings were restored for the benefit of the people as proposed.

GREAT THINKERS AND PHILOSOPHERS

While the children of the captivity busied themselves with the tasks assigned them by God, a short distance across the northeastern loop of the Mediterranean Sea other events were developing. City-Empires such as Thebes, Sparta, Athens and others became stronger and stronger in the military aspect, waging wars, winning and losing by the thousands. The whole area seemed like a fuming volcano . . . ready to explode any moment. Rome was emerging, and Greece found herself in the limelight of an advancing civilization and enterprising commerce. But, regardless of the prevalent uncertainties great men found time to think, to philosophize and teach . . . the Greeks being most famous of the era. Let us look at some of these great men and their contributions, digressing only for a few moments.

SOCRATES of Athens (469-399 B.C.), eminent thinker and philosopher, is said to "have brought philosophy from the heavens and introduced it to the homes of men." Historians say that he was the greatest moral teacher of pagan antiquity, and taught a pure system of morals that was surpassed only by the precepts of the Great Teacher, Jesus Christ. Informative sources tell us that he believed in the immortality of the soul, and in the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Such tenets conflicted with the pagan god worship, and an angry citizen-court of over five hundred fellow-citizens tried him for "introducing new divinities of his own . . . and not worshipping the gods the city worshipped . . . and for corrupting the youth" and passed the death sentence upon him. Sometime later he calmly drank the cup of poison.

He was a great educator. In spite of his digressive tendencies at times he seemed to have the firmest hold of all upon the affections of mankind, and he left behind him allusions of godly memory and influence among the warmongers of his day.

PLATO (427-347 B.C.) also of Athens, gave up the prospects of a brilliant career in the area of Greek affairs and politics when he

came under the influence of Socrates, and became his pupil. He gave extensive study to philosophy. Upon the death of Socrates he resorted to voluntary exile, where he gained much experience and extensive knowledge. He later returned to Athens to open a school of philosophy, and to labor to complete the works that bear his name. History tells us that he believed in a future life, but to what extent is an assumption only. Yet some of his precepts approached the teachings of Christianity it seems, for he said, "We ought to become like God, as far as this is possible; and to become like Him is to become holy and just and wise." Surpassing his great teacher Socrates in the grasp of intellect, Plato's doctrines embraced in writing much of what his master tutor taught by word of mouth, for Socrates never wrote his philosophies. Plato's versions of life have had profound influence upon the schools of thought and philosophy since his time. In the above quotation he suggests an undertone of godliness about which the militant rulers of his day should study. The minds of men and women needed a renaissance, and to explain further would seem redundant at this time.

ARISTOTLE (384-322 B.C.) was born at Stagira, a city of Macedonia. He studied for twenty years in the school of Plato. His mastery of the intellect was nearly unparalleled, exceeding that of his great teacher. It has been said that he was "the master of those who know." For centuries the schools of philosophy and learning of such flourishing cities as Alexandria, Constantinople, Athens and Rome studied and copied him whose fertile intellect produced unmatched works of morals, logic, wisdom, rhetoric, poetry, physics and other studies that deal with man's intellect. He was a great lover of books and manuscripts, and is credited with being among the first, if not the very first person to possess a great library of its kind in that era. Many of his lectures on philosophy and other intellectual proposals were given while walking beneath the trees and in the gardens of Athens.

In that epoch some human endeavors, exploits and achievements certainly seemed indefeasible in the upsurge of scholarly grandeur, and is to be expected. Man developed his truer sense of perception and direction some seemed to think, and knowledge mushroomed—some of it good, some of it bad . . . bad especially if it warred against God and His work. Philip II, king of Macedon, engaged Aristotle as preceptor of his son Alexander, whose influence and exploits were destined to effect human history in the Holy Lands and other areas. (2)

2. General History, by Myers . . . Pages 146, 182-185.

A short profile has been given of some of the philosophers and educators of that era; their teachings and doctrines have contributed much to knowledge, reason and understanding to us.

Greece, like most of that part of the world, was steeped in idolatry and preferred not to have their culture permeated and changed. Other men not mentioned, did their share in the endeavors and tasks assigned civilization's progression . . . and the famous School of Rhodes has never been forgotten; classical learning was at an exalted peak. Nevertheless, all the great exploits of philosophy, of learning, of art and sculpture . . . the Golden Age of Greek literature included . . . could never parallel the awakening revival of godliness that stirred the hearts of the Jews who had returned from captivity in Babylon. It was a revival that called a whole nation back to her knees for prayer, worship and sacrifice to God. No people have suffered more abject poverty, have undergone such berated extremes of acrimony and acerbity, downright browbeatings and maltreatment, than did these Jews of the Exodus from Babylon. The revenges of history can do them no violence by sacrifice. They only desired to build again the House of God, and return to Him, for the kings of Persia had provided for their return because of the miraculous workings of God among them.

Many think the indigenous Oriental cultures needed infusion by other progressive cultures emerging to world attention, but they readily admit that any unwise overtures could imperil either or both. Likewise, an invasion of the Jewish religion and culture, at the time, would prove injurious, since the Jews were a separate people as designated by God Himself (Genesis 12:1-3; 18:18-20; 22:15-18). Their uppermost thoughts were of the promises of God . . . their ritualistic practices and observances strange indeed to many others. Any fusion of intellectual godliness with the miracle-working godliness of the Jewish religion could be disastrous to the very cause of the Jewish exodus from Babylon. They were taught to trust in God, and His miracle-working power convinced them, more than once, to place their faith in Him . . . God of the universe.

Unfortunately, some eminent educators, adrift from the sphere of godliness, have attempted to subjugate miracle-working godliness and supplant it with intellectual sublimity. What a disastrous condescension! The wise laborer subjects achievements and intellectual aggrandizements to a more effective service for God.

It is hoped the reader will indulge our short digression from the religious to the civic appeals in order to better understand the course so carefully charted for motivation and preparation. Becoming acquainted with some of the powers in command in the days of Daniel and other prophets of God will help all of us to see things more realistically, and associate them with the difficult era.

ALEXANDER, AND THE HOLY LANDS

The Jewish community, established after their return from captivity, was subject to the political demands of the kingdom of Persia until 332 B.C. when Alexander the Great, of Macedon (Macedonia), invaded Palestine and wrested it from the Persian supremacy. He was a military genius, fearless, bold and enterprising, and was never accused of seeking the postern to civilization. The effects of his conquests were irremeable, and his empire stretched from the Ionian Sea (the sea between Greece and southern Italy) to the Indus River of India.

> Alexander was the son of Philip II, also a military genius of Macedon, who was assassinated in Greece while in the process of securing aid for an expedition in the conquest of the Persian Empire. At twenty years of age Alexander ascended his father's throne. Among his many military achievements, the siege and reduction of Tyre ranks uppermost in history.

Alexander's far-reaching consequences left a remarkable impress on the civilizations he conquered.

1. It caused to cease the long and frightening struggle between Persia and Greece, and spread the Hellenic culture, language and civilization over the Western part of Asia and into Egypt and parts of Northern Africa.

2. It obliterated the distinction between barbarian and Greek, and the understanding and sympathies of peoples, hitherto narrow and somewhat local, were widened with tolerance. This greatly helped to open up the way for the important preparation for the reception of the cosmopolitan gospel of Christianity that was soon to break forth in Palestine.

3. It facilitated further preparation for a more rapid appeal and spread of Christianity that was soon to change the course of things, by furnishing a universal language and cultural concord that satisfied the Greeks and other Gentiles as well as many of the Jews, and enabled them to communicate more fluently in and out of commercial transactions. Though the Jews clung tenaciously to

their temple worship and religious segregation their love and respect for the divine laws and ordinances of God held in high esteem the precious ordinance given them of the Lord. They preferred to be the exclusive group they were, apportioned this lot by the Lord and His precepts, until He saw fit to make a change.

However, it must be remembered that rulers in the days of antiquity were susceptible to vanity that is often the result of accumulated wealth and excesses of its indulgence. Alexander's conquests had evil and far-reaching effects that shadowed his Hellenic endowments. The effeminate luxuries and vices of the Oriental countries and nations, along with the acquisition of the enormous wealth of the Persian Empire*** would eventually affect and injure Hellenic life and culture, and seriously demoralize many of the advocates. Eventually, such things would corrupt Greece, who in turn would help to corrupt Rome, and the civilization and culture of classical antiquity would be seriously undermined.

***When Alexander made his triumphant entry into Babylon he was met by most of the inhabitants, who welcomed him. He was presented an enormous gift. At Susa he took 40,000 talents of gold and silver bullion and 9,000 in gold darics (worth about $5.00 each). At Persepolis he took 120,000 talents, worth perhaps between $90 and $100 Million dollars. (3)

The Hellenic era began with Alexander the Great, though he himself never hellenized the conquered peoples. Yet, it happened because of him. Following his death at Babylon, in 323 B.C., at the age of thirty-three, Alexander's empire was divided between his four ablest generals, the Diadochi, who had no scruples about getting rid of his whole family—a half-brother, his mother Olympia, his widow Roxana, and his posthumous son—by murder. The empire eventually narrowed down to three divisions, and finally to two with which this sketch is concerned at the time—the kingdom of the Ptolemies of Egypt, 323-198 B.C., and the kingdom of the Seleucids of Syria, 198-143 B.C.

Not only was Alexander a world conqueror, but he projected plans to adorn civilization with Greek philosophy, language, literature and art . . . intending to Hellenize the known world. His desire was to also found a model city in every country he conquered. Hence the model city of Alexandria, in Egypt. His library

3. Smaller History of Greece, By William Smith L.L.D. (1887) Published by Harper and Brothers, Franklin Square, New York.

there is supposed to have contained half a million volumes, inspired perhaps by his tutor Aristotle.

Alexander was very reasonable with and considerate of the Jews, and many settled in the new city of Alexandria, because of the freedom allowed them. The Jews of the Diaspora (those living outside of the Holy Lands) accepted Hellenism quicker than did the Palestinian Jews, though some actually assimilated it without being aware of the change. It was a convenience to many of the Jewish people who had learned Greek in maritime and other transactions, though the larger part of the Palestinian Jews spoke, or retained, the vernacular Aramaic. However, the Holy Scriptures read in the temple were in the Hebrew language, and seldom understood by the common worshipper.

> Alexander planned to Hellenize the world he had conquered. He chose Babylon as his capital and seat of government, after stripping the kingdom and palace of her silver and gold. He desired a strong union of Asia and Europe, blending the people by colonies, and even transplanting trees and floras from one continent to another. He sought the formation of one great family by common laws, customs and language. He encouraged intermarriage to blend the races and people, he, himself marrying the daughter of Darius III. He gave expensive gifts to ten thousand of his soldiers who married Asiatic wives. But in the midst of his gigantic enterprise of Hellenic culture and achievement he was seized of a mysterious fever, probably resulting from his foolish excesses, and died 323 B.C., at Babylon.

PALESTINE, AND THE PTOLEMIES

Ptolemy I entered Jerusalem about 320 B.C., while still a general, captured the city and began the dynasty of the Ptolemies, thus subjecting Palestine to their rule. Both he and his son, Ptolemy II Philadelphus worked feverishly to make their captial city of Alexandria the real nursery of Hellenic culture and education. Greek was somewhat of a universal language at this time and for years to come. They strove to make Alexandria attractive, and it became a haven for immigrants, and especially for those Jews who loved the change, and the prodigious advancements of the human mind and the spirit. While it was difficult to induce the "old-line" Jews to embrace parts of Hellenism, it was different with those of the Diaspora, or Dispersion, who adapted quickly to the new change and enterprising venture. These had been cradled in the crucibles of Egyptian cultural designs and native life though they had

retained their religious laws and precepts, and clung firmly to their synagogue rituals and worship.

> For a few years following the capture of Palestine by Ptolemy I historians find it difficult to document accurate chronology, since rules changed with the short change of governments, because of skirmishes and battles for the area. To attempt to pinpoint accuracy is useless. It reminds one of a punting dual on a football field. Efforts to recover political fumbles are futile.

History reveals the established fact that through prophetic utterances and the providences of God strange things happen that baffle the human mind . . . things that make him to know he cannot always, through human intelligence, human perception and strategy reason out the designs, the purposes and movements of God. To attempt it is foolish! God has His own prerogatives, His own ways of doing things; man learns to submit.

> Some movements pose questions at times, especially to those unfamiliar with Scriptural prophecies. Why did the people of God have their homeland invaded and overrun by hordes of heathen and others? Why was the moral fiber of God's people tempted by the flourishing idolatry of the native inhabitants? Rather puzzling to some! But who did the sin . . . man or God? Why attempt to blame God for the sins involved? The wages of sin are terrible . . . yet in spite of them God's sole purpose is the redemption of fallen man, and the preservation of his soul.

Historical focus is upon the land of Palestine. Much of it was a delightsome land "flowing with milk and honey" and fruits of different kinds, and vegetable and animal life flourished . . . but quite an area was wasteland and desert. While Egypt seemed a veritable vegetable garden the sovereign state of the Ptolemies found time to try to change the theocratic government of the Jews, seeking fusion of their Hellenic culture and learning with the cultural and educational approaches of the Jews. Many reasons may be suggested for such endeavors, and a myriad of answers given perhaps, but a glance at a paraphrased prophetical utterance may be amply suggestive. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem . . ." Genesis 9:27. The Semites were descendants of Shem . . . Hamites were descendants of Ham . . . and the descendants of Japheth were Aryans, according to their location, and among them were the Kittim (Greeks) mentioned in Genesis 10:4; I Chronicles 1:7. The word Kittim itself included a wide area of the Mediterranean Sea Coastal countries, as well as the islands . . . Greece and Macedonia included. The Ptolemies were here because of the conquests of

Alexander of "Kittim."

> The words Chittim and Kittim have been used interchangeably in the Scriptures at times, as have other words. Chittim is mentioned in Numbers 24:24; Isaiah 23:1, 12; Jeremiah 2:10; Ezekiel 27:6; Daniel 11:30; and may refer to the Island of Cyprus, but this western area was also referred to as Kittim—any part of it. I Maccabees 1:1 (a book of the Apocrypha) says: "And it happened, after that Alexander, son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out of the land of Chettiim, had smitten Darius king of the Persians and Medes, that he reigned in his stead, the first over Greece." But history tells us that Alexander was of Macedon; therefore Macedonia was evidently included in the land of Chittim.

The Ptolemaic rulers strongly advocated and propagated the Hellenic culture, promoting it throughout the kingdom, but showed some tolerance of the Jewish religion, livelihoods, customs and practices so long as they paid tribute and taxes regularly. They desired to get along with the Jews, though initiating light mistreatment and persecution until actual association and experience convinced them of their need of these enterprising, ambitious subjects. Any drastic persecution was an exception rather than a rule. The Jewish population was an important segment of the Ptolemaic kingdom, and was to be treated with respect, since it was the second time the Jews had come under the control of Egypt.

To the elderly Jews the indigenous precepts of the sacred laws and practices of the Holy Scriptures had become a part of their innate religious culture, pursuit in life and their stringent educational approaches. They embraced these in sacred, almost divine, appreciation, and clung tenaciously to them in an exclusive eagerness. Temple worship and certain administrations sought to retain the original status quo of temple worship and influence, though it seemed difficult to attract the attention, the respect, the desires and patronage of an upcoming ebullient generation that did not know the Hebrew language, and who no longer considered it the mother tongue. Most of the Jews in Palestine spoke the vernacular Aramaic, and they could not understand the sacred texts in worship unless they were translated or interpreted. This had been true when they returned from captivity in Babylon (Nehemiah 8:2-8). Most of the Jews of the Dispersion, including Egypt, spoke Greek, since it was the international language of commerce and learning.

As a result there developed a challenge commensurate to the needs of the people if the Jewish religion was to be practiced by

the Jews themselves. Since they were scattered all over the then-known world, and since Greek was the international language of the people, principally, the Holy Scriptures were translated into the Greek language, beginning about 285 B.C., or later. This was during the reign of Ptolemy I Philadelphus. Legend says it was translated by 70-72 scholars, and was called the "Septuagint," and like the Hebrew Scriptures it is still extant today.

> This was a divine gift of God's providence for it brought to the world the precious Word of God—the sacred Scriptures that had been known only by the select few, of Hebrew tongue, in the sacred portals of the temple and synagogues. This ultimately helped, in a measure, to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah, though many were strangely unawares. It gave the common people a translation of the Scriptures they could understand, and read themselves . . . breaking down the language barrier.

Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-205 B.C.) was to a last degree sensual, effeminate, selfish and debased . . . the Ptolemaic line had degenerated alarmingly. Daniel 11:10-12 seems to give a true and vivid description of his innate character. In 217 B.C., when he returned from the campaign of Raphia and offered sacrifice in the temple at Jerusalem for the success achieved, he purposed to enter the sanctuary—the Holy of Holies to desecrate it. Though strenuously opposing him the Jews could not dissuade him, until near the Holy of Holies he was thwarted by a sudden seige of paralysis. He was stricken with terror and fled back to Alexandria. Foiled in his sensual aims at the temple he determined to inflict vengeance and extreme punishment upon the Alexandrian Jews, and those of the Diaspora under his ruthless, rule, because he was so strenuously opposed by the Jews at the temple. He restricted and reduced their privileges, and initiated a senseless persecution against them. (4)

One writer says that a number of intoxicated elephants were released against a great crowd of Jews in the hippodrome to destroy them, but the drunken elephants centered their attacks upon the large crowd of spectators instead of the Jews. (5)

The sun was setting on the dynasty of the Ptolemies when Ptolemy V (a child of four or five years old) ascended the throne. Conflict and open rivalry between Syria and Egypt that had long divided the people, suffered serious rupture during the struggles

4. Peloubet's Bible Dictionary.

5. The Word of God In History (P. 267) . . . By Loyal R. Ringenbery, M.A., Th, M. Published by the Higley Press, Butler, Indiana (1953).

and skirmishes that marked the king's minority. The disputed regency left in its wake confusion and a grave loss of confidence, thus furnishing fertile grounds and favorable opportunity and convenience for foreign invasion. (Daniel 11; 14)

> Sometimes placed in the Protestant Pulpit Bible, or the Protestant Family Bible, are fourteen apocryphal books which are not considered to be a part of the inspired Scriptures, nor a part of the Protestant Bible canon itself. These books are: First Esdras; Second Esdras; Tobit; Judith; The Book of Esther; The Wisdom of Solomon; Ecclesiasticus; Baruch; The Song of the Three Hebrew Children; The History of Susanna; The Destruction of Bel and the Dragon; The Prayer of Manasses King of Judah; First Book of the Maccabees and Second Book of the Maccabees. They were placed in Jerome's Latin Version of the Scriptures, The Vulgate—the Catholic Bible—but Jerome never considered them canonical, though interesting reading. While not considered a part of the Bible canon itself, two of these apocryphal books—First and Second Maccabees—supply valuable historical background and other details and accounts not readily available elsewhere. But for First and Second Maccabees and Josephus history of the intervening epoch from Malachi to the New Testament would be sparse; as a matter of fact almost nil.

The plight of the Jewish people of Palestine was destined to be stormy, disastrous and terrible. The regal rule of foreigners was injurious to their theocratic principles, practices and worship. Besides the constant pestering by heathen worshippers infiltrating their ranks the Jews themselves had become divided . . . their once stabilizing morals and ethical standards had greatly deteriorated among many. It was a very difficult time to create impulse and desire and muster courage to face up to the oppression of a conquered people. They could only hope for, stagger and trudge toward, divine deliverance through the providences of God. Strange how these people of Jehovah have had to suffer as few people have ever suffered! Yet they are to be highly commended, even through their human failures, for zealously moving toward the goal, toward the advent of the promised Seed destined to make His appearance as their Deliverer, and as the Redeemer of all mankind everywhere. Their move was steadily forward though extremely difficult to understand through all the debris falling around them as God's chosen people.

PALESTINE, AND THE SELEUCIDS

Palestine was controlled by the Ptolemies of Egypt for more

than one hundred years . . . until 198 B.C., when Antiochus III (223-187), known as Antiochus the Great, wrested it from the Ptolemaic sovereignty and annexed it to the dominion of the Seleucids of Syria. He was considerate and tolerant of the Jews, but an ardent Hellenist. The Seleucids (198-143 B.C.) were avid supporters of the Hellenic invasion and were unreasonably ambitious to perfect its institution throughout the kingdom.

One of these Seleucid kings, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (176-164 B.C.) stands out vividly as being the most excessively unreasonable of all . . . a veritable madman who knew no limits to satisfy his self-esteem, and to achieve his egotistical and selfish goals. Grandson of Antiochus the Great, he was an avid believer and promoter of Hellenism, and demanded complete conformity, even to its idolatrous religion. He would have nothing less than perfect compliance it seemed. He manifested unlimited asperity, and showed no tolerance whatever to the Jewish worship of Jehovah. His avowed intention was to desecrate and completely abolish and destroy their religion at any price. He seemed to hate them with animal passion, and purposed to compel them by force to accept the Hellenic religion.

The ultra orthodox Jews refused to Hellenize, and this caused the despotic king to wreak unmerciful vengeance, misery, woe and death upon many of them. Still, they condoned no part of it. To them it was nothing more than an atheistic theory of desecration pitted against their God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob . . . Jehovah, for Whom they had sacrificed, suffered and trudged over eight hundred miles in their Exodus from Babylon to re-instate themselves with Him, and to re-establish the sacrifice and temple worship of their God.

The pitiful plight in Palestine was the division of the Jewish people . . . descendants of those who had suffered, sacrificed and died to pave the way, and blaze the trail back to their homeland, to build again the sacred temple and the city of their forefathers—Jerusalem—that had been laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar, precursor of the Seleucids.

There was a large segment of the Jewish population that embraced the Hellenic culture (I Maccabees 1:11-15). And there were Jews who were less conservative than the ascetic, or ultra orthodox Jews, and these conformed to the Hellenic doctrines in a measure by wearing their styles of clothes, by speaking the Greek language, by participating in the Greek gymnastics, games of discus, sprinting and such like, though they clung to worship according to the Jewish religion. This left them disloyal in the

sight of Epiphanes, and to him it was treason . . . it respected the office of the high priest above his own. He felt the office of the high priest was unquestionably subject to him, and as king he could change the priest at will and it was the duty of the Jews to accept his decision. But the Jews felt different. Their high priest was appointed through the intervention of Jehovah Himself, and no authority had a right to interfere. Conflict was inevitable.

A despotic ruler if there ever was one, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, selfish and headlong, determined to degrade the Judah religion by usurping privilege and power to appoint their high priest—the person of his choice who would acquiesce in his abominable treacheries. Not only did this result in confusion for the Jews but it also fostered distrust and shame for the Seleucid kingdom. Such unreasonable imbroglios have their own ways of reaching and arousing revengeful reaction in other monarchies whose disdain for brutality smolders for a short season until it finally bursts forth in mighty flames of agression and cruelty.

Onias, the high priest, was of priestly parentage and a sober man of modest behavior (II Maccabees 4:37) and being perhaps pro-Egyptian he was respected of the Jews, but he was supplanted by his brother Jason, a wicked and definitely pro-Syrian, pro-Hellenic man. Jason undermined his brother Onias and paid the king 360 talents of silver to appoint him high priest. Besides, he promised Epiphanes revenue of eighty talents, and assured him a commission of one hundred and fifty talents if he would grant him license to erect a stadium in Jerusalem. From this vantage point he could conduct exercises to exploit the minds, consciences and adoration of the youth for heathenistic gaming and practices, and induce their degeneration to idolatry (II Maccabees 4:7-14). It was a clever scheme for favoritism.

> Permission was evidently granted, for contemporary sources of history infer that Jason erected this stadium in the very heart of Jerusalem, in the Tyropoeon Valley, according to Josephus. This bordered on Temple Hill, close to the place of the Holy of Holies. Since participating athletes were naked, bathed only in oil, while in action in sight of the worshippers, it is no wonder the Jewish people detested and resented the exercises.

As high priest, Jason sent Menelaus (not of the priestly parentage) to deliver money to Epiphanes. He arrived with high praise and flattery for the glorious appearance of the king's power and prestige, and gaining the ruler's respect offered the king three hundred talents more than Jason had paid for the office of high priest, and received the mandate. Jason who had undermined his

own brother was likewise undermined by one he thought to be a friend, and he fled to the country of the Ammonites in ignominy (II Maccabees 4:23-26). The religious-believing Jews refused to have anything to do with either of them . . . a sure vote of no confidence.

Menelaus served about three years as high priest, though he came with "the fury of a cruel tyrant, and the rage of a savage beast" (II Maccabees 4:25). To try to pay his pledge to the king, he stole certain of the vessels of gold out of the temple and sold them. Former high priest Onias reproved him for his overt and shameful act. Menelaus then gave some of the stolen vessels to Andronicus, a henchman who deceitfully destroyed Onias. This caused great commotion and reaction by both the Jews and the Greeks that loved and appreciated Onias, and held him in great respect. The king learned of it and the high priest went on trial for his life, and was convicted. But through the efforts and deceit of an attorney, called Ptolemee, Menelaus was pardoned by the king, so this traitor to the people was turned loose to continue his brutal and debase crimes against them (II Maccabees 4:32-50).

When Epiphanes was on a military expedition in Egypt, Jason, the deposed priest, heard the king was dead and began an insurrection in Jerusalem. He murdered many of his countrymen as enemies, but for fear of his life he fled back to the country of the Ammonites. King Aretas of Arabia deported him from that country because he was "hated as a forsaker of the laws, and being had in abomination as an open enemy of his country and countrymen." He went to Egypt without friends. (II Maccabees 5:5-8)

When news reached Epiphanes he thought Judea, and all Palestine had rebelled and he hurried back home, determined to sieze Jerusalem and all Judea by force. The people of Jerusalem and the area were in a state of puzzlement over the revolt and insurrection of Jason. It was a blitz that left in its wake a trail of tears, and blood and death. Then came a train of terrors to the temple itself when the large segment of Hellenizing Jews and associates initiated a sort of mass murder of the orthodox, elite Jews and their associates.

Antiochus Epiphanes felt these military incursions were the results of Jewish sedition and priestly aspirations, and this gave him all the excuse he needed to move violently against the non-Hellenizing Jews. Into every facet and phase of Jewish life, and the hallowed temple worship his armed forces swept down in merciless fury on the defenseless people. It was an unparalleled

furor of desecration, degradation and ruin to a proud people who had sacrificed all for God and their homeland.

Throughout the turbulence of oriental history the Jews underwent the cruel horrors and ignominy, that befall subjected nations or peoples, with a sense of reliability on God and His providences. But never in the cruel suppression by the Assyrians and the Babylonians had they suffered such an edict of desecration and degradation as had been handed them by Epiphanes. Take a glance at this edict with the writer of I Maccabees 1:41-50, which states: "Moreover king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, And every one should leave his laws: so all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king. Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the sabbath. For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Juda, that they should follow the strange laws of the land, And forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and drink-offerings, in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days: And pollute the sanctuary and holy people: Set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean beasts: That they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: To the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he said, he should die."

King Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, was determined to crush and destroy the religious morals and faith of Israel, as well as their desire to "fight-back" for their God. But in this he greatly erred, for Israel was God's chosen, made so by God's own decrees and guidance. The king's ruthless motives, his brutish enactments and decrees made him a demoniac that recognized no bounds to human sufferings, misery and woe. He demanded complete submission . . . or else . . . .

His demands for complete conformity to his Hellenistic program divided Israel in many ways. He plundered and robbed the temple of God. His "pet peeve" was robbing temples. Later on he sent his chief tax official, Apollonius, to levy burdens, and this unmerciful man spoiled the temple and city of Jerusalem, partially burned the temple and the city, slew many people, and took women and children captive. The king had slain forty thousand men and women, and had sold as many men, women, children, virgins, infants and mothers into slavery in three days. (II

Maccabees 5:13, 14) His pogrom was brutal. He forbad the circumcism of children and killed the mothers who circumcised their young. He polluted the sanctuary by offering swine upon the altar of sacrifice, upon an altar he had erected on top the sacred altar of the Jews. This was on the twenty-fifth day of the month called Casleu (Kislev, or December) in 168 B.C. that the altar was profaned (I Maccabees 1:54-59). That was not enough, and he commanded that the holy temple be re-named the temple of Jupiter Olympius (II Maccabees 6:2) or Olympian Zeus. Some scholars feel the sacrifice of a hog on the sacred altar of the temple has reference to the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Daniel 11:31). It may bear circumstantial allusions but other Scriptures apportion the final culmination of Daniel's prophecy to another and much later period (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14). Epiphanes set overseers over the cities, towns and provinces to make sure that his decrees were observed and that the flesh of swine would be offered upon every altar built. He demanded that every book of the Hebrew Scriptures be torn asunder and destroyed, and those who possessed these Scriptures were to be killed. In reality this seemed to be the first thorough religious condemnation and persecution in the annals of history (I Maccabees 1).

> In strength and fortitude, Israel is an example of a nation that remained true to her conscience, her faith and courage when forced to her knees by a superior power. Though some of her people were weakened by the onslaught of cruelty and depression the strong bore the brunt of the infirmities and rallied with confidence, courage and bravery. Their resolute faith stymied their fear of man with his evil forces . . . it was idolatry in a death combat with Israel's God!

Israel was pressed to the breaking point . . . even to the finale of destruction if needs be. They were Abraham's Seed, and the promises were still real though the nation herself had wandered far from the faith that had once been delivered; yet many of them clung tenaciously to it. Conflict with the Seleucid powers was inevitable, the outcome rewarding as the end would amply justify the means to reach it.

THE REVOLT OF THE MACCABEANS

Mattathias, an aging Jewish priest of the Hasmonean family line, had five sons—John (Joannan), Simon, Judas, Eleazer and Jonathan. They lived at the village of Modin, located in the

Judean hills, about eighteen or twenty miles northwest of Jerusalem. Mattathias was an honorable and highly respected man of the village and esteemed by his countrymen.

When the officers, or emissaries of King Antiochus IV came to Modin to enforce his decree or edict, that all inhabitants "forsake the laws of God" and embrace paganistic theory and practices, and sacrifice swine upon the altar set up for that purpose, the aging priest, his five sons and other Jews were present. The emissaries sought to flatter Mattathias it seemed by praising his priestly posture. They said, ". . . Thou art a ruler, and an honorable and great man in this city, and strengthened with sons and brethren: Now therefore come thou first, and fulfil the king's commandment, like as all the heathen have done . . . so shalt thou and thy house be in the number of the king's friends, and thou and thy children shall be honored with silver and gold, and many rewards." I Maccabees 2:17, 18.

This challenge called for an immediate decision . . . God or heathenism. Mattathias was not baffled by the recent turn of events nor fearful of the threat of extirpation of the Jewish people. He arrogantly refused to conform to such a heathenistic sacrifice, and when he beheld a fellow Israelite and townsman approach the altar to do sacrifice he ". . . was inflamed with zeal . . . neither could he forbear to show his anger according to judgment: wherefore he ran and slew him upon the altar. Also the king's commissioner, who compelled men to sacrifice, he killed at that time, and the altar he pulled down." I Maccabees 2:24, 25.

> So the "turncoat" Israelite became the sacrificial fiend instead of the unclean swine which was an abomination to the Jews who held on to God. The king's emissary became the sacrifice that served to stifle heathenism in the Holy Lands, where it had sought so hard to destroy her faith and practice.

This strange event was the signal for open rebellion and resistance in Israel's struggle for survival. The fuse had been lit for the wars of the Maccabees. Mattathias summoned his loyal and determined followers and countrymen to rally round him with support in his daring exploit. Then he, his five sons and adherents, escaped to the hills and highlands of Judea for safety. The closely-knit group shared like faith and beliefs. They found ravines, gorges, caves and other secret haunts in which to secure themselves and plan their strategy for an all-out guerilla warfare against the powers of Syrian occupation (I Maccabees 2:27-29).

The enraged Syrians, chagrined by their failure to subject these devout Israelites to heathenistic conformity, pursued them

bitterly. They knew the Jews hallowed the Sabbath, and so they made war against them on the Sabbath day. This was a complicated situation for the devout Israelites, a predicament that could easily imperil their struggle for survival. Yet, in spite of the eminent danger, the Jews refused to fight or even protect themselves by barricading the passageways to their haunts and strongholds. They said in all honest conscientiousness, ". . . Let us all die in our innocency: heaven and earth shall testify for us, that ye put us to death wrongfully." I Maccabees 2:34-38.

But, what difference did that make with the Seleucid monarch, or his forces? Extermination has no rules of conduct. The Syrians saw their chance and took full advantage of Israel's innocency and integrity. They wreaked havoc upon them by slaying one thousand men, women and children, as well as their cattle, and wiped out this pocket of resistance. The Sabbath meant nothing whatsoever to the embittered, heathenistic force, and the decision of the Jews not to resist was equivalent to an unconditional surrender for annihilation. But Israel learned a bitter lesson from their passive decision—a lesson to be long remembered—for afterwards they fought for life on the Sabbath day (I Maccabees 2:39-41). Mattathias and his group were soon joined by the devoutly pious Assideans (Hasideans) who were very zealous for the religion of their ancestors, and they fought fiercely for religious freedom (I Maccabees 2:42-48).

Mattathias died in 166 B.C., about two years after the rebellion began. His five sons, and the devout followers were left to continue the struggle for liberation from Syrian oppression. Simon, son of Mattathias, was chosen counsellor of the people, and Judas was chosen as military leader to prosecute the war for religious liberty (I Maccabees 2:49-70).

Judas Maccabeus (6), sometime thought of as the "Joshua of the Maccabean Wars," became a heroic military leader, most vigorous in pursuit of his goals for religious independence. He and his zealous army defeated the Syrians in several battles, and the people feared him and his host (I Maccabees 3). With apparent victory on every battlefield Judas and his bold, daring and fearless army of followers entered Jerusalem. They made great lamentation when they beheld the House of the Lord . . . the temple that had been so highly and sacredly respected in the bygone years . . . now held in grave desrepute by many, pillaged, ransacked and desecrated by the forces of heathenism. Such a sight provoked a kind of holy malignity in the Jewish army that

6. The word "Maccabeus" signifies "the hammer."

was not easily forgotten.

> "And when they saw the sanctuary desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burned up, and shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest, or in one of the mountains, yea, and the priests' chambers pulled down, they rent their clothes, and made great lamentation, and cast ashes upon their heads, and fell down flat to the ground upon their faces, and blew an alarm with the trumpets, and cried towards heaven." I Maccabees 4:38-40.

Judas and his zealous host could stand the sight no longer; it was a stink in the nostrils of God. They cleaned away the rubbish and the debris from the temple area, tore down and removed the Syrian altar that had been erected on top of the Jewish altar, and which the Syrians had polluted, and erected a new altar to the God of Israel. They made new holy vessels, and brought back into the temple the candlestick and other temple necessities, preparatory to temple sacrifice and worship.

Then on the twenty-fifth day of the month Casleu (Kislev, or December) in 165 B.C., just three years to the day since Antiochus IV Epiphanes had offered swine, a hog, upon the altar to pollute it, and desecrated the temple, the pious Jews held an inspiring and wonderful dedication service in the temple. It commemorated a long-sought, hard-fought struggle for this Feast of Dedication, an eight-day affair with candles aglow each of the eight days. It is still remembered by the Jews.

In their own way as they felt directed by God Israel fought for her cause of righteousness, but their commander-in-chief, Judas never failed to recognize God's powers and providences. History tells us he said, "For the victory of battle standeth not in the multitude of a host: but strength cometh from heaven." (7)

The tide of battle turned against the Seleucid monarch, Antiochus, who had determined to destroy Israel's faith in God. He was exceedingly and seriously alarmed by the continuous victories of Judas and his army, and he promised soldiers a year's wages in advance just to be ready to fight Israel when he gave the command. Then, seeing his treasuries diminishing so swiftly because of the country's small tribute, he purposed a journey into Persia to plunder and rob the wealthy temple and palace treasuries there. This kind of shame was a part of him . . . he loved it. It challenged his ego. He left a nobleman called Lysias as commander-in-chief of all his forces, and left the Holy Lands. The war went against Lysias, who had also been commissioned to rear and train in warfare Antiochus V, son of Epiphanes. News of the

7. From I Maccabees 3:19.

defeats, as well as how the Israelites had re-established temple worship to the God of heaven finally reached the Seleucid monarch and he was troubled. The temple worship upset him, dug constantly at his conscience. It had been about a year since Israel had celebrated their Feast of Dedication, and from his retreat in Persia he felt the terrible impact of failure. It painted a grim picture for him.

Sometimes, memory is a haunting thing, an apparition not easily shaken off. Some despots revel in their prowess to destroy the innocent and helpless without mercy, crushing violently body and soul if it were possible; but all of them must stop somewhere, sometime, and give an account while they plunge into their own blood-baths in shame and disgrace. Regardless of power, prestige or social standing memory has her own system to stigmatize conscience in distressing crucibles. Antiochus IV was no different. History deals a fair blow to this merciless tyrant, while in Persia.

> "Wherefore he called for all his friends, and said unto them, The sleep is gone from mine eyes, and my heart faileth for very care. And I thought with myself, Into what tribulation am I come, and how great a flood of misery is it, wherein now I am! for I was bountiful and beloved in my power. But now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem, and that I took all the vessels of gold and silver that were therein, and sent to destroy the inhabitant of Judea without a cause. I perceive therefore that for this cause these troubles are come upon me, and behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land." I Maccabees 6:10-13.

Judas was an outstanding military leader in Israel, as borne out by the brief and scant history we now have, (8) in their fight for religious independence. A serious defeat for the army of Israel was at Beth-Zechariah, located ten or twelve miles southwest of Jerusalem, but this defeat was not catastropic . . . it led to a much desired goal. In this battle armored Syrian elephants became the forerunners of armored vehicular columns of modern warfare, and they were supported by 100,000 footmen and 20,000 horsemen.

Thinking the Syrian monarch was riding a royal elephant one of the Maccabean brothers named Eleazar dashed through the host and stabbed the elephant from underneath. The elephant fell and crushed him with its sheer weight. The battle was a defeat for the Israelites who were unable to cope with the superior and powerful forces. But famine and dissension among the colossal Syrian army drove the conquerors to offer peace terms considerably favorable to Israel (I Maccabees 6:58-60). The decrees of

8. I Maccabees, Chapter 6.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes were rescinded or abolished, and the Israelites were granted free exercise of religious worship. Expensive though it was, the rebellion had achieved its aim.

History tells us that John, another of the Maccabean brothers, was killed through a dastardly treacherous plot while on a mission to the Nabateans, a distrusted people that inhabited a region southeast of the Dead Sea. But his death was soon avenged by his two remaining brothers—Jonathan and Simon (I Maccabees 9:35-42).

While Judas was a notable warrior in Israel his accomplishment was religious liberty for his people. He lost his life on the battlefield (I Maccabees, chapter nine). Following his death Jonathan became the commander-in-chief of Israel's armed forces. He was not the military genius that Judas was, but he was a clever negotiator. The Seleucids each sought Jonathan's support when contention arose between them. Jonathan "played both ends of the string" and took advantage of the complicated situation, winning valuable concessions to strengthen him and his position in Palestine . . . making him the chief ruler (I Maccabees, chapters nine through eleven).

Tryphon (or Trypho) was a pretender to the Syrian or Seleucid throne (I Maccabees 12:39-53; 13:12-30), and through deception lured Jonathan to his stronghold, slew Jonathan's guards, imprisoned and held Jonathan for ransom, and finally killed Israel's leader. He proceeded to wreak havoc upon the leaderless army, until Simon, the last surviving Maccabean brother, assumed the role as commander-in-chief of the forces of Israel. He finally took up the bones of Jonathan and buried them at Modin, the family plot of Judas and his father Mattathias. In all his maneuverings Simon became a great leader but he never forgot God from whence came all his successes. The independent Maccabean kingdom was launched by Simon in, or about, 143 B.C., but he refused to be called a king. It was the beginning of the Hasmonean, or Asmonean dynasty.

Having gained their religious liberty the Hasideans, or Assideans, felt their goal had been achieved, and they entertained no plans to pursue any political goals. They were non-Hellenic and naturally separated themselves from the Hellenizing factions of the homeland, and they became known as Separatists, and eventually as Pharisees. The Hellenizing group eventually became known as Sadducees. They claimed to be a direct succession from Zadok, high priest of the tenth century B.C., when David and Solomon reigned as kings (II Samuel 15:24-35; 17:15). Aristocrats

of the Jewish society, they felt they were the legitimate rulers of Israel. Disagreements and distrust invaded the ranks of the two Jewish religious factions, now that the threat of war was stymied. Antipathy reached deeply into fresh avenues of dissension and strife.

Simon was first of the Maccabeans to strike his own coin, and archaeological discoveries in Palestine have produced coins as evidence of Simon as an actual king. Simon ruled eight years, from 143 B.C. to 135 B.C., (9) and was killed through the treachery of his own son-in-law. He was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus I (135-105 B.C.).

THE HASMONEAN, OR ASMONEAN DYNASTY

MATTATHIAS . . . Descendant of Hasmon . . . had five sons: John, Eleazar, Judas, Jonathan, Simon.

SIMON . . . Son of Mattathias, had a son named John Hyrcanus I. He became political leader and high priest upon the death of his father Simon. He ruled about thirty years (135 B.C. —105 B.C.). He was a Pharisee and an able political leader. When his conduct became too offensive the Pharisees asked for his resignation as high priest, and he left them and joined the Sadducees, that had by now become a strong political party.

JOHN HYRCANUS I . . . Son of Simon, had two sons: Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus. Through providence and maneuvering both became rulers.

Aristobulus I (105 B.C.—104 B.C.) is said to have starved his mother to death in a prison cell, and also incarcerated three younger brothers. He was pro-Hellenist and a Sadducee. The Maccabean kingdom began to deteriorate under him. Before death he left his would-be widow in charge of the kingdom.

Alexander . . . (104 B.C.—78 B.C.) was an oppressive tyrant. The widow of Aristobulus I elevated him to the throne, and married him. He began his reign by murdering a brother. He viciously put down a Pharisee uprising, and the rift and hatred between the Pharisees and the Sadd-

9. Bible History Digest, by Elmer W. K. Mould, Ph.D . . . published by Exposition Press, New York.

ucees reached a zenith during the reign of Alexander. He died of a fever.

ALEXANDRA . . . wife to both Aristobulus and Alexander, reigned as queen for nine years (78 B.C.—69 B.C.). She had a good reign, and it is sometimes referred to as the Golden Age of Judaism. She was pro-Pharisee, and her reign bore much national encomium. Among those things glamorizing parts of her reign was the institution of elementary schools in connection with the synagogues in 75 B.C., though her brother, Rabbi Simon Ben-Shetach, was greatly responsible. (10)

ALEXANDRA . . . had two sons: Hyrcanus II, and Aristobulus II. Since a woman could not be high priest Alexandra appointed her son Hyrcanus II to the position. He likewise was pro-Pharisee. Aristobulus was pro-Sadducee, and contention and jealousy arose between the two brothers. It became so severe with envy and strife it precipitated a civil war among the Jews. Sad indeed, but somewhat characteristic of a people who had been so war-torn and battle-scarred that national equanimity seemed impossible. They became easily divided over social and civic issues, and usually some type of warfare served to help unite them in spirit and purpose. Divisiveness plagued them with weakness in their state of affairs as a nation, and they sustained much unnecessary grief. The spirit of strife, contention and dissension grew by the day and it was evident that outside assistance should be sought.

The Idumaean governor Antipater, father of Herod the Great, and one of the most sinister figures ever to enter the political and religious life of the Jewish kingdom, advised Hyrcanus II to seek aid from Aretas, king of the Nabateans, a formidable foe of the yesteryears. With his military assistance from Aretas, Hyrcanus defeated Aristobulus. Then the Romans entered the drama. General Scaurus of Pompey's legion ordered Aretas to leave Palestine, which he did without a fight or skirmish. This left Aristobulus II in charge from 76 to 63 B.C. . . . thirteen years.

The Pharisees clung tenaciously to the high priestly form of government as their lone hope of survival of temple and synagogue worship, but the Sadducees held a "stand-offish"

10. Bible History Digest . . . Page 149 . . . Ibid.

feeling to synagogue worship. This left leeway for partisans of both Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II to appeal to Pompey at Rome, though the Jews preferred neither of them as their king. Rome saw that it was a prime time for an appellate decision, and since Hyrcanus II submitted to the wishes of Pompey he was appointed to the high priestly office. Aristobulus rejected the decision, refused to cooperate or submit to Pompey's decision, and fought bitterly to the end.

Following a three months campaign the Romans captured and partly destroyed Jerusalem. This marked the end of the Maccabean kingdom, 63 B.C., and the end of their political freedom . . . subdued but not conquered. The supremacy of this fourth world power—represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream—is referred to in the book of Daniel the prophet, second chapter.

We have watched this much of the great drama of God unfold before our very eyes . . . but the vision is yet for an appointed time; wait for it, for it will surely come.

PALESTINE UNDER ROMAN SUPREMACY

The descendants of Esau were called Edomites (Genesis 25:30; 32:3; 36; 43). They had settled near the south end of the Dead Sea in the area known as Mt. Seir. About 300 B.C. the Nabateans drove them from their homeland, and the Edomites moved northwestward to the "South Country" or Negeb, known also as Daroma, and settled in the area of Hebron. Hence they were known as Idumaeans, residents of that part of Judea called Idumaea. Their country was subdued by John Hyrcanus I in 126 B.C. who requested their conformity. From Idumaea came Antipater, a sinister figure in Jewish political life, and whose voice and endeavors carried him far into the Roman government of Palestine. He succeeded his father Antipas as governor of Idumaea in 78 B.C.

> Antipas was appointed governor of Idumaea by Alexander Jannaeus of the Hasmonean dynasty, but died in 78 B.C., and Antipater his son took his place. Antipater saw favorable opportunities for a powerful position in the Hasmonean kingdom. He was father of Herod the Great.

It is essential at this time to reflect upon Palestine during the Roman supremacy. In 63 B.C., after a three months' seige Pompey, of Rome, captured Jerusalem at a great loss to the Jews. He ruled Palestine until 48 B.C. Since Hyrcanus II was a friend to Pompey the ruler appointed him high priest of Israel and ethnarch

—"the ruler of a people, tribe or nation." Antipater of Idumaea was made political advisor since he was a Pompey partisan, and remained so until Pompey was defeated by Julius Caesar in 48 B.C., on the battlefield of Pharsalus, in Thessaly, Greece.

The Idumaean, Antipater played up to Rome and became a partisan with Caesar. He was handed citizenship of Rome and was appointed procurator (governor) of Judea. Hyrcanus II remained as high priest and ethnarch under the illustrious Julius Caesar who granted complete religious freedom to Israel.

The Jews were offended when Caesar appointed the Idumaean Antipater governor, or procurator, of Judea, and the area became a hotbed of civil unrest and uprisings in which Antipater had to intervene. Sensing his precarious position Antipater appointed his two sons as ministering executives—Phasael for Jerusalem and Herod for Galilee. These administrators discerned opportunity for personal advancement and determined to make the best of it. Herod exercised his authority by ridding his area of some bands of robbers, and took upon himself the authority to excute their leader. This angered the Jews and resulted in a furor of condemnation of Herod's illicit act since the Jews' governing body—the Sanhedrin—reserved for themselves the right of capital punishment. Herod fled to Damascus to save himself, and the Syrian proconsul there gave him rule of the portion of Syria north of Galilee. He was well on his way to greater responsibilities in Palestine through surreptitious diplomatic maneuverings. Time would prove it.

On the Ides (15th day) of March 44 B.C., the Roman Senate convened, with Julius Caesar moderating it seemed. Upon the pretense of presenting a petition to be heard by Caesar a group of some seventy conspirators, led by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus, rushed Caesar, drew their daggers and assasinated him at the podium. Following this shameful event Cassius rushed to Syria as proconsul, and to enlist troops and collect tribute. Roman Emperors loved wealth. With much energy Herod assisted him and was made procurator of all Syria, by Cassius. His clandestine tactics were working for Herod. Antipater died in 43 B.C.

By 42 B.C. both Cassius and Brutus had passed off the stage of action, having been defeated by Antony and Octavius at Philippi in Macedonia. By clever maneuverings the Idumaeans—Herod and Phasael—were appointed tetrarchs by Antony who assumed control of the Asian provinces for Rome. Hyrcanus II was still high priest but not for long, for when the Parthians from the east overran Palestine in 41 B.C., they named Antigonus (son of Aris-

tobulus II and nephew of Hyrcanus II) king and high priest. According to Dr. Elmer W. K. Mould, in Bible History Digest, old Hyrcanus II had his ears bitten off and therefore he was never eligible again for the priesthood. Herod fled to Egypt, thence to Rome, but his brother Phasael committed suicide.

Antony and Octavius, ruling jointly from Rome, refused to appoint another Hasmonean as king of the Jews, and chose rather to appoint Herod as allied king in 40 B.C. It took Herod three years to capture Palestine and Jerusalem by conquest, but in 37 B.C. when he took over he slew Antigonus and forty-five members of the Jewish highest court—Sanhedrin. He was "any king's dog to hunt with" and he played up to each ruler who ascended the throne of Rome. He was with Julius Caesar . . . he was with Cassius . . . he was with Antony, and when Octavius (called Caesar Augustus by the Senate) came to the throne he switched his personal support to Augustus, and held his job as allied king. Rome became an empire with Caesar Augustus as first Emperor in 31 B.C.

Herod was known as Herod the Great, and his reign of tyranny and terror, ruling over Judea with an iron hand from 37 to 4 B.C., is often cited as an example of despotism. The dynasty of the Herods lasted from about 55 B.C. to about A. D. 93, and was actually founded by Antipater, an Idumaean governor, and there were seven of them in all.

It was near the end of the reign of Herod I, or Herod the Great as commonly referred to, that the New Testament period actually begins. And it was near the close of his reign that Jesus, the Messiah, was born in Bethlehem of Judea . . . an event that changed the whole course of human history, and opened through the fountain of David—with rivers of living waters—redemption for all mankind.



Nazareth, the place where Jesus grew up, and the home place where he was rejected by His own townspeople who sought to slay Him for trying to help them understand the Scriptures relating to Him.

Seen here are the ruins of a First Century synagogue, located at Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee. While it is questionable by scholars legend credits this synagogue with being the place that Jesus of Nazareth, and some of His disciples worshipped. Those who tour the Holy Lands should make it a point to view these ruins.



Dynasties of the Caesars and the Herods

8

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THE CAESARS OF ROME

In contemporary histories of Rome the Caesar dynasty seems most impressive. From the very inception of Christianity, even before the birth of John the Baptist, the Caesars were in Palestine. It seems appropriate, and a little impelling to give a brief sketch of the six Caesars, four of which are mentioned in the Scriptures, since some readers neglect to take time to check contemporary history while perusing the Scriptures that speak of such men.

1. **GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR** . . . Born in 100 B.C., was a member of Rome's First Triumvirate, along with Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gnaeus Pompey. Crassus was slain on the battlefield. The Roman Senate demanded Caesar's resignation, which he refused, and when he met Pompey and defeated him at Pharsalus, in Thessaly, Greece in 48 B.C. he became dictator of Rome. He was an illustrious statesman, a fearless and daring military genius and a wise diplomat. His legions had conquered Gaul and he had successfully invaded Spain and Britain. He knew how to win the confidence of the common people and was well-loved by them. He sent to Rome much gold to help his country "weather the storm" and to help build theaters and stadiums. He was tolerant of Jewish religious liberty. He was assassinated by daggers at his podium 44 B.C., by a conspiracy spearheaded by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus, while feigning an attempt to present a petition to be heard by the Senate. Someone has said, "Rome killed the greatest man their race has yet produced." Julius Caesar is not mentioned in the New Testament by name.

2. **OCTAVIUS** . . . Known as Augustus Caesar, was grand-nephew of Julius Caesar, and is mentioned in Luke 2:1. By will of Julius Caesar he became successor to the throne. The old order of the Republic soon changed and the Roman Empire was established with Augustus Caesar as Emperor (31 B.C.-A.D. 14). His illustrious reign of about forty-four years was some of the most calm and peaceful times experienced for a long time. Literature and art flourished, for he himself was a patron of art and architecture. The era was known as "The Golden Age of Latin Literature." While the world seemed at rest and peace Jesus the Christ was born 5-4 B.C., in Bethlehem of Judea. Augustus died in A.D. 14, a short twelve or fourteen years before Jesus

began His public ministry. Since ancestral worship was prevalent in the Roman Empire Augustus was deified by the Roman Senate, and temples were erected in his honor at different places, and because of such the Christians suffered much persecution for refusing to worship such.

3. **TIBERIUS** . . . An adopted stepson of Augustus, was his successor from A.D. 14 to A.D. 37. He is mentioned in the gospels of Luke 3:1, and in Mark 12:14. He was a morose, suspicious, jealous-type person, and from opposition at the capital he invoked the death force of the LAW of MAJESTAS. Friends spied on one another and the wealthy suffered injustice, because of the spies—DELATORS. Perhaps this spirit prevailed at the trial of Jesus before Pilate (John 19:12). During his reign Jesus began his public ministry, gained a multitude of followers, established His Church —the Church of God—and His gospel covered the whole area. It was during his reign that Jesus the Son of God was crucified April 7, A.D. 30. (1) Palestine saw the apostles fill Jerusalem with the doctrine. And Saul the Roman citizen and Jewish rabbi, who saw Stephen stoned to death, got converted in A.D. 34. During the reign of Augustus the Jews persecuted the Church, and Saul was among the leading militarists.

4. **GAIUS CAESAR** . . . Better known as Caligula, was Roman Emperor from A.D. 37 to A.D. 41. His name is not mentioned in the New Testament. He was unsettled over the conditions of his Empire, and after studying for a long time he fell victim to dissipation that led to his ruin. He became obsessed with the cruel sports of the arena, and even participated in gladiatorial combats himself. After ruling for four years his insane fascination was brought to an end with his assasination by a praetorian guard*** whom he had wantonly insulted. He was thirty-nine.

***The Praetorian Guard was a corps of select and elite soldiers, that had been created by Augustus Caesar as a body guard to the Emperor, and numbered about 10,000 men. It soon became a formidable power of the state, making or breaking Emperors at will. It was stationed permanently at one of the city gates.

5. **CLAUDIUS** . . . Was Emperor of Rome from A.D. 41 to A.D. 54. He is referred to in Acts 11:28 and 18:2. He admitted Gallic nobles to the Roman Senate and allowed them to become magistrates. His conquest of Britain and its annexation as

1. Or the 15th of Nisan, according to Philip Schaff's "History of the Christian Church." And Peloubet's Bible Dictionary.

Britannia in A.D. 43 was profitable, since Roman trade centers sprang up there. He was ill and despised, and his intriguing favorites who ruled under him, and his unworthy wives proved his downfall. His fourth wife was the wicked Agrippina, who poisoned him with a dish of mushrooms, so her sixteen year old son, Nero, could ascend the throne.

6. **NERO** . . . Known as Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, ruled Rome from A.D. 54-68. He was nephew to Caligula, and an adopted son of Emperor Claudius, and was greatly influenced by his wicked mother, Agrippina. He tried to drown her, but failing, he had her assassinated. While he is not mentioned by name in the New Testament, he was the Caesar to whom Paul appealed in Acts 25:11. It was during Nero's reign that Apostle Paul was beheaded in A.D. 68 (Conybeare and Howson). The gospel had reached servants at his palace according to Philippians 1:13 and 4:22. The great fires of Rome in July, A.D. 64 are said by some to have been started by Nero himself, but he blamed it on the Christians and initiated a terrible and severe persecution of them. His reign is characterized by evil, intrigue, debauchery and corruption. The Roman Senate replaced him with Galba as Emperor and sentenced Nero to death. He fled to the village of a freedman, about four miles of Rome, and committed suicide, June 9, A.D. 68. He was the last of the six of the Julian line. The family of the Caesars became extinct, though the name itself was adopted by all succeeding Emperors.

DYNASTY OF THE HERODS

Let us look at the Dynasty of the Herods, briefly, since they all figured into the role of early Christianity, from the birth of Jesus to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70. In order to acquaint readers with the ancestry of the Herods it is necessary to mention Antipas, governor of Idumea, who founded the House of Herods, whose rule extended from 55 B.C. to A.D. 93. The Maccabean priest, John Hyrcanus, induced him to be circumcised and to embrace Judaism, though not a Jew by blood relationship. Antipas had a son named Antipater, who succeeded his father as governor of Idumea. Through a grant by Julius Caesar of Rome he became ruler of Palestine (55-43 B.C.). He was one of the most peculiar persons to enter Jewish political life. The New Testament lists seven of the Herods.

1. **HEROD I** . . . called Herod the Great, was a son of Antipater of Idumea. He is mentioned in Matthew 2:1, and was

Herod the king when Jesus was born, the Herod to whom the wise men paid a visit. He was an unscrupulous and brutal sovereign (37 B.C.-A.D. 4). He sought to assuage his guilt by reconstructing the Jewish temple, called Herod's temple, beginning about 19 B.C., but it was not completed until about A.D. 64, barely six years before it was destroyed by Titus. He built Caesarea on the coast, and is thought to be an influential figure in his day, especially in the Middle East.

2. **HEROD ANTIPAS** . . . Tetrarch of Galilee (4 B.C.-A.D. 39), was a son of Herod the Great by Malthace the Samaritan . . . no Jewish blood kin. He is mentioned more by Scriptures than any of the other Herods. Jesus referred to him as "that fox" (Luke 13:31), and to his evils as "the leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15). He is the Herod that beheaded John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12), the Herod who desired to see Jesus (Luke 9:7-9), the Herod who questioned, mocked and scouraged Jesus (Luke 23:7-15), and the Herod of Acts 4:27. He built a seaport called Tiberius, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, though the name of this town seemed to escape mention by the gospel writers. It was only a short distance from Capernaum . . . the town of many miracles. Herod was banished to Gaul in A.D. 39, voluntarily accompanied by his woman Herodias.

3. **HEROD ARCHELAUS** . . . Ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumea (4 B.C.-A.D. 6), was son of Herod the Great by Malthace, and brother to Herod Antipas. Dissatisfied subjects caused his banishment to Gaul, and the institution of Roman Procurators in Judea. The parable of Jesus may have reference to this Herod (Luke 19:12-27) but is doubtful. He is mentioned in Matthew 2:22.

4. **HEROD PHILIP I** . . . (Of Rome, but not the tetrarch) was son of Herod the Great by Mariamne (II), and half-brother to Herod Antipas. His wife Herodias left him and married his half-brother Antipas (Mark 6:17).

5. **HEROD PHILIP II** . . . generally referred to as Philip the Tetrarch, is mentioned in Luke 3:1. He married Salome, daughter of Herodias and Philip I, but died without heirs. Said to be the best of the sons of Herod the Great, he rebuilt a city at the foot of Mt. Hermon and named it Caesarea Philippi, as well as reconstructing Bethsaida.

6. **HEROD AGRIPPA I** . . . Son of Aristobulus, was grandson of Herod the Great, and Mariamne (I). Referred to as "the King" in Acts 12:1. He persecuted the Christians and gave order to put James to death, and would have done the same to Peter except

God's angel intervened (Acts 12:3-19). He was an enthusiastic Hellenist, and constructed theaters and amphitheaters and public baths. He died a terrible death by accepting personal deity it seemed (Acts 12:20-23). He ruled about everything Herod the Great had (A.D. 41-44).

7. HEROD AGRIPPA II . . . Son of Agrippa I, and great-grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne (I), was king of Chalcis (A.D. 50), later changing this small realm in the Lebanons for what had been Philip's territory, and other regions. He never succeeded his father as King of the Jews. Failing to persuade the Jews not to revolt he finally sided with Rome, and fought alongside Vespasian. He was an expert on the customs of the Jews, and such questions as may help them or rile them up. This was the King Agrippa before whom Paul was brought by Festus at Caesarea (Acts 25:13 and Acts Chapter 26). His sister Bernice was with him. He died A.D. 100, and was the last of the seven kings of the family of Herod the Great.

It has been said the reign of the Herods was tremendously wicked, and the Herodian women were notoriously wicked. The New Testament lists three of the women: Bernice, eldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I; Drusilla, who was Bernice's youngest sister; and Herodias, the granddaughter of Herod the Great and sister to Herod Agrippa I.

These despotic rulers sought to put down and destroy Christianity with all her glory, and worked incessantly against the Church of God that Jesus Christ established, and commissioned to cover the whole world. But the Church went on. What became of the glory of the Herod dynasty? Where is its shame seen today by civilized nations who regard the laws and commandments of God?

Reviewing the Country of Palestine

9

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THE COUNTRY OF PALESTINE

Located in southwest Asia is a small area of land known as Palestine. (1) It has beautiful mountains and hills, valleys, plains and pleasant dells, desert and seas and sparkling waters. During most of the Biblical era, with some reservations excepted, this area of land actually averaged in width about 65 to 70 miles—from the Arabian Desert on the East to the Mediterranean Sea on the West—and stretched in length about 150 miles—from Dan on the North to Beersheba on the South. (2) The boundary embraced an area comparable to the state of Maryland, U.S.A. However, at times the boundary lines were effected when the country was subjugated by different invading despots or rulers. History shows that Palestine has been the battlefields of subjection, reprisal or vengeance for more than forty centuries.

Palestine was convenient to trading areas of three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe. Her treasuries and position in this southwesterly portion of the "Fertile Crescent" enticed maritime trade and commerce of different kinds, and she became the goal that kings and rulers sought at any expense. Tribesmen warred there long before Abraham started his long nomadic journey to Canaan.

The average temperatures in January may fluctuate from 40 to 50 degrees (Fahrenheit) in Galilee, 45 to 55 in the Jerusalem area and Judaean Hills, and 50 to 70 in the southernmost section or "South" country. In August the temperatures rise 25 to 35 (sometimes 40) above those in January. The coastal area varies, usually a few degrees warmer. However, the Jordan Valley is hot, reaching 115 to 118 in the south.

The rainy season is from October to April, with the wettest months being December, January and February. The early rains from October to last of January, and the latter rains last to April. Some mild December nights would not forbid shepherds keeping

1. Called PALESTINA, Ex. 15:14; Isa. 14:29, 31 . . . PALESTINE, Joel 3:4. During the Patriarchal epoch it was called CANAAN, Gen. 11:31; 12:5. The PROMISED LAND, Gen. 12:7, 8; 17:7, 8; Acts 7:1-5. Called the LAND OF ISRAEL, I Sam. 13:19. Called the HOLY LAND, Zech. 2:12.

2. The expression "from Dan to Beersheba" is found in II Sam. 3:10; 17:11; 24:2; I Kings 4:25; II Chron. 10:5. It was proverbial among the Israelites.

watch over their flocks by night (Luke 2:8-16).

In many respects Palestine is phenomenal. Within a distance of about 100 miles one can journey from the snow-crested Alpine Mount Hermon to the tropical plains of the Dead Sea. Resembling a mammoth cone Mount Hermon rises to a height of more than 9,101 feet above sea level, while the Dead Sea is 1,292 feet below sea level.

The Jordan River actually begins with a small spring near the base of Mount Hermon 1,200 feet above sea level. (3) It meanders through brush, through rush and reed and marshlands to Lake Merom (now known as Huleh Lake), a triangular body of water, three miles wide and seven feet above sea level. From Merom it rushes swiftly and headlong ten miles to the Sea of Galilee, which is 680 feet below the level of the sea.

(Authorities reserve differences on this.) From the southernmost tip of the Sea of Galilee it surges with turbulence down deep gorges with craggy bottoms, cascading and rushing with swift undercurrents and dangerous rapids to the Dead Sea 65 miles to the south. The Jordan flows about 200 miles to cover the distance of 65 miles from the lower end of the Sea of Galilee to where it empties into the northern end of the Dead Sea, falling about 9 feet per mile enroute. (4) It may well be termed the "Falling Waters of Palestine" for in its progress the Jordan falls over 3,000 feet, down part of the deepest ditch in the world. The River is about 134 miles long (meandering crooks eliminated), 80 to 150 feet wide, depending upon seasons, and is from 5 to 12 feet deep.

THE SEA OF GALILEE

The Sea of Galilee holds a respected place of significance in one's study of the New Testament times, especially. In the Old Testament it was referred to as the "sea of Chinnereth" (Numbers 34:11; Joshua 13:27); called "sea of Chinneroth" (Joshua 12:3). The New Testament refers to it as the "Sea of Galilee" (Matthew 4:18; 15:29; Mark 1:16; 7:31; John 6:1); the "Sea of Tiberias" (John 6:1, 21:1); the "Lake of Gennesaret" (Luke 5:1). Today it is known in Israel as Lake Kinneret. (5) The sea is 13 miles long and

3. The Jordan actually begins with the Hasbeiya Spring at the foot of Mount Hermon, though the Jews give credit for it beginning with the Nahr Banias Springs at Caesarea Philippi, near the Mount.

4. Harper's Bible Dictionary; Peloubet's Bible Dictionary.

5. Facts About Israel 1971.

about 8 miles wide . . . its greatest depth reaching about 200 feet. It is 680 feet below sea level. As in the days of Jesus the sea abounds with fish—among which the comb-fish and catfish are favorites. The eastern shores of this pear-shaped lake are mountainous, the western has hills but is more accessible in places, and the northern shores are convenient.

THE DEAD SEA

The Dead Sea is phenomenal itself. It is about 10 miles wide, 46 miles long, 1,292 feet below sea level and has a mean depth of over 1,200 feet, the lowest sheet of water in the world. About 6 1/2 million tons of water empty into it every 24 hours, and since it has no outlet except by evaporation the saline content of her remains is over five times that of the ocean. It is said that no fish or other organic life exist in the Dead Sea, though it is extremely rich in chemical deposits. However, springs along the margin of the sea, at times, harbor some birds and frogs. The waters are so dense that the swimmer can sit upright and read a newspaper or magazine, or float along without sinking. There are some beautiful scenes of sunrise and sunset the visitor beholds despite the abnormal smell of driftwood, of dreary salt marshes and sulphur, and the prevalent sterility and sweltering heat pressures that seem to literally burn the shores.

> The lowest place in the continental United States of America is at Bad Water, in Death Valley, California—282 feet below sea level. There is a strangeness experienced by the visitor; how much more would it be at the Dead Sea 1,292 feet below sea level?
>
> The Dead Sea is not mentioned in the New Testament. It is referred to in the Old Testament as "the salt sea" (Genesis 14:3; Numbers 34:3, 12; Deuteronomy 3:17; Joshua 3:16, 12:3, 15:2, 5, 18:19); "the sea of the plain" (Deuteronomy 3:17; Joshua 3:16, 12:3); "the east sea" (Ezekiel 47:18; Joel 2:20); probable reference by Zechariah 14:8 as "the former sea." Josephus referred to it as "the Asphaltic Lake" or "the Sea of Asphalt" and "the Sea of Sodom" as one authority avers. The Dead Sea was first referred to as such by the Greeks in the second century.
>
> Authorities differ on the locations of Sodom and Gomorrah: some feel that the location of the destroyed cities is now buried by the waters of the southeastern part of the Dead Sea; others think it was slightly north of the Dead Sea. (6)
>
> While the location may not be as yet established let us refer to the Scriptural account of Abraham in the plains of Mamre:

6. Ibid.

"And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and behold, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Genesis 19:28.

JERUSALEM, CAPITAL OF PALESTINE

Palestine—Land of Promise—Canaan, and later christened the Holy Land, has been for centuries the focal point of the religious world, and it may well be since Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born and labored there. There were three predominant religious bodies in the area—the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes, along with the Zealots, referred to by Josephus as the "Fourth Philosophy," making four major sects. The Herodians were not a religious sect but a patriotic group that zealously followed Herod. Jesus Christ and His disciples, as well as the Early Church, carried on their work of dispensing the gospel of faith and truth while surrounded by these religious bodies of people.

In this treatment of Palestine it is unwise to attempt to refer to the many places and things of Biblical significance and interest. The avid student can easily locate his source material elsewhere. However, because of certain priorities and common appeal Jerusalem is cited for attention.

David captured it in 1000 B.C. and made it the capital of his United Empire, fortifying and welding it into a strong national and religious nucleus. King Solomon built the Temple there in 960 B.C., and Jerusalem became the center of social and religious culture, susceptible to the praise, the challenge, or the envy of other Eastern kingdoms or empires. It was the seat of the renowned, seventy-one member Sanhedrin court of the Jews, the highest authority in Jewry.

NOTE: The Hebrew name YERUSHALAIM translated means Jerusalem (Joshua 10:1). First mentioned in the Bible as SALEM or Shalem (Genesis 14:18-20). The Jebusites called it JEBUS (Judges 19:10, 11). When David captured it he named it Jerusalem, and referred to it as the city of David (II Samuel 5:6-9). About 66 years after its destruction in 70 A.D. by Titus and his legion, the Emperor Hadrian restored it as a Roman colony, naming the city Aelia Capitolina, and attempted to erect a temple to Zeus on the site where Herod's temple stood. This resulted in strong opposition, but it was not until the fourth century A.D. that the name Jerusalem was restored by Constantine. The city itself is about 2,500 feet above sea level. It is situated about 14 miles west of the north end of the Dead Sea, 5 miles north of Bethlehem, and about 22-23 miles west and a little to the south of Jericho.

Jerusalem was the city Jesus the Messiah wept over (Luke 19:41-44). It was here that the Lord was brought to trial before the Sanhedrin Court, and here that Pilate passed the fateful sentence that He was to be crucified on the cross, outside the gates of the city. He arose the third day and Jerusalem was astir because of it. Jerusalem was the nucleus of the sects of Pharisees and Sadducees, and was the city where Headquarters of the Church that Jesus established was located until Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D.

Yes, Palestine is phenomenal, with inestimable values!

The Wilderness of Judaea, where Jesus was tempted, is a rough, generally waterless terrain, a desolate piece of land east of Jerusalem that reminds one of an irregular lunar surface of caves and badlands. Looking East from the temple site, across the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where it converges with the Kidron Valley, is the Garden of Gethsemane, and farther still the famous Mount of Olives.

Palestine is truly a land of wheat and barley, vines, fig trees and pomegranates, olive oil and honey as the Bible states, to which have been added bananas and different kinds of citrus fruit. And her area is still possessed of wild animals in places, including jackals, wild-cats, hyenas, lynx, with some leopards and wolves in Galilee. There are over 400 species of birds in her mean territory. However, Palestine today has undergone change!

Let us endeavor to see Palestine in the light of the Scripture . . . the Holy Lands on which the Saviour of mankind walked, prayed and brought to us the light of life . . . the Christ born of humble parentage, but who came as the Seed to whom the promise was made . . . who said "IT IS FINISHED."

Religions and Sects in the Time of Christ

10

SUBJECTS COVERED IN TEXT

1. Face to Face With Powerful Structures 128
2. The Pharisee Sect 128
3. The Sadducee Sect 130
4. The Essenes 131
5. Other Sects and Parties 131

FACE TO FACE WITH POWERFUL STRUCTURES

It must be remembered that for centuries—from Horeb-Sinai and the Ten Commandments right on down to the advent of their promised Messiah—the Jewish people (Israelites) were securely entrenched in the doctrines of Judaism, an expression of the written and oral Torah, most of the time referred to as the Scripture and tradition. While enmeshed with ideas and doctrines of men Judaism believed in one God supreme, and the exclusive right of the Jews to preach God's message.

The Jews were a separate people, so designated in the early Scriptures as the seed of Abraham (Abram), and Deuteronomy 7:6 accords them the honor of being "above all people that are upon the face of the earth." This often plagued them when dwelling among other people in other nations, and just as often brought down the wrath of these nations against them. History indicates that no people or nation has suffered more extreme abuses, more degradation, maltreatment, shame and ruin than have the Jews. They have been driven to nations all over the world, for one reason or another, or for financial ventures, but in time they are marked "Jews" and ruthlessly slaughtered by the millions, or driven unmercifully from nation to nation . . . all because they are Jews. But they are still the progeny of Abraham, and God has His hand upon them for an appointed time. The land of Palestine was promised them by God . . . who can prevent them?

Religion among them could not be forgotten and forsaken, though some of them went into idolatry and rank apostasy. They were still Hebrews, Israelites, Jews . . . the words being used interchangeably most of the time. The word "Hebrew" first appeared in Genesis 14:13 . . . the word "Jew" first appeared in II Kings 16:6, prior to the captivity by Assyria . . . and God told Jacob his name would be "Israel" after his conflict with the angel mentioned in Genesis 32:28. It is only reasonable to expect these Jews to establish temple worship and sacrifice upon their exodus from Chaldea.

THE PHARISEE SECT

People of all nations usually have some type of religion, and

people of every era have catered to this approach in an effort to contact the Power that is higher than man to assuage guilt of conscience. Since our concern here is Biblical, we shall so pursue, for the impact of the writings of both the Old and New Testaments have left a profound impression upon the peoples of the world. It is impossible to refer to all religions that existed during the short span of the life of Christ on this earth, but it seems appropriate to refer to some of them.

The sect of the Pharisees (if we should call it that) was a Jewish religious and somewhat political party that actually emerged in the early second century B.C., and showed prominence during the Maccabean revolt—165-160 B.C., or thereabouts.***

***Their origin may be traced perhaps to an earlier Jewish sect known as the Assideans, or Hassideans—the Greek form of the Hebrew word Hasidim—which arose during the third or fourth century B.C., and which sect showed impressively during the Maccabean revolt as recorded in I Maccabees 2:42.

At first the Pharisees seemed to be a protest group against the Hellenistic influence that was invading the ranks of the religious and orthodox Jews who considered themselves successors to Ezra. They believed in a resurrection, but so multiplied trivial precepts and frivolous observances with traditions the worshipper actually did not know or understand the Written Law of God, being burdened and clouded with many trifling instructions.

They are referred to as the "separated ones" or Formalists of the Jewish people, numbering 6,000-7,000 in the time of Christ. They held to Temple worship as a national nucleus of religion but were somewhat pragmatical in the promotion of synagogue worship and observances. They represented the prevailing religious beliefs, views, opinions and social attitudes of the majority of the Jewish people . . . in one way or another . . . holding tenaciously to the Oral Law and traditions that sometimes shamed them and plagued them in spite of their embracing the Written Law, though seemingly secondary at times, in an effort to protect Judaism.

In a respect the Pharisees were a self-righteous sect that liked the attention and praises of men, and did much to polish the outward appearance. They looked with contempt upon other nations and people, and even thought the same of the Sadducees and most of the common people of their own nation. They were not considered the wealthy sect but their ranks were blessed with noble teachers and religious leaders among which were

Nicodemus, Gamaliel, Joseph of Arimathea and the Apostle Paul.

Conflict between John the Baptist and this sect was inevitable. One would certainly expect Jesus the Christ to have increasing conflict with the Pharisees for He consistently rebuked and condemned them for the way they lived and taught the people as referred to in many places in the gospels, especially in Matthew 23:1-7; Mark 7:7 and Matthew 15:9. He rebuked them for "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," and emphatically declared in Matthew 5:20 that ". . . except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

THE SADDUCEE SECT

The Sadducees were a sect or party of high priests, wealthy, influential and aristocratic families, most of whom were ready to embrace Hellenic culture. Formed also in the early part of the second century B.C., this sect was never very large but exercised power and authority, and was the most influential religious society in the economic and political life of Palestine, though not the most religiously inclined. Many of them were members of the Jewish high tribunal—the Sanhedrin.

While they rejected the Oral Laws and traditions of the Pharisees the Sadducees clung to the Written Law of Moses, usually severe in its prosecution. They did not believe in a resurrection, nor in the immortality of the soul, nor in angels, feeling there was no basis for such beliefs. To them Temple worship and sacrifice were uppermost and supreme, and they regarded the synagogue worship of the Pharisees dangerous to their national religion and the overall aspects of Temple worship of Judaism as recommended by the Law of Moses.

They were unpopular with the common people whom they seemed to shun except when it was advantageous for them. The Roman rulers held them in high esteem as a rule, since they influenced the control of the Jewish people. They held conservative views of the Written Law and judged accordingly. Because of the vast difference Jesus had much less to say of them than of the Pharisees, though He assailed them along with the Pharisees as mentioned by Matthew 16:6-12. They are mentioned also in Acts 4:1; 5:17; 23:6-8. They conspired in the crucifixion of Jesus, the death of James and the death of Stephen, besides Peter's imprisonment.

This sect apparently disappeared with the destruction of

Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and never seemed to arise to prominence again.

THE ESSENES

According to Josephus, the Essenes was a Jewish sect or society that arose in the second century B.C., but disappeared by the end of A.D. 1, their monks numbering approximately 4,000. At the close of the first century B.C. their stronghold was located on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea region.

Theirs was a genuine monastic life and community, probably the first of its kind in existence. They did not secede from Judaism, but refused to participate in Temple rites that sacrificed animals; they offered only flour and oil in their rites of worship. They withdrew from the city and Temple religious observances they considered corrupt, took no active part with the masses, but sought God in a simple life in the Wilderness of Judaea.

It is said they arose at dawn, worshipped and worked until nearly noon, bathed in cold water, and recited grace before and after their midday meal (which was observed in strict silence). But for few exceptions women were excluded from the order, and they allowed probational procedures of proselytes to replenish their numbers.

OTHER SECTS AND PARTIES

A. THE ZEALOTS . . . called by Josephus the "fourth Philosophy," was a Jewish sect prominent from 37 B.C. until its disappearance with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. They were militant and sublimely stedfast in the preservation of Judaism. Scriptures indicate that before his call to follow Jesus Christ the Jewish Simon Zelotes may have belonged to this sect (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13).

2. THE HERODIANS . . . (Matthew 22:15; Mark 12:13) was a party among the Jews that supported the Herodian family as a last hope of retaining for themselves a bare particle of national government, rather than be in absolute dependence on Rome. Naturally they paid tribute to the supreme power—Caesar.

3. THE HELLENISTS . . . were Greek-speaking Jews of the Dispersion, or Diaspora, as well as some Greeks referred to in Acts 6:1 and Acts 9:29. These Jews adopted Greek habits and customs which resulted in conflict with the more pious Jews of Palestine, especially the ultra-orthodox Jews.



Seen here are the ruins of the ancient Roman Colosseum which was begun during the reign of the Roman Emperor Vespasian in A.D. 70. This oval-shaped amphitheater is 617 by 512 feet. It was here that many a witness for Jesus Christ gave his life to the beasts of the arena.

Ruins of the colossal amphitheater at Caesarea by the sea coast, Roman capital of the land of Palestine during its occupation by Rome. It was at Caesarea that Apostle Paul was tried before Felix, Festus and where he spoke to King Agrippa about Jesus Christ, spending more than two years in prison at the time.



John the Baptist Makes His Lone Appearance

11

SUBJECTS COVERED IN TEXT

1. Voice Crying in the Wilderness 134
2. John Leads Pastoral Life 135
3. John Heralds the Messiah 136
4. John the Baptist Is Beheaded 137

VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

It is necessary and convenient at this time to relate some events and occurrences surrounding the awe-inspiring life and works of John the Baptist, a man sent from God to prepare the way for the Messiah, the Son of God. Never before nor since has any man been entrusted with such a divine and inimitable challenge and responsibility. Jesus, speaking of John, said, "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see . . . a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist . . ." Luke 7:24-28.

The ordinary residential area provided for the priesthood families is designated in Joshua 21:11. From all indications Zacharias and Elizabeth resided at Hebron, a city in the hill country of Judah, located about forty miles slightly southwest of Jerusalem, and perhaps seventy miles south of Nazareth of Galilee. Zacharias was a priest of the course of Abiah (I Chronicles 24:10), and his duty was to burn incense when he went into the temple at Jerusalem to serve. This was an extremely important function of worship during which all the people outside were praying.

With lineage from the priestly house of Aaron both Zacharias and Elizabeth were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless (Luke 1:5, 6). This was spectacular in its own right for the religious life and morals of the Jews had deteriorated alarmingly. It seemed they placed no trust in one another, and because of their own divisiveness they suffered one extremity after another. However, in spite of the conditions some of them could reflect favorably upon the prophecy of Genesis 49:10, for the Deliverer was yet to come.

Zacharias and Elizabeth were well stricken in years. Elizabeth was barren, a shame that women in the Bible days detested. While Zacharias served at the temple the angel Gabriel appeared on the right side of the altar of incense. He told Zacharias that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son and the son was to be called John; and

he would be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. As a sign Zacharias was speechless until the eighth day after John was born. It was on that eighth day that God loosed Zacharias' tongue and with great joy he was filled with the Holy Ghost (Luke 1:67), as had been his wife Elizabeth before him (Luke 1:41). Following this the aged priest gave to the world a masterpiece in prophetical encomium (Luke 1:68-79). This evidently occurred in the summer of 5 B.C., six months before the birth of Jesus the Saviour. (1) The accuracy of chronology is uncertain.

> The sudden appearance of the angel Gabriel to Zacharias was encouraging and rewarding. There had been about 400 years of silence—a time when no prophecy or angelic ministry had been vouchsafed to the people. The last such prophecy was also by a priest named Zacharias, who was murdered between the temple and the altar, and is recorded in II Chronicles 24:20, 21. He was the last martyr referred to by Jesus in Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51 . . . from Abel to Zacharias . . . since Chronicles was the last book in the Hebrew Canon in the Lord's day, and still is today.

JOHN LEADS PASTORAL LIFE

John grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts alone with God, disciplining himself for the task assigned him. He was a man sent from God, in the spirit and power of Elias (Luke 1:17), and it is expected that his austere life in such a pastoral setting would, to some extent, follow the pattern of the life of Elias. The assumption that he was an exponent of some of the asceticism and communal life of the Essenes is without scriptural foundation.

> It appears that John dressed in the customary garb of the prophets—a course or rough covering, spoken of in Zechariah 13:4, and worn by Elijah (II Kings 1:8). John's meat was locusts and wild honey. Since the insects called locusts are a principal part of some Eastern meals, it is believed by commentators that this was what John ate, with the wild honey gathered from holes in rocks and shrubs where wild bees had deposited it. However,

1. Peloubet's Bible Dictionary. Harper's Bible Dictionary, By Miller. Others seem to think that 6 B.C. is acceptable date of birth of Jesus, with John six months prior. (William C. Martin M.A., B.D. in "These Were God's People" (A Bible History) . . . Published by The Southwestern Company, Nashville, Tennessee. (Page 386)

a few still feel the locust referred to was a part of the tree by that name, but authorities discredit this viewpoint.

JOHN HERALDS THE MESSIAH

It was on the banks of the Jordan that John's crystal-clear messages stirred the people. The word of God came to him (Luke 3:2, 3) and he preached saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Matthew 3:2, 3. He declared he was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light—Jesus Christ (John 1:8). He preached and established water baptism as essential (by immersion), warning the people to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. He admonished them to flee the wrath to come . . . the ax was laid at the root of the tree. His messages were dynamic, filled with fire and judgment without a hint of recreance—the sole recourse of life rested in God. The judgment was sure!

His messages were powerful, and without respect to individual, class, position, national or racial origin . . . in his sight they were all alike. The lower and common classes were receptive, but many of the upper class rejected his admonishings. Disciples followed him (Matthew 9:14; Luke 7:18) and he taught them to fast and pray (Luke 11:1; Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33). He was a zealous tireless laborer in the challenge. But, as he prepared the way of the Lord he pointed continually to that Light that was to follow. ". . . one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire . . . he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner . . ." Luke 3:16, 17. What does the garner represent? John declared he would decrease but the One to follow him would increase. No self-esteem in John!

According to reliable chronologies it is believed that John baptized Jesus the latter part of A.D. 26 or early A.D. 27, and the Sonship of Jesus was annunciated. The Scriptures do not imply that John and Jesus were well acquainted before the baptism, for John 1:33, 34 says, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." And the next day, seeing Jesus walking before them, John said to two of his disciples, "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!"

His ministry was not to continue long. King Herod Antipas had heard John preach, and heard him gladly at times, for John was a just man and holy (Mark 6:20). But when he condemned Herod for having his brother Philip's wife, Herodias, it infuriated the whorish woman and she would have killed John herself, but couldn't (Mark 6:19). In March 28 A.D. Herod imprisoned John in his castle at Machaerus, a fortress on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, where the King often resorted for entertainment and revelry. It was the King's hideaway.

> Herod the Great, son of Antipater the Idumaean, had ten wives. One of them, a Samaritan named Malthace had two sons—Archelaus and Antipas. Archelaus ruled Judaea, Samaria and Idumaea as ethnarch until 6 A.D., when he was accused of tyranny and banished. Then Herod Antipas ruled Galilee and Peraea until 39 A.D. Herodias eloped from Herod Philip, her lawful husband, to marry Herod Antipas, taking her daughter (Salome) with her. Herodias was set in fury against John the Baptist who had condemned her and her lewd life with Herod Antipas (Matthew 14:4, 5).

JOHN THE BAPTIST IS BEHEADED

Herod Antipas held a court festival to celebrate his birthday, at Machaerus. His many captains, party of lords and chief estates of Galilee had assembled for the gala occasion. They celebrated it with glee, and the daughter of Herodias danced to entertain the King and his festival party, evidently after supper. Herod was so pleased with her beauty, grace and performance that he promised under oath to give her whatever she requested. Herodias might have felt bypassed and alone, since her daughter received such honor, but not for long. It seems reasonable to feel that Salome knew all about her mother's hatred of John because he had condemned her whorish and ungodly living. It seems that women then often hated, and sometimes mistreated, one another because of strife, envy and jealousy, lust and passion, and if there had been such between the daughter and her mother it was justified by the daughter seeking the advice of her mother. It was a cherished privilege for Herodias to advise her daughter to ask for the head of John on a charger, or platter (Matthew 14:8). Herodias pursued her own plan to wreak bestial vengeance and satiate her cruel lusts and passions for the blood of a saint.

This happened in 29 A.D., at the castle imprisonment . . . not in a public place for Herod feared the people . . . and it was night-

time, after supper. It occurred just before the third passover of Jesus' ministry. John preached with power, for about twenty-five years later at Ephesus, Apollos knew only John's baptism (Acts 18:24, 25). No prophet born of woman was greater than John, so said Jesus Himself!***

***Josephus indicates in his "Antiquities" the Jews felt the Lord avenged the death of John the Baptist by causing Herod (through the instigation of Herodias) to lose his government, after his army was cut to pieces by the forces of Aretas, king of Petrea, father of the despot's first wife. Herodias went into voluntary exile with Herod Antipas who was banished to Lyons in France.

Matthew Henry relates that while going over the ice in winter the ice broke with Salome, daughter of Herodias, who had danced before the King, and she slipped in, up to her neck, and her neck was cut through by the sharp ice, and she was killed . . . God requiring her head for that of John the Baptist, which, if true, was a remarkable providence. (Page 115, of Matthew Henry's Commentary.)

The Seed to Whom the Promise Was Made

12

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THE SEED OF PROMISE ARRIVES

"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith . . . Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect . . . God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:14-19, 22-26, 29.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH

The strange and immaculate birth of Jesus—the Promised Seed—Messiah to all mankind, retains an unparalleled position in the long historicity of the world. It was a heralded event that was destined to change the whole course of human history. Since the early wake of man's history, when he fell by transgression from his holy estate, the bequest of the Lord has run like a ribbon of gold across the pages of time to traverse epoch after epoch and era after era, until the Seed of Promise came through Jesus the Christ. Time transpired and God sent His angel, Gabriel, to break the long-awaited news to Mary, a virgin who had never known a man.

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed

art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:26-35.

God gave the Messiah a role no other, not even the angels of heaven were permitted to indulge—vested powers for the redemption of the soul of man. Matthew 1:21 explains, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Both evangelists, Matthew and Luke, give vivid descriptions of the birth of Jesus, and both of them give a detailed genealogy of His lineage, proving with all credibility He was the Messiah that was to come. (1)

Matthew 1:17 explains: "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations."

If there seems to be any inconsistencies worthy of pursuit in the genealogies of the Promised Seed, given by Matthew and Luke, the student should consult Adam Clarke's Commentary, or other reliable references. We are at a loss to know why Matthew failed to list Jehoiakim (I Chronicles 3:15), second son of Josias. Jehoiakim was the father of Jechonias. Josias was grandfather to Jechonias. Since this is somewhat clarified now we list below the other names of the genealogy as given by Matthew, including the name of Jehoiakim, in three columns:

1. Matthew, chapters 1 and 2. Luke, chapters 1, 2 and 3. "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" by Alfred Edersheim, Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., (two volumes) is an exhaustive study of the life of Christ, and should be in every library.

1. Abraham	1. Solomon	1. Jechonias
2. Isaac	2. Rehoboam	2. Salathiel
3. Jacob	3. Abia	3. Zorobabel
4. Judah	4. Asa	4. Abiud
5. Pharez	5. Josaphat	5. Eliakim
6. Esrom	6. Joram	6. Azor
7. Aram	7. Ozias	7. Sadoc
8. Aminadab	8. Joatham	8. Achim
9. Naason	9. Achaz	9. Eliud
10. Salmon	10. Ezekias	10. Eleazer
11. Boaz	11. Manasses	11. Matthan
12. Obed	12. Amon	12. Jacob
13. Jesse	13. Josias	13. Joseph
14. David	14. Jehoiakim	14. JESUS

Forty-two generations in all, as listed by Matthew.

The exact date when Jesus the Messiah was born has not been determined with absolute certainty. There are many assumptions, some of which bear a degree of credence, but the explanation by Alfred Edersheim seems most credible and tenable in spite of conflicting opinions and theories extant. (2)

The Roman Emperor Antony appointed Herod the Idumaean, later referred to as Herod the Great, tetrarch of Judea in 41 B.C., and the following year (40 B.C.) King of Judea. He was King when Jesus the Messiah was born. He was King when the wise men from the East came to inquire of him just where the King of the Jews should be born (Matthew 2:1-7). He had reigned over Judea for 37 years. King Herod the Great was a cruel and suspicious, despotic tyrant, and the annunciation by the wise men of a forthcoming King roused in him a rage of jealousy. He sent and slew all the male children, two years old and under, in Bethlehem and the vicinity in an attempt to destroy the Messiah.

So, reason leaves us to accept Gospel-history that allows an interval of several weeks:

1. Mary's purification following the birth of Jesus was about six weeks or longer, depending upon conditions of the Mother.

2. Herod's weariness and worry for decision to murder children after the annunciation concerning the forthcoming King of the Jews.

3. Necessary time required to concoct the murderous plan.

4. Elapse of time from journey of the wise men to see the Babe and present gifts to Him, until Herod despaired to believe their

2. **"The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah." By Alfred Edersheim . . . Page 704, Vol. 2.**

return, and felt mocked by them . . . who were long-time gone home.

5. Bedfast sickness from an awful disease of which Herod died at Jericho in, or about, April, 4 B.C., at the age of 69 years.

This seems to conclude with an ecclesiastical date of about December 25th, B.C. 5, especially if time is assumed to be computed from the death of Herod the Great in April, B.C. 4. Reason for the discrepancy is because the learned monk Dionysius Exiguus, when calculating dates for calendarical purposes in the sixth century made an error of four years before the era from which we count our years—Anno Domini, or A.D. Therefore, the exact date from the birth of Jesus to this year of 1972 is actually 1976, but we compute our dates from "Anno Domini" which simply means the "year of our Lord." Jesus had to be born before the death of Herod, according to the Scriptures.

Edersheim feels the shepherds that kept watch over the flocks by night were not ordinary shepherds, but shepherds that kept vigil over the Temple-flocks the year round. Others seem to feel the sheep were kept in a sort of sheepfold in order to guard against beasts and other dangers. Usually flocks were kept within proper range, even for Temple sacrifices, but some authorities say they were customarily turned loose thirty days before the Passover. While the journey was not too great it required more time to travel at night, but the shepherds were unerringly guided. Jewish tradition revealed a deep-settled conviction that the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

Could it be said these shepherds were the first preachers of the Gospel of Christ, enthusiastically proclaiming as their text, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14)?

Who knows . . . they might have known the first prophecy of Jesus (Genesis 3:15), the nation of His birth (Genesis 22:15-18), the tribe of His birth (Genesis 49:10), the family of His birth (Isaiah 11:10-12), the town of His birth (Micah 5:2), the date of His birth (Daniel 9:25), and His responsibilities as the Messiah (Isaiah 9:6, 7). Yes . . . who knows? Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15 and Isaiah 11:1 refer to Him as a Branch. Let us remember the common people heard Him gladly.

Jesus was circumcised at eight days old (Luke 2:21). The Rabbinic law set a mother's purification for a son at forty-one days, and for a daughter at eighty-one days, (Edersheim says, page 194, Volume One, the Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah). The sacrifice offerings for the rich were lambs, but for

the middle class and poor were either a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons (Luke 2:24).

SIMEON BEHOLDS THE CHRIST CHILD

In spite of the rigidity and inequities of the Jewish laws and traditions God still moved among the just and devout people who seemed to dwell in the secret places of the Most High. Not only did they observe the Law but their piety made them susceptible to the divine guidance of the Spirit of God sent among them at times, and for special occasions.

Such was the experience of Simeon, a just and devout, elderly man of Jerusalem, who was moved by the Holy Ghost. It was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Like many others he waited for the consolation of Israel—the advent of the Messiah who was to be Israel's redemption. This was an event universally expected by the devout Jews. Simeon was led of the Spirit into the temple, and when Joseph and Mary brought in Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the law he took the Christ Child into his arms and blessed the Lord. He then eulogized the long-contemplated event in a paragon of matchless adoration and consolation (Luke 2:25-35).

Some scholars are of the opinion that Simeon was a son to the renowned Hillel, one of the most celebrated of the doctors and philosophers of the Jewish nation since Moses. Many think he was the president of the great Sanhedrin Jewish court. Whether or not he was either or both, let him be remembered as a just and devout man of God, with whom the Spirit certainly visited at times.

ANNA SCATTERS THE GOOD NEWS

Luke speaks also of Anna, a prophetess, who served God with fastings and prayer, and one whose piety gained her recognition in the Sacred Writ. She was a holy woman, had an extensive knowledge of godly things and possessed a personal experience with God that enabled her to counsel others in Divine things. When she beheld the young Child she immediately gave thanks to the Lord. So thrilled was she with seeing the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel, that she told all those whom she met, coming and going at the temple, about the good news she had learned (Luke 2:36-38).

SOME EVENTS NOT EXPLAINED

While some learned people cater to specifics, it seems unwise to attempt to re-evaluate events, time and sequence in an effort to compare the journeying of the holy family from the temple as related by Matthew and Luke. Matthew 2:14 tells us they went to Egypt, while Luke 2:39 says they returned to Nazareth in Galilee. Both could be authentic considering the time element involved, with no conflict suspected. The Christ Child had already been born (Matthew 2:2) when the wise men approached Herod. How long were the wise men enroute to Bethlehem? How long had the Babe been born when they arrived and went into the house (Matthew 2:11)? How long had it been before Herod felt he was mocked and deceived? How long before he decreed to slay all male children two years old and under? These things are not recorded. When Mary's purification period of approximately six weeks was over they may easily have returned to Nazareth, to their home; and they might not have learned of Herod's intention to slay the male children until then, when the angel of the Lord warned them to flee to Egypt, where they remained until Herod's death (Matthew 2:19-21). Neither Matthew nor Luke has detailed the chronology of these early events, though students suggest entities of adjustment. However, some things must be assumed for reasonable motivation of the godly trend, or golden thread of sequence, though not actually pertinent to the great purpose of redemption. The record says the family went to the city of Nazareth, in Galilee, after returning from Egypt.

> If the clause "they are dead which sought the young child's life," suggesting more than just Herod himself, seems strange, remember that five days before the despot Herod died he had his son Antipater, heir-apparent to the throne, put to death . . . and this clause may refer to these two.

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

Neither Matthew, Mark nor John speak of the boyhood of Jesus. The only account given by Luke is somewhat meager, but impressive. When He was twelve years old He went with His parents to the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem. According to Exodus 23:17 and Exodus 34:23 all the male children were obliged to appear before the Lord at the three public festivals—feast of the unleavened bread, feast of the weeks, and feast of the tabernacles. Enjoined by the law to make their three appearances

at Jerusalem it is thought by many that the age of twelve was the appropriate age for this. (3) Young men at thirteen years of age were privileged to wear their first phylacteries strapped to the left arm, during the morning prayers.

When the eight feast days were over—one day for the Passover and seven for the days of unleavened bread—Joseph and Mary, along with the other worshippers, left for Nazareth, and their homes elsewhere up the valley and among the hills and towns of Galilee. Jesus was not with the men or women. Each parent supposed Him to be with the other, as they traveled separately, and at His age He could travel with either party, or parent. After three days of searching the parents found Him in the temple, where He had been sitting with the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, and the doctors had been curiously astonished. His mother reproved Him for causing them much worry. He asked why they sought Him . . . did they not know or realize that He had to be about His Father's business? To paraphrase the thought, "Why did you leave me . . . why leave my company? You should have stayed with me . . . for I have work to do for my Father—work that I came from heaven to do . . . and I must do it. Don't you understand?"

He returned to Nazareth with them and was subject to them, increasing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. He lived among people and gained favor with them, as well as with God; but He never lost sight of His mission to mankind—the long-awaited redemption of both Jew and Gentile. He was the "One wiser than Solomon," the "One greater than the temple," the "One who was Lord of the Sabbath," the "One who had power on earth to forgive sins," the "One who conquered death, hell and the grave," and the "only One commissioned to come on the clouds with power and great glory . . . to resurrect the dead saints, and to catch away the living saints to meet Him in the air" in an unparalleled and spectacular event. Yes . . . He is the Seed of Promise!

God grant that all mankind, all over this entire world can see Him—the long-awaited Messiah—unfold the plan for the complete redemption of everyone who will find Him and walk in His footsteps. The wealthy and the indigent, the great and the small, the bond and the free . . . men, women and children of every caliber in life, of every nation, kindred, tongue and color, can be baptized in the flowing and mighty stream of righteousness that

3. Notes on Luke 2:41 . . . By Adam Clarke.

gushed forth from the fountain of His shed blood at the Cross on Golgotha.

> "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life . . ." St. John 3:34-36.

THE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST

The supreme mission of Jesus Christ was the complete redemption of fallen man. God had created man in His own image (Genesis 1:27) and he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). All His creations were good (Genesis 1:31), yet none of them had a soul but the man He created. Man has since held a respected place in the memory of God. Why? Because he is a living soul. God has been mindful of him (Job 7:17; Psalms 8:4; Hebrews 2:6) because HE IS A LIVING SOUL . . . not a "has-been" or a "going-to-be" but is right now a living soul!

When Satan overcame man in the Garden of Eden—his paradise—he fell from his holy estate in the kingdom of God and joined the forces of Satan and his kingdom. Since the Fall that plunged the world into universal iniquity, man has been subjected to the wiles, wickedness and woes of the kingdom of Satan until he is arrested, converted and rescued with the purchase price of redemption—the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

In a sense, Satan's kingdom is devisive, yet it is strongly coersive in concept, power and principle. Evil belongs to him, and he utilizes every division and faction available to advance it. Not only is he author and promoter of all concepts of evil and sin, but he is Satan—master of the whole ugly retinue of wrong. Some composite factors of evil are mentioned in I Corinthians 6:9, 10 and Galatians 5:19-21. The writer of these epistles declares frankly that such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God . . . no evil can be brought into God's kingdom. There is no place for it! There had been a time when Satan and his angels sought to corrupt the kingdom of God, but he and his angels were cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-19). Jesus Himself said in Luke 10:18: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." There is simply no place in the kingdom of God for sin and wrong! Because of this a place of punishment was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

Man should forebear intrusion of Satan's kingdom, but he

cannot until a power higher than Satan rescues him. For this very purpose and mission the Saviour came to this world . . . came to redeem man and convert him from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God. By this means the whole structure of sin and evil that man accepted when he reached knowledgeable insight, and became accountable, is mortified and destroyed when he is born again, and sanctified by the blood shed by the Saviour to purchase "the living soul," the "inner man" that every person possesses.

Notwithstanding, a converted person, however sincere, is not immune to the temptations of Satan. The new birth puts one into the kingdom of God where no evil exists, but if he sins again his only recourse is repentance. Christians highly respect John 3:16. The failures of man are his . . . and should never reflect on the mercies and redemptive purpose of the Saviour. God's kingdom is holy . . . is sanctified . . . is glorious . . . an all-powerful structure of celestial bliss from which Satan and his host have been excluded.

Heaven could not come to earth . . . God's kingdom was not to be brought down to earth as an army or armored host, but the Spirit of His kingdom was brought to mankind in the person of Jesus, God's Son, through Whom is proclaimed redemption for all believers. Now, "whosoever will" is partaker of His holiness. Unless one has the kingdom blessings within, while residing in this present world, how can he expect to enter the holy realms of heaven without them? This was the avowed mission of Jesus to this world . . . redemption, and the gathering of God's people.

Here, God's kingdom is the influence and possession of godliness wrought through the born-again experience—the definite change from Satan's sinning and sinful kingdom to God's sinless kingdom. There is no record of a halfway ground. One is either a Christian or he is a sinner—not "too bad for heaven and too good for hell." There is little excuse, for it has been reasonably explained that Jesus brought to mankind the same Spirit that prevails in His Father's kingdom—a revelation of the penitence essential to redemption that molds one into a fit vessel for the kingdom of God. His mission is matchless in scope and purpose; who can disavow it?

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24. Man is required to have the same Spirit that prevades the kingdom of God—this Spirit must be born within him as an individual—if he expects to be a partaker. God's kingdom has but one class of people, the redeemed! The sinner and the unredeemed form the other class

that belongs to the kingdom of Satan. Every person has an "inner man" that must be changed, or converted from the kingdom of Satan—through penitence and faith—to the kingdom of God.

In some respects in the days of yore, to many of those serving the Law and during the days of some of the prophets, God seemed transcendent in their particularization of confidence for justification or condemnation He meted at will, though they looked through the "dark glass" at times. They saw the promises afar off and embraced them, but confessed they were strangers and pilgrims (Hebrews 11:13).

But when Jesus, the Son of God, appeared and fulfilled the prophecies relating to Himself, He became Master of redemption, and crashed many philosophical barriers with tangible and spiritual assets that have affected the whole of mankind in one way or another. The conflict of the greedy mind with the penitent, Spirit-hungry soul is ever present, and has been from the Fall, but the restless unsatisfied mind has never been able to subdue and incarcerate the surging of the power of the Spirit indwelling the soul of man. Behold the power of redemption!

Once baptized with the Holy Ghost one is His enlivened temple (I Corinthians 6:19, 20), the inexpressible denouement of God's incessant efforts to rehabilitate him to his sinless status before the Fall, and guide in his quest for perfection. The Scriptures refer to the redeemed as the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16), a place where God may be found, His work seen, His name heard any time, anywhere, under different circumstances. The real born-again Christian, the Spirit-filled person, is never justly gauged by his reactions when subjected to trial and tribulation alone; no, not until he is observed in his reactions to the blissful heights and glories of his most profound ecstacies. Then . . . only then is God properly beheld in the soul of man!

The course of redemption has never ceased from the very hour Jesus left the carpenter shop and embarked on His mission to rescue the soul of man. It will continue until every person has been reached (Mark 16:15; Matthew 24:14; Matthew 28:19, 20). But there will come a time for the finale of all redemptive pursuit, a time when it is all finished and the Saviour, God's Son, presents to His Father the achievements wrought through His matchless work of redemption for the glorious kingdom of God (I Corinthians 15:24). Then the labors, the sufferings and sacrifices of those who prepared themselves will glisten like the stars of the firmament in an unparalleled celestial bliss of assurance.

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

A common opinion is held that Joseph, the husband of Mary, died before Jesus began His public ministry. This seems creditable in view of Mark 6:3, where Jesus Himself is called "the carpenter," and some presume Him to have been a bread-winner in the home. Joseph is not mentioned; just Mary and the family. Customarily the family head is mentioned with the offspring. Both John 19:29 and Matthew 12:46 imply the absence of Joseph, who was a just and pious Israelite and faithfully observed the Jewish ordinances and feasts (Luke 2:21-24, 41-52). There seems to be no record of when and where he died. The opinion that the ministry of Jesus was probably delayed because of the role He had to play for the livelihood of his mother, since Joseph was deceased, is conjectural.

The Jewish people seemed to detest idleness among the male children and consequently requested, or required, them to learn a trade. It was no different with Jesus, and no record is made of any complaint by Him. It stands to reason that He would do His work well, and no doubt He was known throughout Nazareth, as well as the vicinity (Matthew 13:54-56). But the time came when the old carpenter shop lost its appeal and Jesus turned His back on it and left it for the last time.

The Scripture says in Luke 3:23, "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age . . ." This age is a key to the beginning of His ministry as the Promised Seed spoken of by Abraham, and the Law and prophets. John the Baptist had been preaching and baptizing on both sides of the Jordan River for about six months, stirring up the people everywhere to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. It was near the close of John's ministry when Jesus left the carpenter shop and journeyed off down the Jordan Valley to where John was baptizing candidates in the Jordan River, at or near Bethabara, now believed to be about thirteen miles below the Sea of Galilee.

> "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13-17.



This picture was taken a short distance from where the Jordan River begins its long meandering course to the Sea of Galilee, thence down the tremendous recession of the Jordan Valley to the Dead Sea which is about 1300 feet below sea level.

As aforesaid this baptism probably took place in A.D. 26 or early A.D. 27. It is obvious that the indisputable presence of the Godhead was observed—Jesus the Son of God could be seen . . . the Holy Ghost in bodily shape like a dove was seen . . . and the voice of God out of heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Following His baptism in water Jesus was led of the Spirit into the Wilderness where he fasted forty days and nights and was tempted of the devil.

> The Spirit that led Jesus to the Wilderness was the Holy Ghost and certainly not Satan that was to bring temptation. It is suggested that the Wilderness was the uninhabited, rough and generally waterless area east of Jerusalem and near the Dead Sea. Wild beasts are said to have infested this area in the time of Jesus.

Jesus met the devil on his own grounds of temptation in strong combat and mastered the three root temptations that assail mankind . . . and the Master boldly and fearlessly defeated those majors to which all temptations are subservient. John 3:34 says, ". . . for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Following the temptations Jesus went to Bethabara to see John

who seeing the Son of God approaching said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. The next day John was standing with two of his disciples, Andrew and probably John, and looking upon Jesus as He walked before them lauded Him openly, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

The two disciples of John, Andrew and probably John, left their former leader—John the Baptist—and followed Jesus, desiring to know where He dwelled. Jesus answered them, "Come and see." They went with Him and abode with Him, for it was the tenth hour, generally believed to be about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon. (John 1:36-39).

Andrew led his brother Simon Peter to the Lord. The next day Jesus called Philip to follow Him. Philip found Nathanael and led him to Jesus, and the Lord recognized Nathanael as a devout Israelite. Later by the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 4:18-22) Jesus called the first four disciples to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. These were Simon Peter and his brother Andrew, and James and John, sons of Zebedee, all of them fishermen on the Sea of Galilee.

Later, on His way to Capernaum He called Levi (Matthew), the publican, sitting at the receipt of custom, to follow Him (Luke 5:27; Matthew 9:9). Matthew, or Levi, made a great feast and many publicans and sinners sat with him and the Lord at the feast. The Pharisees criticized the disciples for partaking of the feast with so many sinners, but in spite of all verbal assaults and acrimony Levi left all and followed Jesus.

Thus the Lord Jesus commenced His wonderful ministry, by calling a few disciples here and there while He gained followers in great numbers. As He walked the roads and trails of the Holy Lands He met the throngs of sufferers, the maimed, the blind, the lame, the halt and ministered to their needs. He demonstrated His power to save, to heal, and to cast out devils as He preached, taught and instructed about the kingdom of God. His fame spread abroad everywhere.

JESUS PREACHED THE KINGDOM

Psalm 22:28 cites the fact that the kingdom is the Lord's. And in Matthew 6:13, while teaching His disciples how to pray, Jesus said, ". . . For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever . . ." He pointed to the sublime Head of the kingdom. When Pilate wanted to know what Jesus had done, and if He were

the King of the Jews, Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world . . ." John 18:36. Many other Scriptures support this assertion . . . Jesus was the Son of God (Luke 3:22; Matthew 3:17; Hebrews 1:1-8). He was the Word of God manifested in flesh, and preached the kingdom from whence He had come. John the Baptist also preached the kingdom (Matthew 3:2). He was a man sent from God (John 1:6). He was the voice crying in the wilderness, pointing people to Christ, "the One mightier than he," Who was to fulfill the promises.

There is absolutely no monopoly on God's kingdom! No church, no particular group or body of people, and certainly no individuals can appropriate to themselves the blessings and the privileges accorded the kingdom of God. The Almighty Himself reserved all rights and prerogatives (Isaiah 56:8) and it is in vain to attempt extenuation. Jesus is the door (John 10:7-9). No one can enter illegally or falsely—no deception or hypocrisy.

Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Mark 1:14, 15). The new birth itself puts the convert into the kingdom of God (John 3:3-7). This process may not always be easily comprehended whether one is learned or unlearned. Nicodemus was a learned man, a ruler of the Jews, and a member of the famed Sanhedrin, yet Jesus had to explain to him, three times, the importance of the new birth. The Lord said, ". . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus never meant that Nicodemus could look upon this blessing with his natural eyes, but, being the intellectual he was, he could discern it, could experience and undergo the change, and could understand and possess it as a genuine and fundamental attribute of God. There was great assurance in the words of Christ.

The Scriptures clearly indicate that the kingdom of God cannot be observed, seen with the natural eye or looked upon, and wisdom concurs. When the Pharisees wanted to know when the kingdom of God should come Jesus answered them, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20, 21. That is, one cannot see or observe the kingdom of God as he would look upon a building, airplane, mountain, a group of people, or a church intact, because the kingdom blessing is hidden within man . . . is invisible. Every person has an "Inner Man" manipulated by the spirit, and when this "Inner Man" is convicted of sin and wrong, repents and believes the gospel of Jesus Christ, he is "born again" by the Spirit of God, which experience puts him in the kingdom of God. He no longer is

servant to evil, but to godliness, if he remains born again.

Someone may ask what the kingdom of God is; such query is justified. The Apostle Paul gave a logical answer in Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Here reason dictates to conscience. Who can see righteousness? Who can see peace? Who can see joy in the Holy Ghost? This is invisible . . . all covered over so that it is invisible to the eye, the ear and the impressive faculties of observation. One cannot see it, taste it, smell it, drink or eat it as a satisfying portion for the natural man. The spiritual experience is in the heart, or soul of man. The fruit of the born again experience can be seen but not the experience itself. When a bomb explodes on target the bomb itself is not observed anymore . . . only the repercussion or reaction from having been there. So it is with the fruit of the born-again experience . . . you don't see the kingdom blessing but only the reaction of its presence within the human soul.

Therefore it is conceded that the miraculous, invisible new birth puts the determined seeker in the kingdom of God, and he becomes a member of the family of God . . . born into it and regenerated from his former status of evil . . . now a follower and disciple of the Lord (Colossians 1:13, 14). People know that he is a disciple of the Lord's because he bears fruit commensurate to the challenge of the Christian convert, willingly submissive. Why? Because the born-again experience is replete with power within its own right, without interfering with the respective rights of the deeper experiences yet to come.

One is born into the family of God, or the household as some may suggest. Paul, when referring to the wall between those who were called the Circumcism and those who were called the Uncircumcism (Ephesians 2:11-13), said, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Ephesians 2:14-19. This surely is understood that when we are "born again" as the Scriptures demand us if we would be saved we become a member of the family of God. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of

whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Ephesians 3:11, 14, 15.

Redemption is deliverance from sin . . . salvation. Just one kind . . . through a simple repentance, relinquishment of self, and personal faith in Jesus Christ who came to redeem mankind.

The Kingdom of God and the Church of God

13

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LAW AND TRADITIONS CONFLICT WITH GRACE

It was not too difficult to ascertain the marked contrast of doctrine and precept of the Pharisee and Sadducee sects, notwithstanding their unified efforts to keep alive Temple worship and sacrifice as practiced by their forefathers. (1) The Sadducees opposed synagogue worship as promoted by the Pharisees, whose aims were to reach and serve others. Barring other sects and creeds of the region, the contrasts, differences and language made observances difficult for the worshipper.***

***Aramaic was the vernacular language of the majority, many of whom also spoke Greek. This made it rather difficult for the average worshipper in temple worship where Hebrew was practiced. Inevitably it fostered confusion among those returning from their Feast Days at Jerusalem. History indicates that much of the Scripture was translated into Aramaic for synagogue worship, making it easier to understand. It is believed by Bible students that Jesus spoke Galilean Aramaic, as did His disciples of Galilee. This seems suggestive in Luke 4:15-21, as Jesus' mission was to all mankind.

It is easily seen why a worshipper's understanding may be stymied, his concept and concern uncertain, leaving him puzzled for procedure. An examen of his personal conscience clearly revealed his sincerity and integrity for Jehovah. Yet, there seemed to be little room for such in the existing hierarchy of Jewry.

The Pharisees and Sadducees had doctrinal differences that opposed each other, and these issues were important to the common man, especially. It was easily seen in Paul's day. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both." Acts 23:8. Since there was diversity of belief and doctrine it was reasonable to anticipate and expect the Mosaic Law and traditions to conflict with grace and truth as abridged by John the Baptist and brought into powerful

1. **To the orthodox Jews the entire world was divided, and so far as they were concerned there were only two classes, "Jews and Gentiles," apparently feeling themselves to be the favorites of God, and all others simply outcasts. Likewise, the Greeks held to two classes, "Greeks and Barbarians," with less exclusiveness. Jesus tore down the middle wall of partition (Ephesians 2:14).**

operation by Jesus Christ. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." St. John 1:17. Vested in the Mosaic Law were the powers to justify and the powers to condemn. Yet, these powers could never give the penitent seeker—the sinner, the criminal, the unruly, unholy, ungodly trucebreaker—a "born-again" experience wrought in the heart of the individual himself. The letter of the Law was excruciating, but peace came by Jesus Christ. The needy needs need to face up to urgencies of conflict common to the religiously inclined, and the disciples of Jesus were no different. Conflict was inevitable; it had to come.

The battle now raging was the theory of established Jewish religion with its traditions versus the real "born-again" salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Apostle Peter seemed to corroborate in this viewpoint when he said, ". . . let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36. The following of Jesus had grown by the day and by the hour as He preached and taught in the synagogues, on the streets and along the countrysides of Palestine, performing miracles that astounded the people. He sought trustworthy disciples from among the immense throng of followers. In the synagogue at Capernaum his discourse on the Bread of Life had led to the defection of the multitude, and from that time many of His disciples forsook Him (St. John 6:47-66). He then turned to the twelve and asked, "Will ye also go away?" The testing time for true discipleship had dawned, and Simon Peter said, ". . . Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." St. John 6:67, 68.

Faith, concern and godly respect welded these true disciples into intimate fellowship and companionship with Jesus, the Christ. He referred to His people as sheep (St. John 10:1-16) and as lambs (St. John 21:15). As emblems of meekness, humility and submission they seemed to typify the matchless compassionate and humble qualities in the person of the Saviour Himself. John the Baptist called Jesus the "Lamb of God" (St. John 1:29). People are referred to as lambs and sheep more than eighty times in the Scriptures. They have tender consciences when converted, and Jesus saw the need of keeping His sheep, teaching and training them for the tasks ahead. Turning them from sin to righteousness was not enough . . . they had to be kept righteous by tender care, association, training, witnessing and prayer . . . at the feet of their Master whenever possible. If they were left to run loose at will, left to hunger and thirst for more of the same kind of

soul-food they had received, then they would be unprotected and imperiled by every power of prey. After all how could the sects of Jewry compound spiritual resources to bless them with any sense of encouragement, or spiritual security, when they opposed the salvation provided through Jesus the Saviour?

It is not difficult to re-emphasize the natures of conflict when the connotations of religious disparity were so evident. Jesus came, first of all, to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, and He admitted this in Matthew 15:24, when addressing the Syrophenician woman, mentioned in Mark 7:26. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." St. John 1:11. The Bible teaches they hated Him without a cause (St. John 15:23-25; prophesied of by Psalm 35:19). Notwithstanding, He never separated Himself from the synagogues and temple, but always taught and instructed listeners at opportune times in such areas.

INTENSIVE TRAINING FOR THE DISCIPLES

The dynamic preaching and teaching of Jesus began with repentance (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15), which He linked with the kingdom of God, though there are theories extant today that seem to wrest the Scriptures to a posture of puzzlement, as was the case with Nicodemus (St. John 3:3, 4).

Jesus gained many followers, and He definitely called certain disciples to follow Him, promising to make of them fishers of men (Mark 1:17-20; Matthew 4:18-22). To break the dawn of this new gospel and doctrinal epoch required extensive training and teaching of those disciples essentially responsible for its propagation. Unquestionably Jesus pulled his inner circle of disciples closer to Him in confidence as He expounded the truth and purpose of His mission to this world. Many of His great truths had to be explained in parables, as He welded together the consciences and beliefs of His small group into a power structure that would later startle and baffle the world. He taught and trained them with authority. Never had any teacher or instructor taught with such intenseness of purpose as did this Master Teacher.

To His disciples Jesus delivered His famed Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) subsequent to Mark 3:13-15, on a mountain near the Sea of Galilee. (2) He began by giving to mankind the

2. To honor and commemorate the great Sermon on the Mount, the Church of Prophecy Marker Association has erected a stone marker, or tablet, on a

Beatitudes—a document of personal blessedness, peace, poise and assurance unparalleled in the annals of human history. Those who cherished spiritual resources then, as now, believed the Beatitudes to be the finale of Christian consciousness, concept and conquest. In them the Master seems to dip bits of His tenderness and mercy in splendor, then hurls them asunder in unmatched ecstatic assurances to "Whosoever Will"! Nothing like it ever pervaded the premises of mortal man . . . His bequest so inimitable.

He spoke with kindness and love, and mercy and compassion, though at times His judgments were severe. Wherever he came in contact with unclean spirits, His demands for them to vacate the premises they held were obeyed, and they recognized Him as the Son of God (Mark 1:23-27; 5:2-13). Some people declared they never saw it on this fashion (Mark 2:12). Others said, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him."

He taught His trusted disciples reliance on Him and His mission. He showed them love, devotion and mercy. He taught them perseverance and simple trust . . . pulling them closer to Him and His endeavor. They needed training to help them face up to the inevitable conflict ahead, as well as those times they were traveling with Him in His opposition from the established sects of Palestine. These sects—Pharisees and Sadducees—fought Him and His teachings, endeavoring to proselyte His disciples and followers in every conceivable way. They were definitely against Him. Although He came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill (Matthew 5:17, 18).

NATURAL DEMANDS FOR A CHURCH OF HIS OWN

Sensing the natural and intrinsic needs and requirements of the spiritually possessed disciples, and the spiritual values involved in the preservation of the "changed" followers of Jesus, neither of the Jewish sects provided a true sheepfold for the preservation and protection of these sheep. Because of self-indulgence and self-reliance in their ritualistic observances of the Mosaic Law they seemed void of any appreciable aggressive enterprise. They were apparently activated as a sort of "control board" of Jewish religion and conscience. They had kept alive, and before the people, the name of God . . . Jehovah . . . Yahweh . . . the great "I

mountain west of the Sea of Galilee near Kurn Hattin, or the Horns of Hattin. (See chapter dealing with the work of the Church of Prophecy Marker Association.)

AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14). It was a noble achievement by a people surrounded by idolatry, and who were in constant fear of onrushing attacks from merciless invading forces.

But this was not enough! There was a spiritual need that reached deeper than the natural human resources could penetrate, for, "that Prophet" presaged by Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-18), and referred to by the Apostle Peter (Acts 3:22) and Stephen (Acts 7:37), had appeared to bring spiritual life to mankind.

> "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us." Acts 7:38.

It was pathetic, and awaringly disturbing, that the prophetic understanding of the scribes and Pharisees and the elders was so lax and time-concealed they did not recognize "that Prophet" . . . the Messiah . . . when He came. When they should have been energetic and wide awake to the era's advent of spiritual awakening they were blinded and perhaps prejudiced, and found to be sound asleep. What a loss! They could offer no protection and security for the spiritually-inclined sheep of God. If these sheep were corralled by ritualistic, and now antiquated, religious observances as a means of protective custody it would be demoralizing, dangerous, and in time destructive to their righteousness wrought through the mercies, grace and truth of Jesus Christ. To Him they must cling . . . He must make provisions for their spiritual custody.

The only channel of safety was to build His own Church . . . a Church that believed and practiced what He—Jesus Himself—had taught them, and would further instruct and indoctrinate for their safety and welfare. This broad expanse between God and mankind had been spanned by Jesus Himself, as the Bridge over the immense chasm (St. John 1:14). He is mentioned as the Son of God more than one hundred times in the New Testament, and as the Son of Man more than seventy-five times in the same Testament, besides those references and indications contained in the Old Testament. Unquestionably He was the Bridge to span the chasm.

The natural inclination was to build His own Church; there was no other alternative if He was to keep, teach and train His followers to propagate the gospel with which He would entrust them, which gospel was to cover the world with His message of true redemption. For, it was apparent the leaders of the

Sadducees, the scribes and Pharisees and elders of Israel disfavored and opposed the new religious order that threatened to sweep over the entire area, and they seemed to be the first to persecute the Church, and attempt to destroy it.

PROPHECIES HAD TO BE FULFILLED

The whole Bible is interwoven with the glorious panorama of God's mission to mankind and the redemption of the man He created. Prophetical utterances interfuse most of the Scriptures without interposing their narrative techniques. In so many places in the Holy Book the Son of God is cited, spoken about, referred to and prophesied of that it seems proper and reasonable to expect Him and His Church to be interlocked in prophetical references.

While the practice of polemics between the Pharisees and Sadducees was disappointing and seriously discouraging it was to be expected under the circumstances. The common man detected it with ease . . . it was a sort of "pony-express" that injured conscience. In view of the interrogatory predicaments existing, some natural and common reasoning as to why Jesus should establish His Church have been exploited for better understanding of the religious affairs in Palestine. By doing this no injustice is done common sense and the usual valid reasons.

But, the weightier and more valid and impressive reasons to establish His Church are borne out by prophecies interlacing the Holy Writ. Jesus was prophecy fulfilled . . . a perfect Son . . . not just in the unmatched aggrandizement of celestial glory, not in another "Garden of Eden," but right among mankind in this common world in which we all live. He was the center of all sacrificial love and devotion between God and man. Opinions, pro and con, do not equivocate, nor will they prevent God's plan and purpose for mankind. His prerogatives are at will and who is so foolish as to try to thwart them?

PROPHECIES OF THE COMING MESSIAH

Before delving too deeply into prophecies relating to the Church it seems appropriate, first of all, to point to some of the prophecies concerning Jesus the Saviour who founded and built the Church of God. Unquestionably those prophecies are impressive and many of them conscience-seizing, but to extend preview of them is too exhaustive for this volume regardless of their significance.

Consider the Tribe of Judah whose eponymous ancestor was

Judah, the fourth son of Leah and Jacob (Genesis 29:35). His magnanimous will and spirit manifested themselves in the saga of Joseph (Genesis 37:26, 27; 43:8, 9; 44:14-34). Judah and Reuben, the first-born, obviously led the brothers. Though younger than Reuben, Simeon and Levi (Genesis 29:32-35), Judah received the blessing of his Patriarchal Father Jacob. To the Tribe of Judah was transmitted the responsibility for the functions of Judaism and the systems and government of the Jewish people and their kingdom, though their first King, Saul (1020-1000 B.C.), was a Benjamite. Through Judah came Boaz, Jesse and David, and finally Jesus—the Righteous Branch (Jeremiah 23:5, 6) of the house and lineage of David (Luke 2:4), of the seed of David (John 7:42), and referred to by the people in Palestine as the Son of David (Matthew 9:27; 12:23; 21:9, 15; 22:42; Mark 12:35). Peter corroborated this in Acts 2:29, 30, and Paul mentioned it in Acts 13:22, 23, 36, 37. Look a little closer:

1. The authority of Judah was destined to change, at a set time when the Seed of Promise came to effect, as God had said: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Genesis 49:10.***

> ***SCEPTRE (scepter) denotes a royal or imperial power or authority. A LAWGIVER is one who prepares and puts into effect a system of laws for a people. SHILOH, in this sense, points to the Messiah that was to come, and to whom the people would gather. An ancient version renders it "Till he come whose it is," the reading adopted by many of the Christian Fathers. (Peloubet)

2. The Messiah was to be born in human likeness, an image and person with whom the common people could walk and talk, and look upon as they associated with Him. A person they could feel and handle would open the fountain of David for the suffering multitudes. This was the Messiah prophesied of . . . the Messiah that was to come.

The Major Prophet Isaiah said, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14. Besides being expounded elsewhere in the Scriptures, this prophecy was literally fulfilled about 750 years later, and is recorded by both Matthew 1:20, 21 and Luke 1:26. Even an angel proclaimed His arrival—"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the

city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord . . ." Luke 2:10, 11. To prove and seal the allegation the Bible declares the shepherds journeyed in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger (Luke 2:15, 16). The Minor Prophet (Micah 5:2) said He would be born in Bethlehem. The chief priests and scribes assured the angry King Herod that the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:5, 6), after he had become so stirred when the wise men from the East asked him, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Matthew 2:2

Skeptics and unbelievers may question this whole drama, but who can be so naive as to question prophecies so easily seen fulfilled? If one believes the Bible he must accept her precepts and instructions in righteousness. David, in the spirit of prophecy concerning the Messiah declared, ". . . Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me." Psalm 40:7. The writer of Hebrew refers to this Davidic prophecy, and quotes it almost verbatim: ". . . Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." Hebrews 10:7. It is a sure thing that the consummation of man's redemption and spiritual custody is woven around Jesus Christ.

TWELVE PROPHETIC ASSURANCES CONCERNING JESUS

1. First prophetical reference to Jesus ..... Genesis 3:14-16
2. The prophetical nation of His birth ..... Genesis 22:15-18
3. The prophetical Tribe of His birth ..... Genesis 49:9, 10
4. The prophetical family of His birth ..... Isaiah 11:10, 13
5. His prophetical righteousness ..... Jeremiah 23:5, 6
6. The prophetical city of His birth ..... Micah 5:2
7. The prophetical date of His birth ..... Daniel 9:25
8. The avowed purpose of His coming ..... Matthew 1:21
9. Declared He would build His Church ..... Matthew 16:18, 19
10. Purchased the Church with His blood ..... Acts 20:28
11. The Church to be presented to Him ..... Ephesians 5:27
12. Finish the program for God's people ..... I Cor. 15:24-28

It is an established fact that the ministry of Jesus was no careless, haphazard, spasmodic outburst of fervor and zeal, but a well-manipulated program and approach for redemptive purposes, and the preservation of the sheep of God in His Church. Not only were sinners redeemed, but there had to be a way made

to keep them together, in His own Church, and to build within them spiritual resources commensurate to their needs. They needed to be corralled and governed in the sheepfold, by the true Shepherd through Whom they were redeemed. This would require precept and admonition, understanding, obedience and loyalty, and unfeigned faith in, and respect for, the rules of government they espoused. Separating themselves from all bondage they could then practice their freedom in functions of their own government, in those things taught them.

THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY

Bible readers think of Zion*** as the hill in Jerusalem on which the royal palace and the temple were built, and which was to be the nucleus to generate the powerful influence of the Jewish religion.

***Zion is the Hebrew name, but the Greek form of this word is Sion which is used throughout the Books of the Maccabees. It is used different times in the New Testament, especially in Matthew 21:5; St. John 12:15; Hebrews 12:22.

At Zion the Law was analyzed and the rites of sacrifice and worship were observed under religious government. It was no shilly-shally affair, but was executed under strict discipline and rules. Zion is referred to as "the holy hill" (Psalm 2:6), and as the "habitation of the Lord" (Psalms 9:11; 76:2; 132:13), but the deteriorating religious observances and worship, though still affluent in many aspects of Jewry, had long ago retreated to the dim shadows of the Church in the wilderness.

While the terrestrial Zion, referred to above, was high and mighty to behold, the celestial Zion held a far more impressive posture as emphasized by Hebrews 12:22, 23. Sometimes one may refer to the Church as Zion, and vice-versa, with variations in thought and interpretation. Different dictionaries list different meanings of the word "Zion." The Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary says: "ZION . . . 1—Hill in Jerusalem on which the royal palace and the temple were built. 2—Israel; the people of Israel. 3—Heaven; the heavenly city. 4—the church of God." Therefore, it seems that no violence is done either the Old or New Testament Scriptures when Zion is compared with or referred to as the Church in certain respects.

There are many direct prophecies, besides the prophetic

allusions, that respect the actual establishment of Church government by Jesus. Look at the following allusion, if you wish to so call it, then judge accordingly: "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon . . ." Psalm 72:16. "Handful" suggests but a small portion of seed. "Upon the top of the mountains" suggests a high, difficult, arid perhaps, and unusual place, when ordinarily seed is planted in the fertile fields, valleys and lowlands. The "fruit thereof shall shake" implies an abundance of fruit, growth and yield. In view of the assumed conditions, to produce such a natural yield would require the smile of the Unseen Face . . . the Silent Voice . . . and the touch of the Invisible Hand. Some seem to feel that, in this Scriptural reference, David was interceding for Solomon's success, but many think David was in the spirit of prophecy concerning the small and meager beginning of the Church Jesus established on the mountain in Galilee with only twelve members.

About 760 B.C. the Major Prophet Isaiah, through the scope of time, saw the rising of Christ's kingdom and the establishment of His Church and government for the people.

> "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Isaiah 2:2

In this case "mountain" means government, and it was to be established in the heights of all other "mountains" or governments. Is it possible for anyone but the Lord Himself to establish His government, or Church, on the apex of all others? It was to be exalted or easily seen above the "hills" or lesser governments, and was to be large enough to accommodate all nations, kindreds and tongues that would flow unto it. This prophecy pointed to a real government actuated by God. About fifty years later the Minor Prophet Micah uttered an identical prophecy, almost to the word, corroborating with Isaiah.

> "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it." Micah 4:1.

These prophecies indicate no interference and cite no changes in the civil and internal affairs of the Palestinian government, and do

not refer to any other except the government of God's people it seems. Howbeit, some of the followers of Jesus mistook His spiritual Kingship and thought Him to be another militant leader, such as had been others who appeared, especially the Maccabean leaders, who would help throw off the yoke of bondage from the Jewish people. But, time and again He tried to assure the people that His kingdom was not of this world, as He told Pilate in St. John 18:36.

A plan for redemption had been formulated . . . spirituality was stressed by the oracles of God, along with the much-desired preservation of the sheep of God. The responsibility of keeping the sheep gravitated to the Son of God, and to be able to keep them and preserve them involved government . . . a Christo-centric government composed of actual people. These were sheep of God; sheep that moved with caution as activated by God. They needed protection and godly custody . . . a sheepfold for them where they could go in and out and find pasture (St. John 10:9).

THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS

Jesus, the Son, was with the Father when man was created (Genesis 1:26). He has been concerned with man's destiny ever since the fall. He was king in Jeshurun (Deuteronomy 33:5). He was with Moses on Mount Sinai. "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in mount Sina . . ." Acts 7:38. For forty years He directed the affairs of the church in the wilderness. It was a divine entity, an order established under a charter of divine premise and purpose. It functioned as a divine government with the blessings of divine revelation. While the people were the same, the church in the wilderness was not the church until the laws, ordinances and rules of government were established. Increase of government was evident when Moses accepted the advice of Jethro, his father-in-law, and appointed able men to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens (Exodus 18:25), to help share the burden and responsibilities of the government of the church in the wilderness. The intercessions of Moses rescued the church from the divine wrath of God at times, for the church was somewhat inferior to its more perfect status after it reached Canaan where its mission was fulfilled.

Now, since the laws and ordinances of sacrificing bulls and goats, and other sacrifices, had been supplanted by the living oracles of grace through repentance and belief in the Son of God,

He was obligated to found and organize a more excellent and glorious Church than that in the wilderness. He was now the very life and soul of the Church He was to establish for the preservation of the sheep . . . the very Church that had cast the shadow of the church in the wilderness (Hebrews 10:1). He says, too, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more . . . A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Hebrews 8:12, 13.

JESUS ESTABLISHED HIS CHURCH

Chapter twelve (sub-head "Jesus Preached the Kingdom") treats the invisible, yet powerful and realistic blessings afforded by the kingdom of God without reservation or question, as recorded in the Scriptures. Through repentance and faith and belief in God the once-penitent sinner is awarded individual blessings without pressures from society or group dominance. Regardless of where he is, who he is, or his social status quo, if he is a born-again Christian he is in the kingdom of God, and only God is able to disfellowship or expel him from the spiritual sanctuary when, or if the occasion demands it.

But the Church is different!

Jesus spent much valuable time calling and selecting His disciples before He ever made mention of building His Church. Yet, all the while gathering disciples, He moved forward in earnest anticipation of the day when prophecies relating to Church organization and government would be fulfilled, and His sheep would be gathered together in one. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17.

> "If Christ's purpose was to fulfill the law and the prophets, then it is quite evident that His purpose was also to fulfill all the prophecies which had been written concerning Him and the Church." . . . From: "Lessons In Bible Training," Volume Three, page 192 . . . 1971.

Covered elsewhere under the sub-head "The Church in Prophecy" are some prophetic revelations taken from Psalm 72:16, Isaiah 2:2, and Micah 4:1, and it is credible to show some Scriptural fulfillments. In two of these prophecies, the Messiah's government, or Church, is called "the Lord's house" and "the house of the Lord" which mean the same. His government had to

be established in the mountain and not at Jerusalem. This was inconceivable to those ill-versed in the Scriptures, for some people seemed to think that all important events had to take place in or around Jerusalem, and the Temple.

Scriptural narratives are not always in proper chronological sequence yet their significance and meaning are the real directives that qualify. It is unwise to cavil over the chronological dissertations handed down for study though one may prefer some guidelines of his own which may differ from the choice of someone else. The account of the actual organization of the Church is vividly explained in the writing of Mark 3:13-15: "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." Luke's reference casts additional light: ". . . he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." Luke 6:12, 13. Luke indicates there were other disciples, but Jesus chose only twelve, and named them apostles, which name they retained unto the end. This is the very first definite move by the Lord to effect any sort of nucleus or government—Church. (3)

Therefore, it is conceded the twelve men whom Jesus had chosen became the first members of the Church He had established, and they formed the inside nucleus of His government. The names of these twelve men, whom He called apostles (Luke 6:13) are listed below:

3. "This was the first step in organizing the church, and from this point the teaching and training of these men became a matter of paramount importance to our Lord. They were chosen in absolute sovereignty; Jesus called to him those whom he desired . . ." From: "The New Bible Commentary: Revised" . . . published BY Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan . . . 1970, P. 859.

NAMES OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

MATTHEW 10:2-4	MARK 3:16-19	LUKE 6:14-16
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter
Andrew	James	Andrew
James	John	James
John	Andrew	John
Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew
Matthew	Thomas	Thomas
James (Son of Alphaeus)	James (Son of Alphaeus)	James (Son of Alphaeus)
Lebbaeus (Thaddaeus)	Thaddaeus (Lebbaeus)	Simon called Zelotes
Simon the Canaanite	Simon the Canaanite	Judas (Brother of James)
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

NOTE: Judas, brother of James, listed by Luke is Lebbaeus, or Thaddaeus, listed by Matthew and Mark. He was sometimes referred to as Jude maybe.

In a preceding chapter, the kingdom of God was referred to, and so far as a spiritual experience in the soul—a born-again experience—is concerned, it was clearly seen that the new birth puts one into the kingdom of God. But it does not put one into the Church of God that Jesus organized; they were already converted—His disciples—people with whom He established or organized His Church. If these were already in His Church why was it necessary for Him to establish it, or set it in order? They were called out or separated from the other followers (Luke 6:13) and commanded certain responsibilities and duties. This definite organization, or calling apart, evidenced some specifics heretofore not mentioned:

1. Close adherence and communion.
2. Companionship.
   a. Essential for good understanding.
   b. Necessary for both private and group teaching.
3. Delegated authority for service.
   a. Power to heal sicknesses.
   b. Power to cast out devils.
4. Definite commission given.
   a. Sent out to preach.
   b. Results were expected.

This organizational procedure was so impressive and spectacu-

lar that when Jesus came down from the mountain and entered a house (Probably the house of Simon and Andrew at Capernaum) such a multitude thronged them that they were unable to eat. His friends (perhaps His own family and kindred mentioned in Mark 3:31) became so stirred they went to lay hold on Him, saying, "He is beside himself" (Mark 3:21). Meanwhile inside, a peculiar and stirring interlude was going on; the scribes from Jerusalem accused Jesus of being influenced by the prince of Beelzebub. He there taught them a lesson with strong emphasis, something to be long remembered, when He told them: ". . . If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." Mark 3:25.

As already mentioned elsewhere all chronological sequences are not credibly accurate. Many of the events listed in the gospels are not always in the exact order in which they occurred, though copious exposition and cyclopedic analysis, debate and apologies have done much to relieve the pressures for accuracy, much of which is yet pending. The efficacy of the testimonials of gospel episodes does not depend on chronological sequence but upon the actual occurrences evidenced in the wake of the events.

An unusual historic episode in the ministry of Jesus with His disciples occurred near the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, a town rebuilt by Herod Philip, the tetrarch, named in honor of Emperor Tiberius Caesar and with his own name, Philip, attached to distinguish it from Caesarea on the sea coast. It was near the base of Mount Hermon and some 20 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. There is no Old Testament history of it but it is referred to in both Matthew 16:13 and Mark 8:27, and is thought to be the northern limit of the journeys of Jesus. While a concise record is given by Mark 8:27-29, Matthew's account holds precedence for explanation, especially in this account.

> "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:

and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:13-19.

Here again may arise the question of proper sequence though perhaps not too pertinent to the cause espoused. The assembling and arranging of Scriptural facts and occurences are not to be considered codicillary or presumptive whether or not events are listed exactly in the order in which they occurred, for to do so is extremely difficult at times. Lest one coddle conscience remember that dates and sequence, wherever possible, are invaluable. But why dawdle and throw up our hands in despair if they cannot be had as yet? A strong character makes the most of what he has the best of, and disseminates the potent blessing.

There are different opinions concerning the event that happened at Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus made His historical declaration. Some seem to feel this occurred prior to the actual establishment of the Church by Jesus (Mark 3:13-15), and this was the opinion of Bishop A. J. Tomlinson:

"After saying this much about the mixture of Scriptures to be unraveled and made plain by the Holy Spirit, and of the mysteries that are to be known by the Church of God, and probably hidden from others, we call attention to the founding of the Church by Jesus Himself, subsequent to the statement that He would build His Church." (From: "A. J. Tomlinson (God's Anointed—Prophet of Wisdom)" Page 93, and from: "Historical Notes" a revision by Perry E. Gillum, Page 47 . . . Both volumes published by the White Wing Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee.)

The author of the lessons on "Bible," Page 228, of Volume Two, "Lessons in Bible Training," Bible Place, Cleveland, Tennessee, says:

". . . it was the opinion of A. J. Tomlinson and many others that the organization of the Church came after Peter's confession in which he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the occasion on which Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Since the Gospels do not record all the events in their chronological order, this could very well be true."

The Chairman of the Bible Department of Tomlinson College, Daniel D. Preston A.B., M.A. has this to say:

"Prior to this time an organization was effected with the twelve disciples, and the fact of this organization is given in

> Mark 3:13-15 . . . It is inconceivable to think that the Church was established on the Day of Pentecost, for Jesus is responsible for establishing the Church while He was upon earth." (From: "The Church Triumphant" by Daniel D. Preston, Page 20. Published by the White Wing Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee.)

Bishop M. A. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Church of God of Prophecy, entertains this opinion:

> "The gospels do not record all the events that took place during the ministry of Christ, and those events which are recorded do not always appear in the exact order of their occurrence. There is no definite chronology to indicate that Jesus declared His intention to build the Church before He called unto Him whom He would and ordained the twelve, but other passages indicate that the twelve had been chosen on various occasions prior to their ordination. The disciples had been with Jesus and heard His preaching and teaching long before the ordination service and the organization of the Church. It would not be reasonable to think that Jesus would ordain any man who had not first demonstrated his faith in the divinity of Christ. So it is obvious that Jesus called the disciples, that they walked with Him in His ministry, and then at the appropriate time, He established the Church of God and ordained the twelve." (From "The Glorious C ..ch of God" by M. A. Tomlinson, Pages 23, 24. Published by the White Wing Publishing House (1968), Cleveland, Tennessee.)

While the consensus of opinion of Bible students may differ on the preferred order of events in the life and times of Christ they endeavor to assuage the desire to probe too deeply into minute occurrences few of us may ever understand, fearing lest some of us miss the more important issues and major emphasis of His coming as the Messiah. After all, the narratives of His life and works are not meant to be just a chronicle of events but a revered interpretation of the Christ-centered influence, and the effective and objective motivation His appearance left with us. Our major concern is not whether or not Mark 3:13-15 is subsequent to Matthew 16:13-19, or vice-versa, but that He actually declared His intention to build His Church—finish His work—that He fulfilled prophecies pertaining to the noble act (as specified in Psalm 72:16, Isaiah 2:2 and Micah 4:1) by choosing His small group, calling them to Him on the mountain and organizing His Church.

The epoch-making event that transpired on Kurn Hattin, probably A.D. 28, requested unparalleled confidence, and close



Seen in the distance are the Horns of Hittin, located about five miles west of the Sea of Galilee. It was upon this mountain in Galilee that Jesus called to Him whom He would and ordained them for the work to which He had called them. The Scriptures indicate this is where He established His church.

communion and companionship between the Lord and His disciples. He asked His chosen "handful" of disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter, who seemed to be spokesman for the little group, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This great confession was an absolute declaration of the true identity of the Messiah, who came as the Seed of Promise through the prophetic progeny of Abraham. Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church . . ." Matthew 16:17, 18.

The expression "Upon this rock I will build my church" has had much scholastic interpretation, some of them indicting one another, but all contributing to better understanding, using such Scriptures as Ephesians 2:20; I Corinthians 3:11; I Peter 2:6; Isaiah 28:16; Psalms 118:22, to elucidate opinion and theory.

It seems that the opinion of the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, in 1922 was reflected by the writer of a doctrinal treatise:

> "The Rock to which Jesus referred was not Peter—but Jesus Himself. ("For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." I Corinthians 10:4.) Peter does mean "stone," but accurately it means a small stone—a pebble. Now we do not think of the Church being founded on a small stone. And besides, it is an awkward figure of speech, a

> strained significance to try to figure that the Church is founded on Peter. No, it is founded on the Rock Christ Jesus. Psalms 62:2, says, "He (God) only is my rock." (4)

The ambitious student, or reader, can gain a profitable background of important Biblical understanding, of some of the controversal opinions resulting from Matthew 16:18, if he will read and study references listed by some Biblical commentaries, some of which are: Adam Clarke's Commentary, Volume 5, Page 171; Matthew Henry's Commentary, Volume 3, Page 133, The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Page 959; The New Bible Commentary: Revised, Page 837. There are many other reference works should one wish to indulge a little superfluous research.

Notwithstanding, the Church of God of Prophecy has sought to prepossess members and constituents with a more favorable and simple interpretation of this favorite Scripture concerning the "rock" upon which the Church was to be built. Bishop A. J. Tomlinson referred to it: "But there is the same mystery again. Jesus had already told them that He was going to build His Church. He had shown them the difference between building on creeds and something positive, made so by revelation and two positive statements (Matthew 16:13-18)." (5)

The favorable and simple understanding and interpretation of this document of the Church of God of Prophecy is explained by Bishop M. A. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Church:

> "What is the rock upon which Jesus established the Church of God? Peter was not the rock. Neither was Jesus the rock. The rock was the divine revelation and the mutual knowledge that existed between Jesus and the disciples. The rock was the fact that a perfect understanding had been reached and it had come by divine revelation." (6)

It is impossible to narrate all the events that transpired in the colorful life and ministry of Christ. From the time He gathered the group, or body of disciples, together and established His Church all accounts thereafter became the history of Christ and His Church—the Church of God. In addition to those factors of His composite will to reach man and redeem him from the terrible

4. From: "The Book of Doctrines" Page 101 . . . Published in 1922, by the Church of God Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee.

5. From: "A. J. Tomlinson, God's Anointed—Prophet of Wisdom," Page 94 . . . Published June 1943, by the White Wing Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee.

6. From: "The Glorious Church of God," by M. A. Tomlinson, Page 22, Published 1968, by the White Wing Publishing House.

curse of sin, provisions were also included in His will to keep those committed to His care, as He mentioned later: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition . . ." John 17:12. He had declared at the well in Samaria, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." John 4:34. In His prayer in the Coenaculum, or supper room, Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do . . . I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." John 17:4, 6. It is clearly evident that these were obligated to propagate the teachings, the doctrines and precepts handed them by the Master Teacher—Jesus Christ. Great and grave responsibilities henceforth devolved upon these leaders of the newly organized Church and have since been transmitted to their followers.

At the time, Simon Peter was spokesman for the group when Jesus addressed him in Matthew 16:16-19, but the reins of government were given the Church and not to Simon Peter, as sustained by Matthew 18:15-17. It was an actual theocratic government, directed by God, and carried throughout the New Testament period. It was a government for visible people—members who were seen, human beings that could be touched, taught and counseled, a body—Church—that was to govern itself according to the direction of God. It was not a spiritual invisible body but an actual group of people bound together by covenant and the precepts and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

NO SPIRITUAL INVISIBLE CHURCH

From all indications, many good Christian people confuse the kingdom of God (the spiritual invisible blessings of Romans 14:17) with the Church of God. Bishop A. J. Tomlinson, former General Overseer of the Church until his death October 2, 1943, had this to say:

". . . a question was raised about a spiritual church composed of all saved people. My answer was, there is no such teaching in the Scripture. The Church of God is just as real as the government of the United States. Its laws are on the statue books; they can be obeyed or violated. Its members are to have a spiritual experience, and the more spiritual the better; but the members themselves that obey or violate the laws and rules are more than a spirit.

"The bosh or fallacy of a spiritual church composed of all saved people in all churches of our day, or out of any church, is shown by the following words of Jesus. Read,

"'Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.' (Matthew 18:15-17.)

"There is scarcely any need for comment on this Scripture because anyone can see that telling it to that so-called spiritual church with no definite membership is an absurdity. And the Bible recognizes no such nonentity as being the Church of God." (Pages 89, 90 of "A. J. Tomlinson, God's Anointed—Prophet of Wisdom" . . . by White Wing Publishing House.)

The Church of God of Prophecy stands unbiased in support of these views as Scripturally credible, and believes in the continuation of the Church of God as organized by Jesus Christ, and designated in the Scriptures.

ARE MEMBERS BORN INTO THE CHURCH?

The church-world at large agrees with the Bible that Jesus established His Church as He said He would do (Matthew 16:13-19), that He called His chosen disciples to Him on the mountain and ordained twelve to be with Him as charter members of the new organization He had effected (Mark 3:13-15). They agree the names of the members are listed (someone kept a good record) and Judas Iscariot was selected to act as treasurer of the small group, probably because he was qualified for this position. No puzzlement over these procedures whatsoever.

But, pursuit of the Church Jesus established and just how people become members is somewhat of a controversal issue at times. Almost universally the church-world is of the opinion that all born-again Christians are members of the Lord's Church, and there are some Scriptural references that may indicate such a belief, especially if such references are taken out of context, or other Scriptures are not used in conjunction to rightly divide the Word of Truth. This would invariably mark Christ's Church as an invisible non-entity, when Paul declares emphatically different by writing to visible people who compose the Church at Corinth (I

Corinthians 1:2, and even mentions the fact they are sanctified. He also mentions a visible local body, in II Corinthians 1:1). Additional explanations by Paul are in I Corinthians 6:15; 12:27. What kind of teaching was expected of those early disciples?

SOME PUZZLING BIBLICAL ANSWERS

IF PEOPLE ARE BORN INTO GOD'S CHURCH . . .

1. Why did Jesus say He would build His Church (Matthew 16:13-19)?
2. Why did He select certain disciples, call them to Him on the Mountain and established His Church with them (Mark 3:13-19)? Were they not already followers of His (Matthew 4:19, 20)?
3. Where were the other sheep He said He had which were not of this fold, which He said He would bring (John 10:16)?
4. Who would have the right to deal with one who trespassed against him as Jesus Himself instructed (Matthew 18:15-18)?
5. Who would have authority to designate or appoint someone to any position of prominence in the Church, such as the one who kept the record of the names of the first members (Mark 3:16-19; Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 6:14-16), or the local church treasurer, as was Judas Iscariot (John 12:6; 13:29)?
6. How could "false brethren unawares" be brought in (Galatians 2:4)?
7. How could "certain men creep in unawares . . . ungodly men . . ." (Jude 4)?
8. Then every member would be saved and no human agency could "put him away" or disfellowship him from the Church. Did not Apostle Paul admonish the Church to "put away" the wicked fornicator (I Corinthians 5:1, 2, 13)?
9. How could an arrogant, disobedient preacher cast members out of the Church (III John 10)?
10. Who would have the authority to deal with the disobedient preacher, as was Diotrophes (III John 9, 10)?
11. Then members would have to backslide out of the Church, and the Church could not obey the instructions of Jesus (Matthew 18:15-18)?
12. Who would have the authority to "ordain elders in every city" as Paul instructed (Titus 1:5)?
13. Who could exercise the right to "admonish and restore" those who had strayed (Galatians 6:1, 2)?

14. Who could claim any right to exercise the rule over others (Hebrews 13:7, 17)?

ARE PEOPLE BAPTIZED INTO THE CHURCH?

This theory has been circulated extensively in some organizations. They claim one becomes a member of the Church Jesus established when he is baptized with the Holy Ghost, though they admit one is born into the kingdom of God. They seem to feel this is what Paul meant (I Corinthians 12:13), but invariably bypass the salutation of Paul's epistle to the Corinthian Church. He sought to get them to understand they were one body, and needed to expend all energies available to be alike and to speak the same things, so there would be no divisions among them (I Corinthians 1:10) . . . the Church of God at Corinth, and it could be a great stimulant to other churches.

Then, there are others who declare that one cannot be a member of the Church of God unless he is baptized with the Holy Ghost, again using for support I Corinthians 12:13. Other Scriptures show this viewpoint to be erroneous. Were not Peter, James, John and the other apostles members of the Church Jesus established on the mountain (Mark 3:13-15)? Yet, they never received the baptism with the Holy Ghost until the Day of Pentecost, but were active members of the Church of God from the time it was set in order by Jesus Christ on the mountain. Then too, let us remember that those baptized with the Holy Ghost are not carnal (I Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19), for carnality cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Paul inferred the Corinthian Church had some carnal people as members (I Corinthians 3:3). The Church at Galathia had some difficulty with members being turned away from following Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:6; 4:19). Acts 2:47 declared that saved people—those who have been born again—are eligible for membership in the Lord's Church.

BIBLICAL MENTION OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

The name alone does not make the Church of God of the Bible without the practices and observances of her governmental procedures, her rules, regulations and spiritual values and issues essential to her members being kept in the Father's name, as Jesus inferred. She is mentioned by name at least ten times in the New Testament:

Acts 20:28 ..... To feed the Church of God....
I Cor. 1:2 ..... Church of God which is at Corinth....
II Cor. 1:1 ..... Church of God at Corinth, with all....
I Cor. 10:32 ..... Give none offense.... to Church of God....
I Cor. 11:22 ..... Despise ye the Church of God....
I Cor. 15:9 ..... I persecuted the Church of God....
Gal. 1:13 ..... I persecuted the Church.... and wasted....
I Tim. 3:5 ..... How shall he take care of the Church....
I Thess. 2:14 ..... Followers of the Churches of God....
I Cor. 11:16 ..... No such customs, neither the Churches....

It is referred to in different words, in two other places:

I Corinthians 14:33 ..... Churches of the saints....
Romans 16:16 ..... Churches of Christ salute....

In about 1014 B.C. the wise man Solomon presented a very beautiful allegory of the Church and her betrothel to the Bridegroom (Song of Solomon 6). He says emphatically, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." Song of Solomon 6:9.

Influence of the Church Is Felt in Palestine

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CHURCH JESUS ESTABLISHED FUNCTIONS

From foregoing references and explanations it is clearly seen that Jesus came as the long-promised Messiah to mankind. He was the Prophet referred to in Deuteronomy 18:15 . . . the Light referred to in John 1:6-8 . . . the Lamb of God mentioned in John 1:29. His call caused fishermen to leave their nets to become His disciples (Matthew 4:18-22). Others followed Him (Matthew 9:9). He preached repentance and the kingdom, and many followed Him (Matthew 4:17). He cast out devils and healed all manner of sickness, preached in the Jewish synagogues, and was threatened many times. He prayed all night on Kurn Hattin, and when morning came He called His disciples to Him on the mountain (Luke 6:12, 13) and from among them He chose twelve, and ordained them (Mark 3:13, 14), giving them the commission to preach, to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils. This was His very first attempt to organize His force and establish His Church. These twelve men became the charter members of His Church. Their names are listed in Mark 3:16-19, and the treasurer for the little Church in John 12:6; 13:29. Already it had affected Palestine.

It functioned from its very inception, or organization, and from that time on the twelve were called apostles. Jesus realized His need of a Church for His disciples, a fold for the safety and protection of His sheep. Nor was that all; major emphases were seen in the fulfilling of prophecies spoken hundreds of years before. It was the long-sought establishment whose scope of influential precepts and issues was not confined to the New Testament alone, but embraced many prophetic fulfillments.

> "'And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.' (Ephesians 2:20) This passage points out that the true Church will have strong basis in Old Testament prophecies for its message and its existence. The only meaning that can be attached to this reference to the prophets is that the Church must not only teach the New Testament or the apostles' doctrine but it must also fulfill the prophecies spoken of her in the Old Testament." (From: "The Body of Christ," by Bishop James B.

Wright . . . former Superintendent Bible Training Camp, Cleveland, Tennessee.)

This reference, or excerpt, elucidates more clearly the viewpoint sustained in regards to prophecies and various allusions to prophecies mentioned in the Book. From all indications to identities Jesus definitely established His Church, with visible members—actual people—the lone entity that embraced and propagated the doctrines Jesus Himself taught. To the sects and creeds of the day the new little organization was strange perhaps, but it changed the thinking and lives of multitudes.

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH IDENTIFIED

Jesus Christ—the Promised Seed, and Messiah to all mankind — has been amply identified in foregoing chapters, but additional mention and proof is helpful, since He fulfilled prophecies relating to His coming. Everything was not pleasant for "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:11. They hated Him without a cause, as borne out by John 15:25, fulfilling Psalms 35:19; 69:4. His own brothers did not believe on Him, and even challenged Him to attend the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles and prove His works to His disciples and to the world but He said, ". . . The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." John 7:1-7. He promised His disciples a part of the same omen He Himself suffered (Matthew 24:9).

But, the good things, the blessings and assurances He gave His disciples overbalanced by far the sufferings and omens of disaster heaped upon them at times, and in the epochs of time, by the unbelievers—the Jews were no exception. But what a price the Jewish people paid for their denial of the Promised Seed! John 1:12, 13 lends encouragement to those who believe and accept Him, for it says: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Lord Himself assured believers, ". . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. He further substantiates this assurance by saying, ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10.

Keep in mind that Jesus was "that Prophet" addressed by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, 19, and John 1:45 definitely

names Him Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. In Acts 3:22, 23 Simon Peter recognizes Him as "that Prophet" and passes sentence upon unbelievers. Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:5), recognized Him as "that Prophet" also, and declared that it was He who was in the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:37, 38). When the Lord Jesus presaged His sufferings, His crucifixion and resurrection, Simon Peter was mystified. The Lord rebuked him and assured him he did not savor the things of God.

Then, about six days later, on a high mountain in Galilee, when Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John there appeared Moses (who represented the Law) and Elias (who represented the Prophets) and they were conversing with Jesus. Simon Peter, always quick to speak, wanted to build a tabernacle for each of the three—Jesus, Moses and Elias. But, "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." Matthew 17:5-8.

It is certainly reasonable to expect the Messiah to have to undergo the social inequities and religious injustices of human events, for He was destined to alter the eschatological outlook of mankind. In a careful study of Mark's gospel it is seen that He was opposed more than eighty times while seeking to equate sufferings with blessings. Except for the Messiah and His devout disciples those of His day found it difficult to remain equanimous in the face of eminent criticism, unmerciful abuse, injustices of every kind, extreme sufferings, brutal assaults, and eventually death by the most crude, merciless methods of the day and age.

It seems that the identity of the Church has been amply established in foregoing references; however, other suggestions may serve to enhance her posture. Since the Bible lists only the Church Jesus established it is assumed that the disciples who followed closely to Him belonged to the Church He organized. There seems to be no record in the Bible of other churches . . . not even a record of John the Baptist having ever established a single church. The great Temple was at Jerusalem, and there were many synagogues in areas occupied or inhabited by the Jews, but Judaism's ethical, ceremonial and legal foundation and rites were of the Old Testament. Apparently there were some Judaist

Christians among the members of the early Church (Acts 15:24; Galatians 2:1-16), but they were readily suppressed when trying to expound their theories.

Jesus assured the apostles there were yet others to come. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16. He pulled His establishment closer to Him by the day, as a study of John, fifteenth chapter, indicates. He refreshed their thinking, and offered some sound consolation when He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:16. Notice His mention of having ordained them!

In those days there were numerous sects, cults and creeds in the area as history points out, and religions of different kinds extant. But, Jesus never proposed an organization of sects and cults and religions . . . nor did He propose a society of friends who would continue to propagate their own creeds, doctrines and opinions, most of which were enmeshed with divisiveness of all kinds. Christ was not divided, and He never desired His followers to be divided, but rather prayed earnestly in the Coenaculum, or Supper Room, for them to be one. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:20, 21.

JESUS OUTLINED GOVERNMENT FOR HIS CHURCH

When Jesus declared He would build His Church He also declared the gates of hell would not prevail against it. Then in the very next verse He says: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19.

In proper context it is inferred that Jesus would, or was going to give the keys (power or authority) to the Church He had established. He did not say He had already given the keys to them, but He said simply, ". . . and I will give unto thee the keys . . ." This indicates at a later time perhaps. Other things were to be said and done. He was speaking with Simon Peter, who was spokesman for the little group, but at no time conferring this

power and authority upon Simon Peter individually, as is borne out by study of other relating Scriptures. It was to His Church!

Just because the Lord addressed Simon Peter at the time does not infer or suggest that he was entrusted with the oversight and entire responsibility for the government of the Church to operate or function successfully. The infusion of governmental procedures required time, effort and perseverance. Peter, like all others of the apostles, had his part to play, his responsibilities to dispose of, and close adherence to protect and develop. The Bible leaves no record of him having ever been the anointed Bishop General of the Church, though he was the anointed leader of the early Church for perhaps ten to fifteen years following the return to the Upper Room from Bethany. Even then he had no right to direct the work of the Church to suit himself . . . it was God's government for His people. Jesus directed the government and work of the Church until His ascension at Bethany.

Jesus further explained that whatever they bound on earth, and whatever they loosed on earth would be recognized in heaven . . . all of which must unquestionably be subject to the directives of the Holy Spirit and the will of God, not as the word of men but as the word of God (I Thessalonians 2:13; John 12:35, 36). Perhaps this excerpt from Matthew Henry's Commentary will enlighten here:

> "To teach or declare a thing to be unlawful, was to 'bind'; to be lawful was to 'loose'. Now the apostles had an extraordinary power of this kind; some things forbidden by the law of Moses were now to be allowed, as the eating of such and such meats; some things allowed there were now to be forbidden, as divorce; and the apostles were impowered to declare this to the world . . ." (Matthew Henry's Commentary, Volume III, Page 134.)

Sometime following His declaration to build His Church, and promising the keys of authority to operate it, Jesus Himself outlined the procedure of government for it:

> "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew 18:15-18.

Veering a little from successive narration and chronology the Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Church to ". . . put away from among yourselves that wicked person." I Corinthians 5:13. He had direct reference to the unfaithful. The Church exercises the right through its government to excommunicate, disfellowship or exclude members who refuse to abide by the teachings and practices of the Church, and the Word of God. It is a visible government operated by actual visible human beings.

PROMINENT LESSONS TO THE CHURCH

It is impossible to evaluate the many lessons learned by the apostles as they sat at the feet of Jesus, with the open sky as probably their only canopy. He taught with power and authority, and fortunate followers undoubtedly sat entranced with the glories and ecstasies of the future life so ably and forcibly explained and revealed by the Master Himself. Some followers may have belonged to an eclectic group, sent to spy on His liberty, but the multitudinous majority thronged Him to get "even a small crumb" of the Bread of Life He so willingly and mercifully broke to them.

For centuries the whole world had needed a change of heart and mind and soul . . . the fervor of a religious awakening . . . and a genteel spiritual renaissance to pervade the consciences of people everywhere. Such an upheaval of religious conscience could come only by and through the actual presence of the Son of God—Jesus Christ—as He dwelt among the people themselves.

He brought the dynamic message of repentance recorded by Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3, 5, and Matthew 4:17, an act of grace to change the course of human nature, thus opening the way for possession of the actual "born again" experience that puts one into the kingdom of God. Multitudes embraced this teaching while some rejected it . . . but their rejection never lessened its potentials. Jesus openly declared He never came to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). This was a prominent teaching in His early ministry.

As explained elsewhere, Jesus had preached and gained many disciples, and after praying all night on a mountain in Galilee (probably Kurn Hattin) He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them with whom to establish His Church (Mark 3:13-15 and Luke 6:12-16). Following this event He gave to mankind the Sermon on the Mount—one of His greatest discourses, held in the highest esteem by the whole of Christianity. Some of the

Beatitudes are cited, quoted, or referred to in most schools, colleges, universities, civic gatherings, political meetings and assemblies of all kinds. No other sermon or message recorded has so affected the different facets and phases of man's life as has this spiritual and thrilling treatise that came from the lips of the Son of Man.

Jesus taught, and emphasized, respect for His divine call (Mark 1:16-20; John 21:15-18). He sent His apostles on a specific mission with a challenge of vast importance. ". . . go . . . to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . . . Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor script for your journey . . . for the workman is worthy of his meat." Matthew 10:6, 8-10. He urged unfaltering trust in the divine and corroborated by saying, ". . . he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew 10:38, 39. His inspirational remarks, given under stress and strain, were destined to be a lifeline to the trustworthy disciples.

He manifested His unparalleled interest in missions when He came to this world to give His life a ransom for many, but He further demonstrated it in Mark 1:38 and Luke 4:43, long before He gave the Great Commission recorded in Mark 16:15 and Matthew 28:19, 20. The apostles faced rejection as well as a portion of success wherever they went . . . the approach to the soul of man was new to the multitudes. It seems the Lord felt it advisable to "send them forth by two and two" (Mark 6:7). This perhaps resulted in more tenable impressions and influence. It seemed to work at the time.

Jesus also sent out seventy others—seventy besides the twelve. "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." Luke 10:1. At the time their commission seemed a little different to that of the twelve who went as lambs among wolves. The seventy were detailed to places where Jesus Himself was to come, but their challenge to divine trust was no different to the twelve. (1) They returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). However, Jesus kindly reminded them of the

1. **Some Bible readers and scholars are of the opinion that Luke was one of the appointed Seventy since his is the only reference to it; he should know!**

essence of their real safety and concern: ". . . I give unto you power . . . over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:19, 20.

In all His teachings and instructions Jesus sought to stabilize and ground the leaders of His Church in the fundamentals of continued spiritual freedom and growth. He was aware of the fact that He would soon be leaving His House in the charge of those whom He had selected to be charter members when He established it. He had found them, preached to them, walked with them and taught them by precept, by example and miracle, never once allowing the miraculous power of God to become subsidized by important persons of the social, civic or ecclesiastical world. Members of His flock beheld miracle after miracle at His hands, and heard myriads of blessings, comforting promises and assurances fall from the hallowed lips of this gold-tongued Orator and Messiah who spoke as "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

The influence of the young Church in the Holy Lands was measured by both success and opposition. It was a real Church composed of actual living human beings. It was the image which intercepted the Light and cast its shadow, which shadow became the church in the wilderness. Jesus was in this church in the wilderness that was destined to disappear when the true image or Church was established, and which Church would stand, for the Lord Himself said, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Jesus spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem and warned His disciples of the impending danger. He admonished them of the tribulation days just ahead. This was no parable, but the truth concerning future events. Nor did He stop there . . . He had a message for His Church . . . He would soon be leaving His House down here on earth and would take a far journey.

> "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." Mark 13:34-36.

Jesus had been twice rejected by His own townsmen at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30; Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-6), had

cleansed the Temple twice of the traders (John 2:13-25; Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48), had healed all manner of sicknesses, cast out devils, forgiven sins, raised the dead, fed five thousand men besides the women and children near Bethsaida (Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 6:36-45; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:5-14) and fed four thousand at Decapolis (Matthew 15:32-38; Mark 8:1-9). The Church learned about tithing and giving (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42), and about the evils of divorce (Matthew 5:32; 14:3, 4; 19:3-12; Mark 10:12; Luke 16:18). Through the parables He spoke they learned many things concerning eternal life and its preparation. The teachings of Jesus concerning the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, were exhaustive, probably moreso than those on any one subject He had expounded. He knew their need of this special enduement of power, since He was soon to leave them.

He foretold His death three different times—First: Matthew 16:20-28; Mark 8:30, 31; 9:1; Luke 9:22-27. Second: Matthew 17:21-28; Mark 9:30, 31; Luke 9:43-45. Third: Matthew 20:18, 19; Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-33. To His group of disciples these things seemed to be enigmas that left in their wake some puzzlement, some disenchantment at times, and perhaps a little discouragement, but His thrilling and devout words of life subsidized all such feelings, and they followed a little closer—except Judas Iscariot whom Satan induced to separate himself. Although they had been blessed through exercise of the spirit and power He had granted them they seemed defenseless when He assured them they would soon be like sheep without a shepherd. The clouds that swooped down around them got darker by the day, but they seemed to cling closer to Him, and some of them declared they would never depart from Him.

Jesus never seemed to forget His own though they rejected Him and hated Him without a cause. Often referred to as the Son of David He remembered the promises made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3 and elsewhere) and His great heart swelled with passion to see all Israel saved; but they rejected His redemptive mission. His feelings are exemplified when He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:37, 38, and also referred to in Luke 13:34, 35.

Reviewing the Last Days of Jesus Christ

15

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THE REGAL, TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

It was Sunday, the very first day of Passion Week! (1)

The Lord Jesus Christ left Bethphage and Bethany (Luke 19:29) on an illustrious and far-famed journey to the city of Jerusalem, the like of which is unparalleled in history. As He and His retinue of followers descended the Mount of Olives and came near the city of Jerusalem He foresaw with sorrow the doom of the city and her inhabitants, and wept over it, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19:42-44. What compassion that only the Son of God could manifest! What an event of prophecy soon to transpire! Had they accepted the Prophet they could have comprehended the prophecy . . . but alas!

None of His disciples and crowds, not even the multitudes that thronged the wayside to see Him pass, nor the scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and elders could forget His regal, triumphal entry of the city of Jerusalem, the strange, unusual, spectacular event that took place this first day of His week of Passion, fulfilling Zachariah 9:9. Matthew describes it vividly.

> "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought

1. **Now referred to as Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter, celebrated in commemoration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.**

the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." Matthew 21:1-11.

THE DAY OF PASSOVER PREPARATION

The shadows of the earthly life of Jesus lengthened eastward as He moved, almost in a hurry it seemed, toward its most crucial moments and stage of action—the crucifixion. Monday and Tuesday of the Week of Passion were spent in the dissemination of His teachings and doctrines. It is generally conceded that when He entered the city He cleansed the temple at Jerusalem the second time (Matthew 21:12). In the morning, while enroute to the city He was hungry, and espying a fig tree looked for some fruit thereon but found leaves only; and He cursed the fig tree and it soon withered away (Matthew 21:18-20).

In the temple at Jerusalem His authority was questioned by those who represented the Jewish Sanhedrin—scribes, priests and elders—but Jesus counter-questioned them about the baptism of John, and this trapped the rulers who admitted they could not tell, or say by what authority John did his baptizing (Matthew 21:23-27), thus evading commitment to the truth.

He spoke parables to them by which they could measure themselves by belief, confidence and acceptance commensurate to predicaments and their everyday living. He reminded them that the stone the builders rejected had become head of the corner. He further assured them that the kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth fruit (Matthew 21:42, 43). Many other parables He taught them.

Leaving the temple, perhaps on Tuesday of Passion Week, the disciples, probably pleased with the city's beautiful structures, showed Jesus the buildings of the temple. He said unto them. "See ye not all these things? . . . There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matthew 24:1, 2. He continued His explanations and went on to prophesy things to come to pass, and repeatedly warned His disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, the tribulation of days soon to come, as well as concerning the end of the world. He used

examples to enlighten them, and even cited them to the conditions that existed in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37-39). He warned them over and over to watch and be ready, and Matthew 24:44 reveals the paramount challenge to all souls, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Time grew shorter by the hour. Whatever course of action He pursued, and the moves He made were a source of encouragement and strength to the little Church He had established. Her influence had seemed to wane and trial and conflict threatened her very lifeline—Jesus Himself—but He gave them stronger meats to build up and bolster spiritual resources they would need within a few hours, or a day, or two perhaps. Some ministers feel the illustration given in Matthew 25:1-13 is really the premise of the Church and the termination of her final challenge and duty to God in reaching others.***

***They infer rational interpretation with practical understanding, e.g., the kingdom people are those who are Christians . . . some have the full blessings provided for them, some do not have. At midnight, darkness everywhere, a cry is made. The kingdom folk are asleep. Who makes the cry? Who is awake to make the cry? Who is supposed to make the wedding announcement? No one knows any definite time of betrothel but the bride. She is the first to know . . . and when all others are slumbering and sleeping she is awake preparing for the wedding. He only likens the kingdom of heaven to the meeting of the bridegroom . . . no marriages in heaven, for Jesus Himself said, "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Matthew 22:30. The bride is expected to make the cry, for she is the Church that Jesus established, and she must prepare herself for presentation (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7).

Jesus again forewarned His disciples of His approaching crucifixion (Matthew 26:2). The chief priests, the scribes and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, and consulted as to how they might take Jesus by subtilty and destroy Him (Matthew 26:3-5). It is likely that Judas Iscariot attended this meeting (Luke 22:2-5). Satan had entered into his heart and he covenanted with them to deliver Jesus into their hands for thirty pieces of silver. (2)

It appears according to the Scriptures, and other informative sources, that Jesus spent most of Wednesday of Passion Week in

2. Valued at about $17.00

retirement, perhaps in close communion with the Father. More exhaustive study of the life, trial and arrest of Jesus, the Christ, may be easily obtained from many volumes extant. (3)

The Scriptures indicate, and it is the scholarly opinion that Thursday of the Week of Passion was an eventful day in the life of Jesus. It was the fourteenth day of Nisan, first month of the Jewish sacred year, and corresponds to our April 6th. It was the time of the Passover Feast preparation (Leviticus 23:5) and seemed to last 24 hours (Leviticus 23:6), beginning at sundown on the fourteenth day of Nisan. Jesus had instructed His disciples to prepare for the passover He would keep with His disciples (Matthew 26:18, 19; Mark 14:12-16), a thing expected of Him.***

***It might be presumptuous to aver that Jesus did or did not eat the regular Passover with His disciples this last year of His ministry . . . but it is certain He ate "a Passover" with them, whether or not at the designated time. There were unusual events taking place at this time. Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath and of the Passover also. It was Thursday night. Here in this Upper Room He instituted the Lord's Supper, or Holy Sacrament. Following supper He girded Himself with a towel, took a basin of water and washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:4, 5).

During this serious, yet sacred, time Jesus foretold His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, and said, ". . . woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24). This assertion of the betrayal troubled the disciples who asked the question, "Lord, is it I?" It so stirred the alert, forward, quick-spoken Simon Peter that he vowed he would lay down his life for Jesus' sake. The Lord calmly told him, "The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice" (John 13:37, 38). An atmosphere of sadness and discomfort pervaded the meeting, to be sure, but in John 14 and 15 Jesus gave encouraging words of comfort and consolation. He urged them, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). He spoke of the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, and gave the great discourse of the vine and the branches. He tried to so intertwine their fellowship and redemptive efforts as to make them inseparable. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye

3. **"The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" by Alfred Edersheim, and "The Trial of Jesus Christ" by Frank J. Powell, are enlightening.**

should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:16. He had held His final conversation of intimacy with His trusted disciples. He closed the meeting following His intercessory prayer (John 17), in which He implored the Father not to take His disciples out of the world, but to keep them from the evil of the world. He knew some problems would be mastered . . . some problems solved . . . but His disciples would be forced to live, or co-exist, with others, and would therefore need spiritual strength. He pleaded with the Father that "they all may be one" (John 17:21). Judas Iscariot had disappeared from the huddle.***

***It is well to remember that Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, had been denounced by the Lord as the betrayer, and Jesus had said, "That thou doest, do quickly" (John 13:27). Judas then left the huddle of disciples and the Lord, to execute his mission. He knew the place where Jesus was going (John 18:2).

Following His intercessory prayer, it was midnight or shortly thereafter when Jesus left the Coenaculum (or Supper Room) with His disciples, crossed the brook Cedron (Kidron), and walked up the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the Garden of Gethsemane. It was about a mile. The moon was bright and they could probably discern the lofty reaches of the temple buildings silhouetted against the murky skyline to the west. He knew, for He and His disciples had frequented the Garden before. Judas Iscariot had been with them on such occasions . . . but his sole and selfish mission this night was his most sinister. Like Cain, he was gone out from the presence of the Lord!

BEHOLD THE MAN . . . THE MESSIAH . . . THE REDEEMER!

When they arrived at Gethsemane, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus asked His disciples to wait while He went and prayed (Matthew 26:36; Mark 14:32). He took Peter, James and John a little farther and told them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." Matthew 26:38. Both Matthew and Mark tell us He prayed three times, earnestly desiring the will of the Lord. Evangelist Luke tells us of the extreme agony He suffered (Luke 22:42-47). It seems that the weight of the sins of the whole world fell upon Him, but He never



Pictured here is the Garden of Gethsemane to which Jesus resorted with His disciples following His close fellowship and meeting with them in the Coenaculum, or Supper Room. It was in the Garden that the Lord prayed "Thy will be done" just before He was arrested, hurried to the house of Anna, then to Caiphas and on to Pilate for the great trial. Some ancient olive trees are seen in the picture.

faltered . . . never staggered . . . never cowered from test and trial. Never had there been such a day in Israel, nor would ever again be when the Messiah would be sacrificed as the Paschal Lamb to redeem mankind! It was time for the Jews' Passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and the chief priests and the scribes feared a bloody riot of the people, especially the multitude of followers that would throng Him should they seek Him openly and put Him to death at the time of the sacrifice or feast. So, they sought to take Him by craft and destroy Him lest their feast day be interrupted, and probably profaned.***

***In view of the strange happenings on the 14th and 15th of Nisan, it seems unlikely the Jews celebrated their Passover this year. Occurrences were so unusual and awe-striking: the awful betrayal; the dastardly manhunt for the innocent; the unlawful seizure and arrest; the shameful accusation before the Sanhedrin; Simon Peter's fearless denial; the unfair trial and

conviction; the brutal chastisements; the rending of the vail of the temple (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45); the tantalizing, furious earthquake (Matthew 27:51-54), and the unnatural and dismal darkness over all Judea from the sixth hour (twelve o'clock noon) until the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon). Jesus Himself as the Lamb of God without spot or blemish, was sacrificed for the sin of all mankind, gave up the ghost, or expired at the very hour the Jewish paschal lamb was slain as a sacrifice. The Roman centurion who stood by said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39). How could this nation observe such a sacred feast of remembrance?

Judas Iscariot, of Kerioth in Judea, was the only one of the apostles Jesus selected who was not a Galilean. He was the key man in the nefarious scheme of the Jews to capture and destroy Jesus, though one of His disciples. At the time he was mentioned as one of the twelve to disclose his awful and debase ingratitude and desperate wickedness, and was considered to be one of the vilest traitors ever to disgrace the mercies of God and mankind. As leader of a militant mob of ruffians and murderers he was the world's worst! He repented of his crime, but suffered extremes in death (Matthew 27:3-5; Acts 1:18), for he was the son of perdition.

At this time little can be said of the condition of the Church Jesus had established. The picture was dark, and the inspiration and initiative all but gone. Sheep without a shepherd, lost for direction! These were drastic times, and in order to familiarize the reader with this episode, it is advisable to reconstruct important events with Scriptural references.

THE NEFARIOUS SCHEME OF JUDAS

"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." Matthew 26:14-16.

BETRAYED WITH A KISS

"And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he:

hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him." Matthew 26:47-49.

THE DECEITFUL, UNLAWFUL ARREST

"When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him." John 18:1-12.

TRIP TO THE HOUSE OF ANNAS

"And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people." John 18:13, 14.

SIMON PETER DENIES JESUS

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto

Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself . . . And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew." John 18:15-18; 25-27.

"And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." Matthew 26:75.

JESUS IS BROUGHT BEFORE CAIAPHAS

"The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?" John 18:19-23.

"Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses." Matthew 26:59, 60.

JESUS FACES FALSE EVIDENCE

"And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days." Matthew 26:61.

"We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together." Mark 14:58, 59.

"And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be

the Christ, the Son of God." Matthew 26:62, 63.

JESUS AND THE ADJURATION

"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matthew 26:63, 64.

THE UNLAWFUL CONVICTION

"Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." Matthew 26:65, 66.

"And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands." Mark 14:65.

THE INFAMOUS CONSULTATION

"And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate." Mark 15:1.

TRIED BY PILATE THE GOVERNOR

"When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor." Matthew 27:1, 2.

"And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man." Luke 23:2-4.

JESUS IS SENT TO HEROD

"And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's

jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves." Luke 23:7-12.

PILATE'S WIFE IS DISTURBED

"When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Matthew 27:19.

JESUS CONDEMNED TO CRUCIFIXION

"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified." Matthew 27:24-26.

TO CALVARY AND THE CRUCIFIXION

"And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." Matthew 27:32-35.

ON THE CROSS . . . DARKNESS

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour." Matthew 27:45.

JESUS YIELDS UP THE GHOST . . . EXPIRES

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, E-li, E-li, la-ma sa-bach-tha-ni? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." Matthew 27:46-50.

WHAT A SPECTACULAR EVENT!

"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." Matthew 27:51-54.

The 15th of Nisan, is likely to have begun at sundown the evening of the 14th (as Jews computed their time) but April 7, A.D. 30, began one minute past midnight April 6th, (the way we begin our days). Hence the arrest, trial, crucifixion and death of Jesus occurred on the 7th of April A.D. 30, within the space of fifteen hours or less. (4) While several authorities agree on the year A.D. 30, they cannot designate the specific day. Those who have specified the month and date feel reasonably sure of their proofs.

STRANGE THINGS HAPPENED

"And they all forsook him, and fled. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked." Mark 14:50-52. Since Mark alone lists this incident it is thought he was the young man referred to here.

4. "History of the Christian Church" by Philip Schaff. "Peloubet's Bible Dictionary."

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matthew 27:52, 53.

Herod Antipas, "that fox" as Jesus once referred to him (Luke 13:32), was still tetrarch of Galilee when Jesus was crucified, and no doubt connived in His death (Luke 23:6-16). He was the Herod that ordered the death of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12). Herod and Pilate were enemies until Jesus brought them together (Luke 23:12), and were made friends.

LAST WORDS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

The last words of Jesus on the cross were:

1. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.
2. "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43.
3. "Woman, behold thy son!" John 19:26. Note: Scholars feel the next clause, "Behold thy mother!" is a part of the first, though it is mentioned in verse 27.
4. "E-li, E-li, la-ma sa-bach-tha-ni? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.
5. "I thirst." John 19:28.
6. "It is finished." John 19:30.
7. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23:46.

THE INTERMENT OF JESUS

"And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand." John 19:38-42.



Shown here is the Garden Tomb . . . commonly referred to as Joseph's New Tomb . . . where the Lord Jesus Christ was laid after the crucifixion, and from which it is said He was resurrected. Thousands of visitors and tourists visit it annually.

"And the women also, which came with them from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23:55, 56.

"Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise up again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." Matthew 27:62-66. (5)

5. After the resurrection of Jesus, Matthew 28:11-15 tells of the deception employed by the Jews to justify themselves.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightening, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." Matthew 28:1-7.

"And as they were sore afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." Luke 24:5-7.

"Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." John 20:3-9.

EVENTS FOLLOWING HIS RESURRECTION

After His resurrection Jesus remained on earth forty days (Acts 1:3). During the forty days He was seen of His disciples at least ten times according to the Scriptures. Five of these appearances were on that very first Easter Sunday, listed as follows:

JOHN 20:1-18 . . . First of all He was seen by Mary Magdalene at Jerusalem. She was the first person to carry the message of His resurrection.

MATTHEW 28:1-10 . . . Shortly after His appearance to Mary

Magdalene, He appeared to the other women at Jerusalem, greeting them, "All hail."

LUKE 24:13-32 . . . He appeared to the two disciples near Emmaus, on the Easter afternoon perhaps, unfolding some of the prophetic utterances concerning himself, and what had actually happened.

LUKE 24:33, 34 . . . The eleven apostles and other disciples, gathered at Jerusalem on Easter afternoon, declared the Lord had appeared to Simon Peter.

JOHN 20:19-24 . . . When ten of the apostles were gathered together behind closed doors (Thomas being absent) Easter Sunday evening at Jerusalem Jesus appeared to them and showed them His hands and His side, and they were glad when they saw the Lord. This was probably at the Coenaculum.

These five events occurred on the first day of His resurrection, observed today as Easter Sunday. At least five other appearances are recorded.

JOHN 20:25-28 . . . Eight days later Jesus appeared to His eleven apostles at Jerusalem, Thomas being present, and Jesus challenged Thomas to touch His hands and His side, and tenderly reproved Thomas for his little faith. This too, was probably at the same place where the Supper was held.

JOHN 21:1-23 . . . Most all this chapter deals with Jesus and seven of His apostles, near the Sea of Tiberias, or Sea of Galilee, at which time He also gave Simon Peter a personal commission, strange and new. It is likely that this is the incident referred to by Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:5.

MATTHEW 28:16-20 . . . This appearance, which is the eighth, was probably on Kurn Hattin, a mountain in Galilee. Jesus met with His eleven apostles and gave to them the last great commission—a challenge unparalleled in the annals of human endeavor. Some scholarly opinions are that Paul, in I Corinthians 15:6, had reference to five hundred other disciples who were also gathered, with the eleven at this time.

I CORINTHIANS 15:7 . . . The Apostle Paul mentions that Jesus appeared to James, the Lord's brother, at Jerusalem it is assumed. This may have been the time He conveyed the leadership of the Church to James, who later was referred to as General Overseer, or General Bishop. Paul only mentions this appearance.

ACTS 1:1-11 . . . Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles, near Bethany on the Mount of Olives, forty days after His resurrection . . . His very last and final appearance to them. He told them to go

back to Jerusalem and tarry until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). He told them they would receive power after they received the Holy Ghost, and would be witnesses. After giving them final charges a strange sight occurred: He slowly began to ascend, was taken up, and a cloud received Him, and the apostles saw Him no more. While they still gazed into the heavens, two men stood by them in shining apparel, and assured them, ". . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

I CORINTHIANS 15:8 . . . Some seem to think the Lord's appearance to Apostle Paul should be mentioned, in addition to the stipulated ten appearances. However, this is purely conjectural on their part.

Church of Prophecy Accepts Leadership for Christianity

16

SUBJECTS COVERED IN TEXT

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CONFERENCE HELD TO REPLACE JUDAS

Following the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:9), events transpired swiftly for the eleven apostles. They were sad and awe-stricken when the Lord left them and disappeared from sight (Acts 1:10, 11), but they determined to obey His final challenge to return to Jerusalem (Luke 24:49-53) and tarry there until they were endued with power from on high. From Bethany to Jerusalem was a sabbath-day's journey. (1)

Arriving at Jerusalem they went to an upper room, which was probably the house of Mary, or another saint's home where the apostles were wont to meeting in services hitherto. Luke 24:53 indicates they might have resorted to an upper room in the temple, but this is uncertain. There were one hundred and twenty of them. Besides the other women Mary the mother of Jesus was among them, as were the brothers of the Lord. All of them continued in one accord in prayer and supplication. No divisions!

The Scriptures leave no record of everything that may have transpired during the approximate ten days in the upper room. Luke 24:53 implies they spent some time in the temple, praising God perhaps, and in prayer. They had time to think, to study and review the strange occurrences that preceded their journey back to Jerusalem. Either of the eleven could recall how they met Jesus on a mountain in Galilee as instructed, and the commission given by Him to "go into all the world" with His message. He never forgot nor ignored the people of any nation, race, color or creed. Yes . . . it was on this mountain . . . not in the temple, not in a synagogue or church . . . out under the clear skies of heaven, in a mission conference unparalleled in ecclesiastical history, Jesus had

1. In any attempt to reconcile events recorded in Luke 24:50 and Acts 1:12 it is necessary to know: FIRST . . . a furlong is about one-eighth of a mile. SECOND . . . the village of Bethany, home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, was fifteen furlongs (about two miles) from Jerusalem (John 11:18). THIRD . . . A sabbath-day's journey was considered to be seven furlongs and a half, or eight. Adam Clarke, commenting on Luke 24:50-52 and citing Dr. Lightfoot, says, Bethphage was the first tract on the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem, and where the tract of Bethany (not the village) joined it was about seven and a half furlongs. Both Mark 11:1 and Luke 19:29 allude to this opinion. Commentaries seem to think this is the place from whence Jesus began His ride on the colt for His triumphal entrance of Jerusalem.

charged the souls of the eleven apostles with a flame of fire never to be quenched. Though some of them had doubted (Matthew 28:17) He upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart (Mark 16:14), assuring them of His unlimited power, and He forthwith challenged their utmost desires, sincerity and selfless exposure of their greatest spiritual resourcefulness and power in an all-out mission to reach every soul with His message. He required their most reverent friendship, their closest fellowship and divine trust.

Before them, so He had intimated, lay the whole world, most of it entirely void of His message of redemption, and the ingathering of God's children as prophesied by Caiaphas in John 11:49-52. Now they felt closer drawn to Him than ever for to them devolved the responsibilities to preach and disseminate His gospel to all peoples. He had pulled them closer to Him in confidence and acceptance . . . in a sort of elite group. (2)

Simon Peter took the lead and addressed the group concerning the unfortunate role Judas Iscariot had played by betraying Jesus to the militant, angry, merciless mob. He reminded them that Judas' deceptive scheme had resulted in the fulfillment of Psalm 41:9 and Psalm 69:25, and had purchased Aceldama, the field of blood (potter's field) with the reward of iniquity. He had lost his bishopric, and therefore it was necessary to select another to take his place (Psalm 109:8).

As spokesman and leader of the little Church group, Peter moderated their first business conference after the ascension of Christ. One hundred and twenty names are recorded (Acts 1:15). Some seem to think there were perhaps other members in Galilee and the northern-most regions of the Holy Lands who could not journey to Judea and be counted, but the Bible record is silent on such speculation. It deals here strictly with the one hundred and twenty mentioned above.

The agenda called for the selection of a suitable person to fill the bishopric vacated by Judas who had fallen by transgression. The candidate per se had to be one who had companied with them the whole time Jesus went in and out among them, even from His baptism by John to His ascension. For such an exalted position the candidate must be a witness of the resurrection of Jesus—the

2. Some authorities are inclined to believe that the "above five hundred" mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 15:6 were present on the mountain in Galilee, though probably not in the huddle with the eleven. The Bible offers no contradiction on this opinion. (Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, D.D., and suggested by Matthew Henry's Commentary.)

Persona Grata of apostleship. Two men were selected as candidates: Joseph called Barsabas, surnamed Justus, one who had been with the Lord during His public ministry, and whom tradition places as one of the seventy (Luke 10:1); and Matthias, who had been in constant attendance of the ministry of Jesus, and whom tradition also places as one of the seventy. They had equal qualifications. "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven." Acts 1:26.

Even if the members of the little Church were all Galilean Jews (Acts 2:7) at this time nothing indicates it was just another Jewish sect, though Tertullus the orator, speaking to Governor Felix at Caesarea accused Paul of being a ringleader of the "sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5). It was the Church Jesus Christ Himself had established on Kurn Hattin, a mountain in Galilee. Whether or not it had adjusted to any permanent posture in Galilee is not known. Nor should it be thought incredible to believe that others, besides the twelve, believed and had become attached to the nucleus, since the Galileans seemed more susceptible to His gospel. Notwithstanding, the Scriptures show with certainty that the influence and nucleus of the Church moved to Jerusalem sometime prior to the crucifixion and resurrection, with Jesus Himself directing its government, manifesting teaching rather than document, for the Judean Jews were slower to accept Him.

It is obvious that this business conference earmarked for the very first time this particular phase and function of the Church that now comprised one hundred and twenty members. It is clearly seen the group exercised the needed phase of government at the time. It must be remembered too this action took place before the group was baptized with the Holy Ghost and endued with power from on high. This should be proof enough to convince us the Church was not established on the Day of Pentecost; it was already in operation and functioning.***

***"It is inconceivable to think that the Church was established on the Day of Pentecost, for Jesus is responsible for establishing the Church while He was upon earth. Further, when He gave His life for the sins of the world on the cross of Calvary, He also died to purchase the Church of God. (Acts 20:28)." From: "The Church Triumphant" by Daniel D. Preston A.B., M.A.

HOLY GHOST DESCENDS UPON DISCIPLES

The Day of Pentecost was the Fiftieth Day after the Passover.

It was celebrated to commemorate the revelation of God to Moses on Mount Sinai, falling during the harvest season. It was one of the seven important Jewish feasts, namely: The Feast of the Passover, the Unleavened Bread, the First Fruits, the Wave Offering, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Feast of Pentecost. (3)

Devout worshippers thronged Jerusalem in observance of this feast day. However, the one hundred and twenty disciples had gathered in the Upper Room in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ on the Mount of Olives, just a short while before He was taken up from among them, and the cloud received Him from sight. They had been there (in the Upper Room) about ten days, several days before the Day of Pentecost had fully come, praising and blessing God.

Centuries ago (about B.C. 800), before the prophecy was to be fulfilled the Minor Prophet Joel had said, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." Joel 2:28, 29. Then about seventy-five years later (B.C. 725) the Major Prophet Isaiah had said, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." Isaiah 28:11. Many feel this Scripture suggests the experience on the Day of Pentecost. And about seven hundred and fifty years later John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:" Matthew 3:11.

The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, had been a subject most fully explained, and referred to by the Lord Jesus. It was essentially a time to assuage the discouragement the disciples had sustained when He had warned them He would not be with them long. The synoptists—Matthew, Mark and Luke—as well as John, had referred to John the Baptist's assertions, and Jesus spoke of the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, in John 14:16, 17; 14:26; 15:26, 27; 16:7, 8. Some ministers think John 13:20 infers this blessing as well.

The instructions and assurances that sent the one hundred and twenty rushing to the Upper Room at Jerusalem were those given

3. New Testament Commentary . . . By George M. Lamsa, B.A., F.R.S.A. A. J. Holman Co. (Philadelphia).

by Jesus before He was taken away from them. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts 1:4, 5. This command kept them "tarrying" for the Promise of the Father, and the further assurances thrilled them. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. Never had there been such a phenomenal event as presaged for this little group!

> "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" Acts 2:1-8.

This event shook the religious world of the day, and the multitude came together, confounded by the strange occurence. The one hundred and twenty were all Galileans, speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Eighteen different peoples were represented in the amazed multitude that heard these Galileans speak in the native tongue of the multitude, with no formal education or teaching in these native tongues. It was overwhelming . . . powerful . . . peculiar . . . and apparently exhilarating in their movements for God. Some of the multitude accused the Galileans of being drunk, or intoxicated . . . and they undoubtedly acted like they were inebriated. But Simon Peter, with the eleven, stood up and said, "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Acts 2:15, 16.

Peter preached with power, with fearless authority and boldness. He no longer was the denying coward but Jesus' foremost apostle now. He spoke as he was moved on by the power of the Holy Ghost he had just received. He explained about the mission of Jesus Christ, and His crucifixion by the very people He came to redeem. It pricked them, stirred them as they came face to face with the urgent needs for their souls, and wanted to know what to do. Peter explained the procedure. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts 2:38, 41.

With the addition of three thousand souls the membership of the Church now numbered three thousand one hundred and twenty, and still the day was young. Fellowship grew and expanded among those who believed. Many residents of Judea, who heretofore had ignored and divorced themselves from adherence to the teachings of Jesus, believed and were baptized. God sent the downpourings of His Spirit and power at the opportune time to reach the multitudes who had journeyed to the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus and His apostles had not been forbidden prayer and teaching in the temple nor synagogues although their teachings were not always accepted, especially by the orthodox Jews and their constituents. After all, Jesus had come to fulfill the law.

What had happened here at Pentecost had disturbed the equanimity of the people, whose unity of purpose and plan was peculiarly strained anyway. The common people believed, as did the poor, and they followed those possessed of the Spirit and power of the Almighty. As borne out by the Scripture recorded by Luke the Church grew and expanded. "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.***

***In the early stages of its development it is not recorded just how the members were added or joined to the Church at this time. Later on, from Scriptural indication, people became members by covenant, and were given the right hand of fellowship. Acts 2:47 verifies the need of people being saved before they become members of the Church Jesus established.

LAME MAN MIRACULOUSLY HEALED

The Holy Ghost had been given those who obeyed (Acts 5:32),

and they were endued with power from on high, especially the apostles. It was power for service . . . power to preach and teach . . . power to heal the sick and cast out devils . . . power to pray and defend and propagate the same gospel Jesus brought. The effects of its possession magnified purpose and glorified God. It would combat unbelief, criticism and opposition and venerate the faithful in consecration and achievement, though not soothed with ease and escape-mediums.

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God." Acts 3:1-9.

> It is inferred by scholarly opinion, as well as commentaries, that the Jews designated, or set aside three different hours of the day for public prayer—the Third Hour (answers to our nine o'clock at morning); the Sixth Hour (Acts 10:9, answers to our noon) and the Ninth Hour, mentioned above (answers to our three o'clock in the afternoon) . . . Adam Clarke, page 704, of Commentary.

When Peter and John made their memorable journey to the temple at the hour of prayer they became the very apotheosis of consecration and power. The healing accomplished through faith in Jesus Christ and His power left with the multitude an idelible impression. The lame man whom they laid daily at the gate called Beautiful was a cripple who had to be transported or carried to his place. He was there perhaps at the Third Hour . . . at the Sixth Hour . . . and now the Ninth Hour. He was there yesterday . . . last week . . . last year . . . and a long time ago, for he was a man. Begging was his only source of livelihood—a drudgery, degrading, tiresome and embarrassing, with no possible hope for recovery perhaps. The Beautiful Gate probably led from the Court of the

Gentiles to the Women's Court . . . convenient position for such a beggar. Strangers and worshippers were more apt to contribute silver and gold coins than were the regulars going in and coming out the temple area who saw the beggar at the gate every day, maybe, for he was past forty years old.

When the beggar asked alms and Peter said "Look on us," was it to compare themselves with the beggar? Were they stigmatized by the presence of the beggar? Did they desire sympathy? Or, did this command emphasize enough of the presence of God upon their lives they expected the beggar to know they had been with Jesus? Opinions differ and religious leaders propound their own theories, but none of them can deny that an outstanding miracle was performed. Christians everywhere acquiesce in support of it and eulogize the miracle as the result of God's presence. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Acts 3:6. The crippled, lame beggar, leaping up, stood and walked.

It stirred commotion among the people. They saw the "once-crippled-beggar" now leaping and walking and praising God as he entered the temple with them, probably for the first time in his life. While the people stood in amazement and wonder, awe-stricken and puzzled, Apostle Peter preached to them the reason and reality of these unsearchable riches they now beheld. He explained how they had denied the Holy One and the Just, and killed the Prince of life Whom God had raised from the dead. He, John and others were witnesses of His resurrection by many infallible proofs. Now, in obvious gratitude to God, the people beheld a most convincing testimonial as they stared upon the lame man who had been healed (Acts 3:16). Peter thoughtfully refreshed their memory with his references to the promises made to Abraham, and to his seed that is Jesus the Messiah.

Mankind is apt to forget the good things and remember the less fortunate ones. Shakespeare said, "The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones." But this is not always the case, for the miracle performed on the lame man is spoken of and heralded everywhere in Christendom, for it unfolded the Messianic mercies of man's Redeemer. It came not by some supereminent piety of the apostles, nor some superhuman act of theirs but was wrought by the majestic divinity and power of One higher than man. These humble apostles were mere instruments through which God worked His miracle, one of many that were destined to shake the souls of men all over the world. Silver and gold could never purchase this power, though unfortunately some

churches and organizations miss the favors and power of God by becoming too deeply entangled with the mammon of wealth and its power structure. This shakes the consciences of people with shame while unmatched spiritual benevolences are at their doorsteps!***

> ***It has been said that while counting large sums of money the minister in charge remarked, "You see the Church is no longer in an age in which she can say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" The other minister said to his superior, "How true . . . nor can she now say to the lame man, 'Rise up and walk.'"

The apostles had no intention of condemning the necessary finance with which to propagate the gospel; Peter just said he had no silver or gold, but he blessed the lame man by sharing with him some of what he did have. It was a mutual blessing—a special time, for the lame who had never walked, now walked, and a special time in the life of Peter and John, for they beheld a living miracle as a result of their faith and power with God, themselves. This was clearly seen to be a very special day in Bible history, and it has been the thematic principle cited in many an unparalleled message or sermon. When the real essence of it is stressed in consecration and prayer, pulpits glow with the radiance of the Holy Spirit.

All Christendom is aware that repentance is a phase of the gospel that is open to everyone; but healing, as evidenced here, is a major purport in which only those who personally need physical healing can share. No attempt to rationalize is even suggested, but an endeavor is requested to expose the practical aspects of the true gospel brought to man. A "changed life" is to be seen . . . it must, and will be seen if one is "born again" as the Scriptures require. Yet, healing is a provision in the Atonement . . . provided for the benefit of physical sufferers, but not required for him to be saved.

The foregoing expository accounts, though somewhat exhaustive, are intended to depict the results of Christian endeavors when the power of the Spirit permeated the life of the individual, and when the Church of prophecy as the Body of Christ in actual operation was moved by the spiritual downflow at the Pentecost Feast day. The spirit of its operation followed in the footsteps of Jesus who governed the group at will, teaching, instructing, training the apostles for future administrators of the Church. Following the Day of Pentecost the little Church was not a highly organized group. They owned no church buildings, nor

were they stymied by oppressive mandates, or ritualistic systems and practices. With few controls as necessary, and being the preachers and leaders of the group, the apostles became the leaders. They favored the spiritual rather than ecclesiastical approaches for some time until needs developed that would request an increase in principle and government, theocratic in form.

Though worshipping in the synagogues and temple at times, and considered by some to be just another sect of Judea similar to the Essenes perhaps, the newly established Church was definitely different to anything else that had emerged from the religious chaos of the centuries. Her accolade came by way of the Cross on which the sole Redeemer of mankind was sacrificed as the Paschal Lamb of God . . . her divinely inspired and endowed amenities were unparalleled . . . and her accretion of Divine Powers came by the hour in deep consecration from God's own empyrean.

THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE MOVE

It would seem unreasonable to attempt to narrate every facet, phase and movement of the young Church following the great outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, for the Bible itself is our very best compendious reference. The accounts therein are rich and certainly rewarding to those who study the Holy Narratives.

After the Church was saturated with the great power of God (Acts 2:1-4) and the one hundred twenty baptized with the Holy Ghost, Apostle Peter waxed bold and strong in his declarations of Bible truths (Acts 2:14-39). He had perhaps heard the fellow-Galileans speak in about eighteen different languages of those who had come to investigate the spiritual phenomenon. Three thousand had been added to the number (the Church), Acts 2:41, making a total of three thousand one hundred and twenty (3,120). The Book declares in Acts 2:47 that the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. Such an innovation of the Spirit was inspiring and stimulating.

Strange things happened! God manifested His omnipotent power when He healed the forty-year-old man (Acts 4:22), who had been lame all his life (Acts 3:1-11). It stirred up opposition among the Sadducees, for they feared Peter and John would preach the resurrection of the dead which they strictly opposed. They laid hands on the two apostles that evening and put them in hold until the next day (Acts 4:1-3). But the Holy Ghost fire in the

bosom of these mighty men was powerful and could not be quenched by mortal men. It was by far more powerful and worse than a ferocious forest fire in tall rich timbers for its velocity was unparalleled. And just as suddenly as flames leap from fagots of tinder, conviction and redemption swept among the people and five thousand more believed and were added to their number, now making a total of eight thousand one hundred and twenty, and far exceeding either the Pharisees or Sadducees.

This stirred the Jewish rulers, and the next day the rulers, the elders, scribes, Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and as many as were kindred of the high priest gathered together. They took knowledge of the apostles that they had been with Jesus—they spoke of Him, they talked like Him and acted like Him though Jesus had been crucified some time ago; and the disciples declared He was resurrected and had ascended to heaven. They inquired of the apostles concerning the miracle of healing of the lame man who had sat so long at the Gate called Beautiful. Peter was quick to explain by what power and authority they had performed the miracle. The "once-lame man" now stood with them (Acts 4:14) and the rulers and chief priests could not deny the miracle, for it was known by all the people of Jerusalem (Acts 4:16).

The elders and chief priests found no fault in the deed done for the lame man, and fearing a turbulent reaction of the people, they threatened the disciples and to no avail cautioned them not to preach or teach in the name of Jesus. They then let them go to their own company—the Church—where a great prayer meeting broke out among them. The Holy Ghost swept into their midst and a real hunger for righteousness and deep consecration was left in the wake of the visit. Everyone seemed thrilled with God's divine presence among them, sharing His mighty blessings with all of them. The spirit of it all was overwhelming and they were impressed and inspired to share any wealth, or land or other belongings or possessions with those of their number less fortunate. They sold their possessions and laid the price of them down at the feet of the apostles, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need so that no one lacked. Even Joses, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles, a Levite of Cyprus, the son of consolation, sold a piece of land and brought the money and laid it down at the apostles' feet. They were all of one heart and one soul, and they were so thrilled with the spirit of consecration and submission to God that none of them claimed

anything belonged to the person himself . . . they had all things common (Acts 4:32-37).***

***All things common . . . not "in common." This Scripture may be misunderstood and misconstrued by some who attempt to stress the erroneous theory that everyone is to share exactly alike as Christians, and never possess aught above his fellow man. But, this was never a command of God by which to gauge Christian fellowship, or spirituality. However, there may be individuals whom God may request, or even require, sacrifice of personal wealth and possessions to receive Jesus Christ, and certain virtues of Christianity as personal acquirement . . . if this is the case the prize is certainly worth the price paid. But, such sacrifice is no blanket demand of God's nor is this a license for spirituality. It remains a consecrated choice of the individual, for money and possessions are great blessings in one's pursuit of Christian endeavors when such possessions are consecrated to the Lord's services, and do not come between the person and his God.

From all indication the young Church was undergoing severe trials of faith, and some of them had even undergone privation and hunger, not possessing the necessary requirements for survival. Jerusalem and the immediate vicinity were often plagued for lack of food and other commodities. It was no different among the Christians.

The Church was a closely knit, unified body in spirit, faith and purpose, and each member seemed to feel and sustain the sufferings, privation and hunger, or persecution experienced by a fellow-member. With such a spiritually inspired cognizance prevailing, their personal outlook and efforts seemed coerced in an unmatched togetherness, and "in one accord" referred to by different Scriptures and about eleven times in the Acts of the Apostles. The sentiment, as well as the movements, of the disciples were purely voluntary, temporary and confined to the area of Jerusalem, for reason suggests that not every one of the members of the group sold his belongings, or disposed of his possessions. No record is left where Andrew, Peter, James and John disposed of their fishing interests in Galilee, nor of Mary, mother of John Mark, disposing of her commodious residence in Jerusalem, a dwelling house often visited by Simon Peter and other members of the Church.***

***Some poverty was alleviated through the community of goods then, and in the particular area was a worthwhile

achievement. However, it seems unfair to the courtesy of the human race to overindulge and promote the poverty mania . . . even in the Church. It tends to rob, stalemate and destroy erstwhile ambition and leaves paupers to grope their ways through an affluent society. Jesus said, "For ye have the poor with you always . . ." (Mark 14:7) No Christian, devoutly following Jesus Christ and His doctrines, will intentionally ignore, neglect, and rail on the poor. One is constantly reminded of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus (Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22).

DISCIPLES MOVE IN THE FEAR OF GOD

From all inferences the Church had no intention of coddling, or encouraging unconcern, indolence, idleness or laziness among them . . . but merely moved to combat and supply the need then existent. Not the whole area of Judaea, for they had no means sufficient for such a challenge. They had the same strong desire and determination that is prevalent in the Church today to become active participants in reaching the less fortunate with assistance.

About eight years after this great consecration to the cause the Church at Antioch, in Syria, sent relief to the brethren (some of the same ones perhaps) of Judaea by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, during the great dearth that occurred in the reign of Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28-30). Notice that Barnabas participated in both incidences. The veracity of the reader's contentions are certainly not contested at all for the miracles wrought by the power-instilled men of God are unequalled in the annals of Christian concept and appeal.

When God blesses His followers look out, for Satan invariably shows up with his retinue and their temptations. From the very fall of man Satan has sought to destroy mankind . . . never tired . . . never resting. There had been unmatched consecration and fellowship among the humble members of the Church and this had fostered a great spirit of self-sacrifice, wholly voluntary.

Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold a possession, kept back a portion of the price (for the rainy days perhaps) and brought the rest of the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. They had not been forced to dispose of the possession, nor induced to bring the price of it and lay at the apostles' feet. It was all voluntary. It belonged to them and they could do as they desired. But to feign personal sacrifice, and attempt to deceive those who had shared "their all" in an effort to relieve existing suffering and misery

when the Spirit worked so mightily among them was too much deception and sin to ignore. Peter said, "Why hast Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). So powerful was the impact of Peter's message as directed by God that Ananias fell down dead, and young men carried him out and buried him. About three hours afterwards Sapphira came in, not knowing what had taken place, and Peter asked her if they sold the land for so much, indicating perhaps the sacrifice given was for all the land they had sold. Peter condemned her and said, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" (Acts 5:9) She too fell dead at the feet of Peter and the young men carried her out and buried her.***

***The essence of this lesson in self-sacrifice is given in partial detail. Satan predisposed his plan of deception, as always, through human agency . . . and as always man lost and Satan gained two souls, right from among a Spirit-filled group.

"And great fear came upon the church, and upon as many as heard these things. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people . . . And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." (Acts 5:11-16) This stirred the devil and the high priests and associates were filled with indignation, and had the apostles arrested and put into the common prison. Their exemplified Christianity in action left the opposition forces in a state of abject puzzlement, as may be determined by the following references:

1. The angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and brought the apostles out (Acts 5:19).
2. Apostles preached in the great temple early in the morning (Verses 20, 21).
3. Officers perplexed when they observed the prison doors safely closed and secured by guards, but the apostles were gone (Verses 22-24).
4. Apostles were brought to face trial (Verses 25-27).
5. Jerusalem filled with the apostles' doctrine (Verse 28).

6. "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Verses 29-32).

7. The high priest, captain of the temple and chief priests counselled to slay the the apostles (Verse 33).

8. The noted doctor of the law, a Pharisee and grandson of the famed Hillel, Gamaliel warned them of the impending dangers, saying, ". . . if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (Verses 34-39). Gamaliel was a member of the Sanhedrin, and the early teacher of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22:3).

9. The apostles were beaten and commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus (Verse 40).

10. The apostles rejoiced because they were "counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Verse 41).

11. "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Verse 42).

Their exigent life with Christ manifested, or evidenced the great calumny of those without Him! The invectives of the opposition never seemed to injure the apostles whose faith swung like a pendulum from the glory-world.

Expansion of the Church at Jerusalem 17

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SELECTION OF SEVEN DEACONS

The abundant supply of finance that resulted from the voluntary contributions and sacrifices (Acts 4:32-37) became a problem to the apostles who faced the responsibility of proper distribution. Though they sought to be fair to everyone, and as far as possible treat everyone alike according to his needs, it is evident there arose some dissatisfaction. Perhaps the Church was also suffering spiritually because the apostles were too busily engaged in the distribution of finances and could not minister to the ever-increasing number of disciples. Then too, the larger the number of constituents the more apt were the chances for complaint, unrest and dissatisfaction. ". . . there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration" (Acts 6:1).

The twelve apostles, realizing their own commission and responsibilities as preachers and teachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ—called for that specific purpose—became fully aware of the complex situation. A great multitude had become disciples and followers of Jesus Christ and the Church had grown and expanded into thousands, of both local and foreign residents. The apostles made a momentous decision because of the divine call of God, and the press of the Grecian complaint. It immediately stabilized their position as ministers of the gospel, and has been hallowed as the world's most noble call by the pulpits of every era of civilization since. The directives were simple but nobly approached. "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:2-4). By the Word God talked to them, and by prayer they talked with God!

This suggestion pleased the multitude (Acts 6:5), and they recommended seven men, namely: STEPHEN, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and from indications he was a Hellenistic Jew from Jerusalem; PHILIP, later known as Philip the evangelist with whom Paul visited on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts 21:8-15), but he is not to be confused with Philip

the apostle; PROCHORUS; NICANOR; TIMON; PARMENAS; and NICOLAS, a proselyte of Antioch, but there is no proof that he was ever associated with the Nicolaitans of Revelation 2:6, 15. The apostles approved of the brethren recommended by the assembly, and appointed them to serve in that position or office as recommended. They prayed for them and laid hands on them, thus ordaining them as the first "deacons" in the Church. It is unlikely they were referred to, or here mentioned, as deacons at the time, but their administrative assignment corroborates the term "deacon" related in I Timothy 3:8-13. (1)

This opened the way for more preaching of the gospel . . . the Word of God increased . . . the number of disciples multiplied. The power of the gospel, the signs and wonders and healings stirred people all over the city of Jerusalem, the very city that had given Jesus such relentless opposition. Now that the apostles were relieved of "serving tables" and were boldly and fearlessly declaring the truths of the gospel, a great company of priests joined them en masse, which evidently was an enigma to their former constituents. Tradition tells us there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem alone. Ten men who gathered together to study the law and interpret the Scriptures could compose a synagogue. (2)

CHURCH NOT TO COLONIZE

In Acts 4:31-35 an outstanding fellowship was experienced among the disciples of the Lord, led by the apostles. Prayer had brought an unmatched downpour of spiritual strength and power, shaking the whole place where they were assembled. It was clearly seen their future contemplations for Church expansion were localized, and perhaps meager, for they sold their possessions and shared in a common storehouse. Such a move was tainted with socialism but was never commanded of the Church. In their spirit of eagerness to share with one another God blessed them and multiplied their numbers. Some people have built a strong nucleus around this theory, even today, but it was never a commission to the Church of God Jesus established on a mountain in Galilee.

This kind of zealous sharing with each other, and with fellow

1. The text does not mention the word "deacon" but it comes to the Church from other important references, used later by Apostle Paul as a respected office of the ministry.

2. The Wycliffe Bible Commentary . . . Page 1135, and published by "The Southwestern Company," Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

constituents, indicated a self-satisfying and complacent attitude while being cared for by an existing treasury, and at the same time had a tendency to limit the scope of outreach expected of the Church whose Leader and Organizer commanded them to "go into all the world." No wrong had been done, no evil committed, but such a move tended toward a type of colonization.

Jesus never intended for the Church to colonize. His impeccable organization would never reach the world with His message if it were confined to area pockets and colonies. Those who colonize lose desire for outreach and expansion except when emergency demands it. They seem to become self-centered, self-sustaining to an extent, and self-satisfied.

Not so with the Church! Forward-looking, inspired Christians indulge her scriptural vision and mission in an outreach to bless the people of all nations and races. Not only does she infiltrate affluent societies, but she also reaches deep into the boondocks and skidrows to bless souls. She must be equal to any emergency she faces, for different areas and different circumstances foster modes and methods for progression, and the Church must understand how best to proceed for advancement. She cannot colonize and obey the commission of Jesus Christ; others may do so and get along . . . but not the Church Jesus established!

STEPHEN BECOMES FIRST MARTYR

Stephen, the very first appointee to the newly created office of deacon, was a man of wisdom, full of faith and power, and full of the Holy Ghost. His endowment and special anointing from on high marked him as a zealous proponent of the gospel of Christ and His Church, for the Scripture explains, "And Stephen . . . did great wonders and miracles among the people" (Acts 6:8). His actions and involvement actually revealed the import of the newly created office of deacon, for he went to the common people as well as to those in authority. His expostulations with them of his spiritual freedom through Jesus Christ who granted the power for miracles and wonders brought disputings from certain of the synagogue of the Libertines, the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians and of Cilicia and Asia. They in turn suborned false witnesses against Stephen and he was finally brought to trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin. The high court heard the accusations and asked, "Are these things so?" (Acts 7:1). The whole council of judges had looked stedfastly upon Stephen as he was being accused and his face glowed with the radiance of an angel. When he spoke to

answer them, grace and radiance were with him. He carefully explained the itineraries of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and how God had dealt with each. He spoke of the twelve patriarchs.

Still known as the people of God, the brethren through envy sold Joseph into Egypt. Through divine favor and wisdom Joseph was appointed governor over all Egypt. By divine intervention Joseph wisely handled the Egyptian crops and saved much of the area from extinction, and especially Jacob and his other eleven sons and their families. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy corn, and the second trip Joseph made himself known to his brethren, and the inheritance of Jacob landed in Egypt, altogether seventy-five souls strong (Acts 7:14), which included Jacob, Joseph and wife, and their two sons—Manasseh and Ephraim.

Stephen referred them to the death of Jacob and how they willingly had carried him back to the family burial grounds at Sychem. (3) He reminded them of the unfriendly Pharoah who had risen up to oppress the children of God that were multiplying, and how he aimed to destroy all the male children of the Israelites. He spoke of Moses' birth and how God protected him, and of Pharoah's own daughter caring for him in Pharoah's own house, where he became learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, and became mighty in word and deeds. He reminded them of how Moses, at forty years of age, fled for life into the land of Midian because he had slain an Egyptian to protect his own kin. He spent forty years in the land of Midian where he was a stranger, but married and had two sons. After residing there forty years the angel of the Lord appeared to him on the desert at Mount Horeb (the wilderness of Mount Sina) in a flame of fire in a bush. The Lord told him that He had seen the afflictions of His people, and commissioned Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt . . . which he did as commanded.

Stephen exalted the name and the acts of God by relating them so the members of the great Jewish court could easily remember them. There had been wonders and signs in Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years, and Moses had cautioned them, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear" (Acts 7:37).

3. This was the field and cave of Machpelah, in the area of Hebron. When Sarah, Abraham's wife, died he purchased the plot of Ephron the Hittite, for four hundred shekels of silver (Genesis 23:16). It was the only plot of land Abraham ever owned personally in Canaan, though God had promised him the whole land for an inheritance. Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah were all buried there.

He let them know that this Prophet was the One in the church in the wilderness, with Whom the angel had spoken, and Who received the lively oracles to give unto them. But their fathers had disobeyed them and returned in spirit to Egypt, asking one of their own—Aaron—to make a calf of gold to which to sacrifice. God then turned them loose to destruction for a time. Moses built the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness just as God had planned it, and Solomon built the majestic temple. But God did not dwell in a house made with hands, but in the hearts and souls of the people who would obey Him.

The very first-mentioned deacon of the early Church waxed stronger and bolder in his assertions, telling the members of the powerful Sanhedrin they were stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and resisted the Holy Ghost just like their fathers did before them. His message became more pointed by the moment as he accused their fathers of betraying and murdering the prophets before them, even before the coming of the "Just One" the prophet Moses had prophesied would come. He accused them of receiving the law by the disposition of angels and had not kept it.

When they heard these accusations it was too much for them . . . they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth. But he was filled with the Spirit of God, being full of the Holy Ghost, and looking up, he saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. The mob got so mad, and was so condemned they cried out militantly, stopped their ears and ran upon him with one accord. Did the members of the great Sanhedrin join in? If they did it was a shameful and dastardly demonstration for a court of supposedly just jurisprudence! The suborned witnesses led the attack of stoning Stephen when they had cast him out of the city. It seemed to be a "free-for-all," and they laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. (4)

Stephen called on God, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The final moments of the stoning grew more severe and he fell to his knees, crying with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And he simply fell asleep in the Lord. (5) Contrast the

4. Saul was a Jew of Tarsus, the capital city of Cilicia in Asia Minor, now a part of Turkey. He was a zealous fanatic and militant in defense of the Jewish religion, having studied at the feet of Rabbi Gamaliel.

5. Stephen's martrydom seems to have occurred about five years after the death of Jesus, according to Merrill C. Tenney, in his "New Testament Survey" page 238 . . . published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

killers and the victim!

Not only had Stephen helped to assuage the business difficulties assigned him but he also was a "preaching deacon." He seemed to excel in wisdom, in knowledge and in power with God, doing many wonders and miracles in the name of the Lord. His message to the great Jewish Court was so stirring, so effective and powerful that it struck terror and conviction in the hearts of these very people who were supposed to be the most literate and learned in the law of Moses and its concepts, principles and practices. Yet, they had consented to the illegal murder of Stephen. He had vividly narrated the favorable events of Jewry as well as those things that caused the disobedience of the chosen ones . . . things that had plagued the Jewish nation for centuries in a vise-like grip. His exposition of the Jewish knowledge and truth alerted the people to the real and powerful influence that was expanding for the Church. His teachings clearly designated the differences between Judaism and the genuine Christianity promoted by the Church, and he was the first martyr of the Church Jesus had established.

SAUL OF TARSUS AND THE CHURCH

Without any explanation whatsoever in the narrative Saul of Tarsus, a young rabbinical student, was introduced in the persecution and death of Stephen. His Hebrew name was Saul, but his Latin name to which he was entitled as a Roman citizen was Paul—the name used exclusively after he turned to the Gentiles, at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:46).

The date of Paul's birth is not agreed upon. Peloubet's Bible Dictionary lists the date of his birth as B.C. 1, while Bible History Digest by Elmer W. K. Mould, Ph.D., lists his birth as 1 A.D., being born during the reign of Caesar Augustus, Emperor of Rome. Others seem to feel it was several years later, and this could be somewhat conjectural. He was born at Tarsus, a thriving city and capital of Cilicia in Paul's boyhood days. He was a Jew of the Diaspora (or Dispersion—Jews deported to other lands), but enjoyed his status of Roman citizenship acquired by birth, inferring that his father either purchased or was awarded Roman citizenship (Acts 22:25-28). He was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee (Acts 23:6), and had been a student of high caliber at the feet of the illustrious and eloquent Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), where he studied to be a Rabbi, probably at the age of twenty years. Others differ in opinions and assertions

and this lends credence to sound basic thinking, for Saul may easily have been sent to Jerusalem to study at the tender age of twelve or thirteen when a son reached the age of accountability to study and learn the law, as well as a trade. He made good progress in his studies (Galatians 1:14).

The Scriptures do not explain how, or exactly why, Saul became so deeply involved in the fanatical element and religious invectives that sought the destruction of Stephen, unless he was with the Cilicians that disputed with Stephen in the synagogue. Saul was an ardent defender of the Jewish faith, and the intensity of his fanatical and militant attitude grew more furious when group psychology mushroomed out of control and an instinct to kill drove the mob to near madness. The witnesses laid down their coats at his feet when they partially stripped themselves to lead the attack, and stoned Stephen to death. Saul himself readily consented to the nefarious scheme, perhaps reveling in the shameful, illegal and abusive murder of the innocent deacon. (6)

Saul's fanatical and merciless militant maneuverings against the Christians, to persecute and destroy them because of his ardor in defending Judaism gained for him high respect and favor with the chief priests, and even the high priest himself, and the rulers. He was jealous for his religion, and his anti-christian animus perhaps helped to spark the terrible persecution against the church at Jerusalem, where they were all scattered abroad, throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. Saul made havoc of the Church, entering into every house and hailing men and women, committing them to prison. But his persecution served only to stir up great revival fires, for those driven away went everywhere preaching the Word, signs and wonders following them, in a missionary challenge unique in its dispensation, as borne out in Acts the eighth chapter.

JERUSALEM CHURCH EXPOSED TO MISSIONS

The Church at Jerusalem had grown stronger in number and in finance, and fellowship seemed unparalleled among them. It was an unheralded blessing, but it could also imperil the gospel challenge and commission given them by the Lord Himself if they

6. "Saul was consenting unto his death" (Acts 8:1) does not necessarily suggest that Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin, though some think that Acts 26:10 implies it. Since the High Court of Jewry could not condemn and kill a prisoner, the whole execution or lynching was illegal, for they had not received the death sentence order from the Roman governor Pontius Pilate.

allowed themselves to become self-contained and complacent. This they had done to some extent as their whole work was centered in and around the city of Jerusalem. They were accused of filling Jerusalem with their doctrine (Act 5:28).

Then came the persecution that arose over the martyrdom of Stephen and the doctrines he preached. It awakened in the hearts of the Church the spirit of missions, and kindled revival fires everywhere. It took Saul's persecution, his breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord to awaken them to the real and genuine spirit of missionary endeavors. They had no time to worry over the Jerusalem treasury, and who was being neglected in the daily ministrations, for it was a struggle to survive in order to take the gospel to someone else that he too might share in an eternal life. Their prime interest was to go everywhere and make disciples of men. Race, color or creed held no priority. There were "Neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all . . ." (Colossians 3:11). From that time on the Jerusalem Church gave to mankind an unexcelled leadership in a short duration of time.

PHILIP LABORS IN THE CHURCH

Philip, another "preaching deacon," was named second on the list of seven deacons appointed by the apostles (Acts 6:5). He is referred to as Philip the evangelist, and is not to be confused with the apostle of the same name. He went down to the city of Samaria, which is located some 28 to 30 miles north of Jerusalem and five or six miles northwest of Schechem. The Samaritans were a half-Jew and half-Gentile mixed multitude, hated by the Jews and hating the Jews. They had no dealings with each other, but they could not rightly be referred to as Gentiles of Samaria. They clung to their conception of the Jewish laws and traditions.

The Samaritans listened to Philip's preaching Jesus Christ to them, and gave heed to his powerful persuasion. Many miracles were seen in the ministry of Philip. Unclean spirits came out of many so possessed, and the palsied were healed and the lame made to walk again . . . all by the name of Jesus Christ. It was a powerful revival that gave in its stir great joy to the city. This reached the ears of the Church at Jerusalem.

Exercising her supervisory powers the Church then sent the apostles, Peter and John, to Samaria, since this was a field heretofore unexplored by them after the resurrection and

ascension of Jesus. At Sychar in Samaria the Lord Jesus had His encounter with the woman at the well and convinced her of His blessings (John 4), but since that time the disciples had centered their activities in and around Jerusalem following Pentecost. Peter and John prayed for the converted Samaritans to receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them. They had been baptized in water, and even Simon Magus, the sorcerer and magician credited with having great power, believed and was baptized, beholding the miracles and wonders done by Philip. The apostles "laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17). Cognizant of the change to the way the disciples received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, it is conceded that physical position was no determining factor but condition and obedience that brought the results. Look at this:

1. On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples tarried for the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:1-4).
2. At Samaria Peter and John laid hands upon the disciples and they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:17).
3. At Corinth Paul laid his hands upon the disciples and they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 19:6).
4. At Caesarea by the sea coast, the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and those that heard the word (Acts 10:44-46).

The real significance of the apostles' visit to Samaria seems concerned with facing the enemy of the soul, catching him and his evil among men red-handed. Acts 8:18-23 gives a vivid account of the encounter: "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

Scholars wonder if Simon was really converted before his baptism in water but did not have power enough with God to shake loose from his magic and praise of men . . . or if he feigned belief in God and His conversion and was baptized in water with the others for personal gain. Regardless of his condition prior to the arrival of the apostles, when he sought to purchase the gift of

God with money the bold and powerful Apostle Peter rebuked him and condemned him because his "heart was not right in the sight of God."***

***There is no record that Simon received the Holy Ghost with the others. In an attempt, real or false, to escape the contemplated evils Simon Magus requested the prayers of the apostles, but there is no record left assuring us of his conversion. He may have sealed forever his chances of real salvation, for traditions tell of his drastic and relentless oppositions to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and His Church that labored ardently to reach a lost world. It is authoritatively proven by early writers that Simon Magus showed up at Rome. Eusebuis' Ecclesiastical History (Chapter 13, Page 62) tells of a statue of Simon being erected on an island in the Tiber River, near Rome, with the superscription in Latin, the translation of which says, "To Simon the Holy God." Helen, a certain prostitute in Tyre, attached herself to Simon, and was known as the first idea that proceeded from him. Even if these ideas are conjectural, or some of them suppositions, righteousness is exalted above all of them.

Before returning to Jerusalem Peter and John preached in many villages of the Samaritans. This was definitely a different outreach for the Church, for the Jews disliked the Samaritans, and vice-versa, and they would have no dealings with each other.

However, God was not through with Philip, whose ears were open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that told him to arise and go down to the road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza. He obeyed the Spirit and when he arrived there he saw a eunuch of Ethiopia, a man of great authority under Candace, the queen of Ethiopia, and who had charge of all her treasuries, sitting in his chariot reading. He was returning from worship at Jerusalem and was reading Isaiah 53:7, 8. Obeying the Spirit of God Philip hurried to the chariot, and hearing the eunuch read asked him if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch then invited Philip to sit with him in the chariot and explain the Scripture he was reading. Philip explained it and preached Jesus to him, evidently explaining water baptism, for when they went on their way they saw water and the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest . . . and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:36-38). This evidences baptism in its best and strictest sense by immersion.

When they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more, and the

eunuch went on his way rejoicing in his new-found freedom in Christ. (7)

The Bible says little about Philip after his meeting with the eunuch. He was found at Azotus (Ashdod) and preached in the coastal cities, finally arriving at Caesarea on the sea coast. From after-history it is evident he preached in the churches at Joppa, at Lydda and at Caesarea, and no account is given of him for about twenty years. Perhaps he had lived at Caesarea during most of this time.

It has been said by F. N. Peloubet D.D. that Philip is the precursor of St. Paul in his work, as Stephen had been in his teaching. Such encomium is due this faithful laborer in the gospel, to a people hated by his own people—classed as Gentiles, but only half-Gentile and half-Jew. Philip had four daughters who prophesied, spending their time in the promulgation of the gospel their father had taught, and for which he had been driven from his home at Jerusalem by Saul of Tarsus. Now, many years after, the great Apostle Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem stopped at Caesarea and found shelter in the home of Philip (Acts 21:8, 9). At this final meeting years of yore might have been a topic, for Philip was a man of experience under duress because of Saul's persecution . . . now Saul was Paul the apostle, and he was heading toward severe persecution, and death at the hands of Nero. Each of the great men may have shared divers joys as well as trials with one another for both of them had seen the gospel carried to the regions beyond, and had seen the Church expand into an unmatched influence throughout the Roman Empire, and the known world.

One tradition places the scene of Philip's death at Hierapolis in Phrygia. Another says he died bishop of Tralles. (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary)

JAMES . . .FIRST BISHOP OF JERUSALEM

The preceding accounts of events and the early developments of Christianity and the Church have been related somewhat profusely so the reader may expose himself to the strange and trying occurrences and circumstances which faced the Christians of that era. As aforesaid, Simon Peter led the group of disciples for

7. Eusebius seems to feel the eunuch was the first Gentile convert. From all indications he was Africa's first real missionary, preaching to the Ethiopians. Tradition tells us he preached to the queen, she believed and was baptized by him. (Ref. The Pulpit Commentary. Page 253)

some time after the ascension of Jesus. How long he did this is questionable, though tradition has Peter conceding the office to James the Lord's brother after twelve years of leadership. Others think it was ten years, some longer. No accurate record is given of the exact date James occupied the exalted office of the Church at Jerusalem, yet the Scriptures, and history of the times, both prove he did occupy this position until his death at Jerusalem 62-68 A.D.***

***Sources of information differ in their references to the martyrdom of James—anywhere from 62-68 A.D. Hegesippus, who flourished nearer the apostolic days than did Eusebius, mentions that James was martyred at the Passover season when thousands were gathered at Jerusalem. Eusebius says he was martyred about the time Festus died, and there was no governorship in Palestine. Festus died in 62 A.D. in office, and Albinus was appointed governor in his stead, 62-64 A.D. Therefore 62 A.D. seems more appropriate for his martyrdom.

The Bible does not say whether or not he moderated a church council meeting or conference at Jerusalem when Peter and John were sent to Samaria where Philip the evangelist was in a great revival, but it says only ". . . when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John" (Acts 8:14). This implies the absence of James, for apparently he was not one of the apostles. The Church is not mentioned here . . . just apostles.***

***It must be remembered that Jesus established His Church on a mountain in Galilee, probably Kurn Hattin, according to Mark 3:13-19, but following the Day of Pentecost the influence had shifted, and the center of Church government and influence was at Jerusalem, where Church official headquarters was established, and remained until the outbreak of the Jewish war against Roman control, finally culminating with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

However, when the spiritual downpour came to Jews and Gentiles alike at Antioch in Syria, where they were first united together in one Church, and were first called Christians there, the situation changed, for it was the Church at Jerusalem that took action. ". . . tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." (Acts 11:22). This move was made by the Church in a meeting perhaps similar to a Call Council or Call Conference, often referred to and practiced today. It

certainly was no regular assembly, but the Church faced a problem that could easily foment dissension and division contrary to the doctrines of Jesus Christ. Why did it trouble the Church at Jerusalem? Perhaps it had no effect on the saints at Samaria, or Damascus, or Phenice, Cyprus or wherever the disciples were scattered because of the persecution by Saul. Jerusalem was the Headquarters of the Church, the focal point for Christian support, principles and practices. Mission fields brought great interest to the Church at Jerusalem. Government . . . theocratic government under God . . . increased with the increase of members, and the increase of demands, and problems to be solved. Church government had to be operated by leaders of the organization. It was not a monarchy or democracy, nor an oligarchy, but a theocracy under God. Yet, there had to be leaders to manipulate and direct God's government on earth. And then, too, there had to be a Chief Executive to moderate meetings, and direct the mission motives and outreach of the organization itself as decreed by the control body—the whole assembly. Whether such leadership was appointed or selected is not important for it was no anomalous procedure in any sense. It was God's government in action!

Whether or not James, the Lord's brother, moderated the meeting that dispatched Barnabas to Antioch on the specific mission is not recorded in the Bible. Some people feel he did; they seem to think he received this divine anointing when the Lord appeared to him after the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:7). But, this is conjectural, though possible under the circumstances without attempting to apotheosize the man himself. God works in His own marvelous ways!

The Bible indicates that James was General Overseer of the Church (Acts 15:19). As "servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" he willingly served, blameless as possible, in this supervisory capacity, and special recognition was given him for his services. On his release from prison, and an untimely death, Apostle Peter (one-time leader and spokesman for the group) said, "Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren" (Acts 12:17). Apostle Paul mentioned that he saw James (Galatians 1:19), and placed him in recognition by naming him first (Galatians 2:9). He placed James in the position of General Overseer for the Church when he referred to the incident "that certain came from James" (Galatians 2:12). Why did he not say that certain came from Andrew, or Peter or John, or from any other of the apostles? Because James filled the office.

It is significantly evident that James moderated the last

Assembly or Council Meeting held at Jerusalem, in 50 A.D., and recorded in the Bible. (Acts 15) Important issues were settled at this assembly, among them being the issue of circumcision. Undoubtedly Moderator James opened the meeting in regular order, but under the auspicies of their own procedures. They—James, the apostles and elders and the whole Church—heard the problems discussed "pro and con" and when they were finished James gave his own enlightening explanation (Acts 15:13-29). In an interim assertion he said, "Wherefore my sentence is . . ." (Acts 15:19), thus suggesting his position as General Overseer, who possessed granted powers and duty to convey, propagate or execute the decrees set forth by the Assembly, or Council in session . . . not a dictator but one whose lot fell in line for duty to God and His Church.

On his last journey to Jerusalem Paul went to see James to give a report of his labors among the Gentiles (Acts 21:17).

Witnessing to the Rest of the World

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SAUL'S ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Interpretations and opinions may vary here; but in his maddened rage to slaughter and thus help extirpate Christianity from Palestine, Saul used wisdom in his approach to the high priest by ameliorating his unusual request with the little two-letter correlative conjunction "IF," realizing that slaughter and death were forbidden of the Jewish Court without the Roman Procurator's consent. To most students it implies doubt there would be Christians at Damascus.***

***It is believed there were many followers of Christ in the areas of Decapolis and Galilee who did not go with Jesus and the others on His mission itinerary to Jerusalem and certain areas of Judea. Paul implies this possibility in I Corinthians 15:6. Other disciples listed in Acts 9:19.

It is not certain that a Church had been established at Damascus, nor does the Bible give any account of it. It is evident that Saul expected to find Christians or why would he have journeyed northeast 130 or more miles in his quest for Christians, and leave the ring-leaders, "the apostles," still yet at Jerusalem? Proof is uncertain, but reason suggests there may have been here, actually existing, one of the stronger outlying churches against which Saul meant to wreak the brunt of his terrors and persecution. Did the churches mentioned in Acts 9:31 spring up so late? No futile search for him; he expected to be amply rewarded for his endeavors at Damascus, the world's oldest city having continuous habitation.

Saul seemed sincere in his approbation to arrest, convict and put the Christians to death, and he was so zealous he was willing to stake his own life on this religious challenge . . . Christianity had to be stopped. There was no adequate or accurate mode or method by which to gauge or measure the toll of Saul's terrors against the Christians and the Church. He created fear and

tantalized believers every possible way in the pursuit of their final death.

1. He gave his consent to slaughter Stephen, and held the clothes of the witnesses who stoned the martyr (Acts 7:58; 8:1).

2. His tyrannical maneuverings helped to foment the persecution.

3. He made havoc of the Church, entering every house and hailing men and women, and committed them to prison (Acts 8:3).

4. He persecuted the Church of God (I Corinthians 15:9).

5. Stigmatized by zealousness he persecuted the Church (Philippians 3:6).

6. He persecuted to death those found in this way (Acts 22:3, 4).

7. He shut the saints up in prison, and witnessed against them in death (Acts 26:10).

8. He punished them often in the synagogues, and compelled them to blaspheme (Acts 26:11).

9. He persecuted the Church of God and wasted it (Galatians 1:13).

He left for Damascus with authority and commission from the high priests (Acts 26:12), but as he neared the gates of the city a single event changed the whole course of his future life. A light shone in brilliance round about him and he fell to the ground. A Voice from out the celestial elements called him by name, twice—"SAUL . . . SAUL!" ". . . and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Acts 9:3-6.

The gates to Saul's pardon and emancipation from the Jewish creeds and religion had swung wide on hinges of forgiving love and mercy, and in his blindness he saw illumination and beheld his smitten soul, as it were, graciously entwined with golden strands of compassion, of radiance and rapture. How strange this move of God . . . precious conversion seen and felt inside! The "killer had been slain" but the creature himself had been made alive through Jesus Christ the Lord . . . and by this very way he once called heresy. Strange . . . yet real!

He was without sight three days, and neither ate nor drank while lodging in the house of Judas on Straight Street, Damascus.

During a part of this time he saw in a vision Ananias coming in and laying his hand upon him that he might receive sight.***

***Ananias is thought to be one of the "seventy others" sent out by the Lord (Luke 10:1). It is acceded he was one of the hundred and twenty that received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. He was a devout man with a good report of all the Jews that dwelt there (Acts 22:12).

Meanwhile, God spoke to Ananias in a vision and explained matters concerning Saul who was now praying. He had heard much about Saul who made havoc of the Church and was somewhat skeptical of him. But, God assured him there was now no fear from Saul, and said, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15-16).

Ananias obeyed the voice of the Lord, and when he found him he put his hands upon him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17). The scales immediately fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. Saul was perhaps filled with the Holy Ghost when Ananias laid hands upon him (a probability supported by Acts 8:17; 19:6) and he was later baptized in water, perhaps shortly thereafter. No record or date is given in the Scriptures.***

***King James Version of the Bible usually lists dates according to Archbishop Usher's opinion, sometimes inconsistent with the opinions of others. No date is given in the Bible of Saul's conversion, except that Usher lists it at 35 A.D.; Peloubet's Bible Dictionary lists it at 36 A.D.; Harper's Bible Dictionary—34 A.D.; The Word of God in History—35 A.D.; Adam Clarke's Commentary—33 A.D.; and Philip Schaff's History of the Christian Church lists it as "The public life of Paul, from the third year after his conversion to his martyrdom, A.D. 40-64, embraces a quarter of a century," (Page 322, Vol. 1) or about 37 A.D. Therefore, Usher's date is hereby accepted.

EVENTS FOLLOWING SAUL'S CONVERSION

Paul broke his fast and took some meat to gain strength. He was no longer the terrorizing Saul of persecution, imprisonments and death to Christians everywhere within reach . . . but was to become Paul the Apostle, and one of Christianity's most

glamorous and spectacular personages and promoters of Christianity and the Church.

He spent much time with the disciples at Damascus (Acts 9:19), which indicates a nucleus of disciples, and implies the possibility of a church operating at Damascus at the time. Saul was no longer the ambitious student at the feet of Gamaliel but an humble servant of Jesus Christ prostrate at the feet of such Christian disciples as Ananias and those who shared the worth of the cross together. Perhaps he spent this time at Damascus listening, studying and being indoctrinated with the basic principles of Christianity by those who were trained and disciplined in the tenets of faith and practice.

After his short stay at Damascus Saul went into Arabia (Galatians 1:17) where he spent most of three years. He returned to Damascus and in the synagogues he preached Jesus Christ is the Son of God. All who listened were amazed for now they heard him preach the very faith he once sought to destroy. As he increased in strength and power his dynamic preaching stirred and confounded the Jews, insomuch they took counsel to kill him, guarding the gates to the city day and night lest he escape. Aware of their nefarious scheme, the disciples let him down by the wall in a basket at night, and Saul went to Jerusalem (Acts 9:19-25).

He tried to associate and fellowship with the disciples at Jerusalem but they were afraid of him, and didn't believe he was a disciple of the Lord (Acts 9:26). Their retrospection of him was unpleasant, for he was the one who had made havoc of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:3). Then Barnabas, a faithful, patient, trustworthy disciple, full of love and of the Holy Ghost, took Saul and introduced him to the apostles and disciples who were present. He explained how God had so miraculously converted Saul, and took time to commend his stable Messianic preaching to the Jews in the synagogues at Damascus.

Saul said he spent fifteen days with Peter (Galatians 1:18), coming in and going out with the disciples at Jerusalem (Acts 9:28), though he was unknown to the churches of Judea (Galatians 1:22). It seems that he addressed the Grecians primarily, or the Greek-speaking Jews who were Hellenists, some of the same group for which he held their clothes to stone Stephen to death for preaching the very thing he now preached himself (Acts 6:9). This group likewise became so stirred and violent at Saul's preaching they laid plans to slay him also. But his Christian brethren thwarted their nefarious scheme by taking him to Caesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, and sending him

home to Tarsus (Acts 9:29, 30). Saul said he saw no other apostle than Peter, save James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19).***

***Paul does not actually say that James was an apostle, though he infers this opinion . . . maybe because of the prominent position James held in the church at Jerusalem, now the headquarters nucleus of the organization. This James is mentioned in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3, and was perhaps eldest of the three brothers, all of whom opposed Jesus' work (Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21; John 7:3-5). For more than a year after the selection and appointment of the twelve apostles Jesus' brethren did not believe on Him, so John 7:5 states emphatically. It is obvious this James was converted to the Christian faith sometime later, perhaps through special manifestations of the risen Lord (I Corinthians 15:7).

PAUL'S RETIREMENT AT TARSUS

Saul returned to his home at Tarsus, capital city of Cilicia, about 37-38 A.D., and the Bible says nothing more of him for several years, until his name is mentioned in Acts 11:25. During his retirement he probably worked some at his tent-making trade, meanwhile spending much time in prayer, study and consecration for the work whereunto God had called him. Notwithstanding, it is expected that he preached, persuaded and argued with the Jews in the synagogues, and with the Greeks on the streets, in market places and in their homes, for this proved to be his customary practice. He was well qualified to meet the religions of his day with a burning message commensurate to any challenge they presented. He was well versed in the Aramaic and Hebrew languages, and spoke Greek as well, since Greek was the language of the streets and shops of Tarsus (Acts 21:37). Perhaps his ministry was so powerful and convincing the news of it reached Antioch in Syria, only about eighty miles southeast of Tarsus.

REFLECTING ON THE LIFE OF SIMON PETER

To reflect upon the life of this powerful, yet strange and bold disciple seems very apropos. Simon Peter was probably born at Bethsaida. When he first appears in the gospel narratives he was a married man, (Matthew 8:14-15), living in a large and commodious house at Capernaum. At this home he entertained the Lord and His disciples and many others attracted by the miracles and teachings of Jesus . . . so he had to have room. His

father's name was Jonas (John 1:42; 21:15-17). Peter was brought up in his father's occupation as a fisherman. He and his brother Andrew were partners of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who had hired servants, (Matthew 4:17-22; Mark 1:15-20). This alone infers they were somewhat prosperous at the time in their fishing industry. They were disciples of John the Baptist.

Peter was led to Jesus by his brother Andrew (John 1:41, 42). On this occasion Jesus told him "thou shalt be called Cephas"—this Syriac name signifying a stone, which meant the same as the Greek word Petros. From the time Jesus called Simon Peter, especially the second calling when Peter was fishing in Galilee (Mark 1:15-20), He seemed to pay special attention to the big fisherman, who possessed inherent capabilities of leadership, and aptly possessed qualified abilities, surging energy, and a prevalent zeal and devotion to the Lord. His age—30-40 years at the time—branded him a seasoned stalwart veteran of conflict and trial and a conqueror of both.

Mentioned first as a rule (Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:13-16) he seemed to take first place among the disciples, perhaps not by choice at all. This may have tempted him to be conscious of this importance, and may have developed in him a natural tendency to forwardness and rashness. He usually spoke his convictions freely and unfalteringly . . . though not always right as was the case when he ventured to reject as impossible the sufferings and humiliation of Jesus which the Lord Himself had predicted. However, this impulsiveness seemed not to diminish or lessen his boldness, great faith, confidence and power with God.

Peter's spiritual discernment and patience were tested at times. It was not courage, but zeal, boldness and rashness that characterized his conduct in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested, and Peter cut off the right ear of Malchus, servant to the high priest (John 18:10, 11). At the Last Supper he was earnest in his appeal that the traitor be revealed and exposed. When the Lord started to wash the feet of the disciples Peter quickly told Jesus He wouldn't wash his feet, but after the kind rebuke from the Master Peter said, "not my feet only, but my hands and my head" (John 13:4-12). Even when he declared his unalterable fidelity to the Lord he denied Him three times at the courtyard of the high priest (Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27). The denial of Jesus struck terror to his heart, remorse in memory of this foremost disciple, and his sufferings and humiliation were equally intensifying, but they never crushed him . . . the words of his Master were forceful

factors in his life. Both Luke (Luke 24:12) and Paul (I Corinthians 15:5) indicate that Peter was first of the apostles to see Jesus after His resurrection. He was completely re-instated and entrusted with divine guidance and responsibility as borne out in John 21:15-19.

Peter led the group of disciples during the most prominent and crucial times after the ascension of Jesus—Day of Pentecost. Peter not only received the Holy Ghost, probably the first to receive Him, but he performed the first miracle after the ascension of Jesus (Acts 3:1-9). He actually conducted and stood in defense of the other disciples before the great Jewish Sanhedrin. No other apostle's shadow was entrusted to heal as was Peter's (Acts 5:15). He was miraculously delivered from prison and death by the angel of the Lord (Acts 12). By preaching to Cornelius and his household Peter actually opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 10).

Paul implies that Peter's wife traveled with him in the ministry at times (I Corinthians 9:5). Peter visited the churches of Judea, Antioch in Syria (Galatians 2:11), probably Corinth (I Corinthians 1:12, and Eusebius), the far east (I Peter 5:13), and elsewhere (I Peter 1:1). Many Protestant scholars are of the opinion that Peter never visited Rome, and this seems credible perhaps, unless it alludes to some selfish indictment of Roman church history of which many others are indifferent. It is of doubtful sequence not mentioned in the Scriptures. Who can rightly and truthfully say that Peter did or did not visit Rome if this is not certified by records?

Legend has Peter and Paul establishing the church at Rome during the closing days of their life, and that both of them suffered martyrdom during Nero's persecution 64-68 A.D., Paul being beheaded and Peter crucified upside down, since he did not feel worthy to be crucified like his Master.

One of Apostle Peter's short classic discourses in I Peter 2:9, 10 assures victory through Christ. ". . . ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

PETER HEALS AENEAS

The churches enjoyed "rest" after Saul's conversion (Acts

9:31), and the Jewish leaders were too busy with their internal problems and affairs, and their alarming relations with Rome to pursue their harrassment of the Christians. Pontius Pilate was still procurator of Judea, until 36 A.D. when Marcellus took over for more than a year, but trouble had arisen within their area of rule.

The Church at Jerusalem exercised greater freedom than ever, and Peter visited several churches of the area, especially on the seacoast. When he arrived at Lydda, in the fertile plains of ancient Sharon, he found a man called Aeneas who had been sick in bed with palsy for eight years. Peter saw him suffering and said simply, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed," and he arose immediately. This great miracle caused all that dwelled at Lydda to turn to the Lord (Acts 9:32-35).

DORCUS RAISED BACK TO LIFE BY PETER

Joppa (the modern Jaffa) was some ten miles up the Mediterranean seacoast from Lydda, and about thirty-four miles northwest of Jerusalem. Evidently a young church had been established there, and Philip perhaps visited the area (Acts 8:40). One of the disciples, or members, Dorcus, took ill and died, bringing much sorrow to the widows especially. Hearing that Peter was at Lydda two men were dispatched to bring him to Joppa. When he arrived at Joppa he was escorted to the upper chamber where they had placed Dorcas after washing and laying her out there. The widows wept as they showed Peter the coats and garments Dorcas had made while she was with them. He beheld their love and devotion for this outstanding disciple—a woman of "good works and almsdeeds"—and the effects of her charitable contributions were easily beheld. People remembered them!

He put them forth, kneeled down and prayed. Then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Peter gave her his hand and lifted her up. He called in the disciples and presented her alive to them (Acts 9:36-41). What a miracle—the dead raised to life again! Such a miracle had taken place some time ago when Jesus stopped a funeral procession at Nain and raised back to life the widow's son (Luke 7:11-15). And it happened another time in a miraculous way, when the Son of God was called to the bedside of Jairus' daughter, whom he raised back to life (Mark 5:22-42), when she

was twelve years old. Then the miraculous raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-46) . . . This stirred the people, and so did the raising of Dorcas, and many people came to the Lord. This manifested the same kind of power in His disciples that Jesus himself exercised.

DOOR OF FAITH OPENED TO GENTILES

The eunuch that was baptized by Philip was actually the first Gentile convert (Acts 8:36-38), but the door of faith had not as yet been opened to the Gentiles as a people.

Cornelius, centurion with the Italian band, was quartered in Caesarea on the seacoast, the Roman capital and seat of government for the Romans, about thirty miles northeastward from Joppa and 65-70 miles northwest of Jerusalem. He was "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (Acts 10:1, 2). About the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon) in a vision he saw an angel of God come in, and he called Cornelius by name. He told him to send to Joppa for Simon Peter who would tell him what to do. It was somewhat strange to the centurion and he called two of his most trusted servants and a devout soldier—perhaps a bodyguard—and dispatched them to Joppa to bring Peter.

Meanwhile, at Joppa about the sixth hour (midday), while waiting for the noonday meal Peter was hungry, but he went to the housetop to pray. He fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and a great sheet let down, filled with all manner of beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air. He heard a voice, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." But Peter said, ". . . I have never eaten anything common or unclean." The voice spoke to him again, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." This was repeated three times and the vessel disappeared.

Studying over the vision Peter was perplexed, and the Spirit sent him to the three men from Caesarea who waited at the gate. They explained their mission, and after lodging for the night with Simon Peter he went with them to Caesarea. Cornelius had called in his kinsmen and close friends and when he saw Peter he fell down and worshipped him (Acts 10:25). They exchanged information concerning their angelic phenomenons, and Peter preached Jesus Christ to the centurion and his house and friends. This historic meeting opened the door of faith to Gentiles everywhere, and the relating Scripture passages are eulogized in the pulpits and podiums wherever Christ is preached.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Acts 10:44-47.

JERUSALEM CHURCH PERPLEXED OVER GENTILE CONVERTS

For about five years the churches in Jerusalem and Judea were organized and functioning with Jewish members, confined to the influence of believing Jews, many of which still catered to circumcision that had been rooted and grounded in them by ancestors.

This Judean church period lasted from the Ascension of Jesus to the martyrdom of Stephen, and Saul's persecution that scattered the disciples to different areas. This started the Church on a journey of transition and this period was destined to produce problems when the Gentiles began to accept the Church. Those accompanying Peter to Cornelius, even after beholding God's blessings upon these Gentiles, were greatly perplexed when they saw them receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

When Peter returned to the Jerusalem Church they contended with him because he had associated and eaten with the uncircumcized. It was a "stone of stumbling" to them. After all, circumcism was an ancient and hallowed ordinance that marked the Jew as being God's chosen ones, and separate from all other peoples, and when this sacred ordinance came under attack by the Jerusalem Church, or headquarters, they found it extremely difficult to circumvent the issues. Peter explained in detail the happenings at Caesarea, and said, ". . . what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17). It seemed rewardingly satisfactory.

Undoubtedly they realized the ushering in of a new period of the Church, for Acts 11:18 says, "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

CHURCH ESTABLISHED AT ANTIOCH IN SYRIA

Those scattered abroad by Saul's persecution traveled to

Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch preaching to the Jews only. But some were of Cyprus and Cyrene who when they came to Antioch preached to the Grecians also. Other Gentiles believed as well as Jews and they joined in together to compose the Antioch church, first church to be made up of both Jews and Gentiles, and they were first called Christians here (Acts 11:26). This was something strange, different and new and it created an unusual situation, and a problem yet to be solved.

News of it reached the Church at Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch to investigate. Being a good man and gifted of wisdom, full of the Holy Ghost and faith, Barnabas saw the grace of God prevalent and working in a mighty way among them—both Jews and Gentiles—and he exhorted and encouraged them to cleave to the Lord, and under such able and noble preaching the church grew and prospered.

Realizing the need of additional assistance from one versed in the ordinances of the law of Moses, as well as one who had experienced the good graces and mercies of the Lord's Christ, Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought Saul with him to Antioch. Then for a whole year they preached and taught the church there.

When some prophets from Jerusalem came to visit Antioch, one of them called Agabus presaged a great dearth through the land which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. (1) The disciples, every man according to his own ability, sent relief to their Judean brethren by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:19-30). This was Saul's second trip to Jerusalem since his conversion. When they returned to Antioch they took John Mark with them. This seems to be the first mention of John Mark.

HEROD AGRIPPA SLAYS JAMES

During the lull of presecution that followed in the wake of Saul's conversion changes in the imperial government of Rome had occurred. Tiberius, emperor of Rome, died and Gaius Caligula became emperor in 37, an event destined to bring about changes in the government of Palestine. Herod Agrippa I was slated to become king over the area from 41-44.***

***Herod Agrippa I was the son of Aristobulus, and grandson of Herod the Great. He was brother to Herodias, unlawful wife

1. Claudius Caesar was emperior of Rome 41-54 A.D. and after a weak and foolish reign, he was poisoned by his fourth wife, Agrippina, mother of Nero, October 13, 54 A.D.

to his uncle Herod Antipas who had John the Baptist beheaded. He was an indolent fellow, brought up in extravagance in Rome. Tiberius imprisoned him, but this lasted only six months, for, being an intimate friend of Gaius Caligula he was released and got the appointment that led to his becoming king of Judea after Herod Antipas was banished to Gaul. He was a contemptuous, conniving ruler who loved the praises of men above other things.

Toward the close of his short reign of three years King Herod stretched forth his hand to vex and trouble certain influential leaders of the Church at Jerusalem. He slew James with the sword, a strong disciple and leader of the Church—one of Jesus' "close in" disciples. James was the second martyr. Seeing this cruel act pleased the Jews, who doubtlessly praised his overt deed, he had Peter arrested and put in prison, detailing four quarternions of soldiers to guard and keep him secure until the days of leavened bread had passed.

The Church at Jerusalem was in constant prayer for Peter, and the very time Herod would have slain Peter the angel of the Lord delivered him in a miraculous manner (Acts 12:6-17). The Church at Jerusalem, gathered in the home of Mary, mother to John Mark, were astonished at the miracle. Peter went to visit the disciples at Caesarea, while a great stir was going on, and Herod in his madness, and chagrined by defeat in fighting against God, sent and slew the guards of the prison.

Herod became the victim of his self-esteem and desire for praise for which he would spare no effort. During a public gathering at Caesarea in 44, arrayed in his royal apparel, and sitting upon his throne made an oration to the people. They shouted, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (Acts 12:22). He manifested egoism as only a voluptuous monarch would venture to do. The Bible says simply, "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12:23).

ASIA IN THE SCRIPTURES

Contemporary history assures us that in the days of Jesus and the Early Church, continents, nations, countries and islands were populated. And, when the Dark Ages swept over the world the gospel had not reached the "every creature" as Jesus had commissioned His Church. One's reference to the world at times may mean that part of the world to which he has access, or knows about, or is able to reach. Reference to the gospel in Europe, the

gospel in Asia, or Africa or elsewhere simply means those areas on these continents which have been reached with the gospel, and the continent itself is named as a great feat, or achievement for God and His message.

When Luke stated, ". . . all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10), he did not mean the whole continent of Asia but that region where the gospel had been preached by them. This was probably Asia Minor, the northern area of land that projects toward the continent of Europe. To better acquaint one's assay of the situation how could a small party of disciples cover an area of over 16,000,000 square miles in the stipulated two years' time mentioned by Luke? Impossible, and assuredly certified by other references. Undoubtedly the writer referred to Asia Minor that covered approximately 156,000 square miles, and was nearly the size of the State of California with her 158,693 square miles. And here they preached only in certain areas. Turkey, with a population of about 31,392,000, now embraces the former boundary of Asia Minor, and a little farther east, besides her small toehold on the continent of Europe, making her land now to embrace 296,000 square miles.

Asia Minor is bounded on the north by the Black Sea, on the west by the Aegaean Sea, on the south by the Mediterranean Sea, and on the east by Syria, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Armenia (Iran and the U.S.S.R.). There were disputes and changes in boundary lines, and re-alignment and consolidation of different areas at times were expected since such moves strengthened and served to facilitate political and governmental aspirations; but all fourteen of the provinces were still under the influence of the Roman emperor.***

***Except for the northern province of Paphlagonia all fourteen are listed, or referred to by mention of important cities:

1. MYSIA . . . Acts 16:7, 8.
2. LYDIA . . . Not mentioned by name. Her cities mentioned are:
   EPHESUS . . . Acts 18:24, 19:1.
   SARDIS . . . Revelation 1:11; 3:1-6.
   THYATIRA . . . Acts 16:14; Revelation 2:18-25.
   PHILADELPHIA . . . Revelation 3:7-10.
3. CARIA . . . Not mentioned by name. Cities referred to are:
   MILETUS . . . Acts 10:15-17; II Timothy 4:20.
   CNIDUS . . . Acts 27:7.
4. LYCIA . . . Acts 27:5.

5. PAMPHYLIA . . . Acts 13:13; 15:38; 27:5.
6. CILICIA . . . Acts 6:9; 15:23, 41; 21:39; 22:3; 23:34; 27:5; Galatians 1:21.
7. PHRYGIA . . . Acts 16:6; 18:23.
8. PISIDIA . . . Acts 13:14; 14:24.
9. LYCAONIA . . . Acts 14:6, 11.
10. CAPPADOCIA . . . Acts 2:9; I Peter 1:1.
11. GALATIA . . . Acts 16:6; 18:23; I Corinthians 16:1; II Timothy 4:10; I Peter 1:1.
12. BITHYNIA . . . Acts 16:7; I Peter 1:1.
13. PONTUS . . . Acts 2:9; 18:2; I Peter 1:1.
14. PAPHLAGONIA . . . Not mentioned in the New Testament, and no proof of the disciples having been there.

It should be remembered the entire Holy Land area, from Beersheba to Dan—145 miles—as well as adjoining lands were in Asia also.

ANTIOCH CHURCH SENDS OUT MISSIONARIES

The disciples that were scattered abroad because of the persecution that arose over Stephen went everywhere preaching Jesus Christ, and making disciples wherever they went. It seemed to take Saul's persecution to shake some of these Holy Ghost-filled disciples loose from home base so they could share their heavenly blessings with others. So long as they were full of the Holy Ghost . . . full of faith . . . full of joy, they had to share their godliness with others before they had room to be refreshed again by the Holy Ghost. Though forced to flee for their lives, they became missionaries from the Church at Jerusalem.

Now, one of those churches established from the missionary effort—Antioch in Syria—prepared to send forth missionaries to the regions beyond. The dynamic ministry of such prophets and teachers as Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen and Saul were a challenge to the church for progress and the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Church. These humble men fasted and prayed and ministered to the needs of the Church. The Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

They fasted and prayed, and laid hands upon Barnabas and Saul, thus emphasizing the deep conviction for souls, the sacred consecration and devotion transmitted by the Holy Ghost as He sent them forth in this unmatched missions endeavor. Persecution had driven the first missionaries from the church at Jerusalem, and regretfully such things have to be done at times to let God's

Spirit bless and refresh His ministry . . . but the second group of missionaries had been "separated for the work" by the Holy Ghost and the charge seemed to eat into the deep of their souls. They left immediately for the unexploited fields of Cyprus and Asia Minor. They took John Mark with them though the Holy Ghost had not anointed him for the journey as He did Barnabas and Saul . . . Barnabas, his uncle, encouraged him to go along perhaps.

The account of this first Missionary Course, taken by Barnabas and Saul, accompanied by John Mark from the church at Jerusalem, is given in Acts 13:4—14:28.

ANTIOCH . . . (13:1-4) . . . Leaving their home base they descended the mountain to Seleucia, the seaport for Antioch, and which was approximately sixteen miles west from the city. No record is given of preaching at this port of departure.

SALAMIS . . . (13:5) . . . Leaving Seleucia by boat to cross the sixty-mile neck of the Mediterranean Sea to Cyprus, early home of Barnabas, they arrived at Salamis. They preached the Word of God in the Jewish synagogues, and Luke the historian pays special tribute to the ministry of John Mark.

PAPHOS . . . (13:6-12) . . . They crossed Cyprus, an Island 140 miles long and about 50 miles wide. Paphos was the capital of Cyprus, and residence of the proconsul, who was Sergius Paulus, referred to as the deputy of the country (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary). He had in his company a sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-jesus, or Elymas, and this magician opposed the Word of God as taught by the apostles, Barnabas and Saul. Sergius Paulus, being a prudent man desired to hear the Word of God but Elymas withstood the apostles, endeavoring to turn away the proconsul from the faith. Saul rose to the challenge of Elymas, rebuked him sharply, and the sorcerer was struck blind by the hand of the Lord, an experience Saul himself had undergone some ten or twelve years before. The deputy was won to the Lord.

PERGA . . . (13:13) . . . They loosed from Paphos and sailed northwesterly to Perga, in Pamphylia, bypassing the seaport of Attalia. Perga was seven and a half miles up the river Cestrus from the sea. For some unknown reason John Mark decided to return home, and he caught another ship and left the two apostles. John went back to Jerusalem. (2)

2. Note: Some seem to think John Mark had contracted malaria, and was unable to continue the journey without being a burden. Others seem to think he became faint-hearted at the adversity.

ANTIOCH (Pisidia) . . . (13:14-52) . . . As was their wont to visit the synagogue on the sabbath day, Barnabas and Saul took their places as auditors in the congregation. But a preacher who cannot preach is an anomaly, so God has a way of opening up channels of opportunity. The rulers of the synagogue called on them for exhortation and Saul responded, rather than Barnabas, with perhaps the longest discourse of his entire ministry. His constituency was composed of both "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God" (Jewish proselytes or Gentiles). He rehearsed the story of the Jewish people from the beginning, condemned the rulers at Jerusalem who did not know or realize Jesus was the Messiah that should come, and who crucified Him, but comforted them by explaining the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus the Christ, and the blessings of grace provided for all people everywhere.

When the Jews had gone from the synagogue, the Gentiles implored Barnabas and Saul to preach to them the next sabbath, and many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas. Notice that Paul is referred to, rather than Saul, for the first time in their ministry. From now on he will be called Paul, the Greek name for Saul in Semitic.

Next sabbath day the whole city turned out for the service, but the Jews, filled with envy, jealousy and strife, contradicted and blasphemed Paul and Barnabas. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and defiánt, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES." (Acts 13:46). This was the greatest turning point ever recorded in the history of mankind! The finale of achievement will be realized with the end-age revival challenge and the gathering together of God's people.

Despite the persecution and deportation a church was established at Antioch in Pisidia, and the disciples were left rejoicing and blessed.

ICONIUM . . . (14:1-7) . . . The two apostles, Barnabas and Paul (Acts 14:14), preached in the synagogue at Iconium and many Jews and Gentiles believed their message, but the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and turned them against the two disciples. During their lengthy stay there God marvelously blessed them with signs and wonders. The people of the city were divided over Paul and Barnabas and the attitude of the Jewish population, and encouraged by the rulers of the Jews they intended to stone Paul and Barnabas, but they fled the city.

LYSTRA . . . (14:8-20) . . . Paul and Barnabas had fled

Iconium for Lystra, where a man that had been born with crippled feet was healed by the apostles. Immediately the natives desired to identify Barnabas with Jupiter and Paul with Mercurius, and set the stage for worship of them. The apostles ran in among them and persuaded them not to do it, and preached the gospel to them. Then came unbelieving Jews from Antioch and Iconium, stirring up the people against the apostles, and drawing them out of the city stoned Paul and thought he was dead. But while the believing disciples stood about he arose, and the next day departed the city of Lystra.

DERBE . . . (Acts 14:21-23) . . . After preaching to the people of Derbe Paul and Barnabas decided to visit again their fields of endeavor at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, to further teach and instruct and establish the disciples more firmly in the faith, that they could withstand the tribulations that might assail them. They traveled over the same dangerous route to visit the Asian churches they had established, ordaining elders wherever needed rather than take the short cut through the Cilician pass to Tarsus, and then back to Antioch in Syria.

PERGA . . . (Acts 14:25) . . . After passing through Pisidia and Pamphylia and preaching at Perga, they went on to Attalia, and sailed to Antioch in Syria. They explained the good news and report of their missionary journey, and how God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. It was a glorious successful trip. The apostles probably remained at Antioch until near the close of 49 A.D. (Acts 14:28), preaching and zealously teaching.

The Church Moves Westward in Progress

19

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CIRCUMCISION, A PROBLEM FOR EARLY DISCIPLES

The ceremonial rite of circumcision was somewhat of an enigma to both Jew and Gentile disciples. The ancient rite enjoined upon Abraham when he covenanted with God (Genesis 17:9-14) designated his seed as a separate people, later to be known as Israel. The rite of circumcision does not seem to be exclusive with the Jews for other nations have practiced it for centuries, especially some people of Egypt, Canaan, and others including many primitive tribes and cults.

However, it was a special mark of significance to the Jew, for it assured him and his descendants a reserved channel for the promise of the Messiah. Circumcision, the removal of the foreskin of all male children by physical operation the eighth day after birth, was confirmed by the law of Moses and practiced for centuries by the Israelites as the confirmed statute of the Lord (Leviticus 12:3). It was a mark for the Jewish male and he often refrained from exposure that fostered derision among other men. Jewish men usually married Jewish women but it was not unusual for Jewish women to marry husbands outside of the bounds of Jewry. God even commanded Joshua to circumcise all males who had not been circumcised since the death of the sons of the Exodus in the wilderness (Joshua 5:2-9). Sacred obedience to the rite of circumcision was honored by John the Baptist (Luke 1:59, 60), by Jesus (Luke 2:21), Paul (Philippians 3:5) and Timothy, who was circumcised to keep from offending the Jews at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), but Titus, the great Greek minister that became bishop of Crete (Titus 1:4, 5), was not circumcised (Galatians 2:3).

Theoretical assumptions to justify the rite of circumcision indicate an act of religious purification, a type of ritual initiation into some tribal group or order, preparation for reproduction, hygienic considerations, dedication of man's generative organs, as well as a curb to abnormal carnal lust (Colossians 2:11). Notwithstanding, it is no by-product of Zipporah's heathenistic spite (Exodus 4:20-26), for it was practiced by Abraham, about four hundred years before, when at ninety-nine years of age, and with his thirteen-year-old son Ishmael, he and all the males of his house were circumcised (Genesis 17:23-27).

Israel had every right to believe in the ceremonial law of Moses,

and to hallow the Jewish rite of circumcision that had been zealously observed for centuries. They confessed they were Abraham's seed (John 8:33), and to them it was an established rite from God—the definite mark of His separated people. Since the biblical inference has it distinctively Jewish the synonymous reference to the Jews is "those of the circumcision," and to the Gentiles "those of the uncircumcision" (Ephesians 2:11), but often carried to extremes.

From careful perusal of the Holy Writ it is clearly observed that the Mosaic law was never intended to govern all peoples of the world, but was a system designed for the Israelites for a certain period, in a designated place, to reach the ends proposed by God. Sooner than contemplated by many it was to be terminated by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who unequivocally declared He came to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17, 18). Paul states in Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." The Mosaic law is not to be confused with God's great moral and Christian law of love and forgiveness—supreme love to God and an equal love for one another (Matthew 22:37-40), to which all nations should aspire.

God allowed only one wall of partition to be built—the wall between the Jew and Gentile, the circumcision and the uncircumcision—and Jesus Christ himself tore down this wall (Ephesians 2:11-22). All other walls are built by people! God permitted a veil in the temple, under the Mosaic system, to separate the worshipper and the high priest who alone entered once a year for atonement; but this veil was rent in twain when Jesus Christ gave Himself to atone for the sins of all mankind (Hebrews 10:19-23). Sad is the plight of Israel that was so enmeshed with her Mosaic laws and traditions that she hated her own promised Messiah—Jesus Christ—when He came, and that without a cause (Psalm 35:19; 69:4; John 15:24, 25), and rejected Him (Luke 17:25; John 12:48).

Whether or not the Pharisees and Sadducees, the priests, the scribes and elders aspired to their position of self-esteem that actually plagued them at times is debatable. Nonetheless, they felt strong persuasion to honor the system of their forefathers though they had accepted salvation through Jesus Christ, the Messiah. They harbored strong argument for circumcision, not because of physical operation itself, but because the rite had been instituted through Abraham, father of the Chosen Family through which was to come the righteous Branch (Isaiah 11:1). Many of them now clung to the Branch without ever having realized or

discerned their spiritual cloister. Then too, many of them felt, or suspected that their Mosaic ceremonial rites were being apostatized by those less sincere, and by the spectacular responses of the Gentiles elsewhere than at Jerusalem. Their personal sentiments reached far beyond the scope of the priesthood to preface arguments and problems wherever the gospel of Jesus Christ was preached to either Jew or Gentile.

Some feel it is unfair to be too critical of the sincerity manifested by the people of Israel, for established rituals and ceremonial practices are not forgotten in a day and night. When something better is provided it requires time to understand and adjust to it, especially in religious observances . . . and this was the position of the Israelites. Barnabas and Paul sought to exercise superb wisdom and understanding in dealing with the problem at Antioch. Their foremost incentives were to godliness and consecration, though they could not afford to injure the Gentile inflow.

With the natural born animus existing between Jews and Gentiles it is doubtful if an amiable and satisfactory solution would have been reached without the direct intervention of God who opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Colossians 3:11). Scattered to most known countries by the Diaspora, or otherwise, the Jews were deeply imbedded in synagogue life and the Mosaic system, though miserably failing here or there at times because of apostate teachers. But the Israelite nation herself respected their system. When it came under attack by the gospel of Jesus Christ it resulted in a desperate and severe conflict. It could be expected anytime, anywhere, for the two systems clashed with that of the Son of God, victorious over creeds.

The affirmative, powerful confirmation of the doctrines of Jesus Christ and His Church harbinger harassment by other religions, whether in Asia, in Europe or elsewhere.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

The monition to the church at Antioch came at an appropriate time for the Church was on the verge of being divided over the Mosaic ceremonials, especially over the observance of the rite of circumcision. This church entertained complications heretofore not experienced, especially by the church at Jerusalem. While the membership of the church at Jerusalem was composed of Jews only the church at Antioch had a membership composed of both Jews and Gentiles. It is reasonable to suppose that many of the

Jews may have felt obligated to observe their ceremonial system and especially the rite of circumcision; but the Gentiles possessed their own national outlook. Paul and Barnabas wrestled honestly and with much concern over this problem that challenged them to endeavor to keep unity and their Christian "togetherness" until the situation could be better understood and the confusion amply mastered. They endeavored to heal dissension and variance.

Meanwhile, some influential leaders perhaps, came from the Jerusalem Church and taught the brethren at Antioch, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). This perhaps soothed the consciences of the pious, circumcised Jews but it was a "stone of stumbling" to these Gentiles. Disagreeing with the erroneous teaching, Paul and Barnabas disputed with the teachers, for there were many Gentiles now in the Church that had already been saved and were now enjoying their new-found freedom in Christ, without having been circumcised to conform to this rite of the Jewish law. This challenge threatened with division the Church everywhere, for Gentiles were accepting Christ any place He was preached. The terror of persecution had never so endangered her fellowship, unity and very existence.

Doubtless, to assuage the difficulties in their favor, the Jerusalem leaders insisted that a delegation composed of Paul, Barnabas, and certain others journey to Jerusalem and meet with the apostles and elders about the question. In an effort to get the complication adjusted the Church at Antioch provided means to take care of the expenses of the delegation to and from Jerusalem, it seems. Many of them were well aware of the existing problems, for their church had both Jew and Gentile members, but not so the one at Jerusalem, comprised of Jewish members only. They knew that problems could be expected until adjustments could be made to ease the tension of both peoples.

When the delegation arrived at Jerusalem, they were kindly and graciously received by the Church, and the apostles and elders (Acts 15:2-4). This was the first council of its kind to be conducted by the Church, and the apostles and elders, and it is evident from Acts 15 that James, the brother of our Lord, moderated the council, or assembly.

It is not difficult to foresee the possibility of the majority of the council acting as a control board had it not been amenable to the discipline and directives of the Holy Ghost that obviously pervaded their midst. But for the guidance of the Spirit men may become utter failures. Both Jews and Gentiles had complications

. . . two sides to discuss impartially and unbiasedly.

1. The prejudiced Jews with their Mosaic rite of physical circumcision, and their self-esteem and self-contented feelings of exclusive "separateness."

2. The erstwhile idolatrous Gentiles with their meats offered to idols, their relishing meats with blood as a delicacy, often strangling their meat-bearers to preserve blood, and their excessive participation in sexual orgies, fornication and adultery, often in public places such as the worship of Venus in Cyprus.

Both Jew and Gentile had hallowed rites to relinquish for unity, and the cosmopolitan appeal of Christocentric influence. This was the place to do it while bolstered by the strength of the apostles and elders, and the whole Church, and all stimulated and directed by the Holy Ghost. But the friction and contention were matters of personal concern.

As soon as Paul and Barnabas had given the report of their missionary journey into Asia Minor, and the endeavors accomplished among the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Acts 15:40) certain of the "sect of the Pharisees" disciples declared "That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5). This accelerated discussion, argument and dispute, evidently on both sides of the issue at stake. The council was slated to hear the pros and cons of the dissension and disturbance. Represented at the council were: 1. Those devoted to the Mosaic ceremonial observance and faithfulness. 2. Those who had never been subjected to such ritualistic observances, nor bound by the laws that govern them.

Peter rose to the challenge with factual expostulation, and declared how God had used him to reach the Gentiles, referring to Cornelius and his household, and how the Gentiles had responded and had received the Holy Ghost. "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:7-10) He encouraged the deduction that both Jews and Gentiles alike are converted, or saved by grace, for he stated, ". . . we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11). His confirmation of facts was firm and unquestionable—it had occurred as he expressed it.

The council then gave audience to Paul and Barnabas again, and they proceeded to explain the miracles and the wonders God had wrought by them among the Gentiles. No mention of the stoning of Paul at Lystra is recorded as a part of their mission into

Asia Minor where they ordained elders as needed. Just who (which of them) now addressed the council, the record is silent. No apologies were offered . . . no objections sustained. If Galatians 2 refers to the Jerusalem council, and this is certainly inferred, it happened fourteen years after Paul's conversion, and his account here, enlightening our views of the delicate situation existing, explains things more clearly.

James, moderator of the council, spoke kindly and with great respect, and cited the address by Simeon—Simon Peter. After some preliminaries he said, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" (Acts 15:19). In all evidence this referred to the Jewish rite of circumcision . . . that Gentiles did not have to become proselytes of Jewry to become Christians. If James was biased toward the ceremonial law of Moses the record does not uphold it, neither shows it. He was a patient man, administrator of wisdom and moderation, respectful, considerate, godly, a sincere follower of Holy Ghost directives and guidance. He denounced the false teachers who had gone to Antioch and said simply, by letter, ". . . To whom we gave no such commandment" (Acts 15:24). In his first appeal he disposed of the confusion caused by his own people—the Jews—over circumcision. It was no longer a Jewish church but a whole-world church, with a doctrine for all mankind. One accord was stressed.

The council agreed to write the decrees and send to the churches by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, and Judas and Silas were to go with them as witnesses to convince the churches by additional testimony that the council had passed the resolutions. A solemn warning was sent the Gentiles as the kind and considerate moderator said, ". . . it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." (Acts 15:28, 29). This letter, or decree, was addressed to the Gentile churches in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, and Acts 16:4 shows the decrees were delivered.

This first and last council recorded of the Church at Jerusalem made absolutely no provision for by-laws or any sort of constitution for the churches of the constituency, but advocated and promulgated the moral and righteous laws established by Jesus Christ Himself and promoted by His sincere and ardent disciples. The great complication and problem over circumcision had been discussed and solved by the Church in council, in one

accord, as the Holy Ghost moved upon participating members. Though it would rise up again and again by Judaizing teachers the event culminating at this council pointed to the termination of Jewish control, and the final destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

DATE OF THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

Like other dates and chronological differences, on which authorities do not agree, it seems difficult to pin-point the date of the Jerusalem council meeting. General references seem to prefer 50 A.D., but other suggested dates are listed for convenience and consideration.

50 A.D. —Philip Schaff (History of the Christian Church)
—Peloubet's Bible Dictionary (Under Barnabas)
—Jesse Lyman Hurlbut (Story of the Christian Church)
51 A.D. —Adam Clarke's Commentary
—Ussher (Used in many Bibles)
48-49 A.D. —Merrill C. Tenney (New Testament Survey)
49 A.D. —Harper's Bible Dictionary

Just where the council was held is not recorded in the Bible . . . it may have been held in the commodious house of Mary the mother of John Mark, but this is conjecture only.

His journey to the Jerusalem council was Paul's third visit to the city since his conversion. At this council the pressures of Jewish religious exclusiveness were released to open the gateway for expanding missionary activities in different nations and continents of the world, and among the people of all races. While the sun of righteousness was gradually dropping behind the clouds over Jerusalem—the world's most renowned religious capital—the rising tide of Church influence and righteousness moved swiftly westward and eventually became the Church of the Gentiles to which the Jews, and all nations, would finally come . . . the Church of God! The fountain of life was opened by Jesus Christ.

PETER VISITS CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

The exact date of Peter's visit to Antioch is not known. In Galatians 2, Paul refers to the difficulty sustained over fellowship of the Jews and Gentiles. Because of his freedom in Christ, and his liberal fraternizing and living as the Gentiles lived there, Peter perhaps overstepped the basic and reasonable bounds of present

association stipulated by the Jerusalem Council. He was brought under tremendous pressure from the Judaizing element of the Church, and he withdrew and separated himself fearing those of the circumcism. Other Jewish members followed him, for he was a Jew, and even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. Certain recommendations had been approved by the Council, but it would take time for them to be heard and accepted by the churches on the field.

It was an error that pointed to the tinge of cowardice in Peter's life, and it evidenced some unstableness in the life of Barnabas; both of them deserved remonstration. Paul withstood Peter in his error, and said before all of them, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews" (Galatians 2:11-14)? He further said that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul had again hoisted the righteous banner of Christian devotion, loyalty and unity in the fellowship of the Spirit, and his stand helped to assuage the difficulties involved.

PAUL AND BARNABAS SEPARATE

Paul and Barnabas had been closely associated for the most of ten years. At Jerusalem, in about 40 A.D., when the apostles refused to accept Paul as a disciple Barnabas took him and introduced him to the apostles. When the Church at Antioch heard of the destitute conditions of the brethren in Judea in 45-46 A.D. they sent relief by the hands of Barnabas and Paul. And when the problem arose in the Church at Antioch in about 50 A.D. Barnabas and Paul, and certain others, went to the Jerusalem Council and returned with great consolation—traveling a distance of over six hundred miles to help try to allay the turbulent dangers of church separation and division. The council had favored their views and they were gratified.

After some time had elapsed Paul suggested they visit the churches established in Asia, and see how they were now getting along. Barnabas, also a missionary-minded man, agreed with the suggestion and wanted to take along John Mark who had left them at Perga, and returned to Jerusalem. Paul did not think it was best. The contention between them mounted and they separated. Barnabas took John Mark and sailed for Cyprus, and Paul chose Silas, and they departed overland to visit the churches in Asia. Evidently Paul and Silas kept the epistle with them

according to Acts 16:4, 5, and Barnabas may have had copies of the same, as several had to be made.

LUKE WRITES ABOUT PAUL (Acts 16:1-18:22)

The Acts of the Apostles is nothing but the "Church of God of the Bible in action," someone has said. It has to do with the inspiration that existed in the time of Christ, and continued throughout its generation of history—about 33 years. In this historical episode are listed some of the greatest victories ever won, gigantic missionary endeavors, miraculous healings and conversions, terrors of persecution and conflicts, and battles fought by humble Christ-like men and women whose very lives were changed when the Holy Ghost fell upon the disciples of the Lord.

Luke wrote it sometime between 62 and 70 A.D., and Peloubet suggests it to be close to 63 A.D., and the field of its history comprised most all the Roman empire at the time, beginning at Jerusalem and ending at Rome with Paul's two years' residence there.

To review and evaluate the field of the Great Apostle's missionary journeys would require too much time and space that may not be conducive to this account. Luke narrates the account of Paul's Second Missionary journey, with Silas, having first-hand information, probably joining him at Troas. Acts 16:10 infers this by saying, "And after HE had seen the vision, immediately WE endeavored to go into Macedonia . . ." Paul and his company visited at least seven stations in Asia—Syria, Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra where he was joined by Timothy, Phrygia, Galatia and Troas, where he had the vision of the man of Macedonia praying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (Acts 16:8-10).

They set sail for Europe where they visited eight stations—Philippi (Here Lydia became the first convert in Europe, and Paul and Silas were imprisoned unlawfully, had a prayer meeting that opened the jail doors, and the jailor and his house were converted and baptized); Amphipolis; Apollonia; Thessalonica (Here they were persecuted and accused of "turning the world upside down."); Berea; Athens (Here was a city steeped in idolatry, and had an altar erected to the Unknown God. Paul encountered the Epicureans and Stoicks at Mars Hill. The Parthenon stood near here); Corinth (Here was corruption and licentiousness in their worst form, wickedness everywhere. Paul labored here for a year and a half, and worked at tent-making trade. He led people to

God, and wrote the epistles to the Thessalonians while here.); and Cenchrea (A church had been established here for Phebe, a deaconess is mentioned by Romans 16:1, 2. Here Paul shaved his head to fulfill a vow.).

Paul came to Ephesus where he preached in the synagogue, traveling about 250 miles. He became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla, and leaving friends behind he set sail from Ephesus for Caesarea, Roman capital of Judea, thence to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover. After the feast he returned to Antioch, having travelled over 2,000 miles. This was his fourth visit to Jerusalem since conversion.

The Apostle Paul's Third Missionary journey comprised about four years, perhaps from 54 to 58 A.D. As the years rushed him he sought more than ever to expand his field of endeavor. The center of missionary influence seemed to center around Antioch from whence Paul made all three journeys. Antioch could rightly be called a missionary church.

Paul visited about twenty-two or twenty-four places, or stations, by the time he reached Jerusalem for the fifth time since his conversion. Not only was the Apostle an unusual missionary laborer, but he was the Bible's greatest Church apostle. And he preached the Church along with all his other messages and missionary work. (Acts 18:23—Acts 21:17) He declared he had laid the foundation (put things into place) and others built thereon (I Corinthians 3:10, 11). He said he persecuted the Church of God and wasted it (Galatians 1:13). He insisted on making all men see the fellowship of the mystery, and declared the Church would know the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:9, 10), and that it would be presented to Christ a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:26, 27).

Paul spent more time at Ephesus than any one place on his mission itinerary—over two years. But on this journey he sensed preparedness as never before and wrote some of his most impressive epistles. He was a stalwart apostle of the Lord and His Church, establishing churches wherever he went. Probably on this journey the seven churches of Asia, referred to in Revelation 1:11, were established by Paul.

While on his journey the ship on which he was riding passed by Ephesus and he called for the elders of the Church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. He carefully explained how he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but that now bonds and afflictions awaited him at Jerusalem. Then in a stirring discourse as from the father to his children he told them in Acts 20:28-31:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

This heart-rending prophecy by Paul was destined to be fulfilled in 325 A.D., and the Dark Age period set in. Paul feared neither trial nor death. He was heading for Jerusalem for the last time, and he stopped over at Philip the Evangelist's house at Caesarea and visited him enroute to the feast of Pentecost. The aging prophet Agabus was there and he bound his hands with Paul's girdle, warning Paul of the impending dangers that awaited him at Jerusalem. Paul declared he was ready to be bound and ready to die for the Lord Jesus.

On his last journey to Jerusalem Paul visited the church at Jerusalem, often referred to now as the Headquarters Church. It was the church from which the General Overseer James, and his staff of apostles and elders came and went. Paul saw James and the elders and reported to them the marvelous things God had wrought through him to the Gentiles, and they glorified the Lord.

But immediately the influence of the Mosaic ceremonial rites came into begin again, after having been settled nearly ten years ago by the Jerusalem Council. These disciples of the circumcision were troubled, and they said, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses . . ." (Acts 21:20, 21). It spite of their new-found freedom through Christ, they still cherished the law, and felt bound to its observance.

In order to ease the tension Paul was asked to acquiesce in a suggested plan that requested him to take four men who had a vow on them, and purify himself with them in the temple. He did this without rebuttal . . . ready to become whatever was necessary to rescue a soul. This was not another council meeting, just a visit with the Jerusalem Church personnel. No doubt many wonderful experiences with God were shared with each other as these great Church leaders conversed.

THE FINAL JOURNEYS OF PAUL (Acts 21:27-28:31)

The definite history of Paul's life actually ends with his imprisonment at Rome and the last verse of the Acts of the Apostles.

He was arrested and taken to Caesarea where he was imprisoned nearly three years. Here he was tried by Felix, the governor of Palestine, but Paul appealed to his Roman privileges of citizenship. When Porcius Festus replaced Felix Paul was still bound at Caesarea. When King Agrippa II came to visit Festus Paul was called in that the king might hear his plea. Paul's testimony before King Agrippa II is one of the most beautiful, far-reaching and classical discourses ever heard to fall from the lips of man. The king was so stirred he said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).

Luke and Aristarchus accompanied Paul on his voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1, 2). Strange things happened but God directed Paul's life. They survived a shipwreck off the Island of Melita, and Paul suffered no harm when the viper fastened on his hand. Father of Publius the chief was healed of a terrible malady, and as a result many others were prayed for and were healed. At Puteoli the church persuaded Paul to stay a week with them; and a group of Christians met him at the three taverns and Appii Forum, and he took courage.

Rome at last! Paul was at the end of a long journey when they reached the imperial wicked city whose population at the time was about 1,200,000 people—half of these (600,000) were slaves and about 400,000 were idle, indolent paupers that lived off city welfare. (1)

FIRST IMPRISONMENT AT ROME

During this first imprisonment at Rome Paul was a respected prisoner with a private guard, and was allowed freedom to live in his own hired house, to have visitors at will, and granted the right to visit and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. His own house became a church at which believers could visit and be taught of Christ and His Church, for Paul was an outstanding Church promoter, and builder. As was his custom he appealed to the Jews first, but being repulsed by them he turned to the Gentiles, and

1. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, D.D. (A Bible Atlas, published by Rand McNally Company.)

his bonds for Christ even reached into the imperial palace (Philippians 1:13, 14; 4:22).

General opinion has Paul acquitted and liberated by Nero the Emperor about 63 A.D., after having spent more than five years in prison—a short time at Jerusalem, about three years at Caesarea and two years at Rome, including his prison travels.

While in prison at Rome he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, and according to Philemon 22 and Philippians 2:24 Paul expected a release any time.

PAUL PAYS HIS LAST CHURCH VISITS

Paul had been a constant, tireless missions traveler, an indomitable and courageous warrior of the gospel, and a determined, persevering minister in establishing churches wherever he preached. Soon as he was released from prison, he headed for Macedonia and neighboring stations, and Proconsular Asia to visit for the last time the churches he had established. He left Timothy at Ephesus (I Timothy 1:3) to check the rising outgrowth of heresy and licentiousness, if at all possible. But, the younger Timothy, perhaps sensing the seriousness involved shed tears when his aging teacher left him (II Timothy 1:4). Though sublime in devotion Paul's name was not honored and revered as it had once been, and Timothy knew this first hand. It seems that Timothy became bishop there.

The apostle left Titus at Crete (Titus 1:5) to pastor the church there, to set in order the necessary things and to ordain elders in every city. When he finally was at Nicopolis in Achaia he wrote Titus of his intention to winter there, and for him to bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos to visit with him there (Titus 3:12, 13). Titus became the bishop of Crete perhaps.

It is believed that Paul enjoyed three or four years of liberty after his first imprisonment at Rome, which time was spent in visiting churches and other fields of labor. He wrote I Timothy while at Laodicea, or Macedonia, and the epistle to Titus while at Nicopolis. He was away from Rome when the city was nearly destroyed by fire in 64 A.D., and which misfortune was blamed on the Christians, falsely. Now, the Christians were being persecuted throughout the Roman empire; merciless slayings and maltreatments. Terror had spread everywhere. Nero was considered Rome's worst tyrant.

PAUL'S SECOND IMPRISONMENT AT ROME

Paul was apprehended at either Troas or Nicopolis, but records are not certified at all. He was rushed back to Rome and imprisoned again. No respects were accorded him this time . . . evidently he was brutally mistreated as were common prisoners who were guilty of crimes against both individuals and the state. From a filthy dungeon perhaps he was permitted to write his last letter—II Timothy. He wrote Timothy to bring John Mark with him, and also the cloak he had left at Troas (II Timothy 4:9-21), and from all indications he anticipated his soon execution. It is inferred by Hebrews 13:23 that Timothy was with Paul to the end, maybe imprisoned, too. In retrospection the aging Apostle said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed to Thessalonica . . ." (II Timothy 4:10). He had sent others to their fields of labor, but Luke remained with him to the end. In his closing hours, when the shadows crept over his industrious, brilliant, far-reaching ministerial achievements he entertained no remorse, no regret, no doubt. Probably some of his trusted companions had gone to the arena of the Coliseum, and others to the stakes in Nero's garden where they became flames and torches for the mad tyrant's hilarious indulgences . . . praying, singing and chanting praises of victory through Christ.

Probably the great Apostle heard the dull thuds of the executioner's footsteps about his own dungeon, and he wrote furiously, carefully, that those who follow Jesus Christ may understand, and be encouraged. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:6-8).

Paul was beheaded in 68 A.D., about a year after Peter was crucified . . . both at Rome . . . Peter in 67 A.D.

JERUSALEM DESTROYED IN 70 A.D.

Paul had made no effort to visit Jerusalem when he was released from his first imprisonment at Rome. Jerusalem and Judea were in great distress. Judea was the only Roman province that was discontented and disloyal. There was a constant unrest felt everywhere, and irresponsible rabble-rousers that actually

precipitated the war with Rome kept the populace inflamed with a passion to be conquerors and govern the world, according to their own interpretation of the prophetic writings. Zealots were strong in certain areas, especially in Galilee. After Felix came as governor, hired killers (or assassins purchasable for any crime) called Sicarians who were armed with daggers or short swords roamed Palestine and were dangerous and a scourge to the country. Hating their heathen oppressors, the Jews revolted, led by the Zealots who possessed "all the fire and energy which religious and patriotic fanaticism could inspire." The Jews were divided themselves and they killed each other just as they killed their Roman oppressors, introducing a reign of terror. The Jewish war actually began in 66 A.D.

The able Roman General Vespasian prosecuted the war in Galilee where Josephus was in command of the Jewish forces, who finally surrendered to the Romans. The war became more severe as the Zealots fought in Jerusalem, and spurned any advice given by Titus, son of Vespasian, who had been called to Rome when Nero committed suicide. As many as five hundred Jews were crucified in a single day, and thousands died from starvation during the famine then sweeping the city. Starvation caused a woman to roast her own child, and the most pitiable screams of distress and sorrow from mothers and their babies could not forestall the horrible degeneracy then existing. Jesus had warned the people (Matthew 24:1, 2; Mark 13:1, 2), and as He drew near Jerusalem once, He wept over it (Luke 19:42-44). Then in Luke 21:20-24 He gave His disciples a very vivid picture of the impending disaster. The Jews rejected their Messiah and sentenced Him to be crucified . . . but it was the Gentiles who actually drove the spike to crucify Him. Now the calamity He had warned them about had struck disaster. The Jews seemed the world's most zealous people.

It was a senseless endeavor of a small, unorganized people to battle the world rulers of the time. Titus, with an army of eighty thousand men, with full equipment—quick-firing siege engines, ballistae, battering rams—and all elite troops, surrounded and besieged the city. The Kedron Valley was a portion of the separation of the army and the city. The city was captured and the temple burned August 10th, 70 A.D., the same day of the month that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Solomon's temple. Jerusalem was laid waste—the fatherland gone!

One historian says there were one million, one hundred thousand Jews slain, eleven thousand died of starvation, and

ninety-seven thousand carried captive and sold into slavery, sent to slave in the mines or to gladiatorial combat. (2) It has been said the Coliseum at Rome was built with Jewish slave labor . . . but it has been in ruins for centuries.

Heeding the warning of Jesus the Christians fled the city of Jerusalem and went to Pella, of Decapolis, about eighteen or twenty miles south of the Sea of Tiberius, and east of the Jordan River. It is expected that Simeon (Simon, Mark 6:3) second Bishop of the Jerusalem Church, and who succeeded James the Just, first Bishop, fled Jerusalem also and continued his office from Pella as long as the Christian community or work continued there as the Church. It later became extinct. However, Simeon carried on until his crucifixion in 107 A.D., by order of the Roman governor of Palestine during the reign of Trajan. Simeon attained the age of one hundred and twenty years, and was succeeded by Justus, third Bishop of the Hebraic line. (3)

However, after Simeon the office of General Overseer seemed to lose it real significance. It was a pattern, and a fine example of theocratic government under God, for the apostles and elders, and the General Overseer and the whole Church sought to remain under the mighty influence of the Holy Ghost, but "men began to rise up and speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them" as Paul had said in Acts 20:30. The handwriting was on the wall . . . becoming more legible now.

REFLECTING ON THE ERA

According to Eusebius there were in all thirty-nine bishops of the circumcision, at Jerusalem, who endeavored to carry on for God until the final dispersion of the Jews in 135 A.D., when Hadrian was emperor of Rome. However, when Jerusalem was destroyed the headquarters of the Church at Jerusalem was no longer in existence . . . the Christians had gone to Pella, and probably the work was directed from there for a time. With the destruction of Jerusalem's temple the Saduccees disappeared, as well as the Jewish priesthood and the whole sacrificial system. However, the Pharisees continued synagogue worship.

From Biblical indications and historical inferences the influence

2. History of the Christian Church, by Philip Schaff. Volume 1, Page 400 . . . 1910. Published by WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

3. Story of the Christian Church. By Jesse Lyman Hurlbut . . . The John C. Winston Company.

of the Church of God moved steadily westward into many areas other than Palestine, reaching some Jews but catering chiefly to the Gentile world, especially the Roman Empire.

Never before had the Church tried to operate without some theocratically controlled board of influence. Times were becoming more turbulent all the while, the forces of evil battling her (the Church) every step of the way. The tyrant Nero had initiated the first real persecution, and his garden was lighted by the burning saints of God, strung to stakes and saturated with oil. But trouble never daunted the faith of the saints of God nor mitigated their courage!

THE CHURCH DRIFTS INTO AN EPISCOPACY

Since Nero, persecution seemed to plague Christendom, but at the same time it served to purify the Church . . . only those endowed with faith directly from God, the love of Jesus Christ, and a peace that passes understanding (Philippians 4:7) could stand the test of martyrdom. The half-hearted and heretic shied away from the Church when persecution reigned. The Church was no small sect, squandered to little pockets of the empire but the fastest growing religion in the whole empire. Because of its rapid growth and expansion, organization and discipline were urgently necessary, and a closer move toward union and government . . . persecution served to draw the churches closer together.

When Peter, James, and John, along with Paul passed off the scene as devoted and inspired apostolic church leaders, with their writings, there is a sad silence and laxity of apostolic inspiration conveyed from the pen of such great laborers as Timothy, Titus, Silas and others who traveled with the great men who had an eyewitness account of Jesus and His Church. The apostles and laborers of the era knew firsthand. Both Luke and Paul referred to titles of "bishops" and "deacons" and "elders" all tightly woven around their central government at Jerusalem. But nearly sixty years later (125 A.D.), without the centralized government that became extinct with the destruction of Jerusalem, bishops everywhere ruled his own church and actually controlled his own diocese, with presiding elders, presbyters, deacons and other church officials under his jurisdiction.

At the Jerusalem Council in 50 A.D., composed of "apostles and elders, and the whole church," measures and resolutions were agreed upon and passed, "as it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and them" gathered together in one accord.

But about 149-150 A.D. council meetings were held and rules and resolutions were made by the bishops only, in their particular precinct or area. History may not explain everything but the episcopal form of government certainly became universal. When the church infiltrated the empire leaders arose to meet the demands for government and authority to enforce regulations against division and heresies. Doctrinal differences and controversies arose in different areas, and even in different churches. They missed the form of theocratic government practiced in the apostolic days. Though erroneous, and obviously so, personal emphasis was stressed on correct belief rather than on the heart-felt, inner spiritual life. Controversies rose up everywhere.

The Arian controversy arose about 317-318 A.D., when Arius, bishop of Alexandria, proposed the doctrine that Christ, though higher than human nature, was not eternal in existence, but had a beginning and was inferior to God. Otherwise he denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. Athanasius, at the time a local deacon, adamantly defended the Christian truth by asserting the unity of the Father and the Son, the deity of Christ and His eternal existence. The controversy continued throughout the whole church and threatened the faith of honest-hearted people. When it seemed impossible to correct the issue . . . no apostolic council to reason out differences of opinions and viewpoints and adjust matters . . . Constantine, who had tried in vain to settle the disputes, called a council of the bishops. It was held at Nicaea in Bithynia 325 A.D., in the Senate Palace, on the twenty-fifth day of August.

The Arian doctrine and controversy was denounced and repudiated by the three hundred and eighteen bishops in the council, more or less moderated by the Emperor Constantine, after being introduced to the council by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea. Arius was banished or excommunicated. The Church and State amalgamated to a degree, subjected to the influence of the State under Constantine, and eventually the Dark Age period was seen and felt wherever Christianity was preached.

This unfortunate occurrence seemed to fulfill the prophetic utterance of Apostle Paul in Acts 20:29-31, some 265 years before. This is amply explained by Bishop John A. Stubbs in his recent manuscript, "The Written Vision," published in 1969: "These statements of Paul are synonymous with the prophecy in Isaiah 49:13-18 and Jeremiah 30:12-17. Thus, for a period of time the Church ceased to function, and the beautiful doctrine and

Christian living taught by Christ and the apostles ceased to be. Introduction of idols and pagan customs and traditions of men replaced the doctrine of the Bible. Thus was the Church plunged into apostasy and brought about what is now called the Dark Ages."

POSTERITY AND GROWTH ENJOYED

From all indications the Early Church possessed no church buildings in which to worship, but used the synagogues, the temple and homes of the people, in the days of the apostles. However, churches in the houses of some of the disciples are mentioned in the Scriptures . . . Philemon's house (Philemon 2), house of Aquilla and Priscilla (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19) and the house of Nymphas at Laodicea (Colossians 4:15). But by the end of the first century A.D., people were building church houses in which to worship. As an entity the Church was prospering in spite of persecution which only caused her to shine a little brighter.

In spite of the rumination of bishops in control of their particular churches and dioceses, differing over minor issues condemned by the Emperor Constantine himself, it is said by now the Church boasted a membership of one-half of Rome's Empire of one hundred and twenty million people, and that millions of Christians are interred in the catacombs of Rome. (4)

The command of the Church's Founder, Jesus Christ, was "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel . . ."

SECTION TWO

The banner of Christendom has been hoisted in practically every nation of the world. The disciples accepted the Lord's commission to "Go ye into all the world" and take His message. The mantle has fallen to nation after nation, and generation after generation, and the commission and the challenge seem as fresh, as vibrant, as inspiring and powerful as when Jesus gave them on a mountain in Galilee.

It would be gratifying to know how God has so richly blessed His people, and to be personally acquainted with the many churches that have held high the torch of true salvation in Christ. Jesus prayed in the Coenaculum that His disciples would be one,

4. Story of the Christian Church . . . Hurlbut . . . Ibid.

and though the Christian world has not as yet reached this place in Him, yet great strides are being made toward this goal. Little things still tend to separate the children of God, but we are constantly making progress toward better unity and cooperation. Really there is no time to lose, for a little more of His love, His grace, His power, will enable us to be overcomers and conquerors through Him.

With due respect to all organizations with their church histories, this account does not propose to review their successes or failures, though references may allude to some of them, whether before, during or following the Dark Age period. The Dark Age era of church governments has been omitted from this text because the Church Fathers have written profusely of them, and repetition is evaded here as futile to this cause.

This treatise is pursued to try to trace the underlying thematic principles of theocratic government established for the Church by Jesus himself and to endeavor to incorporate the transmission to its proper use and functions in the Church today. Therefore, the Dark Age period is from 325 A.D. to June 13, 1903, when the Church of God was uncovered in what is now Fields of the Wood, Cherokee County, North Carolina, United States of America.

Important Events Always Cast Shadows

20

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ACHIEVEMENTS PRODUCE LEADERS

Man's livelihood and invention have so incorporated themselves with every facet and phase of his life they act as governing factors in the actual success or failure of projected efforts. Through channels of commerce and industry, sports and arts, literature and religion unparalleled ambitions for achievement and success in the different fields of endeavor have presented history with many famous and renowned personages, though one's projected image is usually tantamount to accomplishments.

It was on Sunday, July 20, 1969 that Apollo 11 touched down at the Sea of Tranquility on the lunar surface of the moon. Neil Armstrong stepped from the lowered ladder and he made man's first footprints on the surface of the moon. It was a thrilling experience that excited the whole world . . . it made world history! His short message of eight words, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The EAGLE has landed," was flashed across the whole world by all available news media, and those words became immortal within a few minutes. This noble feat had been accomplished by men who had the spirit of it working inside of them. The world sees them as superb Spacemen; they had conquered the seemingly unconquerable.

While this particular achievement is vividly impressed on the historical pages of the entire world, no field of endeavor is bypassed by enoblement. Achievement in every projected field may not herald world acclaim, but honor and recognition are prepetuated by those especially involved in the specified area.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS DESERVE HONOR

The religious sphere of man's life and nature is not ignored and bypassed. Nor is the person who pursues the sound and basic aspects of clean and chaste Christian living forgotten. This Christian conflict is endless until the world's last inhabitant is reached. Those so possessed with the spirit of the challenge they have to devise plans, methods and procedures necessary to the promotion of Christianity shall not be denied the glory of achievement. It may not at the time be observed by them, nor praised during their life-span . . . but it shall come; do not wait for

it! Ecclesiastes 11:1 says: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

Forgetting the glory due for achievement Christians have a desire to please the Lord as they labor for Him. The Apostle Paul said in Colossians 3:23: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." They endeavor to keep in contact with the Control Tower where Jesus is on the right hand of the Father. Honors are appreciated and held in high esteem because Christians represent Christ . . . they are laboring for Him. Compliments are self-explanatory.

THE SPIRIT OF IT

Christians thrill to the words of Jesus, as recorded in John 10:10, that say, ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And they are equally thrilled with what He said in John 6:63, ". . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

People cherish the thoughts of Jesus as He walked on the shores of Galilee, and the times He would visit people of all classes, healing their sick, comforting them and blessing them. The sweet refrains of unsung psalms of His meekness and goodness and power echo and re-echo from heart to heart, from bosom to bosom as his wondrous miracles are hallowed by those who have become acquainted with Him. Paul says in I Timothy 3:16: ". . . God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

In His Mission Conference with His disciples on a mountain in Galilee—a conference unparalleled in the annals of history—Jesus gave to them, and to the whole world the last Great Commission, as recorded by Matthew 28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15-18, and certainly supplemented by Acts 1:8. This Commission has left an incentive and inspiration to Christians of every age and era, and it has been handed down by the shed blood of many who carried it. The names of faithful ones have undoubtedly been inscribed in the Memory Book of Immortals, and the glory of their achievements follows them. From the dim epochs of the past the triumph of their labors resound from heart to heart, and from soul to soul of born-again Christians everywhere. From era to era, from generation to generation, the lighted, flaming torch of this Great Commission has been passed to those who would spend and be spent in pursuit of dispensing the gospel of Christ and His Church. They accepted

the heart-warming, heart-thrilling challenge because they had the spirit of it working within them.

THE POST-WAR FEELINGS

The war between the states, commonly referred to as the Civil War, terminated when Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Federal General U.S. Grant, at Appomatox, Virginia, April 9, 1865. In the wake of the surrender the terrors of war had left a trail of blood, sufferings and tears, hatred, unhappiness, dissatisfaction and distrust; and such wounds were not healed overnight. They seemed to have an uncanny way of refreshing themselves among the best of people who had to battle the furor of the war's aftermath, trying to forget as they attempted to re-adjust and build again those things that had been so ruthlessly destroyed.

The reconstruction blessed many in various ways, but it left others destitute, despondent, homeless, spiritless and irately vindictive. The feeling could arise anywhere though the nation tried hard to forget. It had been a terrible conflict, a war where brother fought brother and everything dear ended for many.

The dissolution of war had clouded the thinking of many for some time but the nation sought to compose herself and mold her people into a strong unified body, hoping that the spirit of peace and goodwill would prevail. Social life had undergone some revolting changes, and there were some ethnical problems to master as a result of the interchange of people from the different areas of the country.

People tried to forget their misgivings. They desired to build confidence in a better outlook and more promising vicissitudes of life. They set about to rebuild their homes, their churches and schools, and sought to refurbish farm and factory. It would mean life! Things were strangely different—disconcerting some, with a tendency to baffle others—but this never seemed to deter their spirit of progressiveness to build again. They gallantly rose up to face the challenge. It was only natural that the war-changes incurred greater insight to demands and responsibilities, and stirred the people to envision new approaches that enabled them to cope with many of the complexities they faced.

RELIGIOUS UNREST SOON FELT

While the nation rallied her governmental procedures for

progress, and geared herself for reconstruction, many of her people became aware of the sagging condition of home, of school, church and the community at large. The spirit of revival that stimulates higher ideals and morals among people had deteriorated to some degree in places, despite the warnings of good ministers—preachers of the gospel—who often labored and toiled almost in vain to re-instate the country's spiritual values.

Near the turn of the century the dynamic, spirit-empowered Methodist Preacher Sam P. Jones said, "I believe the war wrecked more young men than it killed old men." This declaration was made at an appropos time. Great preachers arose against sin, but they were few in the country's analogy. The powerful Methodist-Congregationalist Preacher, Robert Sayer Sheffey—near the turn of the century also—defied the evils and atrocities of the saloon and "blind-tigers," and the dance halls and houses of prostitution that engulfed the virtues of womanhood. He prayed such powerful prayers that vile, hard-hearted ruffians—men that made some communities fear and shake and tremble when they entered—hid among the rocks and buildings or among trees of the forest when the man of God passed along. Wherever this man went there was a revival appeal. But he was just one of many in the throng that traveled by horse and buggy, or by horseback, and his scope for outreach was limited.

However, in many areas the laxity of religious interest and personal spiritual possession among churches and constituents was stunning. This type thing opened the way for the influence of Modernism and Liberalism to invade the afflatus of both minister and membership. While neither was new their invasion left an imprint on the consciences of people everywhere. The tendency fostered was to ignore or bypass the miraculous transforming grace of God that subdues and destroys the works of evil and supplant it with man's reason and scientific analysis that incorporate individual intellectual decisiveness. Establishments void of a burning revival fervor and spirit of prevailing intercessory prayer were most gullible to forget the real and true spirit of worship—the kind of inspiration that sends hungry souls to their knees in search of the Rock that is higher than they. True inspiration and worship had long ago leaked out of the heart and soul of some whose vision had been smeared by grime, toil and sin.

A little over a century ago the Colonies had been stirred and awakened by an unmatched revival fervor that swept over them. A respected sacredness gave courage and faith and spiritual unity without which they never could have resisted the pressures of

outside influence that assailed them. The spiritual upsurge is said to have influenced the writing of the Constitution of the United States. The spiritual and moral potential encouraged godly men to move without fear against the encroachments of infidelity of the Tom Paine school. It is said that when Lyman Beecher entered Yale College he fought infidelity all the way, since most of his class were infidels, and called themselves Voltaire, Rousseau or other infidelic personages. (1)

God moved among the ministers, stirring them with a zeal directly from heaven. It has been said that this was the only time in the nation's history that there was a minister for every two thousand inhabitants. But the forces of evil rallied and infidelity made great inroads to the moral and spiritual liberties of the Colonies which fell into a damaging state of turpitude and spiritual chaos. It is said that Tom Paine himself regretted ever writing the "Age of Reason."

This revival interest, however, swept into the early nineteenth century in spite of the pressures of infidelity, unbelief and laxity of spiritual commitments for church membership. It seemed that the endowed religion of New England, at the time, was principally Congregationalism, and this gave rise to more "freedom thinking" and eventually for the new movement of Unitarianism that appeared as a school of thought about 1785. After the turn of the century many old-line Congregationalists merged with the Unitarians that had become a sort of control body for the modern representatives of the ancient Arian doctrines of the fourth century. It is said that James Russell Lowell, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and William Cullen Bryant, all of them great poets and writers, embraced much of the Unitarian views. (2)

But opposition to true godliness could never prevail so long as men such as Timothy Dwight, Lyman Beecher, Dwight L. Moody, Charles G. Finney, Henry Ward Beecher, and others fired pulpit and pew with unmatched religious fervor. Lyman Beecher resolved to drive Unitarianism asunder, and Charles G. Finney set the pulpit and pew afire wherever he went, winning fully a half million souls. He was a man of God possessed of the Holy Spirit! Constant revivals marked the first part of the nineteenth century, especially. This writer himself has conversed with people born in the mid-1860's, and others later who remembered when those

1. The History of Christian Preaching—Pattison.
2. Story of the Christian Church—Hurlbut P. 216, 217.

seeking God during brush-arbor and camp-meeting revivals had to hold to trees and saplings to keep from falling prostrate from the impact of the downpourings of the Spirit and power of God. This was just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, and some of it occurred after the war had ceased.

But the conflict had done an almost irreparable injury to the spiritual phases and facets of people everywhere, though they sought to reconstruct everything as time permitted. Emerging from the Revolutionary War and gearing herself for reconstruction was difficult for the nation, as well as for those holding in high esteem the spiritual aspects of life. Now emerging from another conflict—the war between the states—they faced the same problems to some extent.

It was disappointing and discouraging to observe the inexcusable, yet inexplicable disparity growing among some organizations over dogmas, rituals, opinions and practices. Many returning veterans became aware of this. They went to their knees in supplication and prayer for personal consecration, guidance, concentration and consolation to acquiesce in spirit if not in effort. People seemed alarmingly restless at times, though absence has its own way of warming the heart to tolerance. Ministers strove to reconcile differences that had had ample opportunity to grow by the year. The "golden wedge" seemed to be accomplishing a mission of its own right among some of those who were battling so hard for revival of godliness. Distrust plagued many . . . spiritual emphasis lagged at times while neighborhoods felt the sting of it. It was apparent that revival was a requisite.

In the wake of such irrelevance, discord, dispute and distrust was born again a feeling that fostered separation from parent churches and organizations for what is termed the more lush fields of religious freedom. As history indicates the time was ripe for such a move in certain areas. Rather than be hampered and bound by ritualistic observances of the ruling minority of ecclesiastical circles people everywhere, especially in the southern part of the United States, sought God because of personal convictions and the apparent freedom to worship. It was the beginning of a timely reformation that not only tightened the spiritual influence of old-line organizations but birthed many new movements that have reached thousands of sincere seekers for a genuine and dynamic Christianity today.

EAST TENNESSEE HOLINESS ASSOCIATION

In the mid 1880's, or thereabouts, the East Tennessee Holiness

Association was formed, and operated in and around the area of Bradley County, Tennessee. It was a reformation move from religious oppression, but lasted only a few short years as such.

Andrew J. Lawson, former General Treasurer of the Church of God (Tomlinson Overseer) spoke favorably of the organization's purpose. Lawson was General Treasurer from Wednesday, August 8, 1923 until his death Wednesday, September 8, 1948. He was converted in October 1886, and joined the Friendship Baptist Church in the spring of 1887, and was later baptized.

He attended some meetings of the Association and received the light on true Bible sanctification. At 8:00 o'clock on Monday morning, May 8, 1888, he was definitely sanctified, according to his own testimony, and joined the East Tennessee Holiness Association shortly thereafter.

But sometimes, in the wake of great revival interests and fervor looms the possible danger of over-indulgence, spiritual excesses and rank fanaticism. According to Lawson himself the Association suffered because of these. Some of the members professed strange and unique experiences. Some said they had "the baptism of fire" while others had received "dynamite" or "lyddite," the latter of which allowed, or permitted them to walk the top of the benches without criticism or question (for no one wanted to question the Lord). Some got what they called the "Wheel-In-A-Wheel" experience which they claimed delivered them from certain foods such as tomato soup, buttermilk, lard, etc., as Lawson said. Such ascetic excesses were embarrassing to the wiser ones, but there was no government among them. They were constantly plagued by lack of Biblical understanding and the basic principles of government. Emotional feelings sometimes excited some of them to perpetrate excesses . . . one extreme ran into another and this kind of thing took toll among these humble people.

Many of them, so possessed, sold their homes, farms, and worldly possessions, or gave them away, and headed for Zion City, Illinois to await the soon-coming of the Lord that was expected within the next year or two. A. J. Lawson, a good stable Christian, refused to be persuaded into this embarrassing predicament that proved to be short-lived. Other areas also suffered from over-indulgence and fanatical functions for people were in a state of reformation and reconstruction, though most of them took steps to circumvent such calamities. This organization was short-lived!



Seen here are Bishop John A. Stubbs (left) and Bishop C. S. Pennington (right) with a sign printed to commemorate the meeting held at the Barney Creek Meeting House where R. G. Spurling Sr. organized the Christian Union, August 19, 1886. In 1972 these men discovered a stone nearby that listed the year, and this definitely marks a forward move in the marking program sponsored by the Church of Prophecy Marker Association.

THE CHRISTIAN UNION IS FORMED
(August 19, 1886)

In Monroe County, Tennessee, in 1884, a Missionary Baptist licensed minister—Richard G. Spurling Sr.—was seized with a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction over certain traditions and creeds that were burdensome and binding on the members. Being a just and devout man, and a faithful member and minister of his church, he spent much time in fasting and prayer and the study of God's Word. This went on for two years or more in view of some reformation. He sought reform in his church through tears, but in vain. It was grievous indeed to this watchman of tearful pleadings, but morals had deteriorated in much of the church-world. He spoke with others. Some of them felt as did he, that some reformation was overdue!

As an alternative he called a special meeting at the Barney Creek Meeting House, in Monroe County, Tennessee, to give further study and consideration to pressing religious matters. This meeting was set for August 19, 1886, Thursday, and a small group assembled for it. Being the strong religious character he was, Spurling moderated the meeting, and addressed them on the pressing and important needs of reformation. His message was timely and inspiring, full of force and effective. The humble and conscientious little group sat intensely interested while he explained the simple proposition and obligation.

In simple, easy-to-understand words he gave it: "As many Christians as are here present that are desirous to be free from all men-made creeds and traditions, and are willing to take the New Testament, or law of Christ, for your only rule of faith and practice; giving each other equal rights and privileges to read and interpret for yourselves as your conscience may dictate, and are willing to sit together as the Church of God to transact business as the same, come forward."

Four important factors and steps governing the obligation were proposed:

FIRST: Freedom from men-made creeds and traditions.

SECOND: Willing to take the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice.

THIRD: Give each other equal rights and privileges to read and interpret for yourselves as your conscience may dictate.

FOURTH: Be willing to sit together as the Church of God to transact business.

Eight people came forward to accept the simple obligation and

give each other the right hand of fellowship. They were: Richard Spurling, John Plemons Sr., Polly Plemons, Barbara Spurling, Margaret Lauftus, Melinda Plemons, John Plemons Jr. and Adeline Lauftus. They then decided to call the infant organization "Christian Union."

Having joined themselves together under the proposed obligation it was decided to open the doors of the new organization to all genuine Christians for membership. They also decided "that ordained and licensed ministers from other churches could retain their same position and office without being re-ordained."

> Mentioned by A. J. Tomlinson in his book "The Last Great Conflict." The reception of other Christians into another church is almost a universal practice. But the retention of position and office of ministers from other churches without being officially recognized and re-ordained was an exception. Regardless of good intent, and despite civic modesty and anticipated church amnesty, this exception violated segments of commonly practiced ecclesiastical procedures.

Having been duly acknowledged and recognized as their spiritual leader and minister of authority Richard G. Spurling Sr. took his seat as moderator, then dedicated the new organization to God and implored His blessings and favors for it to grow and prosper. An invitation was next given for candidates for membership and Richard G. Spurling Jr., a licensed minister himself and son of the elderly Spurling, stepped forward to join the little group. After the obligation for membership was administered the new minister—Richard G. Spurling Jr.—was chosen to pastor the new organization. He was ordained September 26, 1886.

Despite the honesty and sincerity, and the aims and purposes of the Christian Union the amalgamation never pledged it to be the actual continuation of the Early Church designated by the Scriptures. But it was a definite move in the Biblical directives, and whether or not it met the essential qualifications at the time, it pointed to the dawn of a new day in Christendom. Though agreeing to sit together in council as the Church of God their decision for revolt and reformation never made them the Church of God of the Bible. In this they were not too vastly different to other groups revolting from oppressive issues. Yet, they clearly emphasized revolt from creeds and men-made doctrines in their effort to revert to closely-knit Scriptural practices.

As early as 1858, Stuart Robinson, in his book called "The

Church of God," declared it was "an essential element of the gospel." Yet, he never suggested his church to be the exclusive Church as outlined in the Scriptures. Like others he seemed to stress closer adherence to the faith and tenets of the parent church, and at the same time close observance of the commands of Christ. But, his book was called "The Church of God."

Bible scholars concede that Jesus established His Church, and that the principles and practices and doctrinal issues are revealed by the Scriptures. Many agree that progress and advancement depend upon consecration to God, and the pursuit of proper light and revelation of His Word. In this, the new little organization seemed to excel, for time would prove the stability and outlook of Spurling's vision.

COMMUNITY OPPOSITION

The elderly Mr. Spurling died some time after the Christian Union was organized. He had spent many sleepless nights and travailed in long sessions of prayer for the little work, as did his son Richard G. Spurling Jr., who now was responsible for the work. As it were they saw through a glass darkly, but light had shone a brighter path to them.

Growth of the little organization was slow since it seemed that few people cared about it, or about Spurling's vision as partially outlined in the booklet "The Lost Link." R. G. Spurling Jr. pastored the group, preaching at church and wherever people would let him. For most of ten years he prayed, fasted and wept for souls. He preached under great strain, encountered cruel opposition, and labored under strange and peculiar difficulties, but he constantly looked forward to achievement in some degree.

REVIVAL SWEEPS INTO AREA

In 1896 three men—William Martin, Joe M. Tipton, and Milton McNabb—all from Monroe County, Tennessee, became powerfully stirred about lost souls. They went over into Cherokee County, North Carolina and began a revival meeting at the Schearer schoolhouse. They were anointed by God and their messages seemed to arouse people everywhere in the mountainous community. They preached a real "born again" experience with God, and sanctification as the second definite work of grace, subsequent to justification, the eradication of the Adamic nature by the blood of Jesus Christ. They advocated without compromise



The Schearer Schoolhouse where the great revival broke out in 1896, swept through the community like a mighty fire, and continued with the revival spreading throughout many areas. It is said that over one hundred were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire and spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. This, about ten years before the great Los Angeles revival with Seymour.

a clean holy life.

It was a genuine revival awakening such as swept the country over a century ago, and it spread into adjoining counties and nearby states. Scores of seekers found peace of heart, mind and soul and the revival flames reached farther and farther. In buggies and wagons, by horseback and walking, people came for miles to be blessed of the Lord. The lives of hard-hearted men and women were changed into real peace-loving neighbors and citizens. The effects skyrocketed and sinners were constrained to make restitution where possible as they sought forgiveness.

While many were being so richly blessed of God in the salvation of souls other people of the area rejected the revival and waxed bold against it, though many admitted it was phenomenal. It conflicted with their men-made rituals, creeds and ecclesiasticism. Many erstwhile faithful members were violently persecuted and excommunicated from the very churches they had helped to build. One church alone excommunicated thirty of them at one meeting, accusing them of heresy because they professed to live a clean, holy life.

In other states, cities, towns and communities pursuance of the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification—sanctification as a second definite work of grace—was brought to life, more vividly than

ever. Holiness was being preached and lived in many areas, and "Fire-Baptized" groups were now springing up nearly everywhere, especially in the Mid-West, the South, Texas and elsewhere. Here and there an occasional one could be heard to "speak in tongues," a strange experience that appeared to lift him out of the mediocre to a kind of exalted plane with God. It was strange indeed to the establishment. It was no different in Cherokee County, North Carolina.

In spite of opposition the inflowing tide of spirituality rushed stronger than ever through the community. It was like a mighty stream of righteousness that swept sin, evil and wrong from the lives of humble seekers, washing away their uncleanliness, sin-sickness and terrors of evil. In this area there had never been the like of this revival awakening, and it grew by the day and hour. With the increase of godliness and revival fervor persecution rampaged fiercer than ever on every hand; the kindgom of Satan in this mountainous community tottered at the redemption of every new-born soul. Houses were burned where worshippers gathered for prayer and praise. But, this never stymied the revival fervor that seemed to break out in many other places as people sought desperately to straighten up their crooked ways.

Persecution grew more violent among the workers of iniquity and burst into a raging furor when ministers, deacons, stewards and members of churches, a justice of the peace and a sheriff—one hundred and six of them—banded together to crush the revival even at the price of violence. The zealous Christians were driven from the Schearer schoolhouse and the doors were locked against them. This served only to fan the revival fires now blazing almost out of control, for with the blessings it was natural for excesses to flare up.

Powerful prevailing prayers could be heard in many of the homes, the fields and the woods, and from mountain to hill as the hungry-hearted people poured out their hearts to God in a hot, flowing fusillade of intercessions. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). They never let up in their praying . . . just sought more earnestly, more fervently and effectually for Divine intervention, as persecution rampaged in the vicinity.

When they were driven from the Schearer schoolhouse they worshipped in a log church house on a plot of ground opposite the schoolhouse and only a short distance away. (3)

3. Ascribed to by T. N. Elrod, an eye witness, in his statements to this author

Then a volume of blessings descended upon the humble seekers. It was not altogether sudden. God had been moving them in a strange way for a little while, when a rushing of "mighty wind," the Holy Ghost and fire swept down among them and several were baptized and spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. It was the same kind of Holy Ghost that fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. From the sudden impact of the divine rush from God many fell prostrate at times, others staggered like drunk men, and all over the house people shouted, praised God and danced in the Spirit, while others trembled, yelled and jerked, swaying to and fro in peculiar antics, as wave after wave of God's power swept among them. They seemed nearly wafted away at times in exultation and a sense of hilarity. Not for just a service or two but it kept constantly moving among them until over a hundred people were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire during the series of meetings.

Deeper convictions and the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, with the evidence of "other tongues" as the Spirit moved among the worshipers were the stimuli that caused severe persecution to flare up anew. The evil forces stirred to drastic action set in motion plans to destroy the place of worship. Apprehensive of burning a church house intact, they tore down the log church, piled it in a heap and burned it. This was a serious blow to the zealous Christians for it left them without a place to worship. The meetings were finally moved to the home of W. F. Bryant who lived at the foot of Burger Mountain.

A marker known as "The Holy Ghost Latter Rain Memorial" marks the place, nearly as possible, where the first great Holy Ghost revival is said to have been conducted in the New World. This is to be treated later in a chapter on Fields of the Wood, as will also be the Schearer schoolhouse.

This seems to have been the first revival series in which one hundred or more people had been filled with the Holy Ghost in the Western World in the last days. Some people speak of this revival spectacle in Cherokee County, North Carolina, as being the very

in 1944, in an interview at his home.
"America's Unusual Spot" by C. T. Davidson (1954) Page 28. "The Written Vision" by John A. Stubbs (1969) Church of Prophecy Marker Association.

first abundant outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the United States. Others question it, since holiness had been preached a number of years before this revival took place, and therefore mistake holiness (which is real sanctification in action) for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, with other tongues as the evidence. The Cherokee County meetings are creditable to purpose and priority among many, though these were not the first to have the Holy Ghost in the last days.

> Before the turn of the century there were Christians who were filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. This author, in the 1930's, ministered to a lady who had been baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire in 1892. She was the mother of Evangelist George E. Wilson (retired army captain), of Portsmouth, Virginia—both members of the Church. Robert Sayer Sheffey, revered minister of southwestern Virginia and parts of West Virginia, was a long-time friend of the people in and around Austinville, Virginia, and personal friend of the Davidsons. Tom and Nora Turner, deceased at Coeburn, Virginia, were regular attendants at Sheffey's meetings. They told this author that Sheffey was a man filled with the Holy Ghost, and they personally heard him speak in tongues when the power of God would seize him and slay him prostrate in the pulpit. Some people did not understand him, and would remark that he was just "having a spell, or one of his fits."

Lest someone misunderstand about the established churches at or near the turn of the century and absorb too much acrimony we must try to recollect that from the Methodist churches in certain areas came many holiness people, and even whole churches organized into new ones because of the blessings, as did many other "old line" churches. They kept godliness alive among the people, and while some left to pursue a deeper conviction with God, a closer walk in consecration and godliness, there were those who arose against such pursuit, and fought against it. Much credit and honor are due the denominational churches for the great work they have accomplished for God, and are still doing a far-reaching and tremendous work in dispensing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps some day we shall all understand and accept the further blessings of the Lord, as the Scripture says, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord . . ." Hosea 6:3. Controversies raised over the blessings of God must be washed away by "the mighty stream of righteousness" we allow to flood the soul. And controversial surmisings on when and where the

Holy Ghost first fell in the last days should not be too severe for history, yet to be uncovered, could change things. Count it all as history!

However, much of the church-world feels the phenomenal outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the United States, and the New World, really began in April, 1906, in Los Angeles, California. This too is questionable in the light of additional history as is constantly being revealed. Those who became associated with or in the revival series are too numerous to mention here, but we do refer to Frank Bartleman, W. J. Seymour and G. B. Cashwell (of North Carolina) who were involved and who were baptized with the Holy Ghost during the great revival. Seymour seemed to hold some precedence in the memory of most people who speak of the old Azusa Street Mission, and what took place there.

Frank Bartleman, who was baptized with the Holy Ghost, Friday, June 15, 1906, at the Mission was an eyewitness to some of the miracles that happened there . . . again too numerous to mention. He writes: ". . . The meeting . . . had been removed from Bonnie Brae Street to 312 Azusa Street. Here they had rented an old frame building, formerly a Methodist church, in the center of the city, now a long time out of use for meetings. It had become a receptacle for old lumber, plaster, etc. They had cleared space enough in the surrounding dirt and debris to lay some planks on top of empty nail kegs, with seats enough for possibly thirty people . . . These were arranged in squares facing one another . . . about a dozen saints there, some white, some colored. Brother Seymour was there in charge . . ." (4)

NOTE: It is said that W. F. Seymour (sometimes called "George" by associates) was a Louisiana-born Negro, who moved to Texas in early life, and by 1905 was a Baptist minister in the Houston area. He was one highly interested in the work of the Lord, but with little background of religious history. He was a short stocky man with one eye, and was often referred to as "untidy and collarless." At the home of Richard Asbury, 312 Bonnie Brae Street, Los Angeles, Seymour and seven others received the baptism with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. This was Monday night, April 9, 1906. (5) G. B. Cashwell, of North Carolina, was baptized with the Holy Ghost at the old Azusa Street Mission.

4. "How Pentecost Came To Los Angeles" by Frank Bartleman (1925) Pages 47, 48. (Published by the author).

5. "The Holiness Pentecostal Movement" by Vinson Synan (1971), Pages 103-106. (Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.)

Much could be said about the Los Angeles revivals that struck fire all over the world, and churches of all kinds sprung up as a result. But the revival in Cherokee County, North Carolina holds priority here. Their little log church was burned to stymie progress. So they moved the meetings to the residence of W. F. Bryant, a respected Christian leader in the community. Then a mob of seven men became so infuriated they rode to the Bryant home and demanded that he stop the meetings, and forbad him to have family prayer in his own home. However, amid threats, showers of stones and bullets Bryant stood firm and the meetings continued.

HOLINESS CHURCH AT CAMP CREEK ORGANIZED (May 15, 1902)

Richard G. Spurling Jr. often visited the meetings, and the revivals in Cherokee County, North Carolina, and for some time he tried in vain to induce the good people to consider organizing. They really needed God's law and government, though they had gone along quite a while without inside turbulence. However, false teachers came among them and caused factions to arise, and at times fanaticism took possession of others. These things, along with the outbursts of persecution proved to be severe tests and trials of their freshly found faith.

About this time W. F. Bryant, and a few of the others, were impressed by an urgent need for government. So many had been led into error, some led completely astray, by false teachers and it was difficult to keep the little work alive.

Consequently, on Thursday, May 15, 1902, a group of the people met at the home of W. F. Bryant, in Cherokee County, North Carolina. Richard G. Spurling Jr. was in their midst, and he organized them as The Holiness Church At Camp Creek. Apparently it favored the continuation of the Christian Union formed some sixteen years before, but in a different location. Richard G. Spurling was chosen pastor, and W. F. Bryant, one of the officers, was set forth by the newly organized little church, and ordained, making the organization permanent.

Another Christian Leader Emerges

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A CHRISTIAN LEADER IS BORN

While he knew little if anything about the Great Commission, it was this kind of incentive and inspiration, or "strange feeling" that took hold of a twelve-year-old Quaker son, near Westfield, Indiana. While pulling an old-fashioned "Hoosier" cross-cut saw with his father one day he heard his name called distinctly, three different times. He thought his father had spoken to him each time, but his father assured him he had not. The lad was mystified; he couldn't understand this strange innovation that was his only. But it served to awaken in him a nature that would never sleep again.

This Quaker son was Ambrose Jessup Tomlinson. Born September 22, 1865, he was the youngest child of Milton and Delilah (Hiatt) Tomlinson, and they lived near Westfield, Indiana. This was an eventful year, since Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomatox, Virginia, and the spirit of peace and good will were expected to soon reign over all the delightsome land of America.

Tomlinson completed grammar school at seventeen, and commenced to attend high school in town. Being the son of a commonly well-to-do farmer and contractor, he learned to do various kinds of labor that helped to equip him for future work. While in high school, a revival that seemed to stir him, broke out in a nearby church, and although this aroused him he never yielded. He was not a regular Bible reader, and as a result he knew little about spirituality and godliness except what he saw in others. However, the spiritual nature in him had been aroused and he found himself in prayer.

TOMLINSON GETS MARRIED

Having become acquainted with a fine Christian lady named Mary Jane Taylor, Tomlinson married her Wednesday, April 24, 1889, at Bentonville, Indiana. He was in his twenty-fourth and she in her twenty-first year.

GOD DEALS WITH TOMLINSON

His wife, Mary Jane, had been a remarkable Christian woman

for some time, and knew something of prayer, but Tomlinson knew little, if anything, about salvation and the Bible. At this time the only Bible they had was one that had been given his wife. While he did not know how to pray, the spiritual nature in him lashed at his conscience constantly and he became more tender-hearted all the while. Many times he could not sleep at night, and he found himself getting out of bed to pray, hardly knowing what to say or do.

One day, during the very first year of his married life, Tomlinson rushed home from the field where he was hauling hay, to be with his wife during the severe storm that was approaching. The storm was furious and a bolt of lightning struck his house, barely missing him and his wife. This provoked him to consideration and serious thinking, and it stirred his spiritual nature as never before when he fully realized what had happened. After supper he said to his companion, "It's time for us to pray." He got her Bible, read a few verses, and both of them went to their knees in prayer. When they arose from prayer that day the whole world seemed to change for him. (1)

TOMLINSON RECEIVES SANCTIFICATION

A. J. Tomlinson studied at God's Bible School, Mount of Blessings, Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was known for his fervent prevailing prayers. So impressive was his praying that a sign was placed on his door, and it read "The Prevailer," leaving its mark upon the consciences of other students. Here he learned more fully about sanctification, the second definite work of grace that revealed a richer, fuller experience with God. He was never satisfied, never ceased to seek the deeper experience with God until he was gloriously sanctified. An excerpt from his own pen explains his deep emotions and acceptance.

> "It was about twelve o'clock in the day. I cried out in the bitterness of my soul: 'Now! Now! You've got to give it up now! Now!' I felt him begin to weaken and quiver. I kept the 'Sword' right in him, and never let go. That sharp two-edged 'Sword'

1. It has been said that from the day of his conversion Tomlinson was exceedingly earnest, and that he put a Bible at the end of corn rows he was plowing, and at every turn he would read, thinking and praying as he plowed. He confessed that in the corn field the Lord spoke to him the call he never doubted. Witness of the years lends testimony to the certainty of that vision . . . (The Great Vision of the Church of God by Homer A. Tomlinson, 1939, P. 3).

> was doing its deadly work. I did not pity him. I showed him no quarters. There we were in that attitude when all of a sudden came from above, like a thunderbolt from the skies, a sensational power that ended the conflict, and there lay the 'old man' dead at my feet, and I was free from his grasp. Thank God! I could get a good free breath once more. It was an awful struggle, but the victory was won . . . I was indeed sanctified wholly . . ." (From: "Answering the Call of God," by A. J. Tomlinson.)

This deeper experience with God proved its valuable worth to Tomlinson within a short length of time; when unreasonable criticism, abuse and persecution, and trials and tests of all kinds assailed him he found calmness and poise and comfort in spite of it all. Somehow, it helped him find a deeper insight to the limitless grace of God.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP SEEN

Tomlinson never stopped until he had a real experience with God, when he was 23 years old. Life changed for him . . . former attitudes and practices disappeared. Then came a real conflict . . . which church should he join? He searched, he prayed, he sought information and understanding from people, books and papers but was greatly perplexed . . . they all were different and taught different things. Had there been but one church it would have been much easier.

Finally he decided to join the church that was closest home for he felt that he could do the most good, and be the best help to the one nearest him. He and his wife began to attend Sunday School. Before long he became Sunday School Superintendent, and within a short while the Sunday School attendance doubled.

Sometime later a revival broke loose in the community as a result of their prayer meetings. But there was no regular preacher. Tomlinson found himself clumsily in charge, and awkwardly trying to exhort. It was all brand new to him. Sometimes he lost his text, and the Scriptures he planned to use. Sometimes when he was not sure of himself he just read and spoke from the Scripture verses his eyes chanced to fall upon. Perhaps he felt unworthy and unable to cope with the situations that confronted him. He was embarrassed at times, but God seemed to supplement his inabilities with spiritual downflows of conviction that kept the revival fires burning. This inspired him, helped him to keep himself at the altar of God, willing and ready to obey the

commands of his Master.

God blessed him and favored him for He saw in this humble servant certain leadership qualities that would strangely manifest themselves in years to follow. All he had he offered to God for service!

STIRRED BY MISSION CHALLENGE

With each passing day Tomlinson became more excited about God and the spiritual needs of mankind. He sought God more ardently, praying for hours at a time, and ere long he found channels of opportunity open for service to the Lord. Though accustomed to a reasonable livelihood and comfortable home he became greatly inspired for Mission work. J. B. Mitchell, a godly man from Sandusky, Ohio, and a close friend of Tomlinson since his conversion, explained many phases of Mission work, with its sacrifices.

While sacrifices, hunger, privations and family sufferings tend to discourage some workers, and dampen their enthusiasm they never weakened Tomlinson's zeal and determination . . . he prepared himself for them. They could be proven to be glaring reflections of the glory of God. He willingly and fearlessly accepted the challenge to go.

TOMLINSON BECOMES COLPORTEUR

Shortly after his conversion Tomlinson became a great friend of J. B. Mitchell, who was serving as colporteur for the American Tract Society. Mitchell had been a student at Oberlin College and was converted under the dynamic preaching of Charles G. Finney, whose pointed, piercing messages, blazing with gospel fire, fear and power had so stirred and excited him with Mission zeal that he was not the same anymore. His missionary outreach had taken him into the mountainous areas of western North Carolina and neighboring Tennessee, where he distributed Bibles and Testaments, and Christian literature and clothing to the unfortunate and underprivileged. His was a soul-stirring vocation, Tomlinson felt.

He volunteered his services and with Mitchell he too became a colporteur for the same Society, as well as doing some work under the kind auspicies of the American Bible Society.

The Mountain Missionary work was a needy field, inhabited by some great and wonderful, humble and honest-hearted people—

willing to fight for home and country to the last. Among them the two colporteurs were destined to spend many hours in prayer and labor and toil, for they were stirred inwardly. Tomlinson caught the blazing enthusiasm through counsel with Mitchell and the indwelling urge and inspiration from God. He accepted the challenge and embraced it with fervor and delight.

LEAVES INDIANA FOR NORTH CAROLINA

After days of prayer and consultation with God for means to cover transportation expenses to his contemplated Mission Field in western North Carolina, Tomlinson left Indiana as planned. He mentions in his journal that he arrived in Murphy, North Carolina, July 14, 1899, and he moved to Culberson, N. C., October 16, 1899 to begin work in that area. (2)

In the Burger Mountain vicinity (now commonly referred to as Fields of the Wood), a reported incident lends local color. It is said that when Tomlinson stopped at Shoal Creek to let his team drink, two boys sat on the footlog that spanned the creek. Each had a rifle and a string of squirrels. He explained to the boys that his mission was selling Bibles and Testaments where possible, or giving one to those unable to pay. The boys were Luther Bryant and Milt Anderson. Luther suggested that he meet his father, W. F. Bryant, because his father was very religious. Tomlinson followed Luther to his home where he met the Bryant family, and the beginning of a long acquaintance. (3)

Tomlinson drove a covered "hack" and it became a familiar sight in the area, as it was his only mode of transportation. He carried on his work as colporteur, and J. B. Mitchell returned to Ohio, at the time for a rest and other interests, sometime in the mid-year of 1902.

SCHOOLS ARE OPENED FOR THE UNFORTUNATE

Perhaps a short sketch by Tomlinson himself, entitled "A BRIEF HISTORY OF MISSION WORK . . . In the Mountains of North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee" would serve best to explain. It reads:

"I had been engaged in colportage work in the mountains of east Tennessee, north Georgia and western North Carolina, for

2. Samson's Foxes, June 1902.

3. Citizen-Times, North Carolina, August 14, 1955.

several months. Consequently I visited hundreds and hundreds of families.

"To my astonishment, at first, I found a large number of boys and girls just merging into man and womanhood who could neither read or write.

"In the latter part of the year 1899 while engaged in house-to-house visitations in the back way places in the mountains of Georgia, I became specially impressed with the great need of a school for poor neglected children, where they could not only be taken and taught book knowledge but industry and Christianity as well.

"This impression grew stronger and deeper day by day as I continued to visit these poor people.

"I sought and found a teacher who agreed to commence the school.

"Accordingly on the 9th day of April 1900 a school was opened in our own hired house with only 7 scholars.

"We had no financial backing, no food laid in store, and had to pay $5.00 per month house rent. We obligated ourselves to feed, clothe and school the children free.

"When the first term closed late in the summer we had 24 scholars enrolled. A few however had been taken out before the term closed.

"The first term was a success in two ways, especially. 1st, the children could be obtained to fill up the school. 2nd, by the direct providences of God the food and clothing needed were supplied so that all were very comfortably fed and clothed. Then too, we were enabled to supply them with books, slates, etc., for the school room." (NOTE: The slates referred to here were used by school pupils before pencils and tablet paper came into vogue and use. A 'slate' pencil, or a piece of slate stone, and sometimes a piece of chalk were used with which to write.)

"The second term of school was from January 7, 1901 to June 28, 1901, and there were from 20 to 30 pupils in this term."

Sometime after this second term of school closed Tomlinson went to Maine where he was engaged in religious activities for a while. On Tuesday, October 1, 1901, he was baptized by a Mr. Sanford in the Androscoggin River near Shiloh, Maine, "into the church of the living God," as he stated in his diary, "for the evangelization of the world, gathering of Israel, new order of things at the close of the Gentile age." There is no evidence to show that he ever promoted or supported this church in his zeal for God.

Once before, Saturday, October 30, 1897, he had been baptized in the Androscoggin River, near Lisbon Falls, Maine, by a Mr. Gleason. Tomlinson was a firm advocate of water baptism, the answer of a good conscience toward God.

"The third term of the school was from October 7, 1901 to early Spring 1902, with 25 pupils in attendance. It is to be noted here that those pupils in attendance were not only given free books, slates, etc., but they were all fed and clothed free during the school." (4)



A. J. Tomlinson, colporteur for the American Tract Society, and American Bible Society, is seen above among the group of followers, near left-rear wearing a beard, shortly after journeying to North Carolina near the turn of the century.

Sometimes little consideration and appreciation are given those who so willingly offer their services to help advance a neighborhood. It was no different here, though, but for the call of

4. Samson's Foxes — 1902

God upon him, Tomlinson did not have to forsake his good home, comfortable living and neighborhood standing in his home community in Indiana. He spent his own livelihood, and was being spent to bless others less fortunate.

STRENGTHENED BY OPPOSITION

The Tomlinsons had willingly and graciously rendered invaluable religious and educational services to the community. The family had experienced privation and hardship, had undergone financial sufferings and sacrifices of all kinds in their endeavors to help and be a blessing to the needy. Yet, in spite of their best expended efforts they suffered maltreatment and persecution at the hands of the very people they sought so fervently to serve. How strange!

A few sentences from Tomlinson's journal, dated December 11, 1901, exposes the existing conditions: "Last night, while wife and I were sitting in our room, after all the household had retired, a volley of bullets came crashing through the wall of the house, rattling about us like hail. No one hurt . . . I am told that my life is in danger every day that I remain here, but I must be true to God. I cannot leave here until God says go and providences favorable . . ."

Elsewhere, he again relates, "Many times during the winter and spring months we were under great pressure and financial straits, and had it not been for the love of these poor children, and the grace and love of Almighty God, we should no doubt have given up the struggle and abandoned the work . . . In spite of all this gloominess and the many discouragements I can say, to the glory of God, that from our looks or actions no one in the home ever knew of the pressure we were under. God alone sustained us and kept us bright and cheerful." (5)

Probably Tomlinson never thought that his personal approaches and efforts may seem strange and exotic to the mountainous community. Perhaps the people themselves never considered the possibility of personality conflict and environmental differences as he sought so ardently to help them. Appreciation is often crushed between walls of envy . . . it was no different here. Regardless of the predicaments, opposition and conflicts sustained one can easily see God's will in this mission. Tomlinson was not about to quit the task assigned him by his call

5. Samson's Foxes — 1902

to duty. Like a giant anaconda crushing its prey these conflicts, clashes and opposition might tend to crush the inspired ambitions and efforts of a mediocre mission, but not Tomlinson's. He utilized them for strength and purpose of aim . . . every rub polished the gold a little brighter. He saw the hand of God move for him and the mission, time and again, and this increased his faith and confidence.

He kept an abounding enthusiasm, God-given inspiration, personal initiative and lasting perseverance; the mission called for it! He had offered his life and services to God, whatever it took, and he accepted the challenge willingly. The name of great Christian leaders filter through the pages of history, and their accomplishments in the particular fields to which God had called them are indisputable, but none of them could execute the mission assigned Tomlinson . . . it was his, though he was unaware of the extent to which it was destined to reach. His limited insight at the time developed trust in God by the day, and almost by the hour.

The Major Prophet Isaiah once said, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, HERE AM I; SEND ME." (Isaiah 6:8)

A PUBLICATION IS STARTED

In order to keep those informed, who were interested in Mountain Missionary Work, the publication "SAMSON'S FOXES" was inaugurated with the first issue dated January 1, 1901. It was printed on a 11 x 16-inch sheet, both sides, and was folded to make either a four- or eight-page paper. It was supported by subscriptions at 10 cents per year. (About a year after it started, the January 26, 1902 issue lists 620 subscriptions.) A. J. Tomlinson was editor and publisher with an address at Culberson, N.C. The actual printing of the paper at the time was done by James H. Eads, at Walnut Shade, Missouri. An interesting explanation in the masthead says: "Samson's Foxes is published monthly in the interest of the 'Hundred-Fold' gospel, and the speedy evangelization of the mountain districts of North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee, and the world." (6)

> Only those who sense the value of souls can yield themselves unselfishly to the call of God to reach them. It is clearly seen by the above masthead that A. J. Tomlinson personally sustained a burning desire, interest and burden for the souls of the masses of

6. Samson's Foxes, Vol. 2 No. 6—June 1902.

> lost men, women, boys and girls. So intense was his burden he called for the speedy evangelization, not only of the mountain districts, but also of the world. Perhaps this was his first mention of the word in gospel context.

The little periodical "Samson's Foxes" was later discontinued, after Tomlinson moved his wife and three children, Halcy, Homer A. and Iris to Elwood, Indiana in late November 1902. When he returned to Culberson, May 27, 1903 there seems to be no record that he started the little paper again.

PLANS LAID TO BUILD ORPHANAGE

Deeply touched by the infirmities, and the sufferings and needs of the children of the mountainous area Tomlinson took many of them into his own home, and from time to time cared for them. Before long the need became so great that he built another house beside his to accommodate them, though under adverse circumstances and drawing heavily upon his own meager financial support. The responsibilities were trying . . . the food was scarce . . . the family went hungry—sacrificing for others. Tomlinson and wife never wanted more children, never wanted to bring another child into the world to have to suffer the hunger and privations of life they themselves were now undergoing. But through it all Tomlinson had learned to trust the good graces and providences of God, for the Small Voice kept saying to him, over and over again, "Lo, I am with you . . ." Somehow . . . He made the way just in time. Outstretched hands of the needy kept reaching out, and plans were laid to build an orphanage at Culberson, with marble from an abandoned marble quarry.

At that marble quarry in 1902 an incident occurred which shows a remarkable Christian trait in Tomlinson. Quarrying was done in the old-fashioned way . . . one man held the steel drill, and two or three other men would rythmically strike it, time about, with heavy sledge hammers. His little son, Homer, said to his father, "I wouldn't hold that steel. I'd rather use the sledge hammer." His father answered that he wouldn't drive (use the sledge hammer) for anything. The son asked why. The father replied, "I'd rather get hurt than hurt someone else." This impression seemed evident throughout his life span.

Land was procured for the proposed orphanage site. By late 1902 Tomlinson and helpers had managed to deliver 100 loads of marble to the orphanage site. However, with the turn of events, and other different reasons, the orphanage was never erected, and

plans were discontinued. (7)

Their decision to move back to Indiana in late November, 1902 changed the course of events for the Tomlinson family.

TOMLINSON LEAVES INDIANA AGAIN

Having been in Indiana only a short time, Tomlinson decided to pursue his challenge for God, and on Wednesday, May 27, 1903, he left Elwood, Indiana for Culberson, North Carolina. His wife and three children came later, arriving at Culberson, Wednesday, July 8. He did some colportage work after arriving at Culberson, but the call of God pressed sorely upon him until he found himself doing more preaching than colportage work. There had been a great revival awakening in this area for some time, and Tomlinson himself had shared in the blessings, having been resident in the area for a few years. Little did he realize the Tomlinson family had moved from Indiana for the last time . . . the whole world was to open her doors for the vision that was his . . . yet to come!

SPECIAL MEETING CALLED FOR STUDY

The Holiness Church at Camp Creek, in Cherokee County, North Carolina, had been organized about thirteen months when they called a special meeting to be held Saturday, June 13, 1903, at the home of W. F. Bryant which stood at the base of Burger Mountain. They invited A. J. Tomlinson to join them for the study of God's Word. He had been acquainted with most of the little group for some time before they had any form of organization, and had preached for them several times. He loved them and enjoyed their good free spirit, and appreciated the warm welcome they always gave him when he visited them. They were a conscientious group and possessed great inspiration and enthusiasm to obey the precepts of the Holy Writ in spite of the spasmodic outbursts of persecution that assailed them. Tomlinson said that he "came with the understanding we were going to search the Bible to see if we could find the Church of God just like David said we would find it." (8)

CHURCH OF GOD IS UNCOVERED (JUNE 13, 1903)

Tomlinson spent Friday night, June 12, 1903 at the W. F.

7. The Great Vision of the Church of God. By Homer A. Tomlinson.

8. "A. J. Tomlinson, Prophet of Wisdom" . . . White Wing Publishing House . . . Page 41.



An artist's sketch of the W. F. Bryant home that stood at the base of Burger mountain, in what is now known as Fields of the Wood, in Cherokee County, North Carolina. It was at a special meeting held here June 13, 1903, that A. J. Tomlinson joined the Holiness Church at Camp Creek, with the understanding that "It is the Church of God of the Bible, . . . not going to be, but is right now the Church of God."

Bryant home where he enjoyed great fellowship and hospitality. He sometimes expressed himself as having had a strange sensation that night.

Morning awakened in the hills early Saturday, June 13, 1903, and perhaps there was a pervasive strangeness with the wake of dawn . . . a day long to be remembered. After prayers and breakfast with the kind family of Bryants an urgency for additional private prayer took hold of Tomlinson, and about eight o'clock he wended his way up the pine-skirted trail to the top of Burger Mountain. He searched out a convenient place for prayer on the mountain top, and on his knees wept and prayed, and prevailed with God. It was there that God revealed to him the light and true vision of the Church of God of the Bible.

> NOTE: Tomlinson seemed to think that it was about eight o'clock that Saturday morning of June 13th when he ascended the mountain to pray. He often said he got lost away in the spirit of prayer as God blessed him, and he did not know just how long he stayed on the mountain, but he was sure that it was an hour or more.

When he came from prayer on the mountain his countenance was aglow with new vistas of spiritual work, and unexplored horizons loomed ahead of him in his inspired vision of greater things to be achieved for God. His very soul thrilled to his new-found freedom in Christ.

Let Tomlinson tell it years later in his own words: "I came back down the mountain and entered the meeting. Questions were asked, Bible answers were given. They said they took the whole Bible rightly divided as their only rule of faith and practice. I said, 'Well if you take the whole Bible rightly divided, that makes it the Church of God. Why do you want to call it the Holiness Church at Camp Creek?' They agreed with me but couldn't answer my question. Then I said, 'You have agreed that this that I have said makes it the Church of God, and will you be willing to take it and keep it the Church of God?' They said they were willing. I then asked if they were willing to take me in with the understanding that it IS the Church of God—not going to be, but IS the Church of God? They were willing. So I stood right there in front of the fireplace and Brother Spurling, who has gone to heaven, took the Bible and gave it to me. He handed it to me and said, 'Will you take this as the Word of God, believe it and practice it, obey its precepts and walk in the light as God is in the light?' I thought deeply. I remembered what a time I had on the mountain. I meant

business. God meant business . . . Right here I gave my hand to Brother Spurling . . . I took the obligation with deep sincerity and extreme sacredness never to be forgotten." (9)

Tomlinson was one of the five new people who accepted the obligation. Another minister and two deacons were ordained . . . Tomlinson was the new minister, and was chosen to pastor the little church of perhaps 20 members that year.

So right there in the W. F. Bryant home, at the base of Burger Mountain, Cherokee County, North Carolina, on Saturday, June 13, 1903, the Church of God of the Bible, the continuation of the Early Church as designated in the Scriptures, was declared to be in existence and functioning. Many have said that Tomlinson became the first member of the Church of God by covenant this side of the Dark Ages, when he led in declaring, "It is the Church of God of the Bible." They professed to be no part of any Holiness Organization or Church of God then in existence. The Bible Church was their heart's desire.

> The "Memorial of the Vision" marker, designating the vision of the last-days Church, and the "Arise, Shine" marker telling or designating the place where the Church of the Bible was declared to be in existence, to rise and shine, are both located where the Bryant home stood at the base of Burger Mountain, in what is now known as the Open Court in Fields of the Wood. For study and reference check the chapter on Fields of the Wood.

The Christian Union, formed August 19, 1886, and the Holiness Church at Camp Creek, organized May 15, 1902, took giant steps forward in throwing off the yoke of bondage of creeds and men-made doctrines of the area. They agreed to sit together to do business as the Church of God—or as they might interpret that the Bible Church may do business—but neither of them declared themselves to be the continuation of the Early Church as designated in the Scriptures. Tomlinson, by revelation seemed to pull away some of the covering that had shrouded the Bible church for centuries when he declared it to be the Church of God of the Bible. In his address to the Twenty-Fourth Annual Assembly, held at Cleveland, Tennessee, September 11-17, 1929, Tomlinson says, ". . . In fact, that is all we are doing, just fulfilling prophecy. I did not know it when I started in this institution on the thirteenth day of June, 1903. But later on it became clear . . ." In the interim functions of the work of the Church Tomlinson said he

9. **"A. J. Tomlinson-Prophet of Wisdom" (Pages 41, 52, 168) — Historical Facts — (Pages 8, 77).**

made errors the same as did others, but he never lost the vision of the Church God had given him.

Presumptions easily flourish and a myriad of questions may be asked: Does the Bible contain the light of the Church? Are not all churches the Church of God? What happened to the Church during the Dark Ages? Where was her identity . . . who could identify her? Why did Tomlinson claim God revealed the light on the Church to him . . . to him alone? Why to Tomlinson, and not to someone else? Was his a real vision of the true Church? How could he explain what constituted the Bible Church? How did he become the first member of it after his vision of it? It was the Holiness Church At Camp Creek . . . how could it suddenly become the Church of God of the Bible? Did his declaration change the actual profile of church functions? Was it just the time and person for the true revelation of the Church of the Bible? Where would it have been without his revelation? If God saw fit to reveal the Church of God to A. J. Tomlinson why prejudice his privileges and blessings?

Having joined the little Holiness Church at Camp Creek he was selected to pastor it. Though bearing the name for some time afterwards the little organization never seemed the same anymore . . . for some reason. It may have been because of the forward outlook, the zeal and closeness.

The Church of God Makes Progress

22

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TOMLINSON'S FIRST PASTORATE

Tomlinson had been baptized by a Brother Sanford in the Androscoggin River in Maine, sometime before he joined the little group known as the Holiness Church At Camp Creek. Pastor Richard G. Spurling Jr. had wept, prayed and labored with the little church last year, during its first year as an organization, but there had been no additions to membership. It was all he and the little flock could do to hold together in the face of conflict, false teaching, unbelief and criticism.

It was on June 13, 1903 that the little work revived and took upon it a new impetus. Five new members had joined, and in spite of some light persecutions the work moved along smoothly and prospered under the preaching and guidance of Pastor A. J. Tomlinson. Mary Jane Tomlinson, wife of the Pastor, joined in August or September 1903, about two months after her husband had joined. During this year M. S. Lemons also joined. Tomlinson himself said, "There were fourteen more accessions that year."

Soon after being chosen pastor he went into revival work in Tennessee and nearby communities in an endeavor to reach others with the message and organize new work. The record shows that an organization was effected in Georgia and two more in Tennessee. The work had increased, evangelism was encouraged and the work grew and prospered. On August 14, 1903 he states in his journal that he had been in revival work for three weeks in Tennessee. He also states that he had purchased a printing plant for $125.00. (1)

As pastor of the congregation Tomlinson was patient and much concerned for the welfare of his people, kind and generous and considerate, but with those who persisted in disturbing the House of Worship he was kind, yet resolute in demanding respect for the gospel. On December 9, 1903 notes in his journal say, ". . . Last Sunday our meeting was disturbed and broken up at Camp Creek, Cherokee County, North Carolina, by . . . a ranter. The next day he was arrested and after trying every way we could to get him to

1. Iris M. (Tomlinson) Evans explained that this was a small treadle press, and handset type, that her father used for most of his printing and publishing at that time.

promise to let us alone, all in vain, he was tried, convicted and sentenced to jail for an indefinite time. I offered to pay him out and let him go free if he would only promise to let us alone, which he would not do. I was so sorry to send the poor man to jail, but it seemed it was the only way to deal with him, and we felt it was better for one man to suffer than for a number of souls to be lost, which he was standing in the way of."

"THE WAY" PUBLICATION IS STARTED

Tomlinson was chosen to pastor three congregations in 1904—namely Camp Creek, North Carolina, and Union Grove and Luskville, Tennessee.

With both pastoral and evangelistic responsibilities increasing he sensed the need of a publication medium by which to keep constituents and interested people informed of the progress of the churches. So, he initiated plans to print a publication called "THE WAY."

The first issue, Volume One, Number One, was dated January, 1904, and was entered as second class matter at Culberson, N. C., January 9, 1904. Tomlinson states in his journal, entry dated December 9, 1903, that he came home December 8th to edit and print the paper, "The Way." A copy on file, Volume One, Number 12, is dated December 1904.

Sheet size was 11 x 16 inches, printed both sides from hand-set ten point type perhaps, and folded to make four pages. Motto in capitals beneath the heading "The Way" read, I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE—JESUS. It was supported by subscriptions at 10 cents a year, with the possibility of the price being raised to 25 cents a year if an eight-page paper was printed. The Editors were A. J. Tomlinson and M. S. Lemons. It was published monthly by The Way Company, Culberson, North Carolina.

> In Volume one, Number twelve issue, dated December 1904, a SPECIAL NOTICE appeared, excerpts from which read:
>
> ". . . We are arranging to move our printing and publishing department to Cleveland, Tennessee, a town of 4,500 population, about 60 miles distance from Culberson.
>
> "After December 1, 1904, all communications should be addressed, THE WAY COMPANY, Cleveland, Tennessee."

The little four-page periodical contained sermons, messages, testimonies, announcements and notices of importance to readers.

The general appeal was encouraging, especially to those of the organization and people interested in the progress of the movement. It was published for a while at Cleveland, Tennessee, but was discontinued some time later. This fact is verified in Bishop Tomlinson's article in the "White Wing Messenger," dated September 1, 1928: ". . . announcements were made at the different churches. We had no church paper . . . thus the announcements were made principally from the stands orally . . ." These announcements were concerning the First Assembly to be held January 26, 27, 1906. Just how long "The Way" was published prior to this time the record is silent, for the little periodical was apparently discontinued by this time or there would have been a paper through which to boost the first assembly.

ON THE SCENE OF ACTION

Tomlinson had no secular employment, though he still distributed Bibles, Testaments and Christian literature to the unfortunate ones. It was a part of him it seemed to want to help others. The urge was irresistible and he possessed an abounding enthusiasm to minister to people anywhere and in any walk of life. This was no "drummed-up" spasmodic outburst of emotionalism; it was real as his soul and came forcibly with the call of God. He once said, "The prayer of my heart now is, 'Lord, don't let me fail Thee.'" And another time when things looked dark, he lifted his face and said, "Praise God for the trial of my faith, which is more precious than gold." Well, he had no gold, and they had existed on one meal a day for quite a while. But this never deterred his religious courage and ambition.

Finances were insufficient to meet the needs of the growing family, without evaluating the pressing obligations of the gospel and ministry that were so demanding. It was evident Tomlinson had convinced himself that trial and test were apposed to any achievement for God and His Church. Respective of the intent to which he was called he lauded his challenge as a grand privilege to labor in the harvestfield of God. The immensity of it loomed up, continually before him, and he recalled the admonition of the Master to His disciples as recorded in St. John 4:35, ". . . I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." His vistas for outreach and his perspicuous desires to help reap the golden grain of God's harvestfield illuminated his inmost being by the day . . . yes, by

the hour . . . notwithstanding his inability to secure the desired and much-needed finance. Hours found Tomlinson at his altar in prayers and tears! He did not profess to be a master-mind but only one who feared God, and desired to walk in the light as God was in the light, remembering his covenant taken June 13, 1903, when he joined the little group with the understanding that "it is the Church of God of the Bible." At the time he did not realize just when and where, to whom and to what and how his sacred covenant would lead but he had embraced it with sacredness and joy . . . never to be forgotten.

There were times that his wonderful family lacked even the bare necessities of life, and different times the children were put to bed hungry—their precious mother too tenderhearted and sympathetic to hear them cry for bread. She embraced like-faith to her devoted husband, and stood unflinchingly at his side, and sometimes in front of him to shield him from the terror of abuse, criticism and dangers. She knew how to pray, and when she would gather her little ones around her knees, while her husband was wading mud and sleet and snow for souls, the whole room would seem enshrouded with a heavenly touch. She kept the flag flying at home . . . and the home-fires burning! Their glow reached many firesides!

Realizing his family's sacrifices, and conditions pervading the area of home Tomlinson seemed to suffer agony at times. He sometimes wished that things were not like this but he could never afford to ignore the call God had placed upon him, even at so great a sacrifice. At times his faithful wife, Mary Jane, would kiss him goodbye, and stand wiping her eyes with her apron as he hurried out the back way to escape assailants and headed for the harvestfields of God.

He would leave what finance he had managed to collect, and be gone for months at a time, walking many, many miles to fill engagements, when he had no money to ride the train. His feet were blistered and sore at times, and he often spent the night with strangers, or slept out when emergencies demanded it. Transportation at the turn of the century, and even during the early twentieth century, was by railroad, street cars in the cities, horseback, or by conveyances that were horse-drawn. Once Bishop Tomlinson was gone so long that his little daughter Iris did not know him, or recognize him. Such things bore upon his conscience the same as upon the consciences of those who were not called to the harvestfield of God, but he pushed them off through prayers and tears. To him God's work was first. Out there . . . ahead of

him as far as he could see . . . the fields were ripe to harvest . . . the golden grain was falling to ruin . . . for this he was called away. He was different . . . people would see!

Yes . . . Tomlinson was on the scene of action, and usually wherever he stopped to preach and teach and counsel the people they were never the same anymore. He always managed to leave some of the warmth and glow of his Christ with them . . . left them feeling better than when he found them if they received him. Duty and responsibility pressured him to labor more fervently for God, despite his own personal conscientiousness and thrilling desire to exceed, or do more than duty called for, in order to be able to better please the Lord.

FROM CULBERSON TO CLEVELAND MOVE

Since the work had grown, and more congregations were established there was no need that Tomlinson remain in the mountainous area of North Carolina. To reach more people he had to get among them, and it was necessary to have better conveniences. While his position was pastoring the flock, he was also evangelizing to reach others and try to establish new work. The responsibility for the little work seemed to almost "fall in his lap" so to speak, as he accepted portions of the leadership invariably entrusted him. He wanted to be among people . . . more people . . . and more people.

It was on Saturday, November 26, 1904, that Tomlinson bought the house and grounds at 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee, which was about eighteen months after he joined the group in Cherokee County, North Carolina.***

***This house at 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, was the home of A. J. Tomlinson until his death, October 2, 1943. It was purchased by the Church with International Headquarters at Bible Place, Cleveland, Tennessee, and is known now as the Tomlinson House. It is under the auspicies of the Church. The C.P.M.A. first placed a marker in the yard November 25, 1943.

Tomlinson left Culberson, North Carolina, Tuesday, December 6, 1904, for Cleveland, Tennessee. The December 8th entry in his journal says, "I came to Cleveland to make ready for my family. Homer came on the 10th. Wife and daughters came on the 13th."

Tom Pentecost, a friend of the family, said that Tomlinson looked at a house on Broad Street (north) in Cleveland, in view of buying it but decided in favor of the house on Gaut Street.



Usually called the Tomlinson House, this was the residence of A. J. Tomlinson from early December 1904 until his death October 3, 1943. Located at 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee it served as his church office for some time prior to the erection of the office and publishing house, on a lot he donated across the street from his home. He purchased the house November 26, 1904.

Though somewhat handicapped for some time Tomlinson set up housekeeping, set up his office and lost little time in dispensing his ministerial duties.

PROGRESSIVE AND FORWARD STRIDES

Tomlinson was constantly on the go for souls, and on behalf of the Church work in which he was engaged. At times M. S. Lemons accompanied him, walking with him miles and miles. But after he moved to Cleveland, greater opportunities presented themselves, and the year 1905 proved to be a great year. The message got into Cleveland that year.

This writer had an interview with John D. Logan, one of the oldest members of the Cleveland local church, sometime in

December 1945, when the local church had services in the large tabernacle on Central Avenue. He talked and cried, and in his legend he related an amusing event that took place in a conversation with A. J. Tomlinson, before the latter held his first meeting at Cleveland. He laughed and cried as he said he told Tomlinson,

"I don't like you much," Logan had said.

"I don't like you much, either," Tomlinson returned.

"You are wearing a derby, and you are too much like a Jew," Logan had said humorously.

"Well . . . I am part Jew," the preacher added.

Logan said that Bishop Tomlinson held a few nights meeting in a brush arbor at the end of Central Avenue (E.) on a hill opposite what is now Vest's Store. Logan lived at the only house in Gibson's Flat at the time, and his son Robert informed him of the meeting. He and his wife attended and were both sanctified during the short meeting. In late summer or early fall Tomlinson pitched a tent near where the Headquarters office building is now located at Bible Place (Central Avenue) Cleveland. During this meeting, both Logan and his wife were baptized with the Holy Ghost. When the Church was later organized both of them joined. Where the large tabernacle now stands on Central Avenue (1945) was then a large field with grape vines on it.

In his journal entry dated October 7, 1905 Tomlinson said, "On Saturday, September 16, we pitched our tent (in Cleveland) and commenced meeting on Saturday night without any seats. We have had meeting every night since, and some day meetings. Brother (M. S.) Lemons, Sister McCanless and myself have been the preachers . . ."

NEED FOR GENERAL GATHERING DISCUSSED

The churches and membership had increased, and the work had so prospered that by the close of 1905 there was a demand for a general gathering together of ministers and members from all the churches. The purpose of this type meeting was to consider questions of importance, and to search the Bible for additional light and knowledge. Having observed the blessings of God upon the work they desired to walk in fear and trembling before Him.

A careful and prayerful search of the Bible was made to ascertain whether or not such a meeting was in harmony with the Scriptures, and a thorough study of the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles convinced them it was. They immediately proceeded to make arrangements for the place to hold the meeting.

It was to be held near the Camp Creek Church, at the home of J.

C. Murphy, Cherokee County, North Carolina, only about one-half mile of the site of the Schearer schoolhouse where the great revival broke out about ten years before. The date set for the meeting was January 26, 27, 1906, Friday and Saturday. (2)

Since the Church had no periodical, or news medium, at the time (latter 1905) through which to advertize the meeting or assembly, the ministers promoted and announced it orally from the pulpits of the different churches and congregations they served, notwithstanding the size of the church or constituency.

FIRST ASSEMBLY IS HELD
(January 26, 27, 1906)

The small but ambitious group of itinerant ministers advertised and promoted the special meeting, or assembly. People who could do so made preparations to attend for a profitable time was expected. The following data is to be remembered, for some of the Church's future successes hinged on some considerations given at the First Assembly.

DATE OF FIRST ASSEMBLY ..... January 26, 27, 1906
PLACE OF FIRST ASSEMBLY .... Residence of J. C. Murphy, Cherokee County, N. C.
HOST CHURCH ..... Camp Creek Church
PASTOR OF HOST CHURCH ..... A. J. Tomlinson
WEATHER CONDITIONS ..... Terrible snow storm there.

As pastor of the host church it was Tomlinson's duty and honor to call the assembly service to order, and he by virtue of his office conducted the devotional, also. Since the churches at this time had no executive officer Tomlinson suggested that a permanent chairman be selected to preside over the two days' assembly. In due order he was chosen chairman or presiding elder. He also served as the assembly clerk. Because of the records he made he left Church history of this First Assembly, which proved to be a very successful gathering.

> In his booklet "The Church of God Marches On" Tomlinson says: "At this Assembly many important questions were discussed, and much added light obtained by those present. A good foundation was laid, and although we did not then know of

2. White Wing Messenger—September 1, 1928.



Pictured here is the home of J. C. Murphy, Cherokee County, North Carolina, the place where the First Assembly convened January 26, 27, 1906. Seen at left is W. F. Bryant, and at right R. G. Spurling Jr., both ministers.

> the great development that was destined to follow, we were very careful to follow the Bible in all our deliberations and decisions. This was the one thing accurately aimed at, and to me now it would seem extremely marvelous were it not for the fact of the great Head and Founder of the Church directing His work to see that it was well done. It was His unseen hand and loving counsel that directed every substantial move that was made. We often trembled with holy reverence and Godly fear lest we might or should deviate the least little bit from the plan laid down in the Scriptures. We felt we must have everything just right."

Outside the snow was blinding and uncomfortable, but inside the large rock, country fireplace, at the end of the big room, made it cozy and comfortable while those present sought the guidance of God. Those who attended were: R. G. Spurling, T. N. Elrod, W. F. Bryant, Nettie Bryant, Agnes Bryant, J. C. Murphy, Malissie M. Murphy, John Ellison, Johnie Brown, Andrew Freeman, Alexander Hamby, R. R. Jones, Balford Abercrumby, Sally Hamby, Theophilus Ellis, N. S. Ellis, Ella Robinson, Lucy Coleman, W. M. Coleman, M. S. Lemons, A. J. Tomlinson . . . twenty-one in all.

The Assembly closed at 7:30 p.m., January 27, 1906, and was considered to be a successful one. Tomlinson says in his journal entry dated January 30, 1906: "I arrived home about midnight last night from Camp Creek, N. C. We held a Church assembly

there. I acted as the ruling elder and made the minutes of the proceedings. Preached two sermons, anointed five persons, and traveled about 163 miles. The meeting on the whole was noticeable for the love to one another, and the unity . . ."

Not much was recorded about W. F. Bryant, R. G. Spurling, T. N. Elrod and M. S. Lemons at this time, but these men seemed to be as pillars in the new work, going when the going was tough, sacrificing and suffering, enduring great persecution, false accusations and ungodly abuse. They stood firm, steady, as did their wives and other women who labored in the gospel fields.

Minutes of the First Assembly held at the Camp Creek Church in Cherokee County, North Carolina, were first printed from hand-set type on a treadle-press, operated perhaps by either A. J. Tomlinson or his wife Mary Jane, since it is said that she operated the press at times. For posterity's sake, the original minutes are recorded, except the bold face subjects which have been added for proper motivation.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
Churches of East Tennessee, North Georgia and Western North Carolina,
Held January 26 and 27, 1906, at Camp Creek, N.C.

NOTE:—We hope and trust that no person or body of people will ever use these minutes, or any part of them, as articles of faith upon which to establish a sect or denomination. The subjects were discussed merely to obtain light and understanding. Our articles of faith are inspired and given us by the Holy Apostles and written in the New Testament which is our only rule of faith and practice.

The meeting called to order and devotions conducted by the pastor, A. J. Tomlinson.

THE CONTROLLING DOCUMENT

After due consideration the Assembly accepted the following motto or ruling: WE DO NOT CONSIDER OURSELVES A LEGISLATIVE OR EXECUTIVE BODY, BUT JUDICIAL ONLY.

RECORDING OF ASSEMBLY MINUTES

The question as to whether records should be made and preserved, of this and other like assemblies, was duly discussed by deacon J. C. Murphy and others, passed upon and recommended as scriptural.

LOCAL CHURCHES PRESERVE RECORDS

The assembly discussed the advisability of each local church making and preserving its own records. Consider it in harmony with New Testament teaching, and advise each local church to make and preserve records of all church proceedings. The Acts of the Apostles as example.

COMMUNION AND FEET WASHING

Communion and feet-washing were duly discussed by Elder R. G. Spurling and others, and it is the sense of this assembly that the communion and feet-washing are taught by the New Testament Scriptures, and may be engaged in at the same service or at different times at the option of the local churches. In order to preserve the unity of the body, and to obey the sacred Word, we recommend that every member engage in these sacred services. We further recommend that these holy ordinances be observed one or more times each year.

PRAYER-MEETINGS AT LOCAL CHURCHES

Prayer-meetings discussed by brother Alexander Hamby and others. It is, therefore, the sense of this assembly that we recommend, advise and urge that each local church hold a prayer-meeting at least once a week. We recommend further that someone in every church, who may feel led by the Holy Spirit or selected by the church, take the oversight thereof and see that such prayer-meeting is held regularly and in proper order.

EVANGELISM IS ENCOURAGED

Evangelism, discussed by the pastor and others; reports of work done the past year; consecration on the part of a

number. After the consideration of the ripened fields and open doors for evangelism this year, strong men wept and said they were not only willing but really anxious to go. It is, therefore, the sense of this meeting that we do our best to press into every open door this year and work with greater zeal and energy for the spread of the glorious gospel of the Son of God than ever before.

AGAINST THE USE OF TOBACCO

A discourse on the use of tobacco was delivered by evangelist M. S. Lemons and discussed by others. After due consideration this assembly agrees to stand, with one accord, in opposition to the use of tobacco in any form. It is offensive to those who do not use it; weakens and impairs the nervous system; is a near relative to drunkenness; bad influence and example to the young; useless expense, the money for which ought to be used to clothe the poor, spread the gospel or make the homes of our country more comfortable; and last we believe its use to be contrary to the teaching of Scripture, and as Christ is our example we cannot believe that He would use it in any form or under any circumstances.

We further recommend and advise that the ministers and deacons of each church make special effort to use their influence against its use, deal tenderly and lovingly with those in the church who use it, but insist with an affectionate spirit that its use be discontinued as much as possible. We also, advise the deacons to secure a report at the close of each year, of the number that have been induced to discontinue the habit and delivered from a desire for it, also the number that still continue its use, and carry such report to the general assembly.

FAMILY WORSHIP RECOMMENDED

Family worship was discussed by Andrew Freeman and others. It is, therefore, the sense of this assembly that we recommend and urge that the families of all the churches engage in this very sacred and important service at least once a day and at a time most convenient to the household, and that parents should see that every child is taught, as early as possible, to reverence God and their parents by listening quietly and attentively to the reading of God's

Word, and getting down on their knees during the prayer. We recommend further that the ministers and deacons of each church use their influence and make special effort to encourage every family in the church to engage in this devotional exercise every day. And that the deacons ascertain the proper information and make a report of the number of families that have been induced to take up this service during the year, the number that make it a regular practice and those that do not, and carry such report to the yearly or general assembly.

CONCERNING SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School was briefly discussed by Elder W. F. Bryant, Malissie Murphy and others. We highly favor this important service as a means to teach the children to reverence God's Word and the house appointed for worship, and also, to elevate the morals of a community. It is, therefore, the sense of this assembly to recommend, advise and urge every local church to have a Sunday School every Sunday during the whole year if possible. We advise the workers to do all they can to propagate the Sunday School interests, and search for places where there are none and organize where it is possible to do so. We believe a Sunday School may sometimes be organized and run successfully where a church could not be established at once, thereby opening and paving the way for more permanent work in the future. It is further recommended that Sunday Schools be held in the forenoon when it is possible to hold them at that time.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

When a member in good standing removes from the vicinity of one church to another, we recommend that a letter of recommendation be given them on request, in harmony with Romans 16:1, 2: "We recommend unto you Phebe our sister, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints . . ."

DECISION TO HAVE ANNUAL ASSEMBLIES

We recommend a closer union and fellowship of all the

churches. We, therefore, conclude an assembly composed of elders and chosen men, and the women, from each church, once each year to be of vast importance for the promotion of the gospel of Christ and His Church. We, therefore, with one accord select and set apart Thursday, Friday and Saturday before the Second Sunday in January of each year, for this special yearly assembly. Provided, however, that there are no preventing providences. The place to be selected later as the providences of God and His Spirit may direct.

THESE NECESSARY THINGS TO BE RATIFIED

It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and us, being assembled together with one accord, with the Spirit of Christ in the midst, and after much prayer, discussion, searching the Scriptures and counsel, to recommend these necessary things that they be ratified and observed by all the local churches. It is the duty of the Church to execute the laws given us by Christ through His Holy Apostles.

The Assembly concluded:—Saturday, January 27, 1906, at 7:30 P.M.

Door Opened for Advancement

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SEPARATED AND EXCLUSIVE

From all indications, the little group was stirred by their first Assembly. Obviously they predisposed a peculiar sense of separation. They saw things differently from the "run of the mill" organizations, and separated themselves into a definite church government of their own. From their position it was something akin to divine revelation that seemed to designate them a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Many of them felt "pushed aside" by their own church associates, and some of them suffered unwarranted invectives and persecutions from some members and constituents of the very church organizations they had supported. These things encouraged separation in addition to their new-found freedom in Christ. They desired to worship God as they pleased.

And, inasmuch as the prevailing sentiment among them was "their desire to be the continuation of the early Church, as designated by the Scriptures," they openly confessed to it, feeling they were the first perhaps to assume such a stand. This sentiment was obviously heterodox to the common concepts of church, and the world paid little attention. But their earnestness, their integrity and zealous efforts, along with the revelations of the true Church of the Bible, whose tenets and dogmas they sought so ardently to promote, seemed to set them aside as an exclusive group—different to most other church organizations. And as time passed their interpretations of the teachings, the tenets, the documents and practices of the early Church, as designated in the Bible, accused them of being more exclusive all the time. But this never seemed to trouble the little group for they never claimed to be a part of anything else. Nor did they claim to be exclusive in the sense of being the only people who were converted, or the only church whose members were saved. They never felt they were the only Christians in the world. There was more for those who wanted more from God, was their axiom.

In the common church or ecclesiastical parlance, they were referred to as just another sect or cult. But this was soon to be disapproved and denied by growth and influence. They entertained the same rightful privileges of religious freedom accorded citizens of the United States by the Constitution. The little group desired only to follow God and be a help and a blessing

to others. There was no hurt in them . . . they had wronged no one by their sincere religious practices; they had only stirred up the forces of evil that war against the soul of man. They preached against lying, cheating, stealing, prostitution, adultery, and any other evil practice that would damn the soul . . . trying to be helpful. As peaceful, God-fearing, honest and reliable citizens they sought the blessings of God for soul, family and home. They were sincere praying people of God.

In return for their deep spiritual convictions and righteous living, and their closely-knit religious inhibitions they suffered unjust and severe criticism. The forces of Satan tried to smother their very existence at times. They were lied about, abused, persecuted, stoned, and underwent siege after siege to near death when bullets rained all around them. But they had learned to trust God for deliverance, and some of them in their trust and devotion seemed to parallel the lives of men of the early Church. Opposition seemed to mend the breaches that favor bypassed, and the little work took on initiative by the day.

CONDITIONS OF CHURCH WORLD

About the turn of the century, and for sometime thereafter, much of the church world was in turbulence. Harmony was sadly lacking among Christians in some localities, and pressures and procedures became troublesome at times; nearly unbearable even to some elderly constituents. Some churches and congregations lost their appeal and the members often lost interest, for many of them felt the need for reformation to cope with an advancing materialistic world. It was an era earmarked for revolt in approach, in godliness, in deeply spiritual enlivenment, and in tactics and procedures essential to spiritual pre-emption at the time.

All churches were not indicted for failure since certain sections and areas were more spiritual and emotional than others. They believed in the transforming grace of God and the miraculous workings of His matchless power. Some of them held to saplings and trees to keep balance while the power of God was sweeping through their midst. But this was an exception rather than the rule . . . only in places. Some erstwhile good loyal members sometimes lost the fear of God and scolded and condemned their loyal ministers with unpleasantries.

However, God-called ministers labored incessantly to keep godliness alive in both neighborhood and home, though some change

was inevitable. Many resorted to the barn-lofts, to the fields and to the woods to pour out their hearts to God in prayer—fervent, prevailing prayers. But there were others who resorted to opposition and violence rather than keep abreast of the premonitions of the age. They feared to become really soul-stirred and pried loose from their anchor of dormant profession and ritualistic observances, and to be decimated by the prevalent upsurge of revival fervor now threatening with tempest strength. But these soon found themselves fighting against God. It left them stymied and overly embarrassed for excessively indulging church and denominational polemics that invariably robbed them of godly inspiration. The old adage "what is sowed is what is reaped" held evidence that those so inconsiderate, so rigid and unyielding to spiritual advancement, too enmeshed with antiquated "do-or-die" tactics, selfish aspirations and procedures usually reach their Waterloo sooner than expected.

A JUDICIAL BODY ONLY

The covenant administered to become a member, and the right hand of fellowship constituted a definite separation from all other affiliations. Hidden within its sacred folds were a possessive spiritual refinement and new religious and church culture, destined to expand.

The little group dared to be different even at the price of disdain from other church groups. They catered to the teachings of the early Church outlined by the Scripture, as best they could interpret. They preached about the Church of God, but the principal discourses pertained to salvation. Despite derision and criticism they sought God and walked softly before Him. They "crawled on their knees" in search of Scriptural enlightenment, lest they fail in the least. They never searched by-laws and rituals for understanding, or for better organization. They eagerly resorted to the Bible and tried to ascertain, if at all possible, just how the early Church of the Bible operated.

Now their very First Assembly had closed. The foremost and important document adopted during the assembly declared: "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body, but judicial only."

This decision of polity seemed satisfying and sufficient, and would serve as a safeguard the group felt. Notwithstanding, its assurance and protection were destined to suffer violence when selfish elements crept in to destroy its scriptural safety, if at all possible.

LOOKING AT THE FACTS

Besides the twenty-one registered attendants at the First Assembly, there were other members and friends that did not attend, hindered perhaps by the fierce, blinding snowstorm that swept the area, and lack of transportation . . . many people had to walk. But, the Assembly room was warmed inside by the large stone fireplace. Some of those who spent the night at the Murphy home perhaps slept on a "corded" bed.***

***Corded beds were used in the homes of early settlers. As a rule they had no rail locks, no bed slats nor springs. The bedposts were mortised and the rails tendoned at each end to fit tightly. The bed-rails varied in size . . . some from 3 x 5 inches, to 4 x 6 inches, and whatever length was desired. Some were made shorter and some longer than the standard 75 inches. Holes were usually drilled 12 inches apart (sometimes closer, or farther apart) both in the bed-rails and the bottom rails of both the headboard and footboard of the bedstead through which the 3/8" or 1/2" cord, or rope, was interlaced and criss-crossed tightly to secure the bed. The two-pronged wrench of a sort, used to tighten the cords, was referred to as the "wench." A bed properly "corded" cushioned the bedtick that was thinner, and filled with feathers, called the "feather-tick." This was placed on top of the straw-tick, and covered with a sheet, making the bed soft and comfortable. Some homes could afford a "feather-tick" under which to sleep during extremely cold weather. This area of Cherokee County was no different.

From this convocation, or First Assembly, came the first real and systematized written documented teachings, interpreted and recorded as tenets of government to be respected in exercise by all the churches affiliated with the group.

It is evident that the very first resolution adopted was "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only." (1) This gave precedence to the directives of God for His Church, of which they declared themselves to be a continuation as outlined, or designated in the Scriptures. It was a keystone in their successful pursuit.

They accepted the instructions and teachings as predicated by the guidance of the Holy Ghost . . . though few in number they were powerful and far-reaching. They seemed to foster new zeal

1. Book of Minutes, page 15, First Assembly . . . published by the Church of God Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee (1922).

and courage for the little group that filtered into their fields of endeavor to propagate the gospel and the decisions and interpretations of the small but august body.

THE ASSEMBLY YEAR OF 1906

In spite of the June 13, 1903 decision to call it the Church of God the little organization was still referred to at times as the Holiness Church at Camp Creek. Naturally, there were some complications, and perhaps a little confusion after A. J. Tomlinson moved to Cleveland, Tennessee, December 8, 1904, bringing his office with him, though he still pastored the churches at Camp Creek, N.C., and Union Grove and Luskville, Tennessee. It was erroneous to refer to them as the Church at Camp Creek . . . only one church was there. Necessity fostered the move to call it the Church of God as had been designated.

By the Assembly in 1906 it was obvious that Tomlinson had become leader of the little group. He had put his life and soul into the work of the Lord and the upbuilding of the organization, sometimes fasting as much as seventy-two hours, praying and reading. (2) He was a sincere and honest follower of the Lord, willingly prostrating himself at the feet of Jesus, to be used by Him at will. He loved the Lord with all his heart and mind and soul, someone has said, and was willing to risk all for Jesus and His Church. Well . . . this was proven time and again. Supported by the zealousness and godliness in his life the group vested in him certain powers of respect and authority. Then, there were other God-given powers he appropriated to himself and to his position, and at times he assumed authority that was demanded of the office he held . . . acting as ruling, or presiding elder at the Assembly . . . because someone had to do it in this embryo state of the little church. (3)

EVANGELISM IS IMPORTANT THEME

The group had but one way to move . . . forward! To do so the commanding channel was through fiery, dynamic evangelism. Ministers were few among them but the call of God dominated their lives while the gospel fire burned in their souls. With little or no secular or religious training, and no knowledge of homiletics, elocution or pulpit oratory these fiery preachers moved by the fear

2. Diary of A. J. Tomlinson, date: November 10, 1905.

3. Diary of A. J. Tomlinson, date: January 30, 1906.

and power of God set the fields afire, and left in the wake of their departure revival fires ablaze with personal conviction and the vicinity astir with godliness. So powerful was the impact of their presence that no neighborhood they visited seemed the same any more after they had gone. Fiery evangelism was the key to their progress and advancement.

W. F. Bryant, an ordained minister of the group, was a stable leader in his community . . . patient, kind and longsuffering, but an avowed supporter and member of the new Church who stood firm and uncompromising in its promotion, and the evangelism of other neighborhoods. Bishop R. G. Spurling preached and declared the unfaltering faith of God, promoting the Church as declared. Evangelist M. S. Lemons, who joined the little Church in 1903 during the pastorate of A. J. Tomlinson, was a close associate of Tomlinson's, co-working with him in revivals and sufferings, at times walking long distances with him to preach and declare the gospel. The going was rough at times but this never deterred their zeal. However, in the actual evangelistic endeavors Tomlinson seemed to lead the ministry with great revivals of penitence and conviction, giving way to the power of God, weeping, shouting and writhing in travail for souls. Sometimes, people would fall into a trance for hours. (4)

CHURCH IS ORGANIZED IN CLEVELAND, TENNESSEE

Following the Assembly in January 1906, great revivals imbued the group with superb spiritual stamina, and the ministers spread out into new cities, towns and communities with their burning messages. A. J. Tomlinson had conducted meetings in the city of Cleveland, Tennessee but it was not until March 1, 1906, Thursday, that a regular meeting house for services was opened on Middle Street (now called Dooley Street) near the present site of the Church Headquarters, 303 Bible Place, Central Avenue, Cleveland, Tennessee.***

***As of January 1, 1973, the Church Headquarters offices are still located at 303 Bible Place, on Central Avenue, Cleveland.

Tomlinson kept the mission about four months, and when the building was sold he gave peaceful possession on July 6, 1906. But

4. Diary of A. J. Tomlinson . . . date: September 5, 1905.

he never gave up in his efforts to organize a Church in Cleveland. When he gave up the building, services were conducted in a gospel tent until the weather got too cold. From all indications he established the Church at Cleveland while in the tent meeting. His Diary entry of August 20, 1906 says: "Just closed an 11-days meeting at Cleveland with about 27 professions, and some sanctified. Organized Church. Baptized 7. Preached 10 sermons . . . Organized Sunday School. Infidel converted, burned his books."

In his Diary entries of both October 13th and October 18th, 1906, he mentions that he was still preaching in the tent, though in some areas weather was already getting cool for a tent meeting.

NOTE: Since Tomlinson's Diary entry was dated August 20, 1906, which was on Monday, he perhaps organized the Church Sunday, or Sunday night, August 19, 1906, since he states he also organized the Sunday School.

MILTON AMBROSE TOMLINSON IS BORN

In his diary dated October 19, 1906, A. J. Tomlinson penned the following note: "A son came to our house about 6 P.M. Mary wants to name him Milton." He was named Milton Ambrose, an appropriate name since his paternal grandfather's name was Milton, and his father's name was Ambrose. It had been eleven years, nine months and eleven days since the last child—Iris Marea—had been born to the Tomlinson family, and it had been rumored the Tomlinsons never wanted another child.***

***This writer wanted to know facts. So, December 17, 1971, General Overseer Milton Ambrose Tomlinson escorted me to the Chattanooga, Tennessee Airport, and while awaiting the check-out, I asked him about the rumor that many had heard, that he was an unwanted child. He answered me calmly, "Yes . . . it is so . . . I was not wanted. Times were so hard that the other children had to go hungry a lot of times . . . Papa and Mama couldn't see how they could afford another child. They didn't want it to have to suffer and go hungry like the other children had to do . . . That is the reason I was not wanted."

Little thoughts sometimes escalate into momentous decisions, but the parents perhaps never thought that this son—Milton Ambrose Tomlinson—would someday become the General Overseer of the Churches of God of Prophecy throughout the whole world, and as such direct the enormous work of the Church, begun by his deceased father.

THE FIRST ASSEMBLY YEAR CLOSES

Actually, the first Assembly Year dating from January 27, 1906, was swiftly coming to a close and the few ambitious ministers were completing a year of strenuous and renewed effort to reach new fields and communities with the message they were constrained to preach. Unquestionably, evangelistic endeavors held priority . . . they needed people, converts. There were few pastors but these men of God exerted strength, influence and effort to hold their little flocks together, and at the same time preach to them, teach and train them in the rituals of the new organization. Though persecuted and tried they went out into new fields to conduct revivals, and most of them were successful, especially where people hungered and thirsted for a revival awakening. It was a two-some exploit that had to be achieved in designated areas where there were open doors. They buckled down to the task for it was a "must" if they expected growth . . . and growth began to come!

SECOND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD 1907

The first Assembly had recommended that the Second Assembly be held on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday, before the second Sunday in January, with the location to be designated later. However, additional time was anticipated, and the Second Annual Assembly was actually held January 9-13, 1907, and the local Union Grove Church in Bradley County, Tennessee, (some 16 miles east-north-east of Cleveland) was designated as the site for the convocation. It has been said that this Second Assembly is the very first to be held in a church building this side of the Dark Ages. (5)

By this time it was obvious that the nucleus of the little Church had moved to Bradley County, Tennessee, and the one-time Holiness Church at Camp Creek, North Carolina was a fringe participant. It was clearly evident by now that Tomlinson was destined to be leader of the group, and from all indications they were glad he was their leader. Before joining the little Church he had started a religious periodical called "Samson's Foxes," first issue dated January 1, 1901, but it was perhaps discontinued when he went to Indiana. Then nearly a year after he joined the little Church at Camp Creek, Cherokee County, North Carolina, he

5. "The Written Vision" by John A. Stubbs (1969), Published by the White Wing Publishing House, Cleveland, Tennessee.

started another religious paper called "The Way," with first issue dated January 1904. M. S. Lemons was co-editor with Tomlinson, but this periodical was discontinued sometime prior to the First Assembly, January 26-27, 1906, as explained earlier.

Tomlinson seemed to be the only minister of the group who retained an office for the work of the Church in its early days. It is very interesting to note that "The Way Company" and all his office work was moved to Cleveland, Tennessee, Tuesday, December 6, 1904, also explained earlier. He was definitely the leader whether or not he had been selected as such by the group. Someone had to direct the initiatives and apparently the mantle fell upon him. God had moved . . .

The year had ended and the Second Assembly was at hand. While there seems to be no record of a written or printed program having been used at the First Assembly, there was a printed program to be used at this Second Assembly. So, to insure proper understanding of the aims and purposes that motivated the reason for this Assembly it is essential that a copy of the actual program used be included as a part of the text itself, and be accepted as an attribute of our Church history. The program follows in its entirety.

TENNESSEE SITE CHOSEN FOR SECOND ASSEMBLY

The very first Assembly had proved its worth in the promotion of the work of the little church, and the band of faithful devout Christians now anxiously looked forward to another such gathering. They chose to assemble in Tennessee. So the Second Annual Assembly was scheduled to be held at the community church known as Union Grove, located approximately 16 miles east of Cleveland, Tennessee, January 9-13, 1907.

An original copy of this Second Annual Assembly program was presented the author in 1950 by G. P. Spurling, son of R. G. Spurling, who administered the covenant to A. J. Tomlinson, June 13, 1903. Copy of the complete text of this Second Assembly program is given below.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
of the
Churches of East Tennessee, North Georgia
and Western North Carolina
To be held at
Union Grove, Tennessee . . . January 9-13, 1907



Seen above is the Union Grove Church, a few miles east of Cleveland, Tennessee, the place where the Second Assembly of the Church of God convened January 9-13, 1907. It was at this Assembly that the name "Church of God" was officially adopted as the Bible name for the Church, though it had been referred to as the Church of God all along since June 13, 1903, and sometimes mentioned before.

PROGRAMME

Wednesday, January 9th

7:00 p.m. — Opening sermon .....Elder R. G. Spurling.

Thursday, January 10th

9:00 a.m. — Prayer and Praise Service .....W. F. Bryant.
10:00 a.m. — Opening of Assembly. General reception and greeting of each other in love.
10:30 a.m. — Reading reports from churches.
11:00 a.m. — Address: "Importance of the study of the themes for consideration by the Assembly." .....A. J. Tomlinson.
1:00 p.m. — Prayer and Praise Service .....Johnie Brown.

1:30 p.m. — Special steps for the promotion of the Sunday School work ..... A. J. Lawson. Discussion led by R. D. Haney.

2:30 p.m. — Divine Healing. Shall we use drugs in case of sickness, or take Jesus alone? ..... Mattie Lemons. Discussion led by W. W. Simpson.

6:30 p.m. — Unity of the faith. What is it? Should we strive for it? Can we attain it? Results ..... A. J. Tomlinson. Discussion led by M. S. Lemons.

Friday, January 11th

9:00 a.m. — Prayer and Praise Service led by Alexander Hamby.

9:30 a.m. — Sanctification. What is it? Who should seek it? How obtained? Can we be saved without it? . . . Evangelist M. S. Lemons. Discussion led by Elder R. G. Spurling.

1:00 p.m. — Prayer and Praise Service led by John Smith.

1:30 p.m. — Christ's church. Leading principles. Importance of being a member of it. Who should be a member and who should not? ..... R. G. Spurling. Discussion led by W. M. Tallent.

6:30 p.m. — Song and Praise Service led by H. C. McNabb.

7:00 p.m. — Some hinderances to the growth of the church, and how to overcome them ..... W. F. Bryant. Discussion led by Alexander Hamby.

Saturday, January 12th

9:00 a.m. — Prayer and Praise Service led by Charles Curtis.

9:30 a.m. — How to care for the local churches the most effectually. The pastor's duties and how he should be selected. Should he necessarily be an ordained minister? ..... R. G. Spurling. Discussion led by W. M. Tallent.

10:30 a.m. — Gifts of the Spirit. What they are. Should they all be manifest in the Church, now as at the beginning? ..... J. H. Simpson. Discussion led by H. C. McNabb.

1:00 p.m. — Prayer and Praise Service led by Andrew Freeman.

1:30 p.m. — The relation of spiritual power and giving. How and when and to whom should offerings be made? . . . H. L. Trim. Discussion led by M. S. Lemons.
2:30 p.m. — Question drawer and incidental subjects and discussions.
6:30 p.m. — Song Service . . . . . M. S. Lemons.
7:00 p.m. — Prayer and Praise Service . . . . . W. W. Simpson.
7:30 p.m. — Sermon: "The baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire." . . . . . A. J. Tomlinson.

NOTE: *This was copied from an original Second Assembly program presented this writer by B. P. Spurling, son of Richard G. Spurling of early Church fame. The original is on file.*

WHO SHALL ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY?

The office of General Overseer was not mentioned or created at the First Assembly, nor was it created by the Second Assembly in session, and this left such a meeting stranded for lack of an appointed leader or chairman. However, A. J. Tomlinson's pastoral leadership and guidance tended to assuage the difficulties when he was selected to serve as chairman or ruling elder for the occasion—moderator in usual terms. (6)

Notwithstanding, the obligation to moderate the Assembly lasted only a few days—days filled with inspiration, praise and fellowship—but for three hundred additional days these inspired, happy followers of Christ and His little Church were tried, tested, condemned and criticized as they faced an embittered world. Someone, somewhere, somehow needed to sense the gravity and concern for the welfare of the loosely organized group of churches, the oldest less than five years old, and feel responsible for guidance and direction in the multiple facets and phases of church discipline, development and progress. Who could do it . . . who would do it? Who was best qualified to pursue the uphill task that meant sacrifice of home, of family, of finance and friends?

Most of the good ministers worked for a livelihood with which to feed and clothe the family . . . and preached on the side, or when time permitted. They were good ministers filled with the spirit and graces of God—R. G. Spurling, W. F. Bryant, M. S. Lemons,

6. A. J. Tomlinson "Answering the Call of God" and Diary entry of January 30, 1906.

Alexander Hamby, Henry McNabb and others, including H. L. Trim, whose name is mentioned for the first time in the Second Assembly . . . and they reached souls for God. They were itinerant ministers, powerful, persuasive voices for God, but apparently reserved no special office from which to pursue progress in the program for God and the Church, and from which to improvise plans and procedures for the advancement of the church work.

Things were different with Tomlinson, though he led all others in itinerant evangelization . . . no better than they . . . the same God blessed all of them . . . but he surrendered all to Christ and let himself be used for God's glory in humble submission. When he received the definite call to the ministry, the cross was heavy but he shouldered it with a sense of pride for Jesus who had carried His own cross. He went into the work of the Lord, trusting God for support. He worked for five or six months as a machinist in a glass factory at Elwood, Indiana, as a livelihood, the latter part of 1902 and early 1903, but from that time on his services were dedicated to God. His business was serving the Lord, and he gave himself and used all he ever possessed or owned as a personal consecration to the Lord it seemed.

The mantle fell upon Tomlinson . . . he accepted the responsibilities gravitating to him . . . the concern for the welfare of the churches . . . felt the weight of the needs for guidance and direction for the group. Though no official General Overseer had been named by the group yet he accepted the care of all the churches, pursued and dispensed all office duties devolved upon him as a leader, and prosecuted the directives expected of him, without official appointment. He was General Overseer though having not been appointed as such at this time. He rose up to the pressing call to duty, and God remembered him. Someone had to do . . . and Tomlinson answered "Here am I!" This is easily ascertained by examining the topic of his very first discourse to the Second Assembly: "Importance of the Study of the Themes For Consideration By the Assembly."

TOMLINSON MODERATES SECOND ASSEMBLY
(January 9-13, 1907)

By virtue of his office as pastor of the Church at Union Grove, A. J. Tomlinson opened the introductory service at 7:00 o'clock, Wednesday evening, January 9th, 1907. Since no one had been chosen at the first Assembly to act as chairman and moderator for the second Assembly, Tomlinson was chosen moderator and clerk,

similar to the way it was done at the first Assembly. (7) From all indications he prepared the Assembly program, assisted perhaps by M. S. Lemons, and maybe R. G. Spurling. But Tomlinson seemed adept at handling such church and religious maneuverings, and perhaps influenced the selection of the site.***

***It is reasonably evident that this site was selected for church compatibility, convenience and accommodation. Then too, perhaps more people would be reached. It is obvious the nucleus of the church work now centered in and around Bradley County, Tennessee—A. J. Tomlinson himself now had his office at 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee.

R. G. Spurling, a respected minister of the group, delivered the opening address on January 9th, using Hebrews 2:5 for his text. Next morning W. F. Bryant led the congregation in a stimulating prayer and praise service that was filled with the spirit of love and devotion, and brought down the great blessings of God, assuring the eager and sincere delegates that God was in their midst. Shortly past ten o'clock, Thursday morning January 10th, the Second Assembly was open for business.

FIRST TIME CHURCHES REPORT
(January 10, 1907)

For the first time since the little organization started reports from the different churches of the group were read, and everyone could see the progress that was being made. This confirmed the practice of keeping good records as recommended by the very first Assembly of the churches, held January 26, 27, 1906. The group had splintered from other organized churches that kept records, and now they faced the pressing responsibility of establishing their own organizational procedures in order to properly operate as a church. It was now clearly seen the number of women in the church exceeded the number of men. Special mention was made of the important positions occupied by women in the time of Christ and His apostles.

MODERATOR OUTLINES THEMES TO CONSIDER

Moderator Tomlinson's address on the "Importance of the

7. "Answering the Call of God," by A. J. Tomlinson. "Book of Minutes, General Assemblies, Church of God."

study of the themes for consideration by the Assembly" was both inspirational and factual. He read a part of the fourth chapter of First Timothy and said, "There are so many sects, doctrines, opinions and divisions that it is of vast importance for us to know the truths contained in the Scriptures."

Quoting from the Book of Minutes, pages 20, 21: "After speaking for some time on the different 'doctrines of devils' in vogue today, the speaker took up the subjects on the program and briefly outlined the important features one by one, advising the speakers to stand out boldly for their convictions, having themselves so clothed with love that no one could be hurt, and always ready to yield to plain Scriptural teaching even though it might cross some former views, the plain Bible teaching, rightly divided, to settle all points."

DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS

While the extent of discussion and explanation are lacking some subjects were discussed at 1:00 p.m., January 10th, and other important themes and subjects were treated later during the Assembly.

The subject concerning the appointing of assistant pastors was discussed, and "it was advised and recommended that supply pastors be selected by the pastor himself." (Book of Minutes, Page 21)

Concerning the selection of helpers or assistants for evangelistic work, it was advised that each evangelist should have the privilege of selecting whom he would to assist him in meetings. It was further suggested that "Care should be taken to be led by the Spirit rather than ecclesiastical bodies or rulers." (Ibid.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
(January 10, 1907)

This is the first time that Questions and Answers are listed in the Book of Minutes, though it seems certain that many questions had been previously asked and Bible answers given, or opinions relative to the questions were given. Beginning a new work would invite queries. Two are listed in the Minutes, and the moderator evidently answered them.

QUESTION BY M. S. LEMONS: How long should we bear with a sinner in the church?

ANSWER: Until we as a church do our Scriptural duty

toward the sinner and all efforts to reinstate him fail and the Spirit satisfies us that we should disfellowship him.

QUESTION BY W. F. BRYANT: If we know of a railer or extortioner in the congregation, should the deacons be instructed to offer him the bread and wine?

ANSWER: We should be very careful to follow the directions of the Spirit in harmony with the Scriptures, taking all things into consideration.

UNITY OF FAITH

These were trying times for any church or group just beginning to operate, and especially so with the Church of God now becoming better known all the time by the continued use of the name. They did not claim to be a part of anything else, just a continuation of the Bible Church, though some of them had come out from other organizations. In this sense they were quasi-exclusive as a church, but never feeling or believing they were the only born again Christians in the world. They had their inherent rights to identify themselves with the Church of the Bible, and at their first Assembly, the very first resolution adopted stated, "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only." This was one of their most powerful factors of church government and they sought strict adherence.

At 6:30 Thursday evening, the tenth of January, Moderator and chairman Tomlinson brought an inspiring message on "Unity Of Faith." It opened the way for much discussion by the speaker, especially, and it proved "conclusively THAT WE CAN AND OUGHT TO COME TO THIS STANDARD OF PERFECTION." The message was evidently pointed, exact and far-reaching, as may be determined throughout the years that followed.

NAME OF CHURCH OFFICIALLY ADOPTED
(January 11, 1907, Friday)

On June 13, 1903 when A. J. Tomlinson united with the Holiness Church at Camp Creek (Cherokee County, N. C.), he conscientiously and unreservedly stipulated that he was doing so with the understanding that "It is the Church of God of the Bible" (From: "Answering the Call of God," by A. J. Tomlinson, 18). R. G. Spurling, pastor, administered the covenant to him, and it said, "Will you take this as the Word of God, believe it and practice it,

obey its precepts and walk in the light as God is in the light?" (Page 12 of "A. J. Tomlinson, God's Anointed, Prophet of Wisdom.")

But loosely governed as the few churches were at the time, some of them spoke casually of the name Church of God, but it gradually came into use in conversation and preaching ("Last Great Conflict" by A. J. Tomlinson), until shortly after 8:30 Friday morning, the eleventh of June 1907, when, during the Preacher's Conference it was harmoniously and unanimously decided that the official name of the church is the CHURCH OF GOD, (I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 1:1). This was not to prevent the use of Biblical references to "The Church," "Churches in Christ," and others.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS DISCUSSED

When the Friday services were concluded several topics and subjects had been discussed freely and fluently, since the little organization "crawled on its knees" before God in quest of direction and guidance.

FIRST: The subject of credentials for ministers was discussed, and it was decided to use for applications the printed form already in use by some—doubtless the same form used by other established organizations.

SECOND: After some discussion the Assembly agreed to license good evangelists who could hardly measure up to the requirements for ordination. Perfect unity and harmony prevailed.

Following the prayer service and Scripture lesson by Alexander Hamby, M. S. Lemons preached on "Sanctification" and this concluded the morning session.

H. L. Trim conducted the afternoon prayer service at 1:00 o'clock.

THIRD: At 1:30 p.m. the Assembly had an open discussion on a three-phased subject: "How to care for local churches most effectually. The pastor's duties and how he should be selected. Should he necessarily be an ordained minister?"

Several ministers addressed themselves to the discussion.

R. G. Spurling emphasized the need of pastors being ordained ministers, but supply pastors need not be. He felt that churches should choose their pastors, though Paul sent ministers to different places.

H. L. Trim stressed the importance of visiting and praying in homes.

W. F. Bryant laid stress on the importance of having ordained pastors, and on visiting homes.

M. S. Lemons stressed the need of a pastor being a true Christian, being blameless and caring for his own house well.

FOURTH: The selection of pastors was discussed, with the decision reached: "Sometimes the church calls, sometimes (pastors are) sent by those having the responsibility and authority, and in all be sure to be guided by the Holy Ghost."

FIFTH: Several of the brethren discussed some hindrances to the church, and how to overcome them. This was enlightening, apparently, though every problem could not be discussed openly and settled in public. There are always some private problems and offences with which to deal.

Following the evening's prayer service by W. F. Bryant the closing message of the day was brought by the Church's veteran minister, R. G. Spurling, at seven o'clock. His subject was: "Christ's Church." He carefully and wisely stressed the leading principles . . . the importance of being a member of the Church . . . who should and should not be . . . and the importance of rebuilding the torn down structure. The clerk of the Assembly says: "He waxed so warm at the close he exclaimed, 'Give Christ the people in His Church or give me death! Amen!' "

MEMORABLE SECOND ASSEMBLY CLOSES

The clerk of this Second Assembly writes:

"Saturday 8:15 a.m.—Fellowship—Agreement. Some confession. There is a fellowship and a binding together among us who give each other the right hand of fellowship. Christ has pledged Himself that where we agree we can have so much more power."

Then came a time of sacred consecration, when hungry-hearted, soul-stirred ministers in plighted-troth moved humbly before God, promising themselves to be more fully used of God to reach others. The spirit of the powerful consecration dropped like a great mantle over the people throughout the little church house as the procession of pledges moved forward led by A. J. Tomlinson, R. G. Spurling, Alexander Hamby, M. S. Lemons, W. F. Bryant, H. L. Trim and L. W. Smith, all promising more of themselves for service in the Master's vineyard. Did tears flow freely?

Oscar Withrow made his vow while leading the prayer service, and Henry McNabb pledged his service, with his wife's service also, for the battlefield of the Lord.

Mrs. N. L. Lawson spoke on the value of prayer . . . H. C. McNabb addressed the Assembly on "Gifts of the Spirit" . . . and M. S. Lemons gave an exhortation to charity—all subjects of vital interest to the Church of God.

Divine Healing was perhaps a controversial subject, yet of great concern at the time. A frank question was asked, "Shall we use drugs in case of sickness or take Jesus alone?" This subject was broached and discussed in the demonstration and power of the Spirit, with the decision finally being reached to take Jesus as their Physician. A divine healing service followed, the first mentioned in any Assembly, and some were instantly healed by the power of God.

H. L. Trim spoke on, "The relation of spiritual power and giving. How, when and to whom should offerings be made?" M. S. Lemons corroborated.

Saturday evening at 7:30 A. J. Tomlinson used as his sermon topic, "The baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire." The altar filled with seekers, some of them tarrying until late.***

> ***This was exactly one year before Tomlinson himself received the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire. He received this blessing at Cleveland, Tennessee, Sunday morning, January 12, 1908, while G. B. Cashwell was preaching. ("The Last Great Conflict" by A. J. Tomlinson.)

The sermon on Sunday morning, January 13, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (I John 4:16), was followed by the observance of the sacred ordinance—the Lord's Supper and Feet Washing. This helped to establish a very important doctrine.

At this Assembly before closing, Alexander Hamby was ordained bishop, and H. L. Trim was licensed as evangelist. And this Second Assembly came to a close, expecting to meet again in one year. Minutes were signed by A. J. Tomlinson, moderator and clerk.

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REGARDING THE WORD "CHURCH"

Since officially adopting the name "Church of God" the organization was expected, not only to hold its own, but also to be able to answer the barrage of questions relative to denominational churches.

The word "church" has many definitions. The Random House Unabridged Dictionary gives sixteen different approaches, any of which may tend to justify those of particular interest. The majority of sincere honest-hearted Christians have endeared the word "church" to conscience as a phased spectrum of godliness, but never allow it to supplant the needed grace that provides salvation for mankind. Spirit-filled people exercise great caution lest some real born again Christian be anathematized by those less spiritual who blame things on the "church." Some even think of it only as a wood or stone building where people assemble to worship. Some think of it as an ecclesiastical, influential power as distinguished from civic, state or federal authority. Too many people place "church" in the category they prefer and desire, without ever consulting the Bible, the Book that contains reason and explanation for the word "church" itself.

The Bible recognizes only one Church—the Church of God. It was organized by Jesus Christ Himself and was made an active entity, supported by Biblical references such as Matthew 16:18; I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 2:1; Galatians 1:13, and others. Romans 16:16 refers to the same Church Jesus established—He established only the one—the same Church that Paul once destroyed (Galatians 1:23), and how could He preach another?

However, the denominational church world seems to think differently. As indicated by history, and in vogue today everywhere, someone, somewhere and somehow assumed the belief that the Church of God is a universal, invisible nonentity to which all Christians belong, and that every denominational church or church group is invariably a part of the great conglomerate regardless of the group's name, beliefs and doctrines. It is not intended to prejudice them such belief, but just how and where it got started is a mystery to those who have found that the Bible provides an actual, visible Church of God for the people of God. Jesus had followers, disciples (Mark 1:15-20), long before "He

called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve . . ." (Luke 6:13), with whom He organized His Church. This is the Church—the Church of God—recognized by the Bible.

In the book "The Glorious Church of God" . . . (Page 18) General Overseer M. A. Tomlinson has this to say:

"It is necessary to realize that when Paul wrote his epistles, there was only one Church—the one established by Jesus. The present-day structure of denominations with different governments, headquarters, doctrines and teachings was unknown in Paul's day. For this reason a superficial reading of certain Scriptures seem to indicate that the new birth is the same as the entrance to the Church; however, upon closer examination of the Bible, it is evident that the kingdom of God and the Church of God are not the same. Recognition of this difference is vitally essential to an understanding of the Church of God from the Bible standpoint."

Bishop Tomlinson continues (Page 69): "Many sincere people have been taught, and fully believe, that the act which makes one a Christian also makes him a member of the Church, and this erroneous teaching leads to the assumption that all Christians are members of the Church. However, the Scripture does not teach this. It is true that a person who has been born again is justified in the sight of God and he has been forgiven of his actual transgressions. He has been born into the family of God and is a child of God, but this does not mean that he is a member of the Body of Christ, the Church. In order to clearly understand this point, it is necessary to have a revelation of the spiritual, invisible nature of the kingdom of God as compared to the visible, physical nature of the Church.

"We are born into the kingdom of God, but the Scripture makes it clear that we enter the Church by some other action . . ."

On page 88 of the same volume it is recorded: ". . . Jesus built His Church, and then in fulfillment of prophecy it went into apostasy in the dark ages only to make its appearance again, also in fulfillment of prophecy, in Fields of the Wood. The Church was not destroyed, but it was lost to view. Hence, David declared that the Church or the habitation of God was to be 'found' in Fields of the Wood. A. J. Tomlinson did not establish the Church of God. Jesus did that. But it had been covered over with creeds and false teaching, and A. J. Tomlinson received the revelation of the Church which was already in existence . . ."

During the interim period between the "covering over of the Bible Church" and its "uncovering in 1903" many religious

groups rose up and proceeded to organize themselves into what is referred to as denominational churches, or organizations fostered by man. They have grown into thousands of church groups all over the world, and in the 1969 World Almanac, Protestants number 230,535,000. This is quite a number, and what a force it would be if all God's people were together—in the Church of the Bible! Should this be considered strange, exotic, phenomenal or mysterious in view of the prayer of Jesus in the coenaculum, or upper room? Is there anything too hard for God? It is only when the spiritual concedes to the natural to forestall Scriptural knowledge and wisdom that people will ignore and depart from the prayer of Jesus, who cried out in the midst of His disciples:

> "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;
> "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
> "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:
> "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one . . ." John 17:20-23.

As mentioned elsewhere theocratic government as formerly practiced by the Church gave way to an episcopacy where different bishops ruled, or governed precincts and areas, and this was a definite departure from the practices of the Church of God with headquarters at Jerusalem—the Church imbued with such power they filled the city with the doctrine. Trouble in the churches soon became eminent. Dissension, division and diversified views, opinions and interpretations concerning God, the trinity, the Church, the immaculate birth of Jesus, and other doctrinal points necessitated calling a council at Nicea in Bithynia in 325 A.D. and this was where heated debate and discussion ensued.***

> ***The Nicean Creed was not the cause but the instrument that precipitated the ushering in of the Dark Age period. It was the division and contention among the people of God that resulted in the sad but cataclysmic event that plagued the whole of Christendom. Acts 20:29, 30 indicate that Apostle Paul foresaw these perilous times, presaged the terrible blow to Christianity and warned the disciples.

This was much different to the Council at Jerusalem, that Paul

and Barnabas attended, where unity prevailed and "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost" when decisions were made (Acts 15th Chapter). But, the cataclysmic event never altered or changed the doctrines of the Church of God of the Bible . . . they were still there. Jesus had said, ". . . upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

For centuries religious leaders have tried, in one way or another, to return to Bible directives, perhaps in an effort to try to find the same principles, precepts and doctrines practiced by the apostles and disciples of the Church of God of the Bible. They desired to escape the pollution and power of the mammon of unrighteousness and as a result formulated creeds to conform to their scope of interpretations, doctrines and practices, and many of them organized into denominational churches or church groups for added strength. They all preach a part of the Bible, and many of them cling tenaciously to certain doctrines of faith as taught and practiced by the Church of the Bible—the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23).

This is further elucidated by the former General Overseer of the Church, A. J. Tomlinson, who compared the Church to a great tree. He said:

"From the Church went out the teaching of repentance, as a branch from a tree, and on this branch were people who repented. Another branch was extended from the same body named baptism, another sanctification, another baptism with the Holy Ghost, another feetwashing, etc., etc. From the body (the Church) extended every line of truth and teaching that He had given them . . . First is the trunk, and from the trunk extends the branches, and upon the branches appear the leaves and luscious fruit hanging in great yellow and red clusters. The Church of God is to the gospel or doctrine taught in the Bible as the trunk or body of the tree is to the branches, leaves and fruit.

"Where did Martin Luther get the doctrine of justification by faith? From the Church of God as it was given by its members through the Bible. The branch had grown and grown and lengthened out through the 'dark ages' until by now and by Martin Luther appeared as a cluster of fruit away out on the end of the long branch.

"Where did John Wesley get the doctrine of sanctification as a definite and instantaneous experience subsequent to justification? From the Church of God. This branch had also extended away out through the darkness, and finally blossomed with George Fox, and then fruited heavily in the time of the Wesleys. These two

branches have grown and borne much precious fruit ever since.

"Where did Doctor Simpson get the doctrine of divine healing? Where did this branch come from? The Church of God. Hundreds, yes thousands have given up physicians, thrown away remedies, wheelchairs and crutches, and have been suspended on this wonderful branch . . .

"But the wonder is that none of these men, who discovered these wonderful truths, ever crawled back down the branch to discover, if possible, where they started from, and locate the trunk of the tree. But no, they seem to have been so occupied with present surroundings and conditions, and the branches had grown so long, and through the long night of the "dark ages" that the darkness was too dense and the task too great. And thus, instead of discovering the trunk of the tree, men went to work and got up articles of faith and creeds, and have tried to make out that these precious truths were doctrines of church so and so. For example: It has been said so often that 'Sanctification is a doctrine of the Methodist Church,' 'Baptism by immersion is a doctrine of the Baptist Church,' etc., etc. None had been able to see just where the branches sprang from and to what body they were attached . . . but . . . were . . . found to be fastened to and held in place by the Church of God." (Excerpt from the book, "The Last Great Conflict" Chapter 15, By A. J. Tomlinson, 1913.)

Sometimes these branches are more easily seen in some places for the religious realm is not a world of fantasy but of reality . . . souls of men are involved. People move when moved on by the Spirit of God. Members of different church groups have left and joined the Church of God when this light came to them. R. G. Spurling was a Baptist; W. F. Bryant was a Methodist; A. J. Tomlinson was a Quaker; F. F. Johnson was a Catholic; R. L. Williams was a Mormon; Carl D. Funk belonged to the Assemblies of God; J. J. Lowman and W. M. Lowman (former overseers of Virginia) were both Methodists.

God has His own prerogatives. He moves upon whom He will. No one can justly condemn the Christian who is led by the Lord, and finds additional light in which to walk. God has a Church—the Church of God—and His people are going to see it.

EVENTS OF ASSEMBLY YEAR 1907

The Second Assembly, held January 9-13, 1907, has been treated more fully perhaps than will be some of the others. The organization was growing, slowly but surely, and problems could

be expected because of the Biblical interpretations and doctrinal issues accepted and promoted by the group. Naturally, expansion produced additional problems and new challenges but these never deterred the ambition and efforts of these zealous ones.

By this time practice had certified acceptance of such doctrines as Repentance . . . Justification . . . Regeneration . . . Born Again, all separate yet in a peculiar way composite factors of the spiritual life of the individual. People testified to getting salvation . . . being converted . . . to having been changed . . . to being saved . . . to being born again, but despite the terminology used they simply confessed they had become Christians. Only born again Christians were eligible for membership in the Lord's Church—the Church of God. If a member fell by the wayside and went back into sin compassion was shown him, but if he insisted on continuing in sin after all efforts to restore him were exhausted he was disfellowshipped from the Church according to Matthew 18:15-17.

The Church of God was not a survival group but was an active force of Christians who bound themselves together by covenant, the right hand of fellowship and practice to reach into every area where mankind resided. Though other organizations preached and even practiced some of the same doctrines they themselves promoted, the Church of God sought to screen all doctrines carefully by the Word of God—acting in a judicial capacity only. They found in the Scriptures, accepted and practiced such doctrines as: Water Baptism as practiced in the Bible . . . Sanctification, the second definite work of grace . . . Holiness, as a state of spirituality with God . . . Baptism with the Holy Ghost, with the evidence of other tongues . . . the Lord's Supper . . . Washing the Saints' Feet. Now, at this Second Assembly Divine Healing was introduced, a healing service launched, and several were instantly healed. Tobacco had been frowned upon and condemned at the Frist Assembly in 1906, and further discussion and action were pending.

The influence of the Church of God reached into many areas, with doors opened in several cities, towns and communities. Camp Meetings were in great vogue at the turn of the century, and they afforded open doors for the Church. Inspiration was power . . . progression a watchword. The group was few in number but powerful in approach, constantly in prayer, agonizing for souls! They were among the most sincere Christians of the age—prayer-warriors, ever sincere, mastering defeatism!

Pastor A. J. Tomlinson and the church at Cleveland, Tennessee



Here is the very first church building erected by the Church of God. It was built on the corner of 24th and Peoples Streets, Cleveland, Tennessee, finished and dedicated by Pastor A. J. Tomlinson, September 29, 1907. Ten Assemblies were held at this local church—three through eleven, and also the fourteenth Assembly in 1919—since it was a convenient location. After deciding to move the Assembly dates from January to November two Assemblies were held here in 1913—one in January and one in November.

decided to build a church house for worship and Sunday School. An earnest search for church lots got under way.***

***A. J. Lawson relates: "J. T. Loomis, of Loomis and Hart Manufactoring Co., of Chattanooga, Tennessee, owned some lots at the corner of 24th and Peoples Streets (In Cleveland). When he (Tomlinson) approached him for the lots on which to build a church, Mr. Loomis gave Brother Tomlinson two lots on which to build a church, then sold him the third lot for $150.00 on time." (White Wing Messenger, April 28, 1945.)

On these lots, May 13, 1907, A. J. Tomlinson and the local church at Cleveland began the erection of a church, and by September 26, 1907 the church was completed, and was dedicated September 29th. This is the building in which the Annual Assemblies were held from 1908 through 1915. The structure cost $1,093.67, as reported by the pastor, and an offering received during the dedication service amounting to $453.80. The erecting of this church proved to be a great stride forward.

Great revivals got under way in different areas where ministers were available. Among these was the tent revival in South Cleveland from July 3-August 10, 1907, A. J. Tomlinson in charge most of the time with W. F. Bryant, J. H. Withrow, H. L. Trim, J. H. Simpson and others assisting, and some of them at times left in charge. And at the Union Grove revival in August, Tomlinson, Will Tallent and Brothers Washington and Simpson participated. Revivals were on the move in several areas. Records show that among several areas effected by the gospel it had also reached

Birmingham, Oak Grove, Chattanooga, Zion Hill, Tellico Plains, Turtletown, Blue Spring, Oakland (Tennessee) and even Jeffries Hell.

Progress was made in different facets and phases of the church work, and the group now prepared for their forthcoming Assembly in January 1908.

THIRD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(January 8-12, 1908)

The Assembly of the Churches of God had become an annual affair. This Third Assembly convened in the newly erected church at Cleveland, Tennessee, where A. J. Tomlinson pastored. He was again chosen to moderate the Assembly, and clerk. The introductory service Wednesday evening, January 8th was conducted by R. G. Spurling. It seemed to temper the delegates into unified aspirations and a congenial body of Christian fellowship.

When the Assembly officially opened at 10:00 o'clock Thursday morning, January 9th, the very first resolution offered and adopted was: "This Assembly is not legislative or executive but judicial only."

This adopted resolution, by declaring in positive terms "This Assembly is not legislative . . ." superimposed strength to the resolution adopted at the very First Assembly which stated, "We do not consider ourselves a legislative . . ." and is cited, as is or revised, in other Assemblies. This strong Bible tie or tenet of church faith has been held in high esteem from the very beginning.

Conforming to an established practice, the churches again reported the work accomplished during the past Assembly year.

The zealous M. S. Lemons addressed the Assembly on the importance of the themes and subjects for discussion. This was followed by prayer by W. F. Bryant.

At 1:30 p.m. the following subjects were presented and discussed:

1. Our duty about voting.
   DECISION: "Church members should vote provided they can do so with a clear conscience."
2. Can church members belong to lodges?
   DECISION: "No person that belongs to a lodge is eligible to membership in the Lord's church. IICorinthians 6:14-17; Ephesians 5:4-7, 11, 12; II Timothy 3:4, 5; Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12."

3. Worshipping God as conscience may dictate.
   DECISION: "It would be mockery to worship God contrary to a man's conscience, but his conscience should be purged and trained according to the laws and commands of Jesus."
4. The Unity of Church and state.
   DECISION: "Opposed to the union of Church and state under any circumstances."
5. The law and its relation to the church.
   DECISION: "Should obey laws as long as said laws do not conflict with Christ's law." (Note: Number 3 decision is listed here, along with number 6, following) Number 6, decision says: "The church should appreciate the laws that protect public worship and should recognize the officers of the law as God's ministers. Romans 13:1-6."

At 2:30 in the afternoon of Thursday, January 9th, the important subject of "Training Children" was discussed with great fervor but in a good spirit. It was decided they could be raised up right and would not go astray, provided all the Bible conditions and requirements were met and applied.***

***During this time, few years past the turn of the century, our public school system in the "States" was not as progressive as desired. Little red, sometimes white, one room schoolhouses dotted the countrysides, and many people had children who were underprivileged, and many were deprived of an education in school. Many communities and neighborhoods were agrarian and every member of the family worked hard with long hours to eke out a living in some portions of the country. Some children had little opportunity for training as discussed.

The evening prayer and praise service was conducted by Alexander Hamby at 6:30. Then followed an impressive discourse by R. G. Spurling on, "The difference between the 'Church of God' and other sects and bodies of Christians."

The Book of Minutes, page 27, says: "R. G. Spurling showed that there is a germ of life in the true Church that is not in men's organizations. The Lord set up His Church and men set up theirs. The Church must be made exact in every part as the tabernacle was exact, must be subject to Christ in everything. Ephesians 5:24. There is no need for more than one, Jesus prayed for oneness."

This discourse evidenced the trend of thought and purpose, as

well as the sentiments of the humble followers of the Lord who had assembled in consecration, and concentration of aims, plans and procedures for advancement. Slowly emerging from its embryonic rising the little church was carefully preparing for greater progress and stability. After all the annual Assembly's purpose was to weld the organization more tightly together, and order plans for business expansion, and growth.

THE DIVORCE PROBLEM

At 8:00 o'clock Friday morning, January 10th, the subject "DIVORCE" was brought to the floor for discussion. The question presented was: "Is anyone having two or more living husbands or wives, with or without divorce, eligible for membership in the Lord's Church?"

Divorce and double marriage were "hashed and rehashed" and discussed for hours, and an extra session for discussion of the subject lasted until past midnight, but no satisfactory conclusion was reached. It was decided to extend, or carry this subject over to another year.

"However, it was decided that there was only one cause granted for a divorce that would leave either party innocent and at liberty to marry again, and that was fornication or adultery. It was advised that it was really the safest for all parties who are divorced for any cause to remain unmarried. It was further decided that none who are divorced and married again are eligible for membership in the Lord's Church except the innocent party of Matthew 5:32, or perchance it might be the woman who was the innocent party." (Book of Minutes.)

OTHER BUSINESS

Before closing the morning session several spoke of the advantages of having a printing press and a church paper, but no decision was reached.

The financial system, a "peculiar subject at the time" was considered and discussed, with no decision being reached.

When the afternoon session began at 1:30 questions and answers were given . . . a very appropriate method of learning about certain things pertaining to church work, tenets of faith and practices.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THIRD ASSEMBLY

QUESTION: Should elders give themselves entirely to the

ministry of the Word and prayer?

ANSWER: Elders may be others besides ministers of the Word and all should work at something when not directly engaged in the ministry of the Word. Although it would be good for preachers to not be entangled too much with the affairs of this life.

QUESTION: Does the use of tobacco disqualify a man for the office of a deacon?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Should the church members unite in colonies?

ANSWER: No.

MORE ASSEMBLY DISCUSSIONS

Following the Question and Answer session a compendium of issues were introduced and discussed, three of which were:

1. "Deaconesses and their duties"—According to Romans 16:2, Acts 6:3, Titus 2:3-5 and I Peter 5:1-4, it was decided that qualified women should be appointed by the church to minister.

2. "Selecting pastors"—The Assembly decided to retain the present plan where each church chooses its own pastor.

3. "The Sunday School"—A. J. Lawson and A. J. Tomlinson stressed the value and importance of Sunday School . . . the need of qualified teachers . . . urged prompt attendance, and active home class department, Sunday School conventions . . . and recommended a Sunday School evangelist.***

***A. J. Lawson joined the Church of God, January 1908. (From White Wing Messenger, April 28, 1945.)

At 7:00 p.m. R. G. Spurling addressed the Assembly on the subject of "Sanctification," the removal of the carnal nature.

At 8:00 o'clock Saturday morning, January 11th, lengthy discussions concerning the care of the churches, Bible plans and practices, seemed to leave some of the group groping for better understanding and light, and the following conclusion was reached: "Seeing our imperfections we should strive for the standard as rapidly as possible, always seeking more light."

Hindrances and how to overcome them, were discussed by R. G. Spurling and others, and J. H. Simpson spoke to condemn false teaching, skating rinks, nickeloes (nickelodeon) and shows. This was an open "free-for-all" discussion, and consumed much time.

It was suggested that every church member be a worker, with

the outline of the work considered. However, no decision was made.

At this Third Assembly, because of the pressing need, an enormous amount of time was spent discussing the divorce and double-marriage problem, and the tobacco question that became of grave concern since it was first introduced to the First Assembly of delegates.

Concerning tobacco . . . It was decided that those in the church who use tobacco should be dealt with kindly, fairly and given a little time for consideration, and those who refuse to discontinue its use in a reasonable length of time be disfellowshipped. Isaiah 55:2; II Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-7.

The Book of Minutes, page 30 states: "The above minutes are not laws made by the Assembly but only the laws given us by Christ and His disciples, searched out by that body and brought to light that the churches might take action on the same as they see fit."

In a sense this explanation requested the spirit of ratification, but left decision to the churches "as they see fit."

This Third Annual Assembly closed a few minutes after midnight—Signed by A. J. Tomlinson, moderator and clerk.

In his well-documented book, "Written In Heaven," Bishop B. M. Johnson says: "At the close of the Third Assembly, the September 1941 'Joyful News' quotes A. J. Tomlinson as saying, 'I was selected as General Superintendent of all the ministers and churches . . . and moderator for another year.'"

Important Events at Assemblies 1909-1910

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NOTES OF ASSEMBLY YEAR 1908

But for the meager records kept, and left us by A. J. Tomlinson little would be known of the immediate progress of the Church of God. During the Assembly year of 1908 A. J. Tomlinson pastored churches at Union Grove, Oakland and Cleveland, Tennessee, and held meetings at Drygo, McMinn County, Blue Springs, Red Knobs, Madisonville, Sobel, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Rome, Georgia. In the revival from May until August, he was assisted by M. S. Lemons and H. L. Trim, and on August 3, 1908 Tomlinson organized a Church at Chattanooga with forty-nine members. (Pages 60, 61, the book "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar)

Following the Chattanooga revival A. J. Tomlinson conducted a revival at Cleveland, Tennessee, and it has been said this was probably the greatest revival Cleveland had experienced to now. By Diary entry of October 14th (1908) he says: "Held meetings at tent. Closed out tonight after a ten weeks successful battle. Two hundred and twenty-five professions and one hundred and sixty-three received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Seventy-eight baptized in water. One hundred and six accessions to the Church . . ." (Ibid. Page 64)

August 20th he says the mayor of Cleveland served a paper on him, asking him to close the meeting about 10:00 o'clock or be arrested. He refused and that night the officers agreed to protect them for staying open as long as they were obliged.

The members of the immediate Tomlinson family all received the baptism with the Holy Ghost while residing at Cleveland, Tennessee.***

***A. J. Tomlinson	January 12, 1908
Halcy Olive (a daughter)	August 10, 1908
Homer Aubry (son)	August 18, 1908
Mary Jane (wife to A. J. Tomlinson)	August 21, 1908
Iris Marea (a daughter)	July 23, 1909
Milton Ambrose (youngest son)	April 14, 1927

God blessed the Church, filling it with His divine presence and power, and more people saw the light on the Body of Christ. Revivals were powerful. Thanksgiving Day, November 26th, A. J. Tomlinson writes that by the close of that day forty-five had

joined the Church. The Spirit was moving strongly among the people of God.

Nonetheless, there were also some disappointments. An erstwhile laborer in the gospel work, J. H. Simpson, had caused trouble by offences, divisions and contentions for several months. Endurance over such things was terminated. Simpson refused to be reconciled, even at the expense of tears and pleadings from Pastor A. J. Tomlinson, and the Church disfellowshipped J. H. Simpson in a business meeting held January 2, 1909, in accordance to Romans 16:17. (Ibid. P. 68).

FOURTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(January 6-9, 1909)

The Fourth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God convened at Cleveland, Tennessee, January 6-9, 1909. A. J. Tomlinson was selected to serve as moderator and clerk. R. G. Spurling delivered the opening sermon when the Wednesday evening, January 6th, service began at 7:00 o'clock.

The Assembly was officially opened for business at 10:00 o'clock Thursday morning, January 7th, and since no report forms had been issued the following churches reported orally:

STEER CREEK—M. S. Lemons. Some good work done there.

CHATTANOOGA—M. S. Lemons. Work there began this year . . . number of professions . . . about seventy-five baptized with Holy Ghost . . . membership of about sixty.

DRYGO—M. S. Lemons. Had meetings and Sunday School . . . little accomplished.

RISING FAWN, Georgia—Some good accomplished . . . chance for a work.

CAMP CREEK, N. C.—R. G. Spurling. Held meetings . . . future prospects not encouraging.

JONES—R. G. Spurling. Meetings held . . . work at a stand still.

UNION GROVE—A. J. Tomlinson. Meetings most of year . . . Sunday school . . . Three protracted meetings . . . some good.

OAKLAND—A. J. Tomlinson. Good work done in Sunday School and prayer meetings . . . Some saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost.

CLEVELAND—A. J. Tomlinson. Revival nearly all the year, and regular Sunday School . . . Membership increased from 60 to 230 . . . about 300 professions and about 250 filled with the Holy Ghost. Number abstained from use of tobacco.

HILLVUE—W. F. Bryant. Some good work done . . . meetings and Sunday School held almost regularly . . . good open field . . . work should be continued.

RED KNOBS—Meetings most of year . . . about thirty experiences in revival.

CHICAMAUGA—William Tallent. Good work established there . . . several professions, some baptized with Holy Ghost . . . church house being built.

Shortly thereafter the resolution adopted was "This Assembly is not legislative or executive, but judicial only."

The afternoon service opened at 1:30 with song and prayer, followed by some business. At the last two Assemblies the subject of selecting pastors had been discussed, but each time left for the local churches to decide. However, at this Fourth Assembly a change was made and a more thorough explanation given. The following plan was decided on:

SELECTION OF PASTORS

"The church desiring a pastor should earnestly pray for God to give them the person that He knows would be the proper one for them under the existing circumstances. After prayer to agree upon one if possible, as they feel divinely guided. To consult in person or by mail with the person desired, and when they make out the yearly report for the General Assembly to fill in the space "Call for pastor" with the names of two ministers, either one of which they would gladly receive. This report should reach the moderator two or three days before the date on which the Assembly convenes. The Assembly, after prayers and consultation with the delegates from the churches and the ministers desired, decide to place the pastors as nearly as possible according to the requests or desires of the churches to be supplied.

"In case the Assembly cannot supply pastors for some churches, the moderator is to confer with said churches and arrange to fill such vacancies to the best of his ability." (Book of Minutes, Pages 32, 33).

Other business measures adopted were:

FEMALE MINISTERS

This concerned deaconesses and evangelists. "The Assembly advises further that the women who engage in the ministry of the Word be acknowledged by the church and supplied with a

certificate or license showing date of appointment and by what church."

UNORDAINED MALE MINISTERS

"Also that above certificate or license (similar to that supplied the female minister) be conferred to unordained male ministers."

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

This subject, along with several others, came to the floor for discussion shortly after the Friday morning, January 8th session of the Assembly that opened at 9:45.

"It was decided to let the minute of 1908 remain unchanged, but the following to be added:

"In case of a man having two living wives wishing to connect himself with the church, also in case of a woman having two living husbands desiring the same, we recommend that the church to which they wish to unite appoint a committee to investigate the case, and for the church to then act according to the advice given by the Assembly, the best light and knowledge obtained by the church and the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

OTHER BUSINESS

It was decided that all the churches hold quarterly business meetings.

There was some discussion about a Church paper but the Assembly came to no conclusion regarding it.

Concerning the preparation of minister's credentials "It was decided that the examination committee prepare forms for bishops, deacon and evangelist credentials, the same to be submitted to the Assembly for approval." This was done as suggested, and during the next day's afternoon session, under the heading "Minister's Credentials" the following entry was made in the Minutes: "The report from the committee assigned to prepare ministerial credentials was heard and accepted with instructions given to have them printed and signed by the proper officers and presented to the ministers.

It was here decided that the blank reports should be placed in the care of the Assembly clerk to be forwarded to local churches at the close of the year, in time for them to be filled out and returned to the Assembly."

Concerning report blanks, a committee composed of A. J. Lawson, F. J. Lee, P. A. Wingo, was appointed to prepare a form for the annual reports of local churches, and next day, January 9th, the committee report to the Assembly "was accepted with a slight amendment and the chairman instructed to get the forms printed and place them in the hands of the proper officer for use next year."

GENERAL OVERSEER IS MENTIONED

The appointment of a General Overseer of all the churches for mutual help and general instructions was briefly discussed but no action taken. This was done before Friday's adjournment.

However, knowledge and understanding of the needs of such an office in the Church pressed constantly upon the Assembly, and before it finally closed the following resolution was adopted:

GENERAL MODERATOR SELECTED
(January 9, 1909)

"Whereas, the following office is considered in harmony with New Testament order and on account of the present needs for the general welfare of the churches and the promotion of the interests of the same, we hereby institute the name, General Moderator, whose term of office shall commence at the closing of each yearly Assembly and expire the following year at the same time or until his successor is selected.

"The duties of said officer shall be as follows:

"To issue credentials to ministers, to keep a record of all the preachers and evangelists within the bounds of the Assembly, to look after the general interests of the churches, to fill vacancies either in person or by sending some one who in his judgment would edify the body of Christ, and to act as moderator and clerk of the General Assembly."

A. J. Tomlinson was selected General Moderator for the ensuing year.

"It was unanimously decided to add two days to the work of the Assembly, placing the date of opening two days earlier than heretofore, giving five days instead of three."

The Assembly adjourned January 11, 1909, late at evening, following a session characterized by love, order and harmony, after deciding to meet on Tuesday before the second Sunday in January 1910, at 10:00 a.m.—A. J. Tomlinson, moderator and clerk.***

***The Fourth Assembly convened January 6-9, 1909, but the closing date is listed January 11th, late at evening. We cannot clarify this inconsistency, except that it could have been a typographical error, or two days added. It is observed also, that when signing the Minutes he never used the official title "General Moderator" as passed by the Assembly. He had his own reasons perhaps and simply signed them as moderator.

REVIEWING THE YEAR 1909

The year 1909 was not only a fruitful year for the Church but it released as well a barrage of persecution and trouble to the group. Wherever camp meetings, revival services or tent meetings were conducted the forces of evil turned loose upon them, and opposition could be expected wherever the gospel was preached. The opposition forces scoffed, railed and ranted, made fun of heavy-hearted seekers, accused them of having "wildfire" and being fanatic, and accused the altar workers of hypnotizing the seekers. Nothing was too hard for them to say it seemed, even to erstwhile good friends and associates.

A. J. Tomlinson was arrested for disturbing the peace, and the good ministers and worshippers were tried and fined by the court. Yet, no one could justly accuse them of breaking the law. They loved their enemies and did good to those who despitefully used them. A. J. Tomlinson began a tent meeting in Cleveland, Tennessee, near the business section of town. One night following a real spiritual service where souls had been blessed, after weathering a barrage of pepper and hot drops thrown among the people by some antagonists, a mob led by a Mr. Beard and a Mr. Hardwick, cut down the tent and piled it up to move away, but the worshippers continued, and souls were blessed.

At Athens, Tennessee when A. J. Tomlinson started to organize a Church a mob of wicked men opened a can of chemical, and the pungent odor broke up the service. A number of girls and women nearly died as a result. This kind of senseless persecution ran rampant everywhere it seemed.

However, all the trouble never came from the unsaved element. J. H. Simpson who had been with the Church for some time, and shared in the many blessings delivered by God, caused offense and division in the Church at Cleveland. So, on January 2, 1909 the Church there excluded Simpson, and they had some peace and tranquility for a while. ("A. J. Tomlinson," by Lillie Duggar, Page 68)

While A. J. Tomlinson was at Largo, Florida in November, in a

revival he received letters from three brethren at Cleveland urging him to come home at once. He was heartsick. There was trouble in the Church at Cleveland. John B. Goins seemed to be the instigator.***

***A. J. Tomlinson says that on November 12, 1908 he went to Memphis, Tennessee, and while in a Pentecostal convention there he organized the church. He states that he helped to ordain John B. Goins, of Florence, Alabama. (Diary entry November 26, 1908.)

Bishop Tomlinson was under great pressure over the Goins trouble and spent days and nights, almost, in agonizing prayers trying to get the trouble adjusted. Before long J. H. Simpson joined up with John B. Goins and brought great distress and sufferings to the Cleveland Church by false doctrines and other practices, especially on some specific teachings of the Church. Goins had been left in charge of the services while the pastor was away, at times. The Goins-Simpson element forced entrance into the church, having service at will, and the court gave the Church and the Goins-Simpson element week about to use the church building. This was very unsatisfactory and distasteful to the members of the Cleveland Church, and before the time for the Fifth Annual Assembly to convene January 10-16, 1910, the Goins-Simpson element was enjoined from using the local church building, and this opened the way for a very successful Fifth Assembly.***

***John B. Goins (who had been excluded when the trouble arose) came back into the Church, March 26, 1939, after repenting, confessing and asking forgiveness before the Church. He had been out of the Church for 30 years. But it was not to last. After but a few days in the Church he accused them of too much fanaticism, and on Monday night, April 10, 1939 he was excluded from the Church again. (Diary of A. J. Tomlinson)

The year of 1909 was the year of A. J. Tomlinson's great missionary venture and revivals in the Bahama Islands, a full account of which is given in the book "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar, and published by the White Wing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee.

FIFTH ASSEMBLY MINUTES
(January 10-16, 1910)

This Assembly held at Cleveland, Tennessee, was the first held

under the supervision of the General Moderator, A. J. Tomlinson, since he was officially selected by the Assembly, in advance, to serve for the year 1909, though the Assembly had elected him (on the floor) to serve as moderator and clerk for each of the four preceding Assemblies.

Devotional exercises were conducted as usual, and each session heard sermons, messages and different discussions on important issues among which were the following:

EXAMINATION BLANKS FOR MINISTERS

A committee, composed of M. S. Lemons, R. G. Spurling, T. L. McLain and the General Moderator, was appointed to draft examination questions to examine candidates for the ministry.***

***They later brought their report, and it was read and accepted.

CHURCH PAPER PROPOSED

The need of a Church paper had been mentioned and discussed in both the Third and Fourth Assemblies but no conclusions had been reached (pages 28, 34, Book of Minutes). But, at this Assembly a committee composed of M. S. Lemons, A. J. Lawson, R. G. Spurling and Brother Sigwalt, was appointed to bring the subject of a Church Paper before the Assembly.

They later reported they were in favor of a Church Paper, and recommended the appointment of a publishing committee to prepare for and start a paper (Pages 38, 39, Book of Minutes). The report was accepted and the following committee selected: A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson, Geo. T. Brouayer.***

***First issue of the paper "The Evening Light and Church of God Evangel" came off the press March 10, 1910.

CHARTER FOR THE CHURCH

It was suggested, or proposed that the publishing committee (A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson and Geo. T. Brouayer) arrange for and secure a charter for the Church if in their judgment it was necessary for the best welfare of the Church.

MODERATOR CHANGED TO OVERSEER
(January 14, 1910)

A. J. Tomlinson served as General Moderator for the year 1909. On Friday afternoon, January 14th, the Assembly changed the words "General Moderator" to "General Overseer."

GENERAL OVERSEER IS CHOSEN

On Saturday afternoon, January 15, 1910, by official action the Assembly chose A. J. Tomlinson for General Overseer for the year 1910. (Book of Minutes)

GENERAL OVERSEER TO APPOINT PASTORS

It was advised by the Assembly that the General Overseer appoint pastor for the different churches.

ASSEMBLY CLOSES

Other discussion, and a message by W. S. McMannen on "The Financial Question" preceded the closing of the Assembly. This seems to have been the first time an extra clerk was mentioned by the Minutes of the Assembly. The Minutes were signed by A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer, and Marion Whidden, Clerk.

Procedures for Advancement 1911 Annual Meeting

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SIXTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(January 3-8, 1911)

This Assembly held at Cleveland, Tennessee was officially opened by General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson, and the minutes of the last Assembly were read and approved. The usual routine of devotionals, messages, sermons and discussions came up in their proper order.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL REPORT

In his annual report to the Assembly the General Overseer reported the progress of the work of the Church from the Assembly in January, 1910 through December 31, 1910. It is shown as he reported it:

Number of churches enrolled and reported to the Assembly held January 10-16, 1910	31
Number of churches set in order in 1910	27
Total	58
Number of bishops ordained 1910	7
Number of bishops reported last year	22
Total at present	29
Number of evangelists licensed 1910	9
Number of evangelists reported last year	20
Total at present	29
Total number of ministers	107
Total membership reported last year	1005
Membership of new churches	540
Additions in old churches	310
Total increase	850
Present membership	1855

GENERAL OVERSEER'S FIRST ANNUAL ADDRESS
(January 3, 1911)

The General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson followed his report of churches with his first annual address to the Assembly . . . exactly 950 words . . . the shortest he ever made to an Assembly. He began it by saying:

"While the increase of the number of churches, ministers and members is not specially discouraging, yet it has not been as great as we hoped and has not reached the same proportion of last year. I feel that my work as overseer of the churches the past year has been a comparative failure. Owing to the scattered positions the churches occupy I have not been able to visit them as perhaps I should. In fact I have visited but a very few. Some of the churches have been neglected on account of my inability to supply them with pastors, although they begged for assistance . . ."

The General Overseer felt the weight of the churches. It was not too difficult to comprehend the essence of the delicate situation. He felt it, and sensed the need of stressing things for consideration.***

*** 1. His inability to obtain ministers for pastors.
2. The pressing need of some finance.
3. Encouraged preachers to cut loose from livelihoods, and preach and live of the gospel.
4. Assembly to be responsible for better system.
5. Greater outlook for future organization. Organizations effected now in North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and the Bahama Islands. Almost ready to organize churches in California, Mississippi, Arkansas, Iowa, Indiana, Virginia and Cuba.
6. Church Paper a great factor in spreading the gospel.
7. Encouraged systematic evangelization.
8. Systematic missions to be established.
9. Stresses need of preparatory school.
10. Stresses spiritual care in all deliberations.

CHURCH NOT TO BE CHARTERED

At the last Assembly it was proposed that a committee selected by the Assembly arrange for and secure a charter for the Church if in their judgment it was necessary for the best welfare of the Church. The committee, after investigation, brought their report to this Assembly, "stating that it was best not to incorporate." After discussion all felt good not to incorporate.

OTHER BUSINESS PROCEDURES

Business was discussed and disposed of in regular fashion. Committees were appointed to dispose of certain duties and responsibilities. The portion of the General Overseer's address

referring to a school of training for workers was discussed briefly. The publishing committee reported, as did the editor. Schooling for the children was discussed, advising independent schools where possible. Important subjects of Church doctrine were discussed and decisions rendered.

WATER BAPTISM

The words "by immersion" were deleted from the teaching as explained in the August 15, 1910 issue of the "Evening Light and Church of God Evangel" since it was not a Bible term "but with a full understanding that baptism is to plunge or dip, or a burial beneath the surface of the water and lifting out again, and not sprinkling or pouring."

TITHING AND GIVING

Tithing was really the matter discussed. Some favored tithing and offerings also, while others favored giving and disregarded the tithing. All admitted there was no compulsion. The General Overseer read and spoke from Hebrews 7:1-21, supporting this with other Scriptures, and the following minute was read and approved:

"It is advised that liberty be granted to teach tithing and giving with the understanding that the Church is not to enforce tithing on the members, but teach them the blessedness of tithing and exhort them to seek for the abundance of grace that will evidently lead them or enable them to practice it from choice. No one objects to tithing or teaching that people ought to tithe, provided the churches do not undertake to enforce it . . ."

After the minute was read and approved, the Spirit seemed to prompt the clause, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us."

TOBACCO PROBLEMS

The Assembly considered the list of teachings and spent some time discussing the subject of tobacco. After reading and reviewing the minute of the first Assembly, the General Overseer advised "that ministers who are receiving persons as members into the Lord's Church should humbly, tenderly and lovingly advise those who might be eligible to membership not to present themselves for membership if they use tobacco in any form unless they in that self same moment decide to renounce the habit and by

the grace of God declare themselves total abstainers hereafter."

THE SABBATH

Questions concerning the Sabbath were raised but a few words of explanation and advice from the General Overseer satisfied the Assembly.

GENERAL OVERSEER ADVISES BETTER SYSTEM

The Church of God was principally young, and their system of government had to be sought out by interpretations of the Bible practices, besides having to learn some things by experience. General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson with foresightedness and godly wisdom suggested in his address: ". . . there is a demand for a better system. As to just what should be done, and the form it should assume, I leave to the more able minds of this Assembly. The plans of the Bible should be sought out and followed, and yet much is left in which for us to exercise our own judgment." How well was this said by the man of great outreach!

There were many committees either appointed or selected to serve the Assembly, but even at this early stage of church development the responsibilities of one committee never stymied the progress or duties of another—their coordination was certainly praiseworthy and efficient.

The committee appointed to receive subjects and arrange them to be presented to the Assembly was composed of Geo. T. Brouayer, M. S. Lemons and R. G. Spurling. Some questions concerning the Church were brought to the floor for lengthy discussion, and this was followed by an enlightening discourse by the General Overseer on some of the issues presented.

BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL

The subject of an institution of learning, for the training of workers who need a few months training to make them more efficient workers, and general school or college work, was duly discussed by several speakers who favored such an institution. Strong enthusiasm and faith caused steps to be taken to start the institution.

A committee of three—H. W. McArthur, George T. Brouayer and T. L. McLain—were appointed to select a committee of five who were to locate a place and erect a building for the institution.

They selected as a committee, F. J. Lee, Sam C. Perry, J. W. Buckalew, V. W. Kennedy, George C. Barron. This was accepted and ratified by the Assembly.

Next, a committee was appointed to bring forward names for trustees to hold school or institution property for the Church of God. M. S. Lemons, J. B. Ellis and George C. Barron composed the committee. Trustees were to be subject to the Assembly, and whether serving one year or longer they were to serve until their successors were installed.

EDUCATIONAL BOARD AND PERSONNEL

(Friday, January 6, 1911)

After some discussion of an educational board it was decided the board should comprise seven members. Hence, a committee of three—M. S. Lemons, R. S. Robinson, T. L. McLain—was appointed to present names to constitute the board of education, which board would be empowered to recommend the offices, number of offices and names. This committee reported next day, Friday, January 6th, and recommended the educational board to consist of A. J. Tomlinson, F. J. Lee, Sam C. Perry, H. W. McArthur, George C. Barron, J. B. Ellis and M. S. Lemons. Then in the afternoon the committee completed its report by naming the following officers and offices:

President, A. J. Tomlinson, Cleveland, Tennessee.
Vice President, George C. Barron, Alabama City, Alabama.
Secretary and Treasurer, F. J. Lee, Cleveland, Tennessee.

SUBJECTS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

What is the Church of God?
Upon what laws is it established?
How does it differ from other churches?
What is its highest tribunal?
Who are members of this church?
When do they become members?

When are they or when can they be separated from the body, or in other words, can they be turned out of the church and how?

If women are not allowed to speak in the church (I Corinthians 14), how are they to be dealt with in case of offense?

These subjects were discussed by R. G. Spurling, M. S. Lemons, George C Barron, and lastly referred to by the General Overseer in a short discourse in which "he called attention to the

importance of having the church in perfect order according to God's plan, stating that the part referring to the highest tribunal was not satisfactorily cleared up, and that much depends on us getting everything clear and in perfect order that souls who are now being lost can be saved by a church in perfect order." Many buried their faces in prayer amid tears, groans and sobs, agonizing cries and sufferings. God was moving among His people! They desired more light, more wisdom and knowledge as many of them lay on their faces in prayer and supplication.

CHURCH PAPER NAME CHANGED
(January 6, 1911)

First issue of the Church paper "The Evening Light And Church of God Evangel" came off the press January 10, 1910. It had proved to be a great medium for the distribution of "good things" with which to bless the constituents and followers. However, at this Sixth Assembly the name of the paper was changed to "The Church of God Evangel" and this was to become effective March, 1911.

The Assembly retained the same publishing committee—A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson, Geo. T. Brouayer, and the entire editorial staff continued as heretofore practiced.

Mention was made concerning the purchase of a printing plant, but nothing specially accomplished. (Reference 1911 Minutes)

ORDINATION

SUBJECT: Should our bishops ordain or grant certificates to ministers without the church of which they are members putting them forth for examination and ordination or license?

ANSWER: The church should be consulted and have the setting forth of persons to fill these sacred offices before bishops ordain or license them. (This was the decision after a long discussion among several brethren.)

SUBJECT: Should two bishops be required to act together in ordination, and in no case allow one to act alone?

ANSWER: It was finally decided that one bishop could assist the church of which the applicant is a member in ordaining elders and granting evangelist's certificates. (Minutes 1911 Assembly)

THE DIVORCE QUESTION

Among the many questions asked and answers given was "one

special question about whether to receive persons as members who have been divorced and now living with another man or woman." This was answered by reading the minute of the Third Assembly bearing on the subject, and listed in this history as "The Divorce Problem."

MISSIONARY TO BAHAMA ISLANDS

A letter from R. M. Evans, now a missionary of the Church on the Bahama Islands, was read to the Assembly, and special prayer was offered for the missionary, then amid tears and much weeping of compassion an offering of $21.05 was placed on the open Bible. This was the very first mission field, outside the United States to be touched by the Church of God.

MISSIONARY TO CUBA

On Saturday, January 7th Sam C. Perry delivered a short discourse concerning the Island of Cuba, where he expects to go in February, 1911, about a month from this Assembly.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

From all indications the Assembly welcomed interrogation of the various viewpoints to consider, as well as the doctrines and practices of the Church. It was a convenient way to involve the thinking of the ministers and members of the Assembly. Different questions were discussed openly and exhaustively at times.

QUESTION: What is the evidence of the abiding of the Holy Spirit?

ANSWER: After some discussion all seemed to see eye to eye that "Some manifestations of the graces, gifts and fruits of the Spirit would evidence the abiding of the Spirit."

QUESTION: Can one drop back from the experience of the baptism with the Holy Ghost to sanctification and retain an experience of grace?

ANSWER: It was agreed that such a person does not retain an experience of grace. I John 1:7, and other Scriptures were given as proof. A possibility of being reclaimed from a backslidden condition as shown.

STATE OVERSEERS FIRST APPOINTED
(Saturday, January 7, 1911)

Now came "The propriety of placing an overseer over each state now represented. After considerable discussion it was decided that such action was not only recommendable but in perfect harmony with the Scriptures. Several Scriptures were given as proof." (Minutes of 1911 Assembly)

The Assembly selected the following Overseers:

1. TENNESSEE . . . W. F. Bryant, Cleveland, Tennessee
2. KENTUCKY . . . Sam C. Perry, London, Kentucky
3. NORTH CAROLINA . . . C. R. Curtis, Hayesville, North Carolina
4. VIRGINIA . . . J. J. Lowman, Hiwassee, Virginia
5. GEORGIA . . . H. W. McArthur, Gainesville, Georgia
6. ALABAMA . . . V. W. Kennedy, Adamsville, Alabama
7. FLORIDA . . . J. A. Giddens, Clearwater, Florida
8. BAHAMA ISLANDS . . . R. M. Evans, Nassau, Bahama Islands

DUTIES OF STATE OVERSEERS

Each overseer to have oversight of his state and as much as possible conduct or order a general evangelistic campaign over his state during the year. To see that every church is supplied with a pastor as much as lies in his power.

To secure the names and addresses of every bishop, deacon and evangelist in his state and keep a record of same so he can report to the General Overseer at the close of the year.

To secure the location of every church in the state and keep a record of the same so he can report to the General Overseer at the close of the year.

When a new organization is effected anywhere in the state the information should be sent to the overseer of that state, who should make a record of same, giving date, names of officers etc.

Each overseer should be able to know at any time the name and address of every minister located in his state. He should also know the number of members in his state, and keep a record of the increase as well as the decrease, so total membership can be obtained each year. This can be done by keeping in touch with the clerks of the churches.

Every minister and clerk should take an interest in imparting this information to the overseer of their state.

ASSEMBLY MINUTES TO BE PRINTED

The Assembly decided to have the minutes prepared and printed for distribution, and to make a price on each booklet to cover cost and expenses.

GENERAL OVERSEER SELECTED

A. J. Tomlinson was selected as General Overseer for the year 1911.

Thus closed the business session of the Assembly at 12:00 (M), January 7, 1911 . . . the minutes signed by A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer.

It is to be noted with interest the progress made, new developments set in motion, increase of government with added departments, and better systems offered to initiate greater advance in the work of the Church. The few sermons and messages preached centered around deep spirituality and the increments of church government.

THE ASSEMBLY OF 1911
(Concerning the Minutes)

It is of interest to know that the little booklet of twelve pages, containing the minutes of the Sixth Annual Assembly of the Church of God was printed by the Walter Rogers Press, Cleveland, Tennessee, and it was sold at five cents per copy. The Preface of these minutes is helpful.

"In placing this little booklet before the public it is not without a feeling of humility, but meant for the glory of God and the advancement of the glorious cause of Christ our Saviour.

"The general assembly meets once a year for the purpose of obtaining light and information concerning the Bible Church. This body of Christians is not legislative, nor executive, but judicial only.

"The following pages are the minutes of the sixth annual assembly held January 3-8, 1911.

"We recommend these pages to the honest, sincere, searcher after truth and to those who are interested in seeing the Bible Church re-established on earth with all the graces, gifts and glory

of its former existence. The time for the next annual assembly will be January 7-12, 1912.

A. J. TOMLINSON, General Overseer,
Cleveland, Tennessee." ***

***Business session of the Assembly closed Saturday, January 7th, but the devotionals and spiritual exercises lasted throughout the Sunday services it seemed.

The Impressive Seventh Assembly

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NOT WITHOUT TRIAL OR TEST

Ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ have strange experiences at times, and at other times hardly seem like human beings. Strange things happen to them . . . things that only God understands. They are not usually coddled for failures or mistakes but suffer condemnation to the uttermost when they fail. When he is undergoing fiery tests and trials he is expected to "hold up his chin" and face the world with a smile despite the severe trial or test. More is expected of a minister than any other profession or call to service. Not only is he expected to proclaim the "glad tidings of great joy," the "peace on earth and good will to men," but if necessary defend it to death. This challenge expressed itself in the lives of the last days' Church of God, though it is impossible to refer to all of them here.

When the Holiness Church at Camp Creek was organized May 15, 1902, in the home of W. F. Bryant, it blazed the open way for severe persecution of Bryant and his family who had already sustained tremendous insults. But he stood his ground in the fear of God . . . a leader in the community.

The dynamic "hell-fire" preacher, J. W. Buckalew from Georgia, was slashed so badly the doctors gave him no chance, the hospital denied him, and he was thrown on the back platform of a railway coach and sent home to die. But God brought him through it all. Another time he was in a great revival, the power of God falling and people getting salvation, when the house was broken into, he was knocked unconscious on the floor and the house set afire to burn down and destroy him, but he escaped and lived to proclaim the gospel.

Many others sacrificed and suffered and freely offered their lives in exchange for the redemption of souls, and their deeds and achievements shine as "the stars of the firmament," people say. Not all of them suffered the same things but they suffered in like passion for souls. Unless one has been inside the spiritual kingdom, or realm, and is molded in the crucibles of God's divine love and power, and has found the majestic door to divine, soul-compassion he cannot understand the position of the minister, or preacher. It is something closely akin to God and His unparalleled kingdom. Though people essay to understand, only God knows.

Yet, too often history accounts only for the achievements and the successes of one engaged in certain activities and adventures without a bare mention sometimes of those who helped to make the feat possible. Not everyone can be in the limelight, though some must be. Many a sacrificing, suffering companion of the minister stays home to keep the "flag flying" for the family unit, providing bread and meat, discipline and protection for the home and children, while the husband is reaching souls for the Lord. This sacrifice is sometimes overlooked in the throng.

But it was never overlooked by A. J. Tomlinson in his desire to reach the lost, and to answer the calls that came for help. As General Overseer of the Church he was leader—bold, fearless, tireless, godly, completely "sold-out" to God and the development of His Church. At different times he would be gone for months, crusading for Christ and the Church. His family suffered extremities at times. Sometimes they were without food. Sometimes they suffered disease and other ailments common to man, but the patient, kind, loving companion kept the family together, and they sacrificed and suffered together. Perhaps it is noteworthy to share some of the family sentiment while suffering in his absence during his three months' missionary crusade in the Bahama Islands.

On Friday afternoon, April 7, 1911, A. J. Tomlinson's twenty-year-old daughter Halcy wrote from Cleveland, Tennessee: ". . . I do wish you were at home. We need you oh so bad. Mama is sick again, been pretty sick for about two weeks, but papa, she had the worst spell today she has had at all. Even Brother Bryant gave her up, but I didn't, papa, even though she got so she could hardly talk and was cold. I couldn't think the Lord would forsake us and you out working for Him . . . pray for Homer, he certainly is having a hard time . . . Halcy."

On April 11th, his eighteen-year-old son, Homer wrote: ". . . Mama seems to be awful bad. She last night for the first time consented for us to send for you. It seems almost like the proper thing for you to come . . . she called pitiably for you last night when she was in the very throes of death it seemed . . . Homer."

Then on April 17, 1911, his wife Mary Jane managed to pen a few lines: ". . . so glad the work is still going on, but dear papa, you can't tell how bad you are needed at home till school is out anyway. We are all sure having a test. I am writing this in bed, can hardly stay up long enough for them to make my bed . . . and if you could come take charge until after school is out and help wait on me and help the poor children out that much . . . Your

afflicted Mary." (From the Book "A. J. Tomlinson," by Lillie Duggar)

On April 26th Bishop Tomlinson received a cablegram at Nassau telling him his wife was dangerously ill. When the storm abated he sailed to Florida, and thence by train to Cleveland by April 30th. His children had stood the test, and when the sheriff came to see about calling a doctor, his wife had refused and stood true to the Lord through every test and trial.

Such times try the souls of men! A. J. Tomlinson, and the ministers of the Church had their share. Sometimes "behind the scenes" prove things that are a blessing, especially when the trial and test is over and realized.

SEVENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(January 9-14, 1912)

After an inspiring introductory service the preceding evening the Seventh Annual Assembly opened Tuesday morning, January 9th at 9:30 o'clock with a praise service.

General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson read I Peter, Chapter one, for the Scripture reading, then prayed. Following this he gave his Annual Address of approximately 2,150 words—more than twice the length of last year's address.***

***These Annual Addresses are not listed herein since they are published in separate volumes and may be purchased from the White Wing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee, and should be in the libraries of Christians everywhere.

In his address the General Overseer referred to the First Assembly, and the reasons for having an annual Assembly, preferably in January because of the difficulty of evangelism at this time of the year, as well as it was the beginning of a new year. He praised the unselfishness of the people and spoke to honor and respect the Scriptures. He felt "his usefulness to the churches was minus" but he was still General Overseer. He cautioned against making the same mistakes as were made last year.

He stressed certain points for consideration, and explained that "It is the purpose of this assembly to exchange views, discover if possible and put in motion the perfect New Testament order."

Of the pastoral system he said, "I am sure the Bible provides a perfect system, either in type or antitype . . ."

He pointed to the need of the plan or perfect order of setting

forth and ordaining elders, so essential in the Church, saying, "A church can never advance higher than the ministry." He warned against making rules or laws, and encouraged the searching of the Scriptures to find the perfect plan outlined therein.

He stressed the importance of Church government harmonizing perfectly with the Bible, so as to be able to court the favor of God and expect His approval and blessings.

He mentioned the Bible theme of perfection, saying, ". . . the fullness of the times so demands perfection that we cannot afford to meet here for mere fellowship . . ."

Concerning the financial requirements of the Church he said, "We feel sure that God is not well pleased with our haphazard way of securing money for the running expenses. If the standard or perfect system can be discovered and put into operation, surely we would have God's approval . . ."

In his desire to reach unexplored fields of endeavor he enthusiastically declared "the world ought to be evangelized in our generation, and we should not dare to thrust this responsibility on a future generation. Every State Superintendent (Overseer) ought to make a desperate effort to so conduct an evangelistic campaign in his State that at the close of 1915 he can cry out with Paul and say, 'This message has been given to every creature in my State.' It is time to push out into new territory." This feeling seemed created by mutual respect of the gospel.

The desire of the Church was to reach the lost with the message of salvation and strive for the more perfect plan of keeping all fruit for the Master. Though plans for process and development, and additional phases of government, were essential to progress, the Church contended for the spiritual power and strength from God to undergird their faith, and be the thematic principle and drive in promulgating the gospel of Christ and His Church. They were not "playing Church." The actual scene that followed the address by the General Overseer was the very apotheosis of spiritual and divine chivalry.***

***"When he spoke about the great need of more pastors, and how the wolves were destroying the flocks on account of the absence and shortage of shepherds, the burden became so great that he had to discontinue the discourse for an interval of several minutes, while the hearers prostrated themselves before God in tears, weeping and intercessory prayers with groanings of the Spirit."

CHURCHES REPORT BY STATES

For the first time in its history the churches reported by states:

ALABAMA	V. W. KENNEDY, Overseer
Number of Churches 11	Number of Deacons 23
Number of Members ...423	Number of Evangelists 9
Number of Bishops 6	Churches that have Sun. Schools 6
FLORIDA	J. A. GIDDENS, Overseer
Number of Churches 24	Number of Deacons 35
Number of Members ...804	Number of Evangelists 8
Number of Bishops 12	Churches that have Sun. Schools 8
GEORGIA	H. W. McARTHOR, Overseer
Number of Churches 10	Number of Deacons 13
Number of Members ...226	Number of Evangelists 1
Number of Bishops 2	Churches that have Sun. Schools 3
NORTH CAROLINA	C. R. CURTIS, Overseer
Number of Churches 1	Number of Deacons 2
Number of Members 38	Number of Evangelists 4
Number of Bishops 1	Churches that have Sun. Schools 0
TENNESSEE	W. F. BRYANT, Overseer
Number of Churches....14	Number of Deacons 14
Number of Members ...680	Number of Evangelists 9
Number of Bishops 13	Churches that have Sun. Schools 4
VIRGINIA	J. J. LOWMAN, Overseer
Number of Churches 4	Number of Deacons 1
Number of Members 29	Number of Evangelists 0
Number of Bishops 1	Churches that have Sun. Schools 0
BAHAMA ISLANDS	R. M. EVANS, Overseer
Number of Churches 2	Number of Deacons 4
Number of Members 41	Number of Evangelists 1
Number of Bishops 0	Churches that have Sun. Schools 0

NEW MEXICO

Number of Churches 2	Number of Deacons 3
Number of Members 53	Number of Evangelists 0
Number of Bishops 3	Churches that have Sun. Schools 2

RECAPITULATION

Total number of Churches 68	Total number Bishops 38
Total number Members 2,294	Total number Deacons 95
	Total number Evangelists 32
	Total having Sun. Schools ... 23

MOUNTAIN ASSEMBLY UNION

Tuesday afternoon, January 9th, the General Overseer told of his visit to the Mountain Assembly in Eastern Kentucky, and how they had offered themselves to the General Assembly of the Churches of God, and had appointed messengers to attend this Assembly for the purpose of forming a union. He introduced the two representatives, John H. Parks and Stephen Bryant, and both of them spoke their favor of a union.

Jonah L. Shelton, editor of the Mountain Evangel, offered his subscription list to the Church of God Evangel. Said he would use his influence for the latter and have one paper instead of two. The proposition was accepted by the publishing committee and the Assembly.

A committee of five—V. W. Kennedy, Ala., M. S. Lemons, Ga., J. J. Lowman, Va., J. W. Murrah, Fla., S. C. Perry, Ky.—was appointed to confer with the Mountain Assembly representatives concerning the union.

On Saturday morning, January 13th the committee gave its report to the Assembly, which included a letter embracing the terms of the union, and the Assembly accepted the report. The committee had spent much time in its deliberation, with forethought and consideration. Text of the letter follows:

"The General Assembly of the Churches of God, held January 9-14, 1912, at Cleveland, Tenn.

"To the Mountain Assembly of the Churches of God:

Greeting in the name of Jesus, our great law-giver.

Your kind greetings by letter and in person at the hands of your honorable representatives or messengers, John A. Parks, Stephen Bryant, Jonah L. Shelton, Wm. Hicks and J. M. Thomas, are received with gratitude and appreciation, unanimously; and your

worthy messengers are granted a place with us in our Assembly. In spirit they are received at once.

In conference, we, the General Assembly of the Churches of God have arranged as a basis of union the following, to wit:

First, we receive your Assembly as a whole.

Second, that we receive those of your ministers and deacons in their respective positions who are free from the use of tobacco and have the experience of the baptism with the Holy Ghost evidenced by the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance, and have but one living wife.

That your ministers receive credentials from the Church of God.

Your worthy messengers agreed to, and have accepted the above proposition and terms of union, and in concurrence with the same we have formally and openly received you all into fellowship with us, by giving to your honorable messengers the right hand of fellowship.

These, your worthy messengers, will tell you the same by word of mouth, and how the Spirit also witnessed and endorsed the union by the manifestation of His presence.

The General Assembly will expect you to hold your annual assemblies if you desire to do so, but require you to recognize the General Assembly as the Supreme Assembly and council.

The General Assembly further invites you to receive and recognize the State Overseers for Kentucky and Tennessee, as they will be some assistance to you in the adjustment of affairs and the further perfection of the union; and time will be given you for adjustment on all lines.

We further heartily wish you to feel that we are now all united in full fellowship and love, and that the tie be so strong that it will remain unbroken until the return of our Lord and Christ.

Yours for oneness and love,
THE ASSEMBLY"

"After the brethren representing the churches of the Mountain Assembly accepted the conditions of union they were asked by the Moderator to come forward and take their places on the rostrum, while the members of the Assembly stood to show them honor. Then, with their right hands lifted to God, all began to pour out their souls to Him in prayer and praise. Suddenly the Spirit began to manifest His presence, and approved of the union in such a remarkable manner that all were forced to drop on their knees, and with full hearts offered up praise and thanksgiving for the answering of the Savior's prayer, 'That they all may be one.'

After the tide of joy seemed to abate the whole body of churches of the Mountain Assembly were formally received by the General Overseer giving to the Mountain Assembly's messengers the right hand of fellowship, as the whole Assembly were in a standing position. The Holy Ghost manifested His delight and pleasure in tongues and other manifestations.

All the Bishops then passed around in order and gave to the brethren the right hand of fellowship, then the deacons, then the evangelists, then all the Assembly, both men and women. Such a spirit of love and unity was manifested that many were pressed to say, 'Oh, how they love each other!'

The Assembly while standing began singing, 'Old time religion,' and shaking hands. Tears were in almost all eyes, and under the white heat of God's love, all present were melted into one solid mass of love and fellowship. All then kneeled down and were led in prayer by Jonah L. Shelton. 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.' Ps. 133:1."***

***Later, the Mountain Assembly failed to accept the terms agreed to by the members of their committee, so the union was not formed.

ARTICLES OF BUSINESS

Following the devotional at 9:30, Wednesday morning, January 10th, A committee composed of George C. Barron, George T. Brouayer and J. J. Lowman was appointed to receive and arrange subjects and questions to be presented to the Assembly.

Last year's committee—A. J. Tomlinson, F. J. Lee, Sam C. Perry, H. W. McArthur, George C. Barron, J. B. Ellis, M. S. Lemons—appointed to locate a place for the educational institution reported unable to locate a place, as yet. The same committee was retained, and the same school board was continued.

The publishing committee reported. A. J. Lawson told how the Church paper started March 1910, without a single subscriber and not a cent, but on January 1, 1912 the paper was in debt $123.18 with 2,135 subscribers. An Assembly contribution to help clear up the indebtedness was $31.00. The same committee consisting of A. J. Tomlinson, T. L. McLain, Flavius J. Lee, M. S. Lemons, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson and George T. Brouayer was retained. M. S. Lemons replaced Julia M. Divine as Corresponding Editor.

Except for the noon recess, Thursday, January 11th business procedures and discussions consumed the day from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. In a letter to the Assembly R. M. Singleton, of New Mexico, suggested that Sunday School literature be prepared along Pentecostal lines, but the Assembly felt the time was premature for such an undertaking.

ORDINATION CHANGED

"What are the Bible qualifications for a bishop? Who has the right to ordain? Can a man be a bishop who has a living wife and cannot live with her?" These three questions formed the composites of a subject of prime concern. After some consideration the Assembly selected M. S. Lemons to address them on the subject. After introducing the chosen speaker the Moderator reminded the august body that the Church government was neither democratic nor republican in form—but theocratic—a government by the immediate direction of God.

Lemons read I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Following his discourse it was decided that a man could not hold the office of bishop if he had a wife and could not live with her, but in some cases such a person might be granted an evangelist's license. Though discussed by several the question was not fully settled. At length the Assembly asked the General Overseer to speak on the subject.

Acquiescing to the demands of the Assembly, the General Overseer began by saying: "It has not been the custom for the moderator to take part in the discussions in the assemblies of the past, but at your request, and by your consent, I'll speak." He gave a short discourse concerning the apostles and the Spirit of God fell so forcibly that all felt God was in it, and unanimously agreed on a change of ordination at once.

A committee composed of A. J. Tomlinson, F. J. Lee, M. S. Lemons, Sam C. Perry and George C. Barron was appointed to consider the subject and draft a plan to recommend to the Assembly.

On Friday, January 12th the committee reported to the Assembly:

"We, the committee, have concluded that in the absence of apostles the authority to ordain should be in the Assembly, and those to whom said Assembly invest such authority. It is further agreed that for the present need the state overseers act as a presbytery in cooperation with the General Overseer, each overseer acting in his state."

The report was unanimously accepted. A note and explanation followed: "It is understood that all bishops, deacons and evangelists can set churches in order so far as to administering the obligation and joining them together by the right hand of fellowship.*** Such churches thus organized can recommend who in their judgment are fitted or qualified for bishops, deacons or evangelists and report same to the overseer of state, who in turn will take up the matter with the General Overseer, and plans will be arranged for examinations and ordinations. It is not expected that the General Overseer do all the ordaining, but none to be done without conferring with him either in person or by letter, if such has to be done before the General Assembly meets.

"It is also advised that the presbytery fast before laying hands on in ordination. Acts 13:3; 14:23; I Timothy 4:14."

***The responsibilities and work of Female Evangelists are governed by the license issued them.

CONCERNING UNION OF ELHANON INSTITUTE

At the request of Mrs. Mattie Perry, a committee—A. J. Tomlinson, J. B. Mitchell and Sam C. Perry—was selected to go to Elhanon, N. C., January 15, 1912, and confer with her about a union of Elhanon Institute with the Churches of God for a school and orphanage.

The Assembly contributed $13.65 to help pay railroad fare of the committee to Elhanon, and $335 was pledged to the school if the union was formed and the money needed.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SEVENTH ASSEMBLY

The question and answer period was Friday, January 12, 1912.

QUESTION: If a man or woman has been married and divorced one or more times, as the case may be, before he or she is saved, would the Church of God be justifiable in receiving such as members?

*ANSWER: In answer to the question the minutes of the Assembly of 1911 on that point were read and accepted.****

***The Third Assembly, January 10, 1908: The Divorce Problem . . . a great issue at the time was brought up and discussed at different times. The Third Assembly, January 10,

1908, said: "After hours of discussion and searching of the Scripture and an extra session that lasted until after midnight besides, a real decision was never reached, but it was finally agreed to extend the subject another year. However it was decided that (there was only one cause granted for a divorce that would leave either party innocent and at liberty to marry again, and that was fornication or adultery. It was advised that it was really the safest for all parties to remain unmarried who were divorced for any cause. It was further decided that none who are divorced and married again are eligible to membership in the Lord's Church except the innocent party of Matthew 5:32 or perchance it might be the woman who is the innocent party). And these were the contraverted points that were extended for further consideration. It was recommended by the Assembly that this subject should have due attention in receiving members into the church."

***The Fourth Assembly, January 8, 1909 said: "The minute of the Assembly of 1908, referring to marriage and divorce was read and the subject duly discussed and considered. The sentence of this Assembly, therefore, is to let the minute of 1908 remain unchanged but in addition to insert the following clause, viz—In case of a man who has two living wives wishing to connect himself with the church, also in case of a woman having two living husbands desiring the same, we recommend that the church to which they wish to unite, appoint a committee to investigate the case, and for the church then to act according to the advice given by the Assembly, the best light and knowledge obtained by the church and guidance of the Holy Spirit."

QUESTION: If a man or woman be engaged to marry a second time when they get saved, would it be lawful according to God's Word to break the engagement, or would they be considered as already married?

ANSWER: They would not be considered married until the ceremony was performed according to the laws of the country, and the engagement could be severed.

QUESTION: Which would be the proper emblem to use at the Lord's supper, water, grape juice, or fermented wine?

ANSWER: Pure grape juice. Matthew 26:29.

QUESTION: In observing the ordinance of feet washing, should one or both feet be washed?

ANSWER: Both feet. John 13:10-14.

QUESTION: Is water baptism obligatory when one is freed from all evil habits and sanctified?

ANSWER: Yes, all should be baptized, even if they

have been baptized with the Holy Ghost before they were baptized with water. Acts 10:47, 48.

QUESTION: Can the Church of God fellowship one who has not taken on the Lord in baptism?

ANSWER: Water baptism is not a door into the church, and is an act of obedience after one is converted, hence the fellowship is unbroken, provided such a one will be baptized at the first opportunity, and not reject the ordinance.

QUESTION: Should not a pastor in the Church of God be as blameless as a bishop?

ANSWER: Bishops are to be the pastors. If for any reason any other person should act as a pastor his life should be very pure and upright. I Timothy 4:12.

QUESTION: What about selling tobacco and rolling cigars when their bread and meat depend on this labor?

ANSWER: You might do such work, a little while, until you can have time to change your vocation, but to continue it you will soon get under a cloud of condemnation. (See Sixth Assembly Minutes, Page 46.)

SELECTION OF STATE OVERSEERS
(For Assembly Year 1912)

Appointed Friday, January 12th, to select names for state overseers and present them to the Assembly, the committee consisting of M. S. Haynes, J. W. Murray and F. J. Lee, reported to the Assembly Saturday afternoon, January 13th, and recommended the following for overseers:

ALABAMA ..... George C. Barron, Alabama City, Ala.
FLORIDA ..... M. S. Lemons, Valdosta, Georgia
GEORGIA ..... George T. Brouayer, Valdosta, Georgia
KENTUCKY ..... Sam. C. Perry, London, Kentucky
TENNESSEE ..... T. L. McLain, Cleveland, Tennessee
VIRGINIA ..... J. J. Lowman, Hiwassee, Virginia
BAHAMA ISLANDS .. R. M. Evans, Nassau, N. P., Bahamas

NOTE: The state of Kentucky was added, but the states of North Carolina and New Mexico were left off the list. New Mexico was admitted to the Union January 6, 1912, and was recognized a mere three days before this Assembly began. The General Overseer reported two churches with fifty-three members, and two Sunday Schools, there.

The report was accepted as read, and after a few thrilling remarks by the committeemen they fell on their faces at the altar, amid tears and prayers. God seemed to hover over them in an unusual way. Only J. J. Lowman of Virginia and R. M. Evans of Bahama Islands were not changed.

GENERAL OVERSEER SELECTED

The Assembly unanimously selected A. J. Tomlinson as General Overseer for the year 1912, by acclamation.

PARTIAL REVIEW OF ASSEMBLY EVENTS

When the State Overseers spoke of their work they honored God for all accomplishments, and gladly faced the future with a thrilling expectancy of greater achievements for God and His Church. The essence can be summed up in the remarks by W. F. Bryant: "I believe the coming year will be the most prosperous in the history of the Church. Oh, it's coming, brother you needn't doubt it. I hear the mighty rumbling of the gospel chariot as it comes sweeping through the land crushing down all opposition, carrying the Church into complete and overwhelming victory."

The inspiring Annual Address by General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson was both dynamic and appealing. F. J. Lee and George C. Barron brought powerful messages. R. M. Evans' report by letter, concerning the work in the Bahama Islands was thrilling and touching, as he explained of the good and fruitful work accomplished by the General Overseer and the party of thirteen who spent about three months on a missionary journey to the Bahama Islands last year. J. W. Buckalew stirred the Assembly when he spoke about evangelization. M. S. Lemons, who seemed adept at promoting government in the Church preached on that subject. Elder R. G. Spurling, unable to attend, was remembered as a dear father in the gospel work. V. W. Kennedy's evangelistic sermon blessed, as did the service conducted by George T. Brouayer. F. J. Lee preached a stirring message on "Demonology." A. J. Lawson demonstrated "A Model Sunday School" and brought a discourse. Sam C. Perry's sermon was on "The Deeper Life." Many of these names had become familiar to the Church, besides those whose names are listed elsewhere on the program.

The Seventh Annual Assembly closed Sunday afternoon, January 14, 1912.

NOTE: Duties of the State Overseers were re-affirmed and listed in the Minutes but not included in the Book of Minutes. Also the names of those attending from a distance, as well as the Teachings of the Church of God, listing twenty-five prominent teachings in 1912, which this history is listing for record.

ATTENDANCE AT SEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Names and addresses of those from a distance who attended the Seventh Annual Assembly at Cleveland, Tennessee:

Austin, T. R., Chattanooga, Tenn.
Boutwell, J. M., Boaz, Alabama
Barron, Geo. C., Alabama City, Ala.
Bryan, Stephen, Jellico, Tenn.
Brouayer, G. T., Chattanooga, Tenn.
Brouayer, Mrs. G. T., Chattanooga, Tenn.
Bucklew, J. W., Lafayette, Ga.
Buckalew, Mrs. J. W., Lafayette, Ga.
Burks, John, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Curtis, C. R., Hayesville, N. C.
Cooper, R. L., Coosa, Ga.
Chambers, F. G., Culberson, N. C.
Chambers, Mrs. Nora, Culberson, N. C.
Coleman, W. M., Tellico Plains, Tenn.
Cotton, Mrs. Lorena, Kimberly, Ala.
Davis, J. A., Copper Hill, Tenn.
Davis, Cora, Trion, Ga.
DeCumbe, Mr., Formerly Cleveland, O.
Entrikin, T. L., Alabama City, Ala.
Entrikin, Mrs. T. L., Alabama City, Ala.
Free, L. J., Waynesville, N. C.
Frees, Wm., Byington, Tenn.
Guthrie, L. R., Kimberly, Ala
Guthrie, S. F., Nashville, Tenn.
Gantt, J. E., Jacksonville, Fla.
Gable, Mrs. Carrie, Tallapoosa, Ga.
Haynes, Geneva, Kimberly, Ala.
Haynes, M. S., Kimberly, Ala.
Hicks, Wm., Jacksboro, Tenn.
Hicks, E. J., Jacksboro, Tenn.
Hoghn, S. L., Ridgedale, Tenn.
Hoghn, Mrs. S. L., Ridgedale, Tenn.
Jones, Amanda, Trion, Ga.
Koon, M. H. Byington, Tenn.
Kennedy, V. W., Empire, Ala.
Lowman, J. J., Hiwassee, Va.
Lively, W. H., Dayton, Tenn.
Llewellyn, J. S., Byington, Tenn.
Lemons, M. S., Valdosta, Ga.
Letsinger, M. W., Byington, Tenn.
Lewis, L. V., Amoy, China
Latimer, S. W., Spring Place, Ga.
Murray, J. W., Jacksonville, Fla.
Mostetler, L. B., Hayesville, N. C.
Mostetler, H. E., Cumberland, Wyoming
Mitchell, J. B., Jellico, Tenn.
McPherson, J. W., Chattanooga, Tenn.
Owens, A. D., Armuchee, Ga.
Parks, John H., Emlyn, Ky.
Perry, Sam. C., London, Ky.
Russell, J. A., Tellico Plains, Tennessee
Shelton, Jonah L., Emlyn, Ky.
Shriner, Chas. H., Spring Place, Ga.
Scott, J. L., Ridgedale, Tenn.
Scott, Mrs. Mary, Ridgedale, Tenn.
Treadway, J. T., Coosa, Ga.
Thomas, Josiah M., Jellico, Tenn.
White, J. W., Lafayette, Ga.

TEACHINGS

THE CHURCH OF GOD

Stands for the whole Bible rightly divided. The New Testament is the only rule for government and discipline. Below is given some of the teaching that is made prominent:

1. Repentance—Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19.
2. Justification—Rom. 5:1; Titus 3:7.
3. Regeneration—Titus 3:5.
4. New Birth—John 3:3; I Peter 1:23; I John 3:9.

5. Sanctification subsequent to Justification—Rom. 5:2; I Cor. 1:30; I Thess. 4:3; Heb. 13:12.
6. Holiness—Luke 1:75; I Thess. 4:7; Heb. 12:14.
7. Water Baptism—Matt. 28:19; Mark 1:9, 10; John 3:22, 23; Acts 8:36-38.
8. Baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to cleansing. The enduement of power for service; Matt. 3:11; Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:4-8.
9. The speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism with the Holy Ghost—John 15:26; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-7.
10. The full restoration of the gifts to the church—I Cor. 12:1, 7, 10, 28, 31; 14:1.
11. Signs following believers—Mark 16:17-20; Rom. 15:18, 19; Heb. 2:4.
12. Fruits of the Spirit—Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 5:9; Phil. 1:11.
13. Divine healing provided for all in the atonement—Ps. 103:3; Isa. 53:4, 5; Matt. 8:17; Jas. 5:14-16; I Peter 2:24.
14. The Lord's Supper—Luke 22:17-20; I Cor. 11:23-26.
15. Washing the saints' feet—John 13:4-17; I Tim. 5:9, 10.
16. Tithing and giving—Gen. 14:18-20; 28:20-22; Mal. 3:10; Luke 11:42; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-9; Heb. 7:1-21.
17. Restitution where possible—Matt. 3:8; Luke 19:8, 9.
18. Pre-millennial second coming of Jesus. First to resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to meet him in the air. Matt. 24:27, 28; I Cor. 15:51, 52; I Thess. 4:15-17. Second to reign on the earth a thousand years. Zech. 14:4; I Thess. 4:14; II Thess. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14, 15; Rev. 5:10; 19:11-21; 20:4-6.
19. Resurrection—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:5, 6.
20. Eternal life for the righteous—Matt. 25:46; Luke 18:30; John 10:28; Rom. 6:22; I John 5:11-13.
21. Eternal punishment for the wicked. No liberation nor annihilation—Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 3:29; II Thess. 1:8, 9; Rev. 20:10-15; 21:8.
22. Total abstinence from all liquor or strong drinks. Prov. 20:1; 23:29-32; Isa. 28:7; I Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Gal. 5:21.
23. Against the use of tobacco in any form, opium, morphine, etc.—Isa. 55:2; I Cor. 10:31, 32; II Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:3-8; Jas. 1:21.
24. Meats and drinks—Rom. 14:2, 3, 17; I Cor. 8:8; I Tim. 4:1-5.
25. The Sabbath—Hosea 2:12; Rom. 14:5, 6; 13:1, 2; Col. 2:16, 17.

Encouraging Events Eighth Annual Assembly and Others in 1913

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EIGHTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(January 7-12, 1913)

Similar to the previous Assemblies the progress of last year's work (1912) was reported at this annual gathering at Cleveland, Tennessee. Bishop A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Churches of God, had spent much of his time on the field, doing evangelistic work and organizing churches. At Ethelville, Alabama, he took Z. D. Simpson (pastor five churches) and two hundred members into the Church of God. Besides his zealous efforts to reach the unconverted masses he had the weight and care of all the organized churches upon him, helping the pastors, discussing and advising them in their problems when he could, and duties in Headquarters offices, and editing and publishing the Church paper. The work grew by leaps and bounds but it seemed that none of the evangelists or ministers could outstrip their General Overseer.

The Eighth Assembly was conducted in the usual pattern. A. J. Tomlinson was General Overseer and moderator. As customary fiery singing ushered in the fellowship and reception and the meeting got into full swing, with a compendium of songs, prayers, committee appointments, sermons, addresses, discussions of important increments of Church government, reports, and miscellaneous suggestions that sometimes manifested a degree of ineptitude. However, little criticism was reflected during the Assembly since the august body of devoted Christians kept prayerful, and often "fell upon their faces before God." The Assembly seemed an inexpressible bliss to the enthusiastic throng that crowded the building.

Assembled under their own respective banners representatives from the different states responded with song when introduced by the General Overseer. Final report showed 119 ministers, 104 churches and 3,056 members.

This Assembly address was the third given by the General Overseer and comprised approximately 3,500 words, and with a vision indicative of contemplated growth and expansion he indited a memorable paragraph:

"Knowing the far-reaching influence of this, the Eighth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God, should make us all the more

careful about our thoughts, actions and words. Knowing that we are making history should surely be an incentive to us to do our best. Every subject should be carefully, prayerfully and wisely dealt with. Every decision must be strictly made by the Bible or in harmony with it."***

***The very first measure adopted at the First Assembly, held January 26, 27, 1906, in the home of J. C. Murphy, Cherokee County, North Carolina, was: "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only."

In an effort to arrive at a more perfect system of Church government according to the Bible the General Overseer suggested in his address:

1. Review the decision made during the Sixth Assembly concerning State Overseers. Some had questioned whether or not it was Scriptural.
2. Review the subject of "Ordination" that was passed unanimously by the Seventh Assembly.
3. The Divorce and Remarriage question was still unsettled. He encouraged finding the Bible answer.
4. He preferred a perfect understanding of the Bible plan for selecting pastors for the churches.
5. There must be a Scriptural money system for the Church.***

***Up until now, though mentioned before by the General Overseer, no financial system had been established by the Church of God. No systematic Assembly approach had been designated to care for ministers, yet some churches had practiced tithing and giving for some time.

ACTIONS OF PAST ASSEMBLIES

Tuesday afternoon, January 7th, at 3:00 o'clock, F. J. Lee's address was on "Confirmation of Actions of Past Assemblies." This was urgent since some of those especially who missed a particular Assembly found it convenient to question some decisions that were passed during such an Assembly, and these things presented problems at times. In his address Lee stressed several important things, especially those relative to decisions and how they were made, as a rule.

He said, ". . . Some have said that the Church received their instructions from the apostles, that they were the last overseers. Let us look at verse 22 in the same chapter. (Acts 15) 'Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church.' Then

verse 28, 'It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.' Was it the apostles alone controlling the Church? No, it wasn't enough to say it pleased the apostles—but the elders also, and that was hardly satisfactory so he said the 'whole Church.' Then he also recognized the Holy Ghost as leading.

"What was the whole Church? The apostles and elders belonged to the Church, also many at Jerusalem that have not been mentioned, then the delegates that came with Paul were counted in the number as the whole Church, with James as the General Overseer . . . showing that the sentence passed by James was to affect every church, bringing him in as a General Overseer, or having care of all the churches . . . the General Overseer acting for the Assembly in the absence of the Assembly . . . It is the will of God that the churches be obedient to the General Overseer."

PLAN FOR SELECTION OF OVERSEERS
(January 8, 1913)

The Committee—R. M. Singleton, W. F. Bryant, J. B. Ellis, W. R. Hadsock, F. J. Lee—appointed to recommend Bible plan for the selection of General and state overseers, reported "that they could find no better plan than the one found in the Word: That the General Overseer be selected by the entire body as represented at the Annual Assembly by acclamation, and that the state overseers be appointed by the General Overseer."***

***A second part of this report has been set aside under the heading "If General Overseer's Office Is Declared Vacant." This permits convenience for further study, and follows.

IF GENERAL OVERSEER'S OFFICE IS DECLARED VACANT
(January 8, 1913)

"If the office of General Overseer should be declared vacant, a General Overseer shall be selected by the state overseers to fill the office until the next Annual Assembly." (Book of Minutes, Page 97)

SELECTION OF GENERAL OVERSEER—1913

"The Committee's report" to recommend a plan to select General and state overseers was re-read and as it became the duty of the General Overseer to select and appoint the state overseers it

was thought best to select the General Overseer at this time.

"The Holy Ghost set His seal upon the suggestion that the same one should retain his position, and that he was the one chosen of God for General Overseer. The power fell on some and the Spirit gave a message which was interpreted as follows: 'The smile of the Lord is upon him.' This so deeply touched Brother Tomlinson that he fell upon his face weeping mightily. The entire Assembly fell upon their faces with weeping and prayers of thanksgiving to God for making the selection in such a marked supernatural way.

"Then all arose and marched around and gave him their hand amid tears and shouts . . ." (Book of Minutes, Page 101)***

***Bishop A. J. Tomlinson was selected to serve as General Overseer . . . done in acclamation in the face of the Assembly, and it would seem absurd to think otherwise.

ADDRESS OF ACCEPTANCE

Perhaps a few excerpts from his address will suffice, and enable readers to view the traits of Christian character manifested. He said, ". . . I shall walk before God with fear and trembling . . . recently I have been specially praying for wisdom and knowledge . . . God give me wisdom! It seems too much, beloved—" (He wept aloud) ". . . I may make mistakes—I am only a man. If I should make mistakes won't you bear with me and tell me of them . . . I am determined by the help of God to do my best . . . I believe I love the Church well enough to die for it. I believe I love the people enough to give my life for them. I believe I love my Savior well enough to die for Him . . . While you pray for me don't forget to pray for my little wife. We go along together." (At this time he had another spell of weeping.) He later kneeled down and had Elder R. G. Spurling to lay hands upon him and pray for him.

TIME TO HOLD ASSEMBLY CHANGED
(January 9, 1913)

Thursday morning, January 9th, at 9:30 o'clock, "it was here decided to have the time for the Assembly changed to autumn, the exact date to be fixed by the church at Cleveland." (From 1913 Assembly Minutes)

Date for the next General Assembly was fixed for the first Tuesday in November, this year, and by this have two Assemblies in 1913. (Ibid.)

RECOMMENDED PLAN FOR ORDINATION
(January 10, 1913)

Concerning the subject of ordination the Assembly recommended:

"The local church of which each applicant for the ministry is a member, whether it be for bishop, deacon or evangelist, shall take action in regular order in recommending such applicant. The notice of such action shall be given to the state overseer who in turn will take up the matter with the General Overseer. The state and General Overseers are to compose the presbytery for examinations and ordinations, each state overseer acting in his own state. In case of ordinations in states or territory where no state overseer has been appointed the General Overseer has authority in such cases.

"It is not expected that the General Overseer do all the ordaining or licensing, but none to be done without conferring with him either in person or by letter. It was also recommended that the General Overseer sign all certificates." (Minutes of Eighth Annual Assembly, 1913)

FINANCIAL SYSTEM FOR THE CHURCH

Though tithing and giving had been taught in the Church for some time the Assembly had not to this time adopted a systematic financial system for the Church. The General Overseer selected A. J. Lawson (who had received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, Tuesday night, January 7, 1913) to speak on the financial system. The Assembly adopted its first financial system at the Eighth Annual Assembly. It seemed to follow the system practiced by the Church at Cleveland. The system:

1. Members and friends bring their tithes (a tenth of all income) to the storehouse—the Church. The local Church treasurer would then send one tenth (tithes of tithes received) to the state overseer for his income in the ministry. The balance of nine-tenths to be kept in the local Church treasury to pay the pastor and for other ministerial expenses.

2. The state overseer, in turn, would tithe his income (his portion received, along with his offerings) and send his tithes to the General Overseer. All to be done of a free will. The Israelites under the Law of Moses were a good example. This was a major step forward in the financial structure of the Church.

OTHER ASSEMBLY EVENTS

Familiar names appeared on the Assembly program again, and it was at this Assembly that J. S. Llewllyn brought a message on Sunday School, perhaps his first in the Assembly. Along with M. S. Lemons and M. S. Haynes, J. S. Llewllyn helped to comprise the Committee to receive questions and subjects for consideration by the Assembly.

The same Publishing Committee was retained, with R. M. Singleton and J. L. Scott additional members. A. J. Tomlinson was chosen editor and publisher of the Church of God Evangel.

Pastors were warned to keep false teachers out of the pulpit—to close the doors to those not recognized by the Church of God to teach in the Church, but advised not to be too radical in every instance.

The General Overseer explained that his first pastorate was when the church was called the Holiness Church at Camp Creek, and finally the Assembly designated it the Church of God. He said he needed to be stationed in one place this year.

The trustees for the educational institution were released, as well as the school board, since starting the school was still premature.

The Assembly decided to postpone for another year discussions and decision for a more perfect plan of selecting the pastors.

The Assembly adopted, or accepted the Church and pastor's endorsement blanks, examination certificates and transfer blanks.

The General Overseer was burdened over some division that had come about by too much talk, and frankly said that everything had not gone along as well as he had hoped for and anticipated. He warned against small frivolous ideas and opinions, and against caviling over minor things. However, he praised the attendance of about 400 people, and certainly unity prevailed in spite of the minor occurrences.

STATE OVERSEERS APPOINTED FOR 1913

1. ALABAMA ..... J. B. Ellis
2. BAHAMA ISLANDS ..... C. M. Padgett
3. COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA ..... R. M. Singleton
4. GEORGIA ..... Geo. C. Barron
5. MISSISSIPPI ..... Z. D. Simpson
6. SOUTH CAROLINA ..... H. B. Simmons

7. VIRGINIA ..... J. J. Lowman

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (1913)

QUESTION: Can a man hold an office in the Church of God who has not been baptized with the Holy Ghost?

ANSWER: Referring to bishops, deacons and evangelists, no. One without the baptism could serve as clerk, merely for the keeping of records, if otherwise suitable.

QUESTION: Should children who have the Holy Ghost be allowed to go to school where their parents are persecuted?

ANSWER: If children are able to bear such without being overcome it will make them stronger, but the parents will have to look into such matters and decide for themselves.

QUESTION: How may we discern interpretations?

ANSWER: By being in close touch with the Lord yourself, and being assured that the interpreter is clean and pure in every sense.

QUESTION: What must be done with a member who has the Holy Ghost and "must have just a little bit of tobacco"?

ANSWER: This question gave rise to considerable discussion and careful consideration of the tobacco subject. The sentiment of the Assembly was finally obtained and a decision made. All our ministers and local churches are to refuse to accept any who use tobacco into the Church under any circumstances. Those who are already in the Church who use it are to be dealt with in love, given ample time, only a few weeks, and if they fail to abstain they are to be disfellowshipped.

QUESTION: Can anyone belonging to a lodge or secret order be received into the Church of God?

ANSWER: This question has been amply dealt with in the past and the answer is emphatically, No!

QUESTION: Can anyone belonging to the United Coal Miners' Association be received into the Church of God?

ANSWER: The question might cover labor unions of all kinds. This matter has been looked into and studied carefully from every viewpoint. The time will come when we cannot buy or sell unless we have the mark of the beast in hand or forehead. It is a matter of bread and butter, but we do not dare to compromise and be bound by an order to

bestow a favor upon a member of such order in preference to a brother of the household of faith. The question has been answered before with a positive, No!

QUESTION: Is anyone having more than one husband or wife, with or without divorce eligible to membership in the Church of God?

ANSWER: This question has been answered over and over from year to year as far as it has been decided by the Assembly. We can do no better than to refer all inquirers to page 27 (Book of Minutes, THIRD ASSEMBLY, 1908). It is recommended that none who have been divorced and remarried should present themselves for membership. If any of this class wish to join they should speak privately to the minister and investigation and answer will be given. This subject should have ample attention given it in receiving members into the Church.

QUESTION: Can we afford to adorn our bodies with gold or pearls or costly array? (See I Timothy 2:9; I Peter 3:3).

ANSWER: Unnecessary jewelry, such as finger rings, bracelets, earbobs, lockets, and other kinds for mere adornment should not be worn. Gold teeth, gold-rimmed spectacles, watch cases and things specially useful are left for the individual to decide.

QUESTION: Is it a sin to drink coffee, eat meat etc. and wear collars and ties?

ANSWER: Some have gotten into erroneous ideas because they do not see the weightier things and the reason of this is for a lack of knowledge. It might be well to speak of coffee occasionally in private conversation regarding its stimulating effect as it gives some people the headache to do without it. I believe our folks would be better off without it, but we cannot bring it in the Church as a doctrine. We should be careful about saying harsh, rasping things about it that would wound the feelings of our brothers and sisters.

Pork may not be good for some people and we might all be better off if we did not use it, but if one wants to eat it and another does not there should be no fault-finding with each other about it. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

As to collars and ties, it is easy to get under bondage

about such things. When the tabernacle and the temple were being constructed things were made for glory and beauty. It is good for people to appear neat in dress, and in many places you would have no influence with the people for good if you did not wear a collar and perhaps a tie. People sometimes become as proud in going slouchy as others in their vain dress.

Paul, as far as custom was concerned, became all things to all men that he might win some. Wear your collars and ties if you want to, or if you do not want to wear a tie let the man alone who does. Such things are too trivial to mention when we have so much more important things for consideration.

QUESTION: Can anyone be received into the Church in the absence of the pastor?

ANSWER: It is expected that all churches have pastors, but as all have not, we will have to do the best we can. In case a church has a pastor he should be looked to to administer the obligation and receive applicants. In case a church has no pastor all ministers bishops, deacons, and evangelists are granted the privilege of receiving people into the Church. In extreme cases it might do for lay members to receive members after having obtained authority from some bishop by correspondence or otherwise. This should not be done though except in extreme cases where it is not possible for a minister to visit them for a long time.

QUESTION: What is the appointed deacon for, to rule the ordained deacon or to assist him?

ANSWER: Men are sometimes appointed deacons that they might prove themselves for ordination later. It is not expected that he exercise authority over an ordained deacon, in fact, neither should rule the other but should work together harmoniously in all things and assist one another.

QUESTION: When a brother trespasses against you go to him and if he will not hear you then take one or two more, and if he will not hear them tell it to the Church. Then is he to have the privilege of hearing the discussion concerning his case in the Church?

ANSWER: He certainly has the right to hear the Church if he wants to. It is the duty of the Church to try to reconcile and restore him and nothing should be said that could not be said in his presence.

QUESTION: Do all speak with tongues when they receive the Holy Ghost?

ANSWER: Yes. John 15:26; Acts 2:4; 10:46.

QUESTION: Should we, as the Church of God, allow our ministers to teach that a person is not born of God until he is sanctified?

ANSWER: There need be no division on this question. The all important thing is to get souls saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, and somewhere they will be born again. We can all agree on conversion, and sanctification as a definite work of grace, and speaking in tongues as the evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost. AS FOR THE TEACHING IT SHOULD NOT BE TAUGHT EITHER IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE. We must not cavil over trivial questions. The discussion of this subject is premature and I ask the Assembly to please defer it for the present. (The Spirit of God brought the Assembly to their knees in tears, following some discussion.)

QUESTION: Who are members of the Church? Explain that people are not members simply because they are converted, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost.

ANSWER: To say that every Christian is a member of the Church of God is a delusion. They are not members until they accept God's covenant, and the government of Jesus and are received into fellowship by covenant.

QUESTION: Why are not the deacons and evangelists granted the privilege of solemnizing the rite of matrimony?

ANSWER: This subject was discussed at some length. The final answer was given thus: At some previous time it was decided that some could occupy the position of deacon or evangelist who for lack of wisdom and experience might not have the ability to solemnize the rite of matrimony in the sacred way in which it should be done. In addition it was decided that when one becomes fully able for this solemn duty he would usually be eligible to be ordained a bishop.

All seemed perfectly satisfied that only bishops be granted the privilege of solemnizing the rite of matrimony in legal marriage.

QUESTION: Please explain I Corinthians 12:13.

ANSWER: Jesus baptizes with the Holy Ghost and nowhere in Scripture does it teach that the Holy Ghost

baptizes with Himself. This cannot refer to the experience obtained evidenced by speaking in tongues. But this experience puts both Jews and Gentiles into one body. Paul in finishing up the chapter shows that this body into which both Jews and Gentiles are baptized is the Church. Then at Acts 2:47, we read that the Lord added to the Church daily. Now what is the difference in adding to the Church, Acts 2:47; set in the Church, I Corinthians 12:28, and baptized into the body (the Church), I Corinthians 12:13? Verse 14—"For the body is not one member, but many," gives the reason for the statement in Verse 13. Verse 18 puts the final conclusion clear when he says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in in the body, as it hath pleased him." Baptized them into one body, one Church. Set them into one body—one Church.

When you were baptized the minister put you into the water. Every man who submits wholly to the Holy Ghost will be put, set, added, or baptized into the Lord's Church which is His body. Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18, 24 show that the body and the Church are the same.

CONCLUDING EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

In spite of trivial issues that fomented differences of ideas and opinions, and some heated discussions, the Eighth Assembly proved beyond doubt to be one of the best Assemblies yet held. Powerful messages and sermons were delivered by General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons who seemed adept at preaching Church government, J. W. Buckalew, powerful man in evangelism, F. J. Lee, concerned, wise and considerate, R. G. Spurling, the kind, considerate "father" of the first establishment of the Church at Camp Creek, about which A. J. Tomlinson said, "The first year I was in the Church it went by the name of Holiness Church at Camp Creek. After searching the Scriptures we a little later called it the Church of God." J. S. Llewllyn preached, as did J. B. Ellis, R. M. Singleton, J. C. Underwood, and A. J. Lawson, stable, wise and thoughtful spoke of the financial system needed by the Church. J. A. Davis spoke sincerely and powerfully in his evangelistic message, and S. W. Latimer served with M. S. Lemons, R. M. Singleton, J. B. Ellis and F. J. Lee, on the special committee selected to examine the Divorce and Re-marriage question and bring their findings to the

next, or Ninth Assembly. The Spirit moved mightily in the Assembly, and at different times the people were swept to their knees in consecration, supplications and prayers. So often the spiritual adage "It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost" was breathed or said aloud, and the devout followers of Jesus Christ humbled themselves and submitted to the overwhelming Spirit of God that invaded their midst.

They seemed to be richly blessed and it was not difficult to say with the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1.

The business part of the Assembly closed about 5:00 o'clock, Saturday afternoon of January 11th.***

***Minutes of the Assembly furnish valuable notes and explanations regarding the progress of the Church, and while these Minutes are not meant for rules, bylaws or regulations to govern the Church, they serve to list the "findings" and interpretations of the Scriptural approaches to the more perfect government of the Church recognized by the Bible. Much of the Church functions, as history, and the work of the Church is taken from the Minutes.

GENERAL OVERSEER—BISHOP TOMLINSON

The life of Bishop A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Church of God, was so interfused with and embedded in the work and progress of the Church that it is rather difficult to mention the expansion and far-reaching influence of the organization without actually seeing him as a vital part of it, even from its very beginning. He was an ingenious, hard-hitting, ambitious, tireless laborer for God and His Church, and its development, its growth and outreach were major functions appertaining to his challenge for God. The very "spirit of it" was like fire shut up in his bones! He pushed on relentlessly, fearlessly, his whole being permeated with an unparalleled love and devotion that branded him an indigenous son of Christ's commission.

In addition to the many other duties devolving upon him he was chosen pastor of the local church at Cleveland, Tennessee, shortly following the Eighth Annual Assembly. His diary entry of February 10, 1913 tells us, ". . . Sunday School, meeting at 2:30 p.m., ordination service besides. Last night had another ordination service. Five sermons. I have so much work, pastoral, editorial, correspondence, proofreading, Sunday School work, directing the Church work, advising and talking with workers as

they call at my office, etc., etc., until I have but a few hours for sleep, God is helping me . . ."

FIRST PUBLISHING HOUSE BUILT
(Spring 1913)

It was early spring when the first printing office and publishing house was erected across the street from the Tomlinson residence on Gaut Street, Cleveland, It was a small, weatherboarded structure, with two windows and doors in the front, with the front resembling a store front. On March 3, 1913, A. J. Tomlinson said in his Diary, "Am building a house for a printing office and publishing house across the street." (From: Page 147, the book, "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar.) This was a great beginning though the building had to be enlarged three times while A. J. Tomlinson edited the Church of God Evangel.

BAPTIZED THIRD TIME

Though he was baptized twice before, Bishop A. J. Tomlinson was baptized by T. L. McLain, by request, on Saturday August 16, 1913. He desired to be baptized by a Church of God minister. He sometimes stressed water baptism unreservedly, emphasizing the duties of Church of God ministers everywhere.

HURRIED PREPARATIONS

Since the Eighth Annual Assembly decided to move the date of the Assembly to autumn, the dates set were November 4-9, 1913, with the Assembly to be held at Cleveland, Tennessee. It was a shorter Church year, and many hurried preparations had to be made to be ready for the great event. Evangelists rushed a little harder perhaps than usual and overseers and pastors spent extra time in their endeavors. Greater interest than ever seemed to be anticipated by the ministers, and the work at the established publishing house and executive office took on new life. Growth was eminent . . . zeal running high. This was to be the second Assembly held during the year of 1913.

Encouraging Events at the Ninth Assembly and Some Others

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BOOK . . . THE LAST GREAT CONFLICT

Written during 1912, the book, "The Last Great Conflict" by A. J. Tomlinson was not printed until 1913. It contained 219 pages, was cloth-bound, and was dedicated "To the Church of God, whose duty it is to preach the gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness, and then be presented to Jesus Christ, 'A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.'"

TOMLINSON EDITS THE EVANGEL

Bishop Tomlinson asked to be relieved as pastor of the Cleveland Church, following the Assembly in November 1913, when his time was up so he could give more time to his office duties and other work. F. J. Lee was selected to serve as pastor. The publishing committee selected C. H. Shriner as office editor of the Evangel, but A. J. Tomlinson was still editor of the church paper—The Church of God Evangel.

EVANGELISM AND OUTREACH

The personality and doctrines of the Church of God reached into new areas each year, and because of its outgoing attitude and fortitude it was attracting attention throughout many states of the United States.

Bishop Homer A. Tomlinson (now deceased) had this to say: "Leaders from all parts of the world, some with one church and some with groups associated in given communities, began to visit Cleveland, the Annual Assembly, and to write for information about the Church of God.

"Among those was E. N. Bell, who with associates started as the Church of God in Arkansas, printed letter heads, bearing the name Church of God, but after securing all information established themselves as another group, and later dropped, after 1912, the experience of definite Sanctification from their teachings.

"Nearly all of the groups continued on as associations or churches with names varying from the Church of God, such as Assemblies of God, Bible Church of God, Church of God in Christ,

Mountain Church of God, Seventh Day Church of God . . ." (1)

NINTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 4-9, 1913)

The Ninth Annual Assembly was held at Cleveland, Tennessee, and was the second Assembly to convene in 1913. At the last such gathering it was decided to have the Assembly in autumn, rather than in January as heretofore practiced.

The introductory service commenced at 7:00 o'clock, Monday evening the third of November. T. L. McLain brought the welcome address, followed by a sermon by George T. Brouayer, and songs by R. G. Spurling and M. S. Lemons. It was a time of blessing for the delegates who had made some sacrifice to attend, and the Spirit of God came with a message in tongues and the interpretation (I Corinthians 14:27). Freedom of worship excelled over any trial, test or tribulations hitherto experienced by the devout Assembly attendants.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS

Tuesday morning, November 4th, following the call of states and their response with songs at 9:30 o'clock, the Scripture lesson and prayer, the General Overseer, in the introduction to his address, said, ". . . In making preparation for this discourse I wanted to be free from the influences of the Assembly, so it was prepared when alone with God." He had made a similar statement in the introduction to his address to the Eighth Annual Assembly in January.

In his address of approximately 3,900 words Bishop Tomlinson reminisced some and also referred to Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Fox, Knox and the Wesleys as great reformers of their era. He also mentioned "The Apostolic Faith" group on the Pacific coast, who in the last seven years had reached nearly every country in the world where Christianity is known. He said, "The past year has been one of more apparent defeats than any year I have been serving in this position, and yet, there have been greater achievements in some respects than in all the years put together . . . We have espoused a cause that is to develop into a reformation that will surpass any that has ever been placed on the

1. "The Great Vision of the Church of God" by Homer A. Tomlinson, 1939 . . . Published by the author in New York.

pages of history."

He suggested among other things:

1. To search out any point of Bible truth that may be wanting.
2. Evangelistic and mission work should be more thoroughly organized.
3. The pastoral problem to be solved—the Bible plan revealed and put into action.
4. The financial system of the Church, referred to last Assembly, to be emphasized and put into perfect practical form.
5. That government and authority be looked into a little deeper.
6. The nine gifts of the Spirit should be received.

As executive officer of the Assembly it was Bishop Tomlinson's prerogative and duty to examine issues at stake, and to suggest and encourage discussion of purpose, plan and procedure appertaining to successful operation according to Bible interpretation. The address was concluded about noon, accompanied by messages in tongues and interpretations by the Holy Spirit, in which the whole Assembly shared.

COMMITTEES APPOINTED

At 1:30 Tuesday afternoon, November 4th, following the addresses of the state overseers to the Assembly, the committeemen were appointed:

1. To receive questions for consideration.—J. S. Llewellyn, W. S. Caruthers, J. W. Murray.
2. To consider Bible plans of order.—M. S. Lemons, E. E. Simmons, M. S. Haynes, J. J. Lowman, George T. Brouayer, F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne.
3. To hear and investigate grievances.—Sam C. Perry, T. L. McLain, R. S. Robinson, W. F. Bryant, Z. D. Simpson, C. M. Padgett, W. S. Gentry.
4. To consider plans for foreign mission work.—A. H. Bryans, J. C. Kelley, J. L. Scott.

SELECTION OF THE GENERAL OVERSEER

"As soon as the announcement was made that it was time to select the General Overseer to serve the coming year, the moderator quietly took his seat and awaited development. The entire audience was silent before God.

George T. Brouayer broke the silence by saying, 'As long as the horse works well I see no need of a change.'

S. W. Latimer: 'I am sure the right man is in the place.'

M. S. Lemons: 'We ought not discuss that question at all.'

J. W. Buckalew: 'Reports have gone out that Brother Tomlinson has put himself in this place to rule over us. Let us not allow this impression to go out from here.'***

***(Message in tongues and interpretation: "Brother Tomlinson is in his place. I placed him there and I will take him away when I am ready.") There was cheering, and the song was sung, 'Something More Than Gold.' (Then another message in tongues and interpretation: "Fear not, I will be with thee to guide thee. Press on, there is more to be done. Then these things shall come to pass—the lame shall walk and the eyes of the blind shall be opened.")

Brother Tomlinson: 'I must confess I have nothing to say. I am getting more than gold out of it. It seems almost too much for God to pay so much attention to me. As the time goes by the thing expands more and more to us. I appreciate all your appreciation, but I appreciate the appreciation of the Holy Ghost more.'"***

***It is clearly seen that the selection of A. J. Tomlinson as General Overseer was prompted and guided by the Holy Spirit. While it was no egress to elude responsibility the decision of the Assembly acquiesced in the sacred directives and guidance. It seems unjust, and is obviously an egregious error to accuse Bishop Tomlinson of injecting personal directives to influence the decision of the Assembly. He took his seat while they proceeded.

FINANCIAL SYSTEM OF THE CHURCH

The financial system of the Church (that is, tithing and giving) accepted at the Eighth Assembly in January 1913, was re-emphasized and explained:

"Every local church should have a treasurer, one of the deacons if the church has deacons; if no deacons, then someone to receive the money. Every member should pay a tenth of his income for the past week into the treasury on Sunday. One tenth of these tenths is to be sent to the overseer of the state in which the church is located. The state overseer then sends one-tenth of the tithes he receives from the churches to the General Overseer for general expenses. Those in states where there is no overseer can send a tenth of the tenth directly to the General Overseer as he has the oversight of all places where there are no state overseers.

The tithes that remain in the treasury of the local church are to be used to pay the pastor or an evangelist that may hold a revival, or a minister of the Church of God that may pass that way and prove a blessing to the church. The tenths should always go to the support of the ministry and never to help the poor or build churches or other houses.

Freewill offerings are to be given for other expenses and should always be kept separate from the tithes.

"This plan was made so clear to the Assembly that it seemed that all doubts about it were removed if there had been any."

THE SELECTING OF PASTORS

This subject had been discussed before without a satisfactory solution. On Thursday afternoon, November 6th, M. S. Lemons addressed the Assembly at 2:00 o'clock on the subject "Pastors and how selected." His plan was for those in authority to select the pastors. Then followed some discussions by the different ministers whose ideas differed.

A. J. TOMLINSON: "We want our decisions to be on Bible lines."

W. G. ANDERSON: "We want pastors who visit families, high and low . . ."

F. J. LEE: ". . . I have been about very much and know of a number of churches that would not have pastors sent them by the Assembly. It is all right for overseers to give approval, but I think the pillars of the Church should have control of selecting pastors."

J. B. ELLIS: "I endorse Brother Lee's statement; we ought not to be too strict on that line until we come to more perfect order. We cannot supply the churches until we have the pastors."

J. L. SCOTT: "We ought to be very careful along this line. I agree with Brother Lee. Did Paul send pastors? To put all on one man means much. This thing needs lots of prayer. I think Brother Lee struck the keynote. The General Overseer has a right to appoint state overseers, but whether he has a right to appoint pastors, I question."

Z. D. SIMPSON: "It's all right for the General Overseer to appoint state overseers. I am in favor of Brother Lee's talk."

J. S. LLEWELLYN: "There is a way of doing the right thing in a wrong way. 'In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.' If we are not careful now we will make one of the greatest mistakes ever made. We can't object to the ability of our General Overseer, but it would be putting too much on him."

J. W. BUCKALEW: "What we want is the Bible plan and not our idea. Turn to Ephesians 4:11, 12. 'He gave . . .' It seems to me this would settle the question. The Holy Ghost is accused of many things He does not do. See also Jeremiah 3:15, 'And I will give you pastors . . .' Acts 20:28, 'Over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.' Surely there is no one here that believes this body is not moved by the Holy Ghost, so I would dislike to say that God would not move these men."

M. S. HAYNES: "I want to ask a question. Is there any place in the Bible where it says to confer with the laymen concerning pastors?"

T. L. MCLAIN: "It seems to me that the state overseers should select the pastors, and those who give most of their time in prayer and the study of the Word."

SAM C. PERRY: "I think the state overseers and church members should look after the selection of pastors."

H. B. SIMMONS: "I don't believe it is safe to let the churches select their pastors. I'm satisfied that the state overseers appoint them."

No decision was reached when services closed at 4:40 p.m., but the discussion was resumed Saturday morning, November 8th, at 9:30, before the following decision was arrived at, when explained by A. J. Tomlinson:

"God is enlightening our minds. I've enjoyed these discussions, but had the matter settled before hand. I reached the conclusion for the present needs at 2:30 this morning. The Church of God is a theocratic form of government, but we may not be able to reach the perfect form at once. My sentence, therefore, is this: Where a church is well established the elders (officers and stronger members) select their pastor, subject to the approval of the state overseer. The state overseer should know his men. The reason for not being independent of the state overseer is not because such a one the church might select might be deficient in knowledge and qualifications needful for that particular place. A church might hear a man once or twice and like him and want him for a pastor, but the state and general overseers may have a better knowledge of his ability and qualifications. The General Overseer should not be called into counsel about pastors unless the church and state overseers are unable to decide satisfactorily. Everything should work in harmony as Ezekiel's wheel within a wheel. The new or weaker churches should be provided for by the state overseers in the best possible way. Do the best you can, but do not try to force a pastor on a church where he is not wanted. I am sure from now

on we shall see things more perfectly."***

***(Message and interpretation: "I'm pleased with thee. I'm pleased with this decision.")

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

The Committee—M. S. Lemons, R. M. Singleton, J. B. Ellis, F. J. Lee and S. W. Latimer—appointed by the Eighth Assembly in January 1913, to make a study of the Divorce and Remarriage problem and bring their findings to the Ninth Assembly for discussion did so, except R. M. Singleton whose letter was read in his absence. After much discussion no definite decision was reached to differ from what had been already decided in former Assemblies. Same committee of five, with an additional seven, was appointed to serve in the same capacity for another year. The question had not been settled.

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS (for 1914)

1. ALABAMA ..... George T. Brouayer
2. BAHAMA ISLANDS ..... Milton Padgett
3. CALIFORNIA, COLORADO, AND NEW MEXICO ..... R. M. Singleton
4. FLORIDA ..... W. S. Caruthers
5. GEORGIA ..... C. M. Padgett
6. MISSISSIPPI ..... M. S. Lemons
7. NORTH CAROLINA ..... A. H. Bryans
8. TENNESSEE ..... F. J. Lee
9. VIRGINIA ..... J. J. Lowman

REPORT OF GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

In such a gathering as the Assembly there are usually some differences and grievances sustained by people, usually from misunderstandings. Sam C. Perry, chairman of the grievance committee reported—"We had plenty to keep us busy. I believe I speak the opinion of the committee when I say that our work has been satisfactory. I feel that everything was adjusted where the parties were present, and where the parties were not present the cases were handed over to the state overseers. This is an important committee. Seven men without prejudice can do more than the pastors and state overseers. The work has been beyond

my expectations. It is wonderful to see how hearts were melted and how differences were settled amid shouts." The report was accepted. This was the first time a Grievance Committee served in the Assembly.

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSIONS COMMITTEE

"A. H. Bryans, chairman of committee to consider plans for Foreign Mission work, reported as follows:

We recommend:

FIRST. That a treasurer be appointed for each state to receive money for Foreign Mission work.

SECOND. That each local church contribute one-tenth of all freewill offerings to this work, the money to be forwarded to the state treasurer.

THIRD. That all our evangelists be requested to take public collections at their convenience for Foreign Mission work, and the amounts forwarded to the treasurer of the state in which they are working.

FOURTH. That the Assembly appoint Brother F. J. Lee to be general treasurer.

FIFTH. That the state treasurer forward the money received to the general treasurer.

SIXTH. That the general treasurer shall confer with the General Overseer concerning the distribution of funds to the various fields.

The report was accepted with slight amendments."

BIBLE PLANS OF ORDER

"Report of committee to consider Bible plans of order was given which resulted in the following order:

1. When the Assembly met at Jerusalem (Acts 15), chosen men carried the decision to other churches. So we want to abide by the teachings and decisions of the Assembly. Therefore, all of our ministers and teachers are expected to teach in harmony with decisions made by this Assembly and those who do not and will not shall be considered out of order.

2. The presbytery is to have authority over the ministers, so that in case of a minister teaching false or becoming guilty of error on any line and will not take counsel and advice from the brethren, he should be reported to the state overseer and such action be taken by the presbytery as deemed proper under the

circumstances. I Timothy 5:19, 20; Titus 1:13.

When every reasonable means has been exhausted and failed to reconcile said guilty minister, the presbytery should recall his ministry and credentials and the church of which he is a member takes such action as they deem necessary.

3. In case of some difference arising between ministers they should not write ahead of each other or one the other and warn the people against receiving him, but the matter should be adjusted in order as authorized above. This does not apply to a warning sent ahead of one who is outside the Church. Every minister should be zealous to protect every church against anything false or hurtful." (Book of Minutes)

OTHER OCCURRENCES AT ASSEMBLY

Five of the six references made by the General Overseer in his address were discussed, but reference to the nine gifts of the Spirit was bypassed.

Sermons and addresses were delivered by W. R. Anderson, R. G. Spurling (The Church or Family, Which), R. S. Robinson, C. M. Padgett (The Problem Solved), M. S. Lemons (Pastors and How Selected), L. Howard Juillerat, F. J. Lee (The Church of God Literal or Tangible vs. Spiritual or Imaginary), E. L. Simmons, and A. H. Bryans.

Publishing committee reported the subscription price had never paid expenses . . . now in debt $225, but was covered by offerings and pledges. The same publishing committee retained—A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson, George T. Brouayer, R. M. Singleton, J. L. Scott—as was selected at the Fifth Assembly January 1910, with the addition of R. M. Singleton and J. L. Scott who were added at the Eighth Assembly, January 1913.

The Ninth Annual Assembly adjourned about midnight, November 8, 1913, with a ministry more zealous than ever for the Assembly year of 1913-1914.***

***Most all this information and account was taken from the Minutes of the Assembly, and Book of Minutes. Some other sources of assistance were referred to.

The Tenth Annual Assembly, Another Year of Success for the Church of God

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ASSEMBLY YEAR 1913-1914

From indications the Assembly year 1913-1914 was a prosperous one for the Church. The financial system decided upon at the Ninth Assembly laid a permanent foundation on which to begin building for the future. The tithing system comprised four major steps: 1. Every member pay one tenth of his income into the church treasury; 2. One tenth of these tenths to be sent the state overseer for his support; 3. State Overseer sends one tenth of his income (his after he receives it as income) to the General Overseer for general expenses; 4. The tithes that remain in the local church treasury are to be used to pay the pastor, etc. Freewill offerings to be taken besides for church expense.

The decision concerning the selection of pastors seemed better understood and more favorable, and offered greater encouragement. Ministers were encouraged to work together and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The work therefore grew and expanded in other fields of endeavor in other states.

General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson usually caught up his office work as best he could, then he was off again into new fields where he preached and organized churches with a sizeable number of members. His son Homer was studying at the University of Tennessee, but he managed to contribute of his services to the welfare of the Church. Bishop Tomlinson wrote a pamphlet while on the field of evangelism, calling it "The Doctrine of Balaam."

The Church was prospering as it moved on toward the opening of the Assembly November 2-8, 1914.

TENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 2-8, 1914)

The Tenth Annual Assembly, of the Churches of God convened at Cleveland, Tennessee, November 2-8, 1914, the introductory service opening Monday evening, November 2nd, shortly followed by the Address of Welcome by W. S. Gentry, and the response by Z. D. Simpson. This meeting was accompanied by the usual social greetings, manifestation of fellowship, great joy, rejoicing and happiness. Again, it was no unusual thing to see "Like as of fire"

experience witnessed by several people. It was phenomenal in itself!

Following the usual songs and praises, Tuesday morning, November 3rd, the Assembly opened for business promptly at 10:00 o'clock, with Scripture Lesson Isaiah 40:28-31, and prayer by the General Overseer. Again the states were called to respond with songs and talks by the overseers and representatives, and there were 294 representatives present.

COMMITTEES APPOINTED

The burden of committee responsibility weighed heavily on many committeemen during this Tenth Assembly since developments necessitated the appointing of eight different committees.

1. To receive questions for consideration:
   J. L. Scott, W. A. Walker, C. R. Curtis.
2. To search out Bible plans of order:
   M. S. Lemons, T. S. Payne, F. J. Lee, R. S. Robinson, George T. Brouayer.
3. To hear and investigate grievances:
   Sam C. Perry, T. L. McLain, J. W. Culpepper, W. F. Bryant, Z. E. Simpson, Milton Padgett, W. S. Gentry.
4. To consider plans for Home and Foreign Mission work:
   J. C. Underwood, W. M. Rumler, John Burk, S. W. Latimer, Sam C. Perry.
5. To discuss and weigh the subject, "The New Birth":
   R. G. Spurling, W. R. Hadsock, E. Haynes, J. A. Davis, T. S. Payne, H. B. Simmons, W. S. Caruthers.
6. To counsel about the subject of Water Baptism:
   J. B. Ellis, W. R. Anderson, W. G. Anderson, J. S. Llewellyn, C. C. Walker.
7. To consult as to whether members of labor unions should be taken into the Church:
   Z. D. Simpson, J. L. Stevens, J. C. Padgett, J. C. Kelley, M. S. Haynes, T. L. McLain, A. H. Bryans.
8. To act as watchmen to see that no false doctrine is taught privately or false or questionable literature is distributed:
   J. C. Underwood, W. M. Goings, W. H. Lively, G. T. Stargel, F. D. Davis.

ADDRESS OF GENERAL OVERSEER

Tuesday evening, November 3rd General Overseer A. J.

Tomlinson delivered his fifth annual address to the Assembly. This 6,600 word address was accompanied by the appearance of "Like as of fire," and God's presence, so stated the recording clerk.

As usual Bishop Tomlinson's address was dynamic and stirring, and especially so when he explained the development, the importance and the respect and dignity that should be accorded the exalted position of General Overseer of the Church of God. In more than a dozen references he eulogized the high office that had apparently been occupied by James the Just during the days of the apostles.***

***The Church had established the office of General Moderator at the Fourth Assembly in January 1909, but at the Fifth Assembly that convened in January 1910 the office was changed to General Overseer, feeling this conformed more accurately to the Scriptures.

Encouraging references to this position were made at different times but it was at this Fifth Assembly the high office was shared an unparalleled position in the spotlights of the Church. It was highlighted with profound interest and group appeal by the General Overseer, and from all indications people saw it as a singular position of importance, and was destined to so continue.

With a tinge of regret and remorse the General Overseer referred to the division and defection resulting from the Council at Nicaea in Bithynia, where episcopacy ruled instead of theocracy. But he praised today's prosperity of the Church, with the thousands that had received an experience from God, and many who had been healed by God. In his address he said, "Wild poison serpents have been taken up and handled and fondled over almost like babies with no harm to the saints. In several instances fire has been handled with bare hands without being burned . . . Have seen no reports of anybody outside the Church of God performing this miracle. We are beginning to surpass all others in miraculous signs and wonders . . ."***

***Many such things as listed above have happened in the last days Church of God. It is the eleventh teaching "SIGNS FOLLOWING BELIEVERS" (Mark 16:17-20; Romans 15:18, 19; Hebrews 2:4.) The Church does not cater to nor support the handling of serpents, handling fire or doing such miraculous things for show or demonstration, though it is practiced by some other groups. The doctrine of the Church is that "Signs Follow Believers" rather than "Believers Follow Signs." Only as God

may direct someone to perform such miracles is it felt advisable, or encouraged.

Nor did the General Overseer bypass Church government, but emphasized the pressing need to increase government in the Church as God directed.

MISCELLANEOUS ASSEMBLY EVENTS

FOREIGN MISSIONS: General Treasurer F. J. Lee reported from November 1913 to November 1914; Receipts $91.48. Disbursements $68.55. He was selected to serve as general treasurer another year.

REPORT OF CHURCHES: Shows 137 churches, 4,339 members, 274 ministers.

FINANCIAL REPORT of General Overseer: Receipts $149.12; Disbursements $224.84.

SCHOOL AND AUDITORIUM needs discussed. J. S. Llewellyn, A. J. Lawson and S. W. Latimer selected to serve as committee to draft plans, raise money and push the erection of the necessary buildings.

IRIS TOMLINSON rendered impressive recitation.

FIRST DOLLAR for new building was given by Alice Kinsey. Grandma Collier offered first pair of blankets and quilts for new dormitory, and recognition was accorded Mother Tilly who entertained nearly all the attendants to the First Assembly.

The "LIKE AS OF FIRE" was experienced at different intervals during this Assembly . . . strangely rewarding and appreciated.***

***This may appear illusive to some but the phenomenal occurrences have been witnessed by many, as "the like as of fire" has flashed about in and during the sacred, surging downpour of the power and Spirit of God . . . seen by different people at different times.

PERMANENT LOCATION OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, November 4th, "The permanent location of the Annual Assembly was discussed and it was unanimously decided that Cleveland, Tennessee is the most suitable location for the Assembly to convene."

EVANGEL BECOMES WEEKLY PAPER

Report of publishing committee showed the paper had been changed from a semi-monthly to a weekly paper, and the paper out of debt. The same publishing committee was retained: A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, A. J. Lawson, George T. Brouayer, R. M. Singleton and J. L. Scott.

SELECTION OF GENERAL OVERSEER

After the discourse by Sam C. Perry the moderator said, "Now is a good time to ask the Lord to give a new General Overseer." Since there have been mixed emotions, and different ideas and opinions regarding the selection of the General Overseer it seems appropriate to give the account and how it was decided exactly as it appeared in the minutes of the Tenth Annual Assembly, Wednesday, November 4, 1914.

"Immediately after he made the above statement he stepped back and kneeled down. The congregation became quiet and all seemed almost as still as death. No one spoke a word for a few moments. At length the silence was broken by Brother Lemons who said, 'Brethren, the place is vacant, let us pray for God to give us an overseer.' All fell upon their faces and cried out to God for several minutes, after this there was a great calm again. When the silence became almost painful, one spoke in tongues and the interpretation followed immediately. 'My beloved, you can't do better than what you have. Hold on to what you've got.' A joyous cry arose from almost everybody present. A second message was given and the interpretation followed. 'He has been so faithful, as he was led by me and has governed and led the little flock. So follow him as he follows me.' With this the power fell upon many and the one chosen was literally covered up by the brethren as they fell upon him and kissed him. He was so overcome that he was unable to rise for several minutes. People laughed, shouted, cried, danced, made speeches, and finally Brother Lemons took the one named by the Holy Ghost by the arm and lifted him up and led him to the stand and placed him before the great congregation who shouted their approval and greetings for several seconds."

REMARKS AND COMMENTS

J. A. Davis: "I do not find in the Scriptures any change of

overseer in the early Church until James died and then Paul took his place." Others endorsed this remark.

W. R. Anderson: "I find that when God puts a man in a place he holds it until he dies."

J. L. Scott: "When I look at what Brother Tomlinson has done for the Church of God and the little financial support he has received for himself and family, I can truly say, it is God that has sustained him. He has been so faithful and true and I am glad to say we have a man that never murmurs nor complains."

F. J. Lee: "I have known Brother Tomlinson for several years. I love him. I honor him. I honor him more because God honors him. God has given him special wisdom. I went to him with a burdened heart because it seemed the devil was going to try to make an inroad into the Assembly and cause division. My fears did not disturb him. He took it so calm and quiet that it made me feel ashamed. He quietly remarked that he had no fears and that the Church of God is not like other churches. The burden that was on my heart vanished away. There is such unity and harmony prevailing in this section that I don't see any need of ever making any change until God takes him away."

M. S. Lemons: "I think you can all see that God's approval is on this selection, and I don't see any use of ever saying anything more about a change."

This remark met a unanimous approval.

R. G. Spurling: "I praise God for Brother Tomlinson. I feel toward him like a father."

(Message and interpretation—"I have made this man what he is. Give God all the honor and not man.") Verse of the song, "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow."

(Another message—"We are in harmony now. Keep your eye on me and remain in harmony.")

All this time the General Overseer was unable to speak, so at this juncture he quietly motioned for all to arise to their feet and he quietly dismissed the congregation. The sentiment of the entire Assembly was to make this selection final.***

***Does this look like A. J. Tomlinson installed himself as General Overseer? Did not the brethren make the decision and the Holy Ghost set His approval upon it? F. J. Lee said ". . . I don't see any need of ever making a change until God takes him away." M. S. Lemons said, "I think you can all see that God's approval is on this selection, and I don't see any use of ever saying anything more about a change." Unity prevailed among

the people with no recorded opposition, and surely they could say, honestly and truthfully, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us."

It is to be remembered that the Church of God was doing her best to follow the principles and practices of the theocratic government established by Jesus Christ and His apostles . . . not a legislative or executive body but judicial only. This requested and required close adherence to earnest interpretations of the Scriptures, for they claimed to be no part of any organization except a continuation of the early Church as designated in the Scriptures. They honestly desired to walk softly before God, and sought to please Him in everything.

WATER BAPTISM . . . DECISION

Friday, November 6th, Committee No. 6 reported.

"We, your committee to counsel on water baptism, submit the following:

FIRST. We recognize immersion as the Scriptural mode of baptism.

SECOND. We recommend that our disciples be baptized by a man who is baptized with the Holy Ghost. However, inasmuch as the apostles baptized before and after Pentecost, we leave this matter with the conscience of the individual party and we should not exclude them if they are satisfied with their baptism.

THIRD. We recommend that in case a person wishes to unite with the Church, and because of threats upon the parts of other members of the family cannot be baptized, they shall not be denied the privilege of membership provided they agree to be baptized at the earliest date possible."

The report was accepted after discussion and explanation.

HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

On Saturday, November 7th, Committee No. 4 reported, and recommended:

HOME MISSIONS

"That each church take freewill offerings as occasion may require to be used to assist the poor and needy.

The surplus tithes with freewill offerings may be given to the support of evangelists."

FOREIGN MISSIONS

"FIRST. That there be a general treasurer appointed to receive all funds for Foreign Missions.

SECOND. That such funds be distributed to the needs of the Bahama Island workers, Miss Lillian Trasher, missionary to Egypt, and workers going to other foreign fields. The General Overseer and general treasurer to have charge of the distribution of said funds.

THIRD. That the treasurer of each local church take an offering for Foreign Missions at once each month, forwarding same to the general treasurer.

FOURTH. That we urge our pastors and evangelists to present the cause of missions to their respective congregations, and at the same time take offerings wherever expedient.

FIFTH. Whatever tithes in all the Church treasuries that are not needed for the pastor's support may be added to above fund at the discretion of the deacons." (The report was discussed and approved.)

THE NEW BIRTH

This subject was discussed at length and the General Overseer pronounced the final decision as follows:

"This subject has been considered settled several years ago, but it was questioned three years ago and has remained in question until now. A discussion of the subject has been withheld because of a fear of gendering some ill feelings and strife. But today this fear has all vanished away. Therefore, my sentence is, that the question be removed and we teach the original doctrine, viz: that one is born again when he is regenerated. The different terms used such as sins forgiven, born again, converted, justified, regenerated, may not be absolutely the same but so closely connected that it is difficult to analyze and separate them."

LABOR UNION PROBLEM

A second reference to labor unions, Saturday afternoon, November 7th, resulted in the General Overseer giving a rule to follow for the present.

"The Assembly stands against the members of the Church being members of lodges and all oath-bound organizations and labor unions. But for the present distress members will be granted the privilege of paying dues to labor unions as a tax to purchase a

right to work in the mines, factories and other public works, but should not attend or take part in their meetings. As a minister is to be an example of believers no one should be licensed or ordained to preach that is in any way connected with labor unions or pay dues to them. The ministers are advised to teach and instruct our people on this subject that each one may see for himself that he should not be thus unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

"People can be received into the Church who merely pay their dues for the privilege of working if not otherwise connected with said unions."

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE PROBLEM

This subject was constantly before different Assemblies for discussion, and at this time—this Tenth Assembly—the question was not finally settled, but the following rule was to be followed while the subject was still undecided. Pages 27 and 126 were reviewed, with this explanation:

"All who are divorced for any cause other than fornication and remarried while their husbands or wives are living should not be received into the Church.

"The man or woman who puts away husband or wife for the cause of fornication and marries again may be received into the Church. Investigation should be made when such people wish to join the Church to see whether they are of the former or latter class."

The same committee was continued to search the Scriptures on this subject another year.

BIBLE PLANS OF ORDER

Following the evangelistic service, Saturday night, November 7th, an extra business session was called at 10:00 o'clock and committee No. 2 brought their report on Bible Plans and Order.

"We, your committee, on Bible plans of order, wish to show that the Church in the wilderness under Moses was a type of the Church today. Moses appointed rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens. All small matters were judged by them and only hard causes were taken to Moses. All small matters should be adjusted by the local churches and pastors, and if a case is too hard for them they should call the assistance of the state overseer, and any case that still can't be adjusted should be taken to the General Overseer or Assembly.

"We recommend that all ministers remain within the bounds of the decisions of the Assembly, and that they do not teach anything contrary to the teachings authorized by this body.

"We recommend that all our evangelists and workers keep in touch with their respective state overseers by correspondence or otherwise so that all may work in harmony and avoid disorder and a conflict of dates and places.

"We further recommend that pastors of local churches should be given the courtesy due them, and that evangelists should not be engaged to hold meetings at a place where there is a pastor without the mutual agreement of the pastor and church."

After some discussion and explanation the report was accepted and recommended as good order according to Acts 15; Acts 20; Galatians 2:2; Hebrews 13:7.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Tenth Assembly)

QUESTION: Do pastors have a right to disfellowship members?

ANSWER: Yes, in conjunction with the Church, after having taken the Bible steps, and failed to reconcile and restore the offender.

QUESTION: Do deacons and evangelists have the right to disfellowship members?

ANSWER: Yes, when authorized to do so by the overseers, and the church wishes it done. But care should always be taken to take the proper Bible steps before anyone is dismissed.

PROPER PROCEDURE FOR MINISTERS

Offenses in ecclesiastical circles sometimes wreak havoc among the members of an organization, causing divisions and "splits" in an erstwhile good church group. It is a sad plight for people whose only aim is to live in such a way that when this life is over they will be transported in glorious triumph to be with the Lord. Many innocent people suffer heartbreaks and disappointments of different kinds for lack of good understanding among one another. The Assembly knew this and so offered the following instructions:

"In case an evangelist or deacon visits an isolated church and finds some disorder and the trouble can't be amended after proper Bible steps are taken, and in case the church as a unit wants the offender dismissed it should be done.

"Note—If a bishop, deacon or evangelist visits a church that

has a pastor and finds some disorders, such visiting ministers should not hold a conference and dismiss any members. It is the pastor's duty. If the pastor is neglectful of his duty and has proven unfit for such a position, such information should be given to the state or General Overseer so they can look into the matter and take such action as they see is necessary."

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS

1. ALABAMA ..... W. S. Gentry
2. COLORADO ..... R. M. Singleton
3. FLORIDA ..... W. S. Caruthers
4. GEORGIA ..... W. R. Anderson
5. MISSISSIPPI ..... M. S. Lemons
6. NEW MEXICO ..... R. M. Singleton
7. NORTH CAROLINA ..... J. A. Davis
8. SOUTH CAROLINA ..... J. C. Underwood
9. TENNESSEE ..... George T. Brouayer
10. BAHAMA ISLANDS ..... Milton Padgett

W. A. Capshaw was asked to look after the work in Louisiana, and W. M. Rumler to look after the work in West Virginia, but were not appointed regular state overseers. Illinois, Kentucky and Virginia were to be supplied state overseers later.***

***J. J. Lowman who had been state overseer of Virginia since 1911, had been in ill health for some time, and was unable to attend the Assembly in 1914. In a letter addressed to A. J. Tomlinson later, November 1914, Mrs. J. J. Lowman (his wife) wrote: "Mr. Lowman died on the 11th of November, 1914. His sickness and death was one grand victory for the Lord . . ." Brother Lowman had served as state overseer until Assembly 1914.

Business session of the Tenth Assembly closed at 11:45 p.m. September 7th, but the Assembly continued through September 8th, closing with the late evening service, and victory for the Church of God.

In Spite of Trying Times Progressive Steps are Taken

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THUMBNAIL REFERENCE TO A. J. TOMLINSON

It would seem unfair to bypass the recognition due Bishop A. J. Tomlinson for the tireless efforts expended in the publishing department, besides his myriad of duties as General Overseer of all the churches, and ministerial responsibilities in the city of Cleveland, Tennessee and elsewhere. He loved evangelistic work and could often be found conducting revivals and organizing churches. His whole being—mind, body and soul—seemed consecrated and dedicated to the services of God and the upbuilding of the Lord's Church. He only wished to spend and be spent in achievements for God.

It is said by his long-faithful secretary, Miss Lillie Duggar, that he never dictated his many messages, but wrote them in long hand.***

***The writer remembers seeing him at times, writing with lead pencils, two to three inches long, and has seen him with perhaps half-dozen such pencils which he carried in his pocket, many times using a make-shift portable table he carried with him by bus or train. His dedication to the work of the Church has stimulated and fired-up many a discouraged minister and sent him forth with unbounded enthusiasm and zeal that literally made him seem to "reach for the stars!" He seemed a man after God's own heart.

MOVE TO NEW PUBLISHING HOUSE
(March 17, 1915)

The new publishing house, built across the street from his home, was located at 2524 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. His office had been formerly located in an upper room at his home for ten years.

PUBLISHES SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE
(First Quarter 1915)

The Church published the First Quarter 1915 Sunday School literature, but Bishop Tomlinson was disappointed in his estimation of the response, and had to return several unfilled

orders. It was adjusted to some extent with the printing of literature for the next quarter, and by the time of the Assembly report the publishing house had received a sizeable net gain. The literature consisted of quarterlies, lesson leaves, picture cards and the Sunday School Helper, the latter being discontinued by decision of the Eleventh Annual Assembly in November 1915.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 1-7, 1915)

The Eleventh Annual Assembly was held at Cleveland, Tennessee, November 1-7, 1915. The chairman of the reception committee and the Alabama brass band led an impressive march of delegates from the Southern railroad station to the Assembly hall, Monday afternoon. Then on Monday night, November 1st, Pastor F. J. Lee delivered the address of welcome.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ADDRESS

This 6,200 word address was delivered by General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson on Monday night, November 1st, and it stirred the happy and enthusiastic throng of delegates. The addresses had become a highlight of the Assembly . . . this being the sixth one. To prevent any misunderstanding the speaker said, "These annual addresses have always been more or less suggestive in their nature, except on points previously adopted by the Assembly . . . The intention is not to lay down any systematic principles, but merely to suggest points for consideration by the Assembly."

From a careful perusal of the Assembly Minutes, and other references, it appears the Church was suffering from flagrant jealousy, some discord and dissension among the ardent laborers for God. It seemed to plague the General Overseer and prompted him to reflect a tinge of retrospect and remorse in his address, for he said, "I wish it to be distinctly understood now and forever that your General Overseer is a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, and more or less subject to the Assembly and not a despotic ruler. It is his purpose to obey the rulings of the Assembly to the very best of his knowledge and ability. It might not be out of place to say here, as many of the brethren know, he has never sought the position; but on the other hand he has sought to be released year after year, not from cowardice, or lack of interest in the great Church of God, but it is the same old story

that marks the pages of history—a feeling of inability to meet the responsibilities and requirements of God and man."

His inspiring address covered a compendium of events concerning governments, witnessing, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, the specific aspects of the work and position of James the Just, referred to as the first General Overseer, and how the churches all clustered around Jerusalem as the center of influence. He stated, ". . . it is evident that as the eastern and western divisions held separate councils they gradually became separated. Even as early as 325 A.D. at the Nicene council when Eusebius presented the doctrine of the churches of Palestine it was rejected. There may not be so much in the place where the General Assembly is held, but it is important, judging from the history of the past, that there be one where questions are freely discussed and settled."

In his address Bishop Tomlinson put special emphasis on the idea of elders in the Church, and stressed the need of them if it conforms to the government as outlined in the Bible. He said, "It is evident that James was neither an apostle nor an elder in the sense here meant as elders . . ." Concerning the elders referred to in the Scriptures he said, ". . . why were they mentioned by the writer in a body, and James by himself? . . . At the time Luke and Paul went in unto James the elders were ALL present. The number is not given, but they were ALL present . . . If these elders were the twelve apostles then there were thirteen . . . James was not one of the twelve . . . If the number of the elders was seventy to correspond with the number given Moses, then they were ALL present . . . the "all" could hardly refer to the preachers of the entire Church, but only those at Jerusalem . . . the word "elders" has such a broad meaning."

The General Overseer simply suggested investigation of Scriptural references to the term "elders" and explained, "If this matter is not of interest to us and has no significance worthy of our attention then we might wonder why the matter was mentioned by Luke and preserved for us to read. If it is worthy of our attention, then we should dig into it and learn its import and follow in the footsteps of the early Church."

He suggested examination of the money system, and encouraged more thought and study for the more perfect forms of Bible government; it seemed some embarrassment had resulted because of an imperfect system. Near the close of his address he challenged the whole Church—both ministers and members—to an exclusive Church entity: "Will we go on, or will we falter and

draw back as we approach the final climax that will forever draw a line of distinction between the Church of God and every other system that claims the Christian religion? This is for you to answer. What will you do?"

ASSEMBLY EVENTS (Miscellaneous)

Tuesday, November 2nd, following devotional at 10:00 o'clock, the General Overseer read Hebrews 12 and Revelation 5 for the Scripture lesson and followed the reading with prayer.

Then came the call of states with their response in songs and short talks by the respective state overseer.

Milton Padgett (Bahama Islands) addressed the Assembly, and an offering of $60.59 was received. Religious Song Book publisher, R. E. Winsett donated 100 song books to the Bahama Islands work.

Missionary Treasurer, F. J. Lee reported: Receipts for the year $196.58; disbursements $183.26; balance from last year $12.42; balance at present $26.24. F. J. Lee was continued as treasurer for another year.

Prayer for Lillian Trasher, missionary to Egypt, and Jennie B. Rushin, missionary to China . . . both were sick in body, and were sacrificing.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

1. To receive questions for consideration—H. B. Simmons, E. Haynes, E. B. Culpepper.
2. To hear and investigate grievances—Sam C. Perry, T. L. McLain, J. L. Scott, W. F. Bryant, W. S. Gentry, Z. D. Simpson, Milton Padgett.
3. Watchmen—T. S. Payne, John Burk, W. A. Capshaw.

REPORT OF BUILDING COMMITTEE
(November 3, 1915)

"We, your building committee appointed at the Tenth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God to draft plans and raise money for the erection of buildings for school and auditorium for the use of the General Assembly, beg leave to submit the following report:

We have considered plans provided necessary funds were raised.

Amount received up to date has been only $235.35. This has been acknowledged in the Evangel.

Many have indicated their willingness to contribute to this fund.

We, therefore, recommend that this Assembly take further and definite action in regard to this matter and take up a subscription for this purpose. We also advise that all the pastors and evangelists lay this matter before their congregations and thus raise sufficient funds so this work can be commenced.

Respectfully submitted,
J. S. Llewellyn
A. J. Lawson
S. W. Latimer"

The report was accepted and the same committee retained—J. S. Llewellyn, A. J. Lawson, S. W. Latimer, with four additional committee members—D. W. Haworth, A. Horne, F. J. Lee (pastor) and A. J. Tomlinson (General Overseer).

At the suggestion of the committee a freewill offering of $92.55 was received, and the final amount of subscriptions for funds, and other contributions was $1,821.40. This amount was to be listed in the Evangel, as well as all other subscriptions for funds.

REPORT OF PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

(Wednesday Afternoon, November 3, 1915)

By the publisher . . . "He stated the first issue after last Assembly was 1,600 copies. The last three weeks it was 5,300 copies each week.

Total receipts	$1,433.72
Total expenses	1,092.89
Balance	340.83
Estimate house rent	48.00
Estimate fuel	12.00
Incidentals	5.00
Total	65.00

This leaves a net of $275.83 for the labor of Publisher and family."

The same publishing committee was retained—A. J. Tomlinson, M. S. Lemons, T. L. McLain, Sam C. Perry, F. J. Lee, A. J. Lawson, George T. Brouayer, R. M. Singleton, J. L. Scott.

M. S. Lemons suggested an offering be given the publisher, since he had received such a small amount for his services, but the publisher declined the Assembly courtesy, and suggested the

Assembly reimburse Brothers Fritz and Barney for motor and attachments ($45.00) for folder they had furnished and thus own all the machinery.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S FINANCIAL REPORT
(November 3, 1915)

Tithes $206.82—Disbursements $150.34. Balance $56.48.

The Assembly decided to discontinue the Sunday School Helper, and to continue quarterlies, lesson leaves and picture cards.

Sunday School Literature—

Total receipts for sales	$784.62
Total Disbursements for expenses	$648.89
Balance	$135.73

ODDITY TO REMEMBER

In a dying request Elma Fulghum of Whittier, California wanted all her belongings, and her beautiful long hair sold and the proceeds sent to A. J. Tomlinson to be used in forwarding the Church of God.

HOMER A. TOMLINSON SENDS TELEGRAM
(November 4, 1915)

The following telegram was sent from Indianapolis, Indiana:

"Allow me to extend my heartiest felicitation on the occasion of the Eleventh Annual Assembly to all the ministers and laymen. Nothing else could afford me greater pleasure than to be with you. I feel the spirit of unity away up here and at the hours of your convocations in the evening my spirit is with you. I am sure God is giving you great wisdom in your deliberations and I anxiously await the report. The whole world and heaven are beholding you and only eternity will tell the full returns of your work. After considering all other organizations and Pentecostal beliefs, none come quite up to the Church of God. May the coming year be a prosperous one.

Homer Tomlinson"

TITLE "HOLY ROLLERS" REPUDIATED
(Friday, November 5, 1915)

The General Overseer read a note, in the form of a resolution,

and it was unanimously accepted. The Assembly suggested the decision be printed in the Evangel and other papers with wide circulation. The note read:

"Whereas, The Church of God is suffering undue reproach by the slanderous title "Holy Rollers" that is in common use before the public in referring to its members and work,

"Be it known to all men everywhere and unto all nations that we, the Churches of God assembled in this the Eleventh Annual Assembly at Cleveland, Tennessee, November 1-7 do hereby and hereafter disclaim and repudiate the title "Holy Rollers" in reference to the Church of God.

"In consequence of this decision we herewith give general notice to the public that all reference to the Church of God by the use of the above title "Holy Rollers" by the public press or otherwise will be considered and treated as a slanderous and malignant offense."

LABOR UNIONS AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

(Saturday, November 6, 1915)

Regarding the membership and labor union question a concluding minute was read, and "the entire congregation was melted under the mighty hand of God as He so wonderfully set His seal of approval upon it." The decision read:

"The Assembly of the Churches of God stands for the full standard laid down in the Bible. Therefore, the members of the Church of God shall not be members of any lodge or labor union, nor voluntarily pay any dues to them for any cause. If, however, the company by which members are employed holds back a part of their wages for any cause such members are not responsible, but it is happened unto them according to the Scriptures, "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, . . . is . . . kept back by fraud."

TOMLINSON OFFERS TO STEP DOWN

(November 6, 1915)

The divorce and remarriage question came up for discussion, but the Assembly was so equally divided on the issue that no decision could be reached in harmony. When the General Overseer started to read last year's plan by which the Church had been operating—the only method to pursue another year—someone spoke abruptly, and was unwilling for the question to pass this Assembly without a settlement. A spirit was manifested to force

the General Overseer to a conclusion, but since the division was so equally observed he could make no move toward an accurate decision. So, "he insisted that he could step down and out if they wished to put someone else in the position . . ."***

> ***". . . the power of the Lord began to fall . . . brought a thrill of fear and fright over the entire congregation. The Overseer stood trembling before the Lord awaiting results, while the congregation fell upon their faces in weeping and prayer."

E. W. Simpson said:—"I remember the message given two years ago by the Holy Ghost who said that He had put Brother Tomlinson in as overseer and would take him out when He wanted him out . . ."

Bishop Tomlinson said: "I never have sought this position. I would gladly step out and give place to someone else if the Lord wills. Heretofore we have always given place on the program for selection of General Overseer, but this year when making out the program I remembered the messages given by the Holy Ghost, and, and—(Here he broke down and never finished the sentence.)" They followed the old order again for another year.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (1915)

(Saturday, November 7, 1915)

QUESTION: Shall state overseers select pastors?

ANSWER: This question has previously been settled. The old and strong churches select their own pastors, but new or weak ones may need the assistance of the state overseer.

QUESTION: Can a minister who has been tried for some offense before the state overseer appeal to the Assembly?

ANSWER: In case one feels he has not had justice given him he can appeal to the General Overseer as the General Overseer stands for the Assembly when the Assembly is not in session.

NOTE: It is not to be construed that the overseer of a state has power to make a final decision and revoke a minister's credentials independent of the General Overseer, and in no case should credentials be called in until a final decision is made by the General Overseer and overseer of state.

QUESTION: What shall be done with members of the Church

that grow, sell or handle tobacco?

ANSWER: Our members are required to abstain from growing and selling tobacco, either owners, renters or clerks in stores, but that each one be dealt with wisely and always tenderly and when such dealers or producers obstinately refuse to concur with the advice of the Assembly after all has been done to teach that is necessary under the surrounding circumstances connected with the individual case, then such individuals should be dismissed.

AMENDMENT: In no case should anyone be finally dismissed from the Church without the approval of the state overseers and General Overseer.

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS
(Eleventh Assembly 1915)

1. ALABAMA ..... W. S. Gentry
2. BAHAMAS ..... Milton Padgett
3. FLORIDA ..... W. S. Caruthers
4. GEORGIA ..... J. S. Llewellyn
5. KENTUCKY ..... W. F. Bryant
6. LOUISIANA ..... A. B. Adams
7. MISSISSIPPI ..... M. S. Haynes
8. NEW MEXICO ..... R. M. Singleton
9. NORTH CAROLINA ..... J. A. Davis
10. SOUTH CAROLINA ..... J. C. Underwood
11. TENNESSEE ..... George T. Brouayer
12. VIRGINIA ..... H. L. Trim
13. WEST VIRGINIA ..... W. M. Rumler

Overseer to be appointed for colored work in Florida.

CONCLUSION NOTES

"A statement was made that those in authority, whether overseers or pastors, should not lord it over God's heritage, but rather to advise. There is no forcing to submission under the grace dispensation."

The report to the Assembly showed:

Number of churches . . . 176; Members . . . 6,159; Ministers . . . 310.

Business session of the Eleventh Annual Assembly closed at 5:30 o'clock, Saturday evening, November 6, 1915. The devotional

services of the Assembly continued throughout Sunday, November 7, 1915, and an expense offering of $86.32 was received.

(Taken from Minutes of the Eleventh Annual Assembly)

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TWELFTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 1-7, 1916)

The First Assembly was held at the home of J. C. Murphy, Cherokee County, North Carolina, January 26, 27, 1906. The Second Assembly was held at the Union Grove church, Bradley County, Tennessee, January 9-13, 1907. All succeeding Assemblies, including the Eleventh, had been held at Cleveland, Tennessee. But this Twelfth Annual Assembly was held at Harriman, Tennessee, November 1-7, 1916, in the commodious structure they named the Church of God Temple, but formerly referred to as the W.C.T.U. Temple. The introductory service on Wednesday evening, November 1st was impressive, J. S. Llewellyn delivering the address of welcome, followed by the response of J. A. Davis.

DEDICATING THE TEMPLE

"The building committee appointed a year ago were seated in a row on one side of the platform. The trustees were seated in a row on the other side of the platform.

"At a certain moment the chairman of the building committee arose and walked forward to the stand at the front of the platform. In a few moments the other members of the committee arose and stepped forward and remained standing while the chairman, J. S. Llewellyn, delivered a few appropriate remarks and presented the deed for the property and the keys of the building to the General Overseer as chief representative of the Assembly for dedication.

"A song was then sung after which the General Overseer delivered a special discourse, at the close of which all were called to bow before the Lord to show special gratitude to God for the great building. In a few moments all were called to stand with bowed heads and in silence, while the General Overseer offered the dedicatory prayer. At 9:45 P.M. the last word of the prayer was spoken and all of a sudden the power of the Holy Ghost fell upon the mass of human beings, the brass band struck up the wonderful music, and to describe what followed for thirty minutes would be impossible. The shouts, dancing, talking in tongues, music, weeping and many manifestations of the Spirit of God convinced



Seen here is the Church of God Temple, located at Harriman, Tennessee. Formerly known as the W.C.T.U. Temple the Church decided to purchase the edifice on January 15, 1916 at a price of $3000. The twelfth Assembly in 1916 and the thirteenth Assembly in 1917 were held at this temple. There was no Assembly in 1918 because of the influenza epidemic, and the Church sold the building in 1919.

everybody present that God has accepted the building and filled it with His glory and power.

"When quiet was restored and all were in place again, the General Overseer stood at the pulpit while the trustees, one by one, took their places in silence at his left and formed a semicircle. In a few brief and appropriate remarks he delivered the deeds and keys to them to hold for the Assembly. After this was done, the trustees quietly took their seats, and after some final remarks and announcements the large audience was dismissed for the night."

CALL OF STATES—RESPONSE

Following a very spiritual devotional service on Thursday morning, November 2nd, at 9:30 o'clock, the stress and burden of prayer by the General Overseer was that the directing, guiding and protecting hand of God might overrule during the entire Assembly, and that the love of God predominate in all deliberations. He had read Romans 12 as the Scripture lesson.

Then came the Call of States and their response in songs and short talks by the overseers as they gave their reports.

STATISTICAL REPORT OF WORK

The actual net gain in churches, membership and ministers is seen by comparing the reports for 1915 and 1916, showing the increase.

	1915	1916	Increase
Total number of churches	176	230	54
Total number of members	6,159	7,690	1,531
Total number of ministers	310	418	108

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS
(November 2, 1916)

It was early Thursday afternoon, November 2nd when the General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson delivered his customary address, and it comprised approximately 9,300 words—his longest yet. He reflected upon the First Assembly, upon Abraham and his seed, upon the Council at Jerusalem and the great need for increase of government after the Day of Pentecost. He then emphasized strongly "This Assembly is not a legislative body. It does not create offices, but it is rather a judicial body. One that searches out the law and offices that have been already made and created and applies and fills them. This is what we have been doing from year to year as necessity has created the demand. We are diligently searching for the original system of Church government . . . We are searching for the entire system of Church government, and it is somewhere in that Book, the blessed Bible, either in types and shadows, or precept and example." (Book of Minutes, Page 216) The responsibilities of the Church work had increased so tremendously that it was weighing heavily upon the strength and stamina of the General Overseer . . . he was terribly overworked.***

***"I feel very much worn because of constant toil and limited time for sleep, and no time for rest only when I am compelled to sleep." (Diary, January 20, 1915) Again he said, "This is Saturday night and I am so worn that I am compelled to leave the office at about 10:00 o'clock without getting my week's work up. Oh God, help me and keep me able to work, and give me wisdom and strength . . ." (Diary August 7, 1916)

At last year's Eleventh Assembly the General Overseer foresaw the need of additional assistance, a board or committee of elders with whom to share some of the duties, delegated responsibilities and burdens of the work of the Church as she advanced and progressed. The suggestion was not applauded and received no apparent consideration. Still, the responsibilities grew heavier and seemed to multiply by the month.

At this Twelfth Assembly he referred to what he had said in last year's address concerning a board or committee of elders, but appealed stronger than ever for the Assembly to give it ample consideration. He stated, ". . . If there should be a body of elders to associate closely with your General Overseer similar to the President's cabinet of the United States, we will be that much dwarfed without it, and our growth will be hindered in proportion to the lameness of the government. If there should not be instituted this body of elders, then we want to continue without it as we have been. But it is evident that before James sat a body of elders for deliberative purposes . . . And that they were a body having authority is shown by the orders they gave Paul and the promptness of his obedience to those orders."***

***In his profile of General Overseer James and the body of elders that sat in counsel with him at Jerusalem, Bishop Tomlinson never once indicated the replacing of their theocratic government with an oligarchy. The body of elders was to be a body of counselors to the General Overseer, and never a control board. The General Overseer was the chief executive of the Church, selected as such by the whole Assembly in session . . . standing for the Assembly when it was not in session . . . and all major questions and proposals that effected the Church as a whole, were to be taken under his advisement, or the advisement of those to whom he delegated such authority and responsibility, unless the Assembly ordered otherwise. At this time the Assembly was composed of the entire body of delegates, or people, present.

The General Overseer meant for this body to be a board of counsel, or consultation. He said, ". . . it appears . . . that they had certain times to convene, or were called together by James at his option, when questions arose that demanded special attention and consideration, or when he felt the need of assistance or counsel."

He suggested dividing the states into sections or districts, and have a superintendent over each district. He constantly advised a

better governing system.

Because of the unworkable plan of selecting the pastors, adopted three years ago the moderator suggested that the Assembly give the proposition careful and prayerful consideration for revision.

For the first time Bishop Tomlinson, moderator of the Assembly, suggested that the Assembly give prayerful thought and consideration to another facet of helps and governments. He called this "Watchers Over Tens" mentioned in Exodus 18:21.

He insisted that the Assembly consider and review the financial system of the Church. He suggested ". . . that arrangements be made for a state treasury, and a general treasury, so that these tithes will not come direct to the Overseers." (Book of Minutes, Page 229)

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

(November 2, 1916)

1. To receive questions: —J. B. Ellis, J. A. Davis, W. A. Walker, P. F. Fritz, F. J. Crowder, Herschel Scoggins, A. C. Brawner.
2. Grievance: —Sam C. Perry, W. F. Bryant, W. R. Anderson, Milton Padgett, C. C. Walker, Jesse Clark, J. W. Culpepper.
3. Watchmen: —W. A. Capshaw, John Burk, J. C. Underwood, W. S. Gentry, F. L. Ryder, Charlie Grisam, Johnnie Cagle.
4. Bible Order: —F. J. Lee, M. S. Lemons, George T. Brouayer, J. S. Llewellyn, W. C. Caruthers, S. W. Latimer, Z. D. Simpson.
5. Financial: —T. S. Payne, T. L. McLain, M. S. Haynes, A. J. Lawson, J. W. Pitcher, W. H. Cross, W. M. Rumler.
6. Foreign Missions: —Howard Juillerat, J. A. Self, H. L. Trim, J. L. Scott, W. H. Rogers, E. D. Hopkins, E. B. Culpepper.

OVERSEER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Total receipts	$484.06
Total disbursements	283.48
Balance	$200.58

Because the General Overseer had contributed $19.87 on the expenses of the Assembly, the report as read was not accepted. An offering of $25.89 was received to reimburse him, and the corrected report was read, and accepted. Corrected report:

Total receipts	$509.95
Total disbursements	283.48
Balance	$226.47

REPORT OF PUBLISHING COMMITTEE
(November 3, 1916)

The publishing committee reported that the Evangel had reached 7,100 on March 18, but the last issue was only 5,600. Report was accepted.

Total receipts	$1,847.22
Total expenses	1,527.19
Balance	$ 320.03

NEW PUBLISHING COMMITTEE SELECTED
(November 3, 1916)

After some enthusiastic discussion the Assembly selected a new publishing committee (of three men) composed of A. J. Tomlinson, F. J. Lee and T. S. Payne. Since the General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson wished to be released the Assembly selected the following five men as members of the committee: F. J. Lee, J. L. Scott, T. S. Payne, A. J. Lawson and George T. Brouayer.

MOVE FOR PRINTING PLANT
(November 3, 1916)

Strong sentiment favoring the purchase and ownership of a printing plant, and those who desired to subscribe as a gift, or as a stock company at $10.00 per share left the amount of $786.50 as the contribution, so "the work could be done by consecrated hands." This opened a way for the development that followed in the publishing field.

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
(By F. J. Lee)

Balance in treasury	$ 26.24
Receipts	141.96
Total	168.20
Disbursements	133.68
Balance in treasury	$ 34.52

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE REPORT

For the present quarter we issued 2,800 quarterlies, 1,100 lesson

leaves, and about 3,000 sets of cards.

Total receipts for sales	$1,160.72
Total disbursements for expenses	858.35
Balance for services	$ 302.37

The report was accepted and the publishing of Sunday School literature continued, using the International Lesson Series.

BUSINESS ACTS (Miscellaneous)
(Assembly 1916)

The word "state" was dropped from the name "state overseer" instead designating the overseer of the territory over which each one is placed, e. g. overseer of Florida, overseer of Bahama Islands, etc.

It was decided to have the next Assembly on the same days of the week as the present Assembly.

While band played a collection of $83.95 was recieved. Eight people joined the Church, also.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Reported by committeemen J. B. Ellis, chairman and A. C. Brawner, secretary.

QUESTION: When a member of the Church of God, after being prayerfully and tearfully counseled, warned and advised—deliberately marries an unbeliever, should he or she be retained in the Church of God?

ANSWER: There has never been an absolute law given on this particular subject, but it has always been recommended and advised that people marry equally.

A few people that have married sinners have seen their need of more grace and become more spiritual when they were settled down in married life, but this, however, is not usually the case. When people marry sinners they should not be disfellowshipped for that cause alone, but they may fall into such gross wrong that they will do something sooner or later that will be a cause for which they will have to be dismissed from the Church.

QUESTION: When members of the Church of God show unmistakable signs of a backslidden condition, and strong efforts have been made to restore them without avail, should they be retained?

ANSWER: John says, If you see your brother sin a sin

not unto death, you shall pray for him and God will give you life for him that has not sinned unto death. We sometimes think we have done all we can do and perhaps we have, but we may have sometimes fallen short on our part. —Here the speaker gave a short story of how John, the beloved disciple, won back a man who had fallen into a gang of robbers and become their chief. —In case there is such rebellion and stubbornness that they go on in open guilty sin, of course they will have to be disfellowshipped.

QUESTION: When a deacon's wife backslides and goes into sin, should he be put out of his office?

ANSWER: Anything that would prevent the ordination of a deacon would be a cause for recalling his credentials. In such a case, however, necessary steps should first be taken to reclaim the backslider. When the wife of a deacon backslides there is indication of some wrong elsewhere besides in the wife. All necessary Bible instruction should be followed before recalling such a one from his position.

QUESTION: If a member of the Church of God is unlawfully excluded is he still a member of the body of Christ in the mind of God?

ANSWER: This is a question that has been on the minds of the people for years. When a person is excluded unlawfully he is out of the body in as much as the body means the Church, but he may be a Christian. You may remember how Diotrephes excluded some unlawfully and they were out, but still they were Christians. This unlawful way of doing business is not right, and those who do it should be given the necessary reproof so they will not do it again. John wrote to Gaius and told him he would attend to Diotrephes when he came. Such a person should be reported to the overseers.

QUESTION: If Jesus should come tonight would He take from the earth all the members of the Church of God, the body of Christ, regardless of their spiritual condition?

ANSWER: We heard that explained yesterday by Brother Perry. Folks who are not ready will not go, even if they are members of the Church of God.

QUESTION: If, when one comes into the Church of God in a saved condition, he is bound in heaven, when the same one backslides but is not excluded from the Church, is he still bound in heaven?

ANSWER: This "bound in heaven," may not be fully understood. When the action of the Church is done in absolute perfection, and in harmony with the Bible and the will of God, of course what they do is recognized by God and will stand. But such a backslider does not remain saved merely because he is a member of the Church.

QUESTION: Should the steps referred to in Matt. 18:15-17 be taken in all cases of offense or only in the case of a trespass against an individual by an individual? If they should not be taken in all cases what steps should be taken in the case of one who offends or brings a reproach on the whole local body? This has reference to lay members.

ANSWER: If he has brought reproach on the whole body of course it is necessary for the pastor to see the person and try to get him to repent. If one brings reproach it is right to get him to confess out and acknowledge his wrong and get forgiveness of God and the whole body. If after all the necessary steps have been taken and he still fails to repent, he should be excluded.

QUESTION: Explain Romans 8:9. Is there a difference between the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Ghost? If not how can people who have not been baptized with the Holy Ghost be the children of God?

ANSWER: When a man is converted his life is under the influence of the Holy Ghost. Paul says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." There is a sense in which the Holy Ghost illuminates and witnesses to a person, and he not yet baptized with the Holy Ghost. This was illustrated by an incident showing that the Spirit operates in and through people who are not yet baptized with the Holy Ghost.

QUESTION: Should a wife be subject to her husband when he objects to her being baptized and coming into the Church of God?

ANSWER: No rigid rule should be enforced in regard to this matter. Under some circumstances it might be best to be baptized and join the Church, while there may be other circumstances that it would be better to show respect to the desires of the husband and wait. In such cases real care should be taken, and patient waiting on God before a decision is reached. There is such a thing as a wife winning her husband by her chaste conversation and godly example.

QUESTION: Should we have a body of elders to confer with the

General Overseer in considering questions?

ANSWER: This will be considered by the committee on order.

QUESTION: Should the Church of God have open or close communion?

ANSWER: Yes and no. There are certain restrictions on this, but will say we are not what is commonly known as "close communionists." This matter of communion is a close thing. If you do not take part in it you disobey and have no life in you. If you do take it unworthily you are in danger of sickness and death. There are many good people outside of the Church who have a good experience of salvation, but they may not have had the light on the Church, or may not have had opportunity to come in. No child of God should be excluded from communing with us.

QUESTION: Should the bishops, deacons and evangelists be allowed to hold credentials who do not pay tithes?

ANSWER: I don't know of any. If you know of any I wish you would report them. Of course they should pay tithes, and they prove their disloyalty to the Church and the Bible when they do not. The Assembly stands for paying tithes and the officers should pay tithes in order to be good examples to the believers.

QUESTION: Would it not be a good idea to have the Assembly in a new place every year?

ANSWER: This question seems a little odd at this time and I may not understand the reason for it. But I suppose some one thinks it might be a means of propagating the gospel and the Church of God at a new place each year. If we could make an increase each year in the size of the building and the accommodations in proportion to the increase this time, I guess it would be good to change. But unless we can gain something by the change we had better remain in our present location.

QUESTION: Should members be turned out of the Church if they do not pay tithes?

ANSWER: It has never been decided to make paying tithes a test of fellowship. While people ought to pay tithes yet there is no way to force them to do so.

QUESTION: Where should tithes be paid?

ANSWER: It has been advised that members pay tithes to the local church where they are members, but there has been no special ruling on this point.

TO HAVE UNIFORM DEED

Monday, November 6, 1916, at the request of the General Overseer for a uniform deed to facilitate the handling of church property the Assembly rendered a decision. (Book of Minutes Page 240)

"After some little time in discussion and gathering information on the subject it was decided to have prepared a uniform deed that would do for use in all the states of the Union. And in case of deeds in foreign countries they will have to be prepared in accordance with their laws, and made so as to secure our property. These uniform deeds are to be prepared and printed and kept on sale at the Evangel office."

TRUSTEES TO HOLD PROPERTY

"It is also decided to have the General Overseer appoint a board of trustees to hold any property that may be transferred to the Church of God, when it is desired to deed property to one common board. This does not prohibit appointment of trustees locally to hold property when such seems best at that particular place. The general board can be used in case property is deeded to the Church as a legacy or bequest, and when property is made to the Church, in a locality where there are not suitable trustees located, or where none of our people are owners of property, and all might move away and leave the property abandoned. Then in case such property should be sold these common trustees will have a perfect right to convey such property to legal purchasers.

"This common board of trustees are to be subject always to the Assembly in all their dealings and not to take matters in their own hands. They are only appointed to hold the property and convey the same when ordered to do so, by the Assembly or him who stands for the Assembly when it is not in session.

"Said trustees can be replaced by others at any time it is deemed necessary, when one moves away, or is otherwise rendered incompetent for the position. Or in case of death another must be selected to take his place. Such appointments and replacements to be made by the General Overseer as ordered by the Assembly."

The five General Trustees selected by General Overseer were: J. S. Llewellyn, M. S. Lemons, T. L. McLain, George T. Brouayer and T. S. Payne.

TEMPLE AT HARRIMAN PURCHASED
(Building Committee Report)

"We met in the Evangel office, January 15, 1916, to consider the possibility of securing an Auditorium for the use of the general Assembly. It was unanimously agreed by said committee to purchase the W.C.T.U. Temple at Harriman, Tenn., which was done at the consideration of three thousand dollars. We have paid approximately of this amount $1,100.00 Also on painting, repairs, and improvements ordered by our General Overseer, $442.26. Interests and insurance, $96.68.

Total amount received	$1,802.13
Total amount paid out	1,638.94
Balance in treasury	$ 163.19

We also have another payment to make by December 1, 1916 of $300.00.

Respectfully submitted,
J. S. Llewellyn, chairman."

BODY OF ELDERS SELECTED

Monday afternoon, November 6th the Assembly recommended that a body of elders be selected comprising not more than seventy and no less than twelve, the latter to be selected soon. Their duty was to have jurisdiction over all questions that properly came before them, their actions and decisions to be ratified by the Assembly in session. They were to meet in session as necessity demanded, the time and place to be decided by the General Overseer. (Book of Minutes, Page 242)***

***The Assembly was constantly referred to as "not being legislative or executive but judicial only." They frowned on democratic procedures in church government, and seemed equally afraid of being or becoming an oligarchy or autocracy—seeking only to be a theocracy under the direct government of God.

The General Overseer had suggested that the Assembly consider a body of elders as advisors or counselors to the General Overseer similar to the president's cabinet of the United States. However, the measure adopted by the Assembly Monday afternoon, November 6th left a loophole for some inconsistency, and questionable procedure. Whether intentional or unintentional is purely conjectural, or it may provide personal assumption should one prefer. They had decided:

". . . whose duty it shall be to have jurisdiction over all questions of every nature that may properly come before them, their actions and decisions to be ratified by the Assembly in session."

Though assumed that the General Overseer would be chairman of the body of elders and would take all questions under advisement before final decisions were made, nonetheless it does not specifically say so. Conscious or unconscious of them, such loopholes may become embarrassing to a religious organization.

Next day, Tuesday afternoon, November 7th, the same Committee on Orders reconsidered a part of their first report (Section Two) saying,

"Whereas, There seemed to be some little dissatisfaction about the manner of selecting the body of elders, we decided to reconsider the manner of their appointment and, therefore, recommend that the first two be appointed by the General Overseer and then the General Overseer and the two men shall select the other ten."*** (Book of Minutes Page 244)

***The power of the Spirit fell among many and not a few melted to tears while others rejoiced . . . The Overseer called the entire Assembly to pray that God would give him wisdom to make the selection . . .

METHOD OF SELECTING PASTORS CHANGED

The Committee On Orders in Section Four of their report to the Assembly recommended the following change in selecting pastors, and the report was unanimously accepted:

". . . We recommend that the selection of pastors for all the churches shall be in the hands of the elders chosen to render assistance to the General Overseer, as they work in conjunction with the overseers on the field and the local churches. This body of elders is to take into consideration every phase of all matters, entertain suggestions, weigh all matters carefully and prayerfully, so as far as lies in their power their final decision will be satisfactory to the local churches for which pastors are selected so it can truly be said, it seems good to the Holy Ghost and us." (Book of Minutes Page 245)

FINANCE COMMITTEE PLAN NOT ADOPTED

"We, your committee on finances, respectfully submit the

following:

First. We recommend that every member of the Church of God tithe his income and place it in the hands of a local treasurer. On general principles the net income to be tithed.

We recommend further that all these tithes received by the local treasurers be forwarded to a general treasury instituted at the headquarters of the Church of God with properly qualified men over this treasury to receive them. When the tithes come to this treasury each week a tithe of these tithes shall be taken out and passed to a treasury for the use of the General Overseer and his helpers. The General Overseer to have supervision of the treasury where all tithes are received.

The nine-tenths remaining after the tithe of tithes are separated shall be distributed to all the ministers engaged in active service either as overseer, pastors or evangelists, having no other occupation and having proven themselves to be worthy of the same, according to every one's need.

We believe this system to be in harmony with New Testament Scriptures so there can be equality according to Paul's instructions in II Corinthians 8:13-15; Philippians 4:19. Also as outlined under the shadow or type as practiced by Israel. Numbers 18:20, 21.

Respectfully submitted,
T. S. Payne"

Though a discourse was given on this subject by T. S. Payne, and further explanation by M. S. Haynes, the plan was not adopted but further consideration of this matter to be put in the hands of the elders who should formulate the full Bible plan for presentation to next Assembly. (Book of Minutes, Pages 244, 245)***

***First section of the report had become a practice of the Church and was still in operation unless changed; it was not rejected. Distribution of the tithe of tithes and the nine-tenths recommended was not adopted. In an effort to mitigate unjust criticism the General Overseer suggested a state treasury and a headquarters treasury if found to be in conformity with the Scriptural practices of the Church. Nevertheless "the putting in the hands of the elders to formulate the full Bible plan for presentation to next Assembly" was tainted with a move toward legislative and executive influence, some seemed to feel later.

FOREIGN MISSIONS COMMITTEE WORK

"1. We recommend that in all the Church of God a freewill

offering be taken every two months on the second Sunday beginning with next January.

2. That said offerings be sent to the Evangel office, said office to act as treasurer and report same in its columns.

3. That the Evangel notify our people a week or two before hand when each Missionary Sunday is to be observed, thus keeping the subject before our people.

4. We further recommend that the work in the Bahama Islands be supported and that we keep in touch with Sister Jennie B. Rushin, now in the Philippine Islands.

Howard Juillerat, Chairman"

This report on a move for missions was accepted and adopted for future plans of Mission activities.

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS

(Twelfth Assembly 1916)

1. ALABAMA ..... T. S. Payne
2. BAHAMA ISLANDS ..... W. H. Cross
3. FLORIDA ..... Sam C. Perry
4. GEORGIA ..... M. S. Lemons
5. ILLINOIS ..... D. P. Barnett
6. INDIANA ..... W. H. Martin
7. KENTUCKY .....
8. LOUISIANA ..... M. S. Haynes
9. MARYLAND ..... J. W. Pitcher
10. MISSISSIPPI ..... J. A. Davis
11. NORTH CAROLINA ..... W. A. Capshaw
12. OHIO ..... Efford Haynes
13. SOUTH CAROLINA ..... W. A. Walker
14. TENNESSEE ..... F. J. Lee
15. TEXAS ..... Geo. T. Brouayer
16. VIRGINIA ..... T. L. McLain
17. WEST VIRGINIA ..... W. M. Rumler

CONCLUDING NOTES OF ASSEMBLY

(November 1-7, 1916)

Besides the inspirational address by the General Overseer, other semons and addresses were brought by: J. S. Llewellyn, J. A. Davis, W. R. Anderson, F. J. Lee, D. P. Barnett, M. S. Lemons, M. S. Haynes, J. W. Pitcher (First mention of John W. Pitcher in an Assembly minute), Sam C. Perry, T. S. Payne; some

of whom spoke twice.

Time and again the Spirit of the Lord set His approval upon the measures decided. It was a spiritual Assembly, but serious discussions.

Committeemen were faithful and brought their reports as usual.

The business session of the Assembly closed at 4:30 P.M., but the devotional and evangelistic services brought final touches to the closing gathering. This twelfth Assembly was the first of two such Assemblies to be held in the Church of God Temple at Harriman, Tennessee.***

***However, at the Tenth Annual Assembly conducted at Cleveland, Tennessee, November 2-8, 1914 (two years ago) it was decided: "The permanent location of the Annual Assembly was discussed and it was unanimously decided that Cleveland, Tennessee is the most suitable location for the Assembly to convene." (Book of Minutes, Page 172)

Great Potential Unleashed in Move for Church Expansion

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BISHOP TOMLINSON TIRELESS LABORER

The decision of the Assembly to appoint a body of elders to assist the General Overseer in duties he may delegate to them or request of them, came at an opportune time. His hours were long and hard. By diary entry of January 22, 1917 he says, "I can hardly tell all I do. I have my regular office work, editing, publishing the paper, Sunday School literature, one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty letters every week to answer, or attend to, pastoral work, making peace sometimes among members, praying for the sick, preaching three or four times a week . . . I work from sixteen to eighteen hours every day and have to hurry in everything I do . . ." But he never quailed under the strain.

ADDITION MADE TO PUBLISHING HOUSE
(February-March 1917)

At the Twelfth Assembly, November 3, 1916 the amount of $786.50 was contributed to help purchase a printing plant for the Church, and Bishop Tomlinson had to build an addition to the small office and publishing house to make room for the extra machinery, and office help and equipment. The new addition cost approximately $700.

BODY OF ELDERS APPOINTED

The Twelfth Annual Assembly elected to have a body of elders appointed to assist the General Overseer in certain phases of the work, with certain duties, delegated or acquired, and had recommended, ". . . that the first two be appointed by the General Overseer and then the General Overseer and the two men shall select the other ten."

Accordingly, on February 13, 1917 at 11:00 o'clock p.m., General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson, in his office at Cleveland, Tennessee, officially appointed F. J. Lee and T. L. McLain as the two elders, as had been recommended by the Assembly. Then on February 15, 1917 at 8:00 p.m., the General Overseer and the two men (elders), in a joint session, appointed T. S. Payne, M. S.



Seen in this picture are General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson and the board of twelve elders selected in 1917. Back row, reading left to right: A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer, M. S. Lemons, George T. Brouayer, T. S. Payne, F. J. Lee, Sam C. Perry. Front row, left to right: T. L. McLain, S. W. Latimer, S. O. Gillaspie, M. S. Haynes, J. S. Llewelln, J. B. Ellis, E. J. Boehmer.

Lemons, J. B. Ellis and Sam C. Perry to the body of elders. In a similar joint session, held March 1, 1917 at 8:00 p.m., the General Overseer and the original, charter elders—F. J. Lee and T. L. McLain—officially appointed M. S. Haynes, George T. Brouayer, S. W. Latimer, E. J. Boehmer, S. O. Gillaspie and J. S. Llewellyn as the other six elders to help compose the duly constituted body of twelve elders as recommended by the Twelfth Annual Assembly. (Book of Minutes, Pages 275-276) Listed in alphabetical order they are:

1. Boehmer, E. J.
2. Brouayer, George T.
3. Ellis, J. B.
4. Gillaspie, S. O.
5. Haynes, M. S.
6. Latimer, S. W.
7. Lee, F. J.
8. Lemons, M. S.
9. Llewellyn, J. S.
10. McLain, T. L.
11. Payne, T. S.
12. Perry, Sam C.

The purpose of this body of elders was to offer advice or counsel to the General Overseer when he requested it . . . mentioned in the address of Bishop Tomlinson's to the Assembly.

PRINTING PLANT INSTALLED

It was about the first of April, 1917 when they began printing the Evangel, Sunday School literature and other things. The General Overseer bought a new press for about $1,100, besides the outfit he got from J. S. Llewellyn for $1,250. The work moved along nicely with seven regular employees, and one or two days a week four to six extra employees.

TOMLINSON—PUBLISHER AND PREACHER

Regardless of his busy routine of publishing, printing and writing Bishop Tomlinson took time to conduct revival campaigns. He was in a campaign for most of the month of June 1917 at the tabernacle in South Cleveland where more than twenty-five were converted, and a number sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, besides the interesting street meetings at five or six places in the city. In the same Diary entry of June 29th he states, ". . . Have been running a wagon from my home to the tabernacle to take the workers. As high as thirty have ridden at a time." (1)

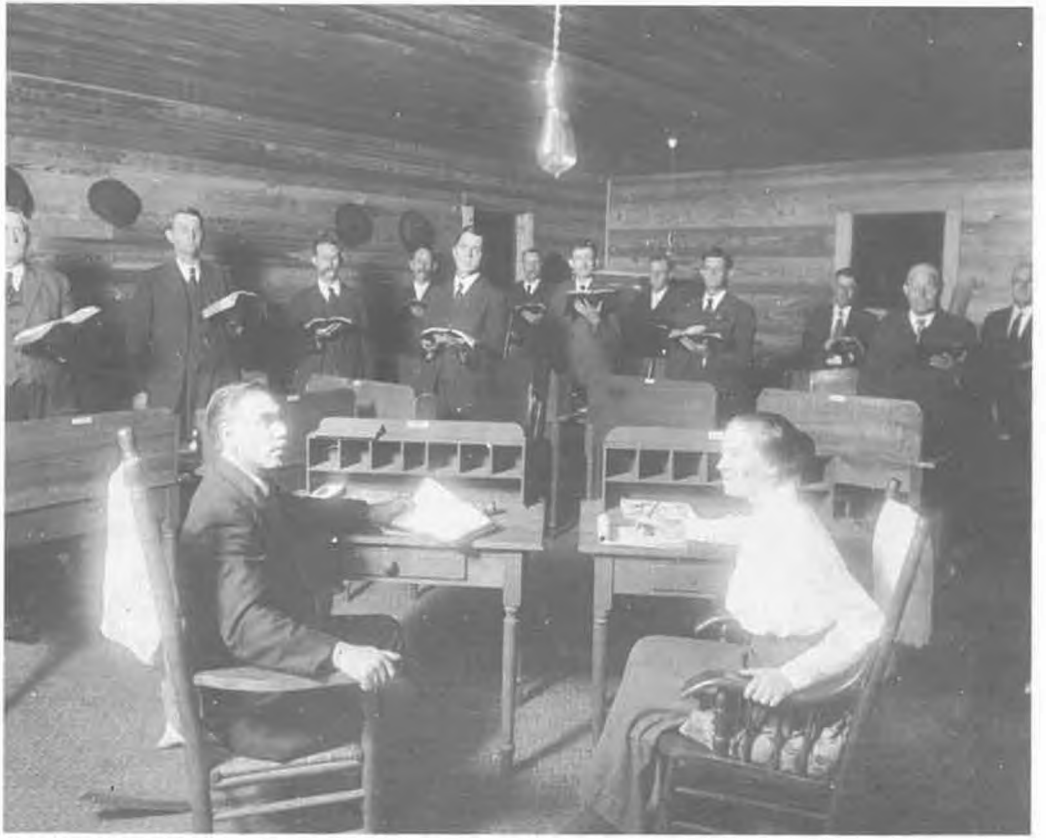
ELDERS MEET IN COUNCIL

The General Overseer met in council with the elders, at Cleveland, Tennessee, October 4, 1917 to discuss measures stipulated by the last Assembly . . . Twelfth Annual Assembly held at Harriman, Tennessee in 1916.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 1-6, 1917)

This Thirteenth Annual Assembly was the second to be held at the Church of God Temple at Harriman, Tennessee, convening November 1-6, 1917. The introductory service on Wednesday evening, October 31st induced the invasion of high spirituality and seemed to set the stage for another great Assembly. The welcome address by J. S. Llewellyn and the responses that followed contributed to the spiritual atmosphere. The offering for the Assembly Building was $240.67, and so when the Assembly

1. From "A. J. Tomlinson" a book written by Lillie Duggar, published by the White Wing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee.



General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson and the Board of Twelve Elders meet in council in the upstairs room of the publishing house, 2524 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. Bishop Tomlinson is seen at left front, and the secretary is Blanche Koon. M. S. Lemons is seen standing behind his desk at left, while Joe S. Llewellyn stands behind his desk second from right. Each of the councilmen had his own desk as pictured here.

actually opened for business on Thursday morning, November 1st at 10:00 o'clock all things seemed in readiness for an outstanding Assembly.

General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson moderated the Assembly, and for an opening Scripture lesson used the twelfth chapter of Romans. His opening statement was inspiring, "We certainly ought to have our minds so renewed in the things of God that we can go from this place with more courage and with greater ability than any time in the past."

At no time, during any Assembly, had Bishop Tomlinson prayed a more sincere prevailing prayer than offered on this opening day of the Thirteenth Assembly.***

***"Our Father who art in heaven, it is in Thy name we have come here to this Thirteenth Annual Assembly, from the north, east, south and west. Our greetings have been pleasant. Our fellowship has been sweet.

We want to thank and praise Thee because we are followers of the great Church of God. We thank the good name of our God for ever sending Jesus to establish His Church of which we can be members. We thank and glorify Thee because of Thy special presence. Thy presence was with the apostles and Thy presence is with us. Thou hast been with us for thirteen years and we believe Thy presence will continue with us until Jesus returns.

Our hearts and minds take their flight yonder, and we think of the great Assembly by and by where Abraham and Isaac and the blessed old apostles, who followed Jesus and who gave their lives for the great Church of God, will gather together.

We are trying to please Thee now, increase our capacity and help us to please Thee more perfectly.

We want to ask Thee to be in all the exercises that may follow in the Assembly. Give us more knowledge and greater ability than we have ever had. Let Thy presence be with all the speakers and give them power through the Holy Ghost.

Lord, be with us all the way, every day and hour, and may our fellowship continue to be sweet.

We pray that all the committeemen, and the people and all those who reside in Harriman may feel Thy presence.

Oh, God, I pray that Thy power may be so great that holiness can be felt and that every one will know that God is here.

God bless those that are not members of the Church of God that came to be with us. Help them to feel welcome and in the future to become members.

We want this to be the greatest Assembly we have ever had, not because of our worthiness, but to show the world that Thou art here in mighty power.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen."

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

1. To receive questions and subjects for consideration: J. B. Ellis, J. W. Pitcher, M. S. Haynes, H. L. Trim, D. R. Holcomb, J. F. Dover, W. H. Rogers.
2. To investigate grievances: Sam C. Perry, F. J. Lee, S. W. Latimer, S. O. Gillaspie, J. A. Davis, W. H. Cross, W. M. Rumler.
3. Watchmen: W. A. Capshaw, John Burk, W. F. Bryant, H. M. Scoggins, W. A. Walker, W. M. Murphy, J. B. Cagle.
4. Foreign Missions: Howard Juillerat, T. S. Payne, Chas. Holt, E. D. Hopkins, E. B. Culpepper, D. P. Barnett, W. H. Martin.
5. Bible Trianing School: M. S. Lemons, Efford Haynes, Geo. T. Brouayer, A. J. Lawson, J. A. Self, C. C. Walker, A. H. Bryans.

CHURCH SHOWS GENERAL INCREASE

With the call of states each overseer present with his delegation responded with songs, short talks and those who had reports read them. The statistical report taken from the reports of states shows:

	1916	1917	Increase
1. Number of churches	230	309	79
2. Number of members	7,690	10,076	2,386
3. Number of ministers	418	474	56

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSION WORK

"At the last Assembly the Foreign Mission Committee recommended that the Evangel Office act as treasurer for this fund, but made no provisions for the distributions of the money received. The Assembly accepted the recommendation of the committee without any notice that no one was appointed to place the money in the hands of the missionaries. When this fact was made known to your General Overseer, it was too late to make any amendments. The Editor of the Evangel did his best to serve in his part of the matter and gave general notice through the paper of the coming Mission day a week or two beforehand. The money commenced coming in and there was need of it on the mission field, so your General Overseer assumed the responsibility of distributing it to the best of his knowledge and ability. There were times when the amount needed was greater than the amount on hands, but he supplied it and met the needs all along. If the Assembly feels that the Overseer did wrong in assuming that responsibility, and that he has used it unwisely, you have only to make it known and he is ready to repent.

"The reports have been given in the Evangel from time to time so that all could see where the money came from and where it was used. There has been nothing hidden about it. The manner of gathering has been a success and the committee that prepared the plan last year is certainly worthy of commendation and praise. The distribution may not have been so satisfactory, yet we know of no complaints or criticisms.

"The committee appointed by this Assembly may have some better system to recommend. If they do we earnestly hope the Assembly may accept and adopt it.

"Balance in treasury last year	$ 34.52
Sunday schools	68.87

Camp meeting	12.50
Collections outside of churches	28.45
Individuals	298.87
One hundred forty churches	1,407.03
Total receipts	1,850.24
Disbursements	1,269.27
Balance	$ 580.97

ADDRESS OF GENERAL OVERSEER
(November 1-6, 1917)

This was his eighth Annual Address to be delivered to the Assemblies. He paraphrased desire, ardor and effort without compunction, and in his 9,400 word treatise relating to the facets, the phases and functions of the Church government and blessings provided through Jesus Christ he left his audience stimulated in profound appeal. It was a paragon of high-spirited "drive" in the ennoblement of effort, endeavor and success. He referred to the Church in the wilderness and penned the following gem of devotion:

"Christ was with them in the wilderness, and He is with us in the top of the mountains. He made them able for their work then; He makes us able for our work now. They were His chosen people then; we are His chosen people now. They were in the shades of the wilderness; we are out in the sunlight of the heavens. They were as guide boards pointing to a better day and more brilliant light; we are now in the day they saw afar off, and walking in the light of the last days. They embraced the promises by faith; we have them in reality. They beheld the glory of this time by faith, but we are enwrapt in its very folds. The wonderful experiences with which we are favored causes us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The vistas that stretched ahead of him were not hoary with age, but stimulating, inspiring, challenging. He stressed unity and love. He eulogized the sacrifices of the Apostle Peter, and Ignatus Bishop of Antioch. He said of government, "All who call themselves Christians agree in admitting that in the New Testament there is to be found frequent mention of a corporate body known as the Church—sometimes spoken of more fully as the Church of God."

Concerning thithes he said, "I would, therefore, recommend that provisions be made to have all the tithe of the tithes that come into the local treasuries conveyed to Headquarters for the

use and disposition of said board or Council of Elders."

He recommended that a Home Mission Fund be established, and that a collection every alternate month with the Foreign Mission collection be received.

He emphasized the keeping of accurate records, and encouraged the organization of a Sunday School in every established Church, where at least one hour a week could be utilized for a systematic study of the Bible.

He insisted that immediate attention be given to the establishment of a Church Bible training school, so needed by the Church, recommending and advising to go at it at once and not wait another year. The need was disturbing him.

He sought to correct some erroneous statements, "It has been reported that a few of our ministers have become enthused, and probably a little overzealous, and on the spur of the moment declared that unless a person could take up a serpent or handle fire he did not even have salvation. Such wild assertions as these should be avoided. The Church of God stands uncompromisingly for the signs and miracles and upholds the taking up of serpents and handling fire under the proper conditions, but does not stand for making such experiences a test of salvation."

He encouraged and advised the evangelists on the proper procedures of their work and the absolute necessity of standing for and supporting the rulings, the doctrines and practices of the Assembly. He also stressed the need of deeper spirituality for the people, warning against any deterioration of one's spiritual reserves and resources. He said, "Our people should be encouraged to yield to the Spirit and even to stir up the gift that is in them. Preaching is necessary, but if all of our services were given to preaching only, the spiritual fire would go out. There must be testimonies, talking in tongues, interpretations, signs, wonders, dancing, and whatever else the blessed Spirit of God dictates. Our people must be free in the Holy Ghost. This freedom must not be taken away from them . . ."***

***Most of these Church of God people who were filled with the Spirit of God had come away from church groups that rejected demonstrations. Many of them were accused of being fanatical, or possessed with emotionalism, and Bishop Tomlinson himself was often accused of this, only to see his revivals blessed with a downpouring of the Holy Ghost power and Spirit, where hard-hearted sinners got salvation, while his accusers often held dry, unfruitful protracted meetings instead of revivals. Bishop Tomlinson was stirred over souls . . . had to

become stirred over lost souls before he could stir others! It was God in the man. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ—Romans 1:16.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the General Overseer had not always been given concern due them. So, on Friday morning, November 2, 1917, following his short address "J. S. Llewellyn recommended that the General Overseer's address be accepted, also that his recommendations be made a matter of business in the Assembly." This was unanimously agreed to with scarcely any delay.

FINANCIAL REPORT OF OVERSEER (Abridged)
(Thirteenth Assembly 1917)

Receipts	$491.19
Disbursements	289.64
Balance	201.55

HOME MISSION FUND BEGUN
(Thirteenth Assembly 1917)

"Immediately after the Assembly was over last year I received a letter from a gentleman outside the Church containing $26.00. In the letter the brother stated that the amount was to be used in sending the ministers where they ought to go. After studying over the matter and waiting on God to know just what it meant and under what head to place it, before I had decided the matter clearly another letter of a similar character came which contained $13.75. And about the same time a demand presented itself for the very thing first mentioned—that of sending two ministers where they ought to go. I then decided to name it HOME MISSION FUND.

"Strange as it may seem the record shows that inside of a month I had received and applied to this fund the sum of $62.97. And demands came to use it just in the manner stated in the first letter.

"The book shows receipts of money of every month during the entire year since the receipt of the first which came November 8, 1916.

"There were no solicitings, and no one knew of such a fund, but received and paid out where I felt clear to use it.

"The total amount received during the year $295.47. This has been used to assist twenty-two ministers in eleven states and some islands.

Total amount expended $277.33
Leaving a balance to begin with next year 18.14

"As this came so unexpected and just kept on coming the whole year it seems to me it is the Lord already commenced to favor a Home Mission fund, by starting it Himself.

Reported by General Overseer."

REPORT OF PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

"The committee met on Thursday following the Assembly last year and decided to have Brother Tomlinson to take the responsibility of publishing the Evangel the ensuing year, and present his financial report at next Assembly. Also decided that the Evangel must be published regardless of the expense, and if the receipts fall short of paying for publishing, the Assembly should make it up as the paper is the property of the Assembly.

F. J. Lee, Chairman"

The Assembly accepted the report as read and decided to retain the same publishing committee another year. This committee was composed of F. J. Lee, J. L. Scott, T. S. Payne, A. J. Lawson and George T. Brouayer.

It was later advised to add a primary quarterly to the list of Sunday School requisites.

PUBLISHER REPORTS ON THE EVANGEL

The publishing committee requested the publisher, A. J. Tomlinson to present his financial report to the Thirteenth Assembly, now in session, and he did so in two sections. Reason for this was the closing out with former printers, and opening up the printing plant for the Church.

SECTION NO. 1

"This report showed that for eight weeks beginning July 21st, 6,000 copies were printed each week, then for a few weeks 6,300 copies. At present there are about 5,000 subscribers.

Last quarter there were prepared 4,200 sets of cards, 40 picture rolls, 5,500 quarterlies and 3,000 lesson leaves, besides thousands of tracts and booklets were printed.

A printing plant was established during the year at a cost of $3,000.

It is only partially paid for as it was purchased on the installment plan, but it is being used for God.

Total receipts to Oct. 28, last year	$1,847.22
Total expenses for same year	1,527.19
Balance for publisher's service	320.03
This same account was continued until Jan. 1, 1917, which showed total receipts of	$2,147.23
And total expense of	2,107.76
Balance for service	39.47
From Jan. 1, 1917, to Apr. 1, the time when we commenced to do our own printing total receipts were	$681.69
Total expenses during same time	708.75
Shortage of	27.06

During the time from the Assembly to April 1, it required the $320.03 reported at the Assembly for the publisher's services, and $27.06 besides, to meet the additional expenses. So we closed out with the former printers $27.06 behind and nothing for our services for the past year and a half."

SECTION NO. 2

"From April 1 to Oct. 29, 1917.

Cash receipts from all sources including donations and investments	$3,481.39
Total disbursements including expenses and payments on equipments and supplies	3,791.27
Amount paid out above receipts	309.88
Cash received for sales including subscriptions for Evangel, Sunday School literature, etc.	3,354.29
Expenses including purchase paper, etc.	3,008.52
Balance	345.77
Amount of shortage April 1, as shown in first section	27.06
Net balance	318.71

This report does not show liabilities and resources, neither does it include any pay for the services of the publisher and his wife, nor rent for the building occupied by the plant.

Respectfully submitted,
The Publisher"

A. J. Lawson, member of the committee, insisted, ". . . We should take into consideration the support of his family, rent and other expenses. I know he is willing to let it pass by and bear the

expense, but is it right for us to let him do so?"

F. J. Lee said: "The report of the publishing committee which has just been accepted includes the making up of deficiencies. Now let us make up the deficiencies."

The publisher expressed his appreciation of the offering then received for his services, amounting to $82.84.

A thousand subscription blanks were then distributed among the people and the Evangel was praised for its good work and great blessings. It was suggested the Evangel be printed in Spanish and circulated among the Mexicans and Spanish speaking people.

Jonah L. Shelton volunteered to discontinue publishing his paper at Jellico, Tennessee and use his influence for the Evangel and its circulation, and the Assembly accepted his proposition.

THE EVANGEL—A FOREIGN MISSIONARY

It was suggested that the Evangel be made a foreign Missionary when sent gratis to foreign countries for free distribution, and draw on the foreign mission fund for the subscription price and postage. After it was explained fully, and information given that care would be taken in the distribution to make every paper worth something, the Assembly accepted the proposition and instructed the publisher accordingly.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
(13th Assembly 1917)

The major doctrines and prominent teachings of the Church are interpreted by the General Assembly in session and supported by the Scriptures (Book of Minutes, Tenth Assembly, 1914, Page 174). However, much light and understanding on certain issues in question, as well as on some approaches to the Christian life, may be received through the questions and answers presented at the Assembly. Nevertheless, many of them should be considered in the light of the particular period for some of them may not conform to church practices today. Transition of Church government, from a beginning to a more perfect status, always requests organizational and operational review . . . and consideration.

FIRST SESSION (November 3rd)

QUESTION: What about life insurance?

ANSWER: No ruling on this subject has been made by the Assembly, but we are advised to discourage it. It is not a test of membership.

QUESTION: What about fairs and school exhibitions?

ANSWER: Much depends upon the kind of fairs and entertainments. Where the farmers bring in their products and stock and exhibit them as a means to stimulate agriculture, no exceptions should be taken to any attending. The conscience of a person ought to be enough to keep him away from places where he should not go. Our people have good common sense enough to know what they ought to do in such cases.

QUESTION: What about marriage and divorce?

ANSWER: Where people have two or more living companions they should not present themselves for membership. When investigation is made and they are found to be within the rules at present practiced they may become members.

QUESTION: What about coca cola and other cold drinks?

ANSWER: I hope none of our people are guilty of drinking such things, but if they are I hope they won't do it any more. I wonder what next. It looks like the devil has many traps set for us, but he is not going to get us all.

QUESTION: What about selling tobacco?

ANSWER: That matter has been settled before. We do not want to buy it or sell it or raise it. We do not even want to touch the old stuff.

QUESTION: What about chewing gum?

ANSWER: This is not a test of membership, but our people should not use it. We will not give a person credentials to preach if they use the stuff.

QUESTION: What about working on the Sabbath?

ANSWER: I guess most people do. (A pause.) The Sabbath is Saturday, When it comes to working on Sunday that is a different thing. The customs and laws of our country have provided that day for religious worship and rest, and it is better to observe it in this way if possible. But no rigid rule should be made, or sharp criticism offered if some of our brethren have to work on Sunday occasionally to hold their jobs. It is better, however, to try to get a job that does not require Sunday work.

QUESTION: Is it wrong to drink coffee?

ANSWER: Some drink it and some do not. But I notice that when coffee drinkers do not get their coffee they have the headache. This makes me think it may be wrong to use it. I do not hear of headaches when people do not get their milk or water. The Assembly has not made any rules about coffee, and it is not good to preach about it or even mention it much and thus probably wound the feelings of some of our people who use it. We can discourage the use of it by doing without it ourselves.

QUESTION: What about soda water?

ANSWER: Some one asked me about that recently and I told them that they might put a little soda in some water at home and drink it if they wanted to, but they should never buy it and drink it at any of these public drink stands.

QUESTION: Is it wrong to sell patent medicine? I sell it in my store and what shall I do about it?

ANSWER: You had better quit it and not sell any more. Better get another job and stop handling the stuff.

QUESTION: What about giving medicine to the sick?

ANSWER: I could not do it. But probably others can. In the case of nurses they feel compelled to give medicine when the doctor prescribes it. While they are serving as a nurse they may have to do it, but if they get so they cannot give it with a good conscience they had better get another job. In such things we must not condemn one another. It is possible to get so straight that one will lean back the other way. We should not go about condemning and wounding the feelings of our brothers and sisters. Jesus did not come into the world to condemn the world, but to save it.

QUESTION: Can a woman be a Sunday school superintendent?

ANSWER: Yes, and sometimes women make the very best superintendents, and teachers too. This is not an office in the Church and no one should take any exceptions to a good woman being superintendent.

SECOND SESSION (November 6th)

Before taking up the questions regularly, mention was made about our people attending spiritualist meetings. It was decided and strongly urged that our people should stay away from such meetings. An example was given that showed the danger.

It was explained that paying tithes did not mean to pay the

grocery bill first, but all food and clothing and the living for the family should be paid for out of the nine tenths after the tithe was taken out.

QUESTION: When a member of the Church of God attends church at one place and belongs at another, where shall he put his tithes?

ANSWER: It is really best for a person to move his membership to the church where he attends if he is permanently located there. It is considered best to pay the tithes into the church where his membership is, but no rigid rule should be enforced.

QUESTION: What steps should be taken with a member who moves from one church to another without transferring his membership and lives a disorderly life?

ANSWER: This is another reason why people ought to transfer their membership when they move in this way. But such disorderly person should be reported to the church where he belongs and dealt with according to what he deserves.

QUESTION: Shall our ministers teach that handling serpents is the evidence or test of salvation?

ANSWER: No, that kind of doctrine will not stand. If they should persist in advocating such teaching they should be dealt with.

QUESTION: What should be done with a bishop who sells cold drinks, such as soda water, and coca cola?

ANSWER: He must not do it. He should quit it and get another job. The Assembly has long since decided against such practice. Bishops, deacons, evangelists or members should not sell such things.

QUESTION: If one is a partner with another that wants to sell cold drinks what should he do?

ANSWER: Dissolve partnership.

QUESTION: Can we be compelled by the laws to hold up our hand and swear in court?

ANSWER: No. The law provides that we can affirm without holding up our hand.

QUESTION: Should not our members be courteous to those in authority?

ANSWER: Yes, due courtesy must be shown to officers and all in authority. Paul says, honor them to whom honor is due.

QUESTION: Shall members of the Church be jurymen in

court?

ANSWER: Members are advised to keep off of the jury as much as possible, but if you are compelled to act, use your very best judgment in the case according to law and evidence. Those who do not believe in capital punishment are not allowed to sit on a jury in a murder case.

QUESTION: Who are the elders mentioned in the fifth chapter of James?

ANSWER: These elders are the ministers, whose duty it is to anoint the sick with oil, but others may do so in the absence of a minister.

QUESTION: Is there any difference in being baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and being baptized in the name of Jesus?

ANSWER: Jesus, in His commission, said to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but where the disciples baptized it is sometimes said they baptized in the name of the Lord or the Lord Jesus. It is not so much the formula that is used in baptizing as it is the act itself. It is not what is said that counts, but what is done. But ancient history shows that the early Church used the formula given in Matt. 28, and the expressions given at Acts 10 and 19 do not necessarily contradict the other. If a person has been baptized by a competent person who used the formula in Matt. 28, he should not be baptized by some one who uses the formula, in the name of the Lord Jesus.

QUESTION: Would it be wrong for any one who is trusting in the Lord for their health to give medicine to an unsaved friend in case of sickness?

ANSWER: We cannot make any rigid rule regarding this matter. People must be governed by their own conscience. I could not do it, but others might feel obligated to do so and feel all right about it. No one should condemn another in this matter. Some may be engaged as nurses and if they can give medicine let them do it, but if they become condemned they had better get another job.

QUESTION: Should our people abuse physicians?

ANSWER: No. We must not abuse anybody. Let the world have their physicians.

QUESTION: Explain rebuking mentioned in I Tim. 5:1, 20.

ANSWER: The word means to reprove or reprimand. In the first instance Timothy was a young man and must

show courtesy and respect to older people. In the second, the minister that sins should be reproved and rebuked before all. But this must be done by Timothy or some one whom Timothy represents. He corresponds to our overseers. This rebuking power that seems to get hold of people at times and causes them to go through peculiar exercises in rebuking one another is to be feared and shunned.

QUESTION: Do all receive the fire with the Holy Ghost, or can it be sought for and received later?

ANSWER: The Bible says, baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. A baptism of fire subsequent to being baptized with the Holy Ghost is unscriptural. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost and tongues like as of fire sat upon each of them. I do not know that it would be out of order for "like as of fire" to be on people at any time.

QUESTION: Is it right for any one to have charge of a church who will not pay tithes and furthermore who opposes paying tithes?

ANSWER: No. The Assembly stands for paying tithes, and any one who opposes is not loyal to the Church. Every minister has to say he agrees with the teaching of the Assembly before he is ordained.

QUESTION: Is the baptism referred to in Luke 12:50 the same as in Rom. 6? If not, please explain the difference.

ANSWER: Baptism referred to in Luke 12:50 is that of suffering, Romans 6 may mean suffering, but probably not the same spoken of in Luke. This is probably dealing with the crucifixion of the "old man."

QUESTION: What is meant by one Lord, one faith and one baptism?

ANSWER: This has reference to the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. One common faith for both.

QUESTION: Does John 3:5 mean water baptism?

ANSWER: No. This has reference to the natural and spiritual birth. The next verse explains this.

QUESTION: Should our evangelist, in the absence of the pastor, invite any one claiming to preach oneness of all Pentecostal people and fights the Church of God, to hold services?

ANSWER: No. We do not want to compromise or allow such a person to fill our pulpits.

QUESTION: Does the Assembly stand for the Church of God in any place using the tithes for purchasing property for the Church, or taking the tithes and donating them to a lay member that is in need of support?

ANSWER: No. The tithes are for the use of the ministers only.

COMMITTEE REPORTS ON FOREIGN MISSIONS
(Thirteenth Assembly 1917)

The Committee on Foreign Missions—Howard Juillerat, J. A. Self, H. L. Trim, J. L. Scott, W. H. Rogers, E. D. Hopkins, E. B. Culpepper—reported and the report was accepted, as follows:

1. We heartily endorse the system adopted by the Assembly last year for collecting funds for foreign missions.

2. We are well pleased with the distribution of funds being in the hands of the General Overseer, and recommend that for the following year he shall have charge of same assisted by any of the brethren he may deem necessary.

3. We understand that less than half the churches contributed to foreign missions last year. We believe our people are anxious to spread the gospel, and if the matter is properly presented by our ministers they will respond more liberally. We recommend that every state overseer, every pastor, every evangelist and deacon should agitate this subject more.

4. We recommend that a vote of thanks be given our General Overseer for his announcement of missionary day through the columns of the Evangel, and would be delighted for him to continue the same.

5. We also recommend that the Sunday school scholars be urged to contribute to the Foreign Mission fund. Children could be encouraged to give more by having a friendly spirit of rivalry among the classes as to which gave the most. The class giving the most being reported to the school, also that what ever surplus money that can be spared from Sunday school treasury be given to missions.

6. We recommend that the Sunday school picture cards be saved and sent to missionaries as needs require, postage paid out of missionary funds.

L. Howard Juillerat, Chairman.

THE MONEY SYSTEM
(Assembly 1917)

The General Overseer spoke at length concerning the money system in present use in the Church and how it could be amended. He said, "Nowhere do we find in the Scriptures where it provides to pay the third tithe as we have been practicing under the present system. It only provides for paying the tithes, and the tithe of tithes. Only two tithes instead of three . . . All the tribes of Israel brought in their tithes and put in the storehouse, and the heave offering—tithe of the tithes—was sent to the high priest. We do not claim to be high priests, but there are certain principles on which to work . . . I am sure, that to take out the tithe of the tithes and send to headquarters will not be out of order. I am giving my honest convictions after listening to the board of elders discussing the subject and a close and careful study of the Scriptures.

". . . The tithe of tithes shall be sent to headquarters. The remaining nine tenths shall be used to supply the needs at home including the overseers. The nine tenths not to be tithed any more. The ministers in active service for the Church shall tithe the offerings they receive and send same to headquarters, or put it in the local treasury. Ministers that have other business that brings them an income shall tithe their receipts from their business and put in the local treasury. Leave the details of the distribution to be worked out by the General Overseer and his helpers and put in practice. This to include both the nine tenths in the local treasuries and the tithe of tithes at headquarters.

"Recommend paying the tithes as noted in last years minutes . . .

"Have treasurer of each local church to report to headquarters every month and give the amount of tithes received, paid out and balance in treasury.

"Have overseer of each state or province to report each month to headquarters the amount of both tithes and offerings received, and his railroad fare and other similar expenses.

"Headquarters may order from churches that have a surplus, whatever is needed to make up deficiencies, in a just and proportionate ratio.

". . . I recommend that this principle be accepted by the Assembly and that the working out of the details be placed in the hands of the General Overseer and his helpers . . . I am satisfied that the details of this principle can be worked out so completely that every minister can be supplied according to his needs . . .

This cannot be worked out unless the Assembly will adopt the principle and place it in the hands of the aforesaid competent men for that purpose . . . I felt like saying all this with a heart overflowing with gratitude and praises to God and love for His Church. I feel good because I have advised this. All I want now is for you to adopt this principle and make it possible to put it in practice."***

***The General Overseer kneeled and prayed, honestly, fervently and earnestly for God to intervene and make possible some additional enlightment, saying, "If this is not the right thing, Lord, we pray that Thou wilt put a stop to it . . . Help us, Lord, help us! . . . we want to get the ministers out in the field working for God . . . give us some plan so that something can be done. Guide the brethren and all of us . . ."

This subject was discussed at length but no conclusion was reached. Then on Tuesday morning, November 6th discussion of the tithing system was resumed. After some time the plan outlined by the General Overseer as explained above was accepted and adopted, with the additional recommendations prepared by the elders, and they gave examples of paying tithes. (Book of Minutes, 13th Assembly, Pages 285-288, 293)

HOME MISSION FUND ESTABLISHED
(November 5, 1917)

"A Home Mission Fund was discussed. The plan provides for a Home Mission fund gathered in a similar manner as the Foreign Mission fund, and every alternate month with it. This provides that the second Sunday of December, February, April, June, August and October be set apart for Home Mission Sunday, on which days offerings for this fund are to be received in every local church and sent to headquarters to be under the care and supervision of the General Overseer and his helpers."

GENERAL OVERSEER GRANTED PRIVILEGE

"General Overseer asked the Assembly for the privilege of appointing a few men for overseers who shall have authority equal with the overseers of the states to act in any territory where there are no overseers and to assist the overseers when necessary, but to have no specified territory.

The Assembly authorized the General Overseer to appoint any

of the twelve elders to officiate in any business he may find necessary. This virtually grants the request of the overseer, and gives each elder power to act as an overseer whenever and wherever required by the General Overseer." (Book of Minutes, Page 280).***

***This decision followed a great spiritual downpour, with a message in tongues and interpretation: "My little children, I am talking to thee. I am taking thee deeper. There are many things I have not shown thee. I am revealing my Word to thee. Be sure to follow the teaching of My Word. This is the object of this Assembly, to make known my laws. Walk carefully before me. My little children, remember that I am with thee. I know the intents of thine heart. My sheep are scattered. I will bring them from the hills and valleys to the tops of the mountains . . ." Is it any wonder that great and important issues for Church advancement could be so easily decided upon in unity? They sought to walk softly before God in all humbleness of mind and contrition.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS
(October 4-17, 1917)

An important subject for consideration was "Systematic Arrangement to Conserve the Work", a subject carefully arranged by the General Overseer and the elders in council sessions October 4-17. When presented it was adopted without delay or change, manifesting a full sense of unity. Full text of the recommendation is as follows:

"Subjects to Recommend to Assembly for Consideration.

Under the head: Systematic Arrangement to Conserve the Work in the State and Local Churches, the following is recommended:

1. The states should be divided into districts. Each district to contain a group or groups of churches.

2. Each district shall be under the care and supervision of a pastor or overseer, appointed by the overseer of the state.

3. The pastor or overseer of each district shall have helpers or assistant pastors, who shall be under his supervision, for the care of the churches of the district. These helpers may included women preachers and evangelists. Provisions for the support of these helpers may be determined by the overseer of the state and pastor of the district in joint conference.

4. The overseer of the state or province shall appoint a

committee of two or three ministers who shall assist him in determining the bounds of each district. The above plan to be worked out where practicable and as conditions demand it for the best interest of the work.

5. Pastors and their helpers will be expected to remain on their respective charges throughout the entire pastoral year. If any changes are made it should be under the direct supervision of the overseer of the state. No one should give up the work without giving due notice to the overseer and securing his consent and advice. Standing in the church will depend upon the observance of this advice.

6. The deacons are instructed to assist the pastor by holding prayer meetings, visiting the sick, keeping in touch with all members and giving special attention to those who are not regular attendants of the regular services for worship and insist on their attendance that they may receive the necessary spiritual benefits. Other members, including the sisters, may be called into this service, and with the assistance of the pastor may be classified according to the needs and best interest of the church.

7. All ministers, bishops and evangelists, not engaged as overseers or in pastoral work are expected to do evangelistic work. In case there are any who are not thus engaged, they should furnish the overseer of the state in which they reside a written reason for their inability to perform their duty as ministers.

8. Evangelists or bishops doing evangelistic work shall have the liberty to enter, without restrictions, any new territory opening up to them, but under no consideration shall they enter a pastoral charge without the consent of the pastor.

9. The evangelists shall be required to report quarterly to the overseer of the state in which they work. This report should include meetings held, churches organized with number of members and name and address of clerks, souls saved, and any general good accomplished.

10. It shall be the duty of the overseers of the states or provinces to hold one or more conventions in each district in his territory during the year, to give general instructions concerning the doctrine, and work for the general interests of the work in the district. These conventions should be planned and the dates announced as early as possible each year so all the members in the district can make their arrangements to attend.

11. It shall be the duty of each district overseer to hold a district conference in his district on the second Saturday of October, for the purpose of preparing the annual reports for each local church

in the district. It shall be the duty of each assistant pastor and clerk of each church to attend these district conferences. Clerks shall be prepared to furnish the necessary information to fill in the annual report blanks, assisted by the district overseer.

At these conferences the condition of the evangelists in the district shall be considered and their worthiness determined for the renewing of their credentials for another year. These matters shall all be reported to the overseer of the state by the district overseer.

12. No conference shall be held in the district except under the direction or supervision of the district pastor or overseer. This does not exclude the authority of the overseer of the state which is fully explained in minutes of previous Assemblies.

13. To meet some requirements of the Clergy Bureaus relative to securing clergy rates on some of the railroads, and the adjustment of some irregularities, we recommend that all evangelists' certificates be renewed each year.

If this recommendation is accepted by the Assembly, then it shall be the duty of the overseers to carefully examine each holder of credentials before renewing the certificate. If any have proved themselves unworthy by any misconduct or wrong teaching, they shall not be renewed. If there are any who for any cause have discontinued their ministerial labors, and do not intend to be engaged in active ministerial service, their credentials shall not be renewed.

14. It shall be the duty of the overseers of states or districts to transfer members from churches that have gone down and not able to do business, to those who are in working order.

Supplemental

1. The Lord's supper and feet washing. After careful consideration of the subject, and examination of the Scriptures it was decided that the two are inseparable, and one should follow the other in succession in the same service. These sacred ordinances should be practiced openly and not in some secret chamber where outsiders are excluded.

2. Life insurance should be discouraged among our people, but shall not be an offence worthy of excluding a member when there is no other offence. Provisions for our unfortunates should be made by the Church. This comes under the head of the financial system.

3. Recommend to the Assembly that a committee composed of M. S. Lemons, E. Haynes and F. J. Lee, be appointed to compile a Church of God Song Book.

The next subject was that under the head, "Keeping Records." This matter was strongly urged and the Assembly favored it in full as recommended in Annual Address.

The next subject was the Sunday school.

A strong expression was given favoring the Sunday school work and all that was recommended was accepted."

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS

(For Assembly Year 1917-1918)

1. ALABAMA ..... J. B. Ellis
2. ARIZONA ..... R. M. Singleton
3. ARKANSAS ..... E. J. Boehmer
4. BAHAMAS ..... Milton Padgett
5. CALIFORNIA ..... W. C. Hockett
6. FLORIDA ..... Sam C. Perry
7. GEORGIA ..... M. S. Lemons
8. ILLINOIS ..... D. P. Barnett
9. KENTUCKY ..... W. F. Bryant
10. LOUISIANA ..... M. S. Haynes
11. MARYLAND ..... J. W. Pitcher
12. MISSISSIPPI ..... J. A. Davis
13. MISSOURI ..... R. L. Cotnam
14. NEW MEXICO ..... O. R. Rouse
15. NORTH CAROLINA ..... W. A. Capshaw
16. OHIO ..... Efford Haynes
17. SOUTH CAROLINA ..... W. H. Cross
18. TENNESSEE ..... F. J. Lee
19. TEXAS ..... Geo. T. Brouayer
20. VIRGINIA ..... T. L. McLain
21. WEST INDIES ..... J. A. Joseph
22. WEST VIRGINIA ..... W. M. Rumler

BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL ESTABLISHED

(13th Assembly 1917)

The Committee on Bible Training reported the following:

"We have considered this matter and decided that we need the school. We first considered using the Assembly building in Harrman. Then we decided it would be better at present to have it at Cleveland and use the upper room where the elders met in council.

We recommend that the General Overseer have supervision of

the school and employ such teachers as he may deem necessary.

This school shall be for the training of young men and young women for efficient service on the field.

"The Bible shall be the principle text book, but such literary work and music as is necessary shall be included in the course.

We hope to have the school ready to commence by the first of December, or as soon thereafter as possible.

M. S. Lemons, Chairman."

CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY

The following resolution was read, accepted and adopted by the Assembly.

"Harriman, Tenn. Nov. 6, 1917.

General Assembly of the Churches of God:

Be it resolved by the Churches of God constituting this General Assembly, that from and after this date, the General Overseer and the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly of the Church of God, be, and they are hereby given full power and authority to sell, transfer and convey, any and all property belonging to the General Assembly, both real and personal, when in their judgment the sale of same will promote the best interests of the cause of God and this General Assembly. Provided further that the General Overseer shall join the Board of Trustees in all deeds conveying real property, and their deed so executed shall convey unto the purchaser all the right, title and interest of this General Assembly in and to said property.

Passed by the General Assembly this 6th day of Nov. 1917.

Attest:

E. J. Boehmer, clerk
A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer."

OTHER THINGS HAPPENED

"The Thirteenth Assembly, at Harriman, November 1-6, 1917, was highlighted in a November 10 "Evangel" article by A. J. Tomlinson, who said that 700 registered; 15 or 20 received the Holy Ghost; street meetings were held in the evening; in the night altar services streaks and "balls of fire" were seen in the building above the heads of worshippers. When opportunity was given to join the Church 25 responded, among them some ministers of wide experience."***

***Excerpt taken from the book, "Written In Heaven" by Buford M. Johnson, and published by the White Wing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee.

From all indications the Bible Money System was discussed more than any other particular subject, because of the pressing need. The staff at headquarters had no means of support and it was imperative that expense money be provided through some channel. But such discussions never deterred the downflow of the spiritual blessing that often swept among the enthusiastic throng of delegates like a great conflagration . . . but it was all righteousness from God!

J. S. Llewellyn addressed the Assembly briefly . . . "Bible Money System Explained" by T. S. Payne . . . W. A. Walker and George T. Brouayer both preached . . . M. S. Lemons brought a discourse on "Discipline vs. No Discipline" . . . F. J. Lee's discourse was "The Temple a Type" . . . W. H. Martin spoke on love . . . Sam C. Perry's discourse was on "Signs of the Times" . . . J. W. Pitcher delivered a message on "The Ideal Local Church" . . . Roy L. Cotnam spoke of the work of a rescue home at Sapulpa, Oklahoma . . . Brother Adams of Louisville, Ky., gave a short message . . . Brother Walker of Oklahoma, the Indian preacher spoke, and the General Overseer exhorted several times during the Assembly, which closed at a late hour Tuesday evening, November 6th, 1917, full of praises and rejoicing and Christian fellowship.

Two Years of Trying Times for Active, Aggressive Church

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THE DAY'S TROUBLING ISSUES

World War I, which began July 28, 1914, had created havoc in many parts of the world. On the one side were Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria, and on the other the Triple Entente—Great Britain, France and Russia, aided by the United States, Serbia and Japan, and others, the United States having entered the conflict April 6, 1917. Belligerence pricked constantly at other nations and peoples not as yet actively engaged in the war. It was a time that tried the souls of men . . . people began in a peculiar way to distrust one another, and this left some of them in a perplexed state of wonderment at times. It was not the same kind of moral and religious decay that plagued the Jewish people of Jeremiah's day, as Jeremiah 9:4, 5 point out. Subversive elements were busy everywhere. The conflict seemed to stymie the faith of some people with a sort of uselessness, while the faith of others was stimulated by their confidence in the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. In spite of any prevailing handicaps the Church took on initiative and strength in a desire to put into operation the things passed and agreed upon by the Assembly. General Overseer Bishop Tomlinson said the Church was growing and the work was spreading in spite of oppositions and discouragements. (1)

FOLLOWING 1917 ASSEMBLY

According to his journal Bishop Tomlinson engaged the services of Maude Pangle, a shorthand writer who commenced working for him on November 19, 1917, and in the same entry of November 21, 1917 he mentioned that five people were employed in the printing department and five in the office besides himself and additional help one or two days a week.

CHURCH WORK PROGRESSING

By June 1918 there had been a council of the elders. Bishop

1. From "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar, Diary entry December 27th.

Tomlinson finished a much needed addition to the Evangel office. A Junior Quarterly had been started, besides a Sunday School secretary book, and nine thousand Church of God Evangels were mailed weekly. The Church was reaching out into new fields, and God was richly blessing the endeavors. But there were also trying times, and Bishop Tomlinson admitted some of the hardest, since the responsibilities of all the Churches fell upon his shoulders at times. From all indications some inside trouble and dissension seemed to be developing in the high echelons of administration.

INVESTIGATED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Since the nation was at war with a formidable enemy it was no unusual thing for civic, social and religious organizations to be investigated by the government, because of the subversive elements existing. It was no different with the Church. Near the first of September 1918 an officer of the government was sent to investigate the Church work, and he took samples of all the materials published by the Church to be examined.

CARE FOR BIBLE TRAINING STUDENTS

The Church had trouble caring for even the few Bible Training School students, so Bishop Tomlinson built an addition to his house on Gaut Street. This addition included a kitchen, a large dining room, a porch on the side of the dining room, and a basement under the new construction. A bath was installed in one of the basement rooms and the other room was used as a utility room. It was completed in late fall of 1918, and most of the Bible Training School students made their home with the Tomlinsons.

ASSEMBLY 1918 POSTPONED

The Fourteenth Annual Assembly, scheduled for October 30-November 5, 1918, at Harriman, Tennessee, was postponed indefinitely, because of the raging influenza epidemic. Public gatherings of all kinds were prohibited by law, and it was a difficult year for most organizations including the Church. A large weekly publication (The Saturday Blade) of Chicago, Illinois, said on page two, of its November 2, 1918 edition, in a banner head that stretched across much of it: "STEAM SHOVEL DIGS DEATH TRENCH . . . New York Grave Diggers, far behind in their task . . . October 31, 1918 . . . 400 unburied bodies . . . 489

new cases of influenza (Spanish) in Greater New York in 24 hours, and 418 deaths . . ." This was one of the most disastrous epidemics to ever strike the world. It is said that it killed an estimated 20,000,000 throughout the world, and 548,000 in the United States and the armed forces. (2)

THE CHURCH MOVES FORWARD

The terrible conflict between the warring nations came to a halt with the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918. However the epidemic of influenza was still on the rampage. The government closed all churches and public gatherings of all kinds. On this same day of November 11th the Church opened another term of Bible Training School with five students, a few more enrolling later. The influenza had prevented larger enrollment at the time. It was difficult to meet the expenses and to take on encouragement in the face of such conflict with the disease, but the Church grew and expanded in spite of it. Sometimes the Church was closed for a month at a time. However, when the school term ended April 4, 1919 two students received diplomas—A. D. Evans of North Carolina and Earl Hamilton of Tennessee. The School was a success.

CHURCH IN NEW YORK?

"Your editor's son Homer is off to New York again this week after a few weeks stay at home since having returned from France. He thinks there is a fair prospect for a church in that great city before very long. How wonderful it will be to have the Church of God established in the great city of New York. Let us pray and work to that end and believe God for great things . . ." (Editorial by A. J. Tomlinson in the Evangel, issue dated May 10, 1919. This copy was printed in six columns of 13 ems, format size about 15" x 22", four pages.)

PUBLISHING HOUSE EXPANDING

Machinery to complete a bookbinding equipment was purchased and installed at a cost of $350.00 and a new Intertype machine was purchased and installed at a cost of approximately $3700.00, and by April 21, 1919 they were printing sixteen thousand five hundred Church of God Evangel papers. The crew now numbered five men and ten women as regular office

2. The 1969 World Almanac.

employees, besides some extra assistance at times.

At their council in April 1919 the body of elders authorized the erection of a building for the Evangel office and Bible School room, and by August 9th the new building was being occupied, though it was not quite completed. Little money was available, yet someone just had to find it, and this task fell to the shoulders of General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson. He sustained great test and trial over trusting God to supply the necessary funds with which to complete the building. He had proven himself trustworthy and was constantly borrowing money on his own signature to help build up the Church of God. But in spite of all improvements and additions the plant was still too small.

CHURCH HAS SOME PERILOUS TIMES

The influenza epidemic was raging and everywhere the nations were fraught with sickness and death, besides trying to mend the breaches of a war-torn world. For as much as a month at a time—some longer—the doors of churches everywhere were being closed. It was difficult to operate efficiently and strengthen and build up the moral and spiritual fiber of mankind in the wake of such severe times.

Usually, if a church constituency is deprived the liberties of assembling together to worship there is a tendency for some to become weak in faith and fellowship, become discouraged and eventually disappear in sad abandon with the lost. Others become "lean" in their experience with God for lack of soul nourishment so essential in fortifying their spiritual stamina and courage to face a cruel world of unbelief. But, the faithful and God-fearing disciples of the Lord hold together and when the doors are opened again they return to the House of the Lord.

The Church of God suffered and sustained like fate in many areas. Nor was it without toll in the ministry. Occasionally some erstwhile good ministers—thought to be dependable and trustworthy—envisioned "greener pastures" elsewhere and left the Church at an opportune time they thought they could, or would draw a large following from the Church of God.

This was the plight of Elder Sam C. Perry, the sixth appointed elder of the body of elders. At the Assembly of 1917—Thirteenth Annual Assembly—he was appointed overseer of the state of Florida, by the General Overseer, having been an aspiring minister of the Church for a number of years. Florida was a rewarding field for the Church, and at the time of his appointment

Reverend Perry had the oversight of 59 churches with an aggregate membership of 1,455, 15 bishops, 34 deacons, 44 evangelists, 42 churches with pastors, 28 churches with Sunday Schools of 800 average attendance, and property worth over $16,000. It was a ripe field for the dissemination of the gospel of Christ and His Church. Perry decided to discontinue his ministry with the Church of God, and according to Bishop Tomlinson's Diary of August 12, 1919 he proceeded to give the Church some trouble.***

***Bishop Vernon H. Smith, at the time overseer of Districts 10 and 18 in Virginia, took this writer to visit Sam C. Perry in the Portsmouth, Virginia area, summer of 1934, and Perry was still apparently bitter toward the Church and Bishop Tomlinson. He was in revival there with another organization. He was removed as overseer of Florida and was replaced by F. J. Lee.

J. L. Scott discontinued his ministry with the Church and started an organization called the "Original Church of God," and was leader of the group as long as he lived, though it never seemed to grow very much. Scott caused the Church a lot of trouble, and by a court injunction put the people of the Church out of their own building.***

***This is attested to by articles that appeared in the Church of God Evangel, issues dated June 3, 1922 and July 8, 1922.

When the Fourteenth Annual Assembly scheduled for October 30-November 5 was postponed indefinitely unquestionably some nonchalance crept in, leaving its mark here and there among the Church constituents. It was during the interim period between the 1917 and 1919 Assemblies that Sam C. Perry and J. L. Scott actually discontinued their ministry with the Church. The Assembly was always a time of refreshing for the members of the Church of God and they looked forward to the conclave from year to year.

Somehow, the Assembly had a way of answering desire and purpose, and provided a healing balm to troubled souls as well as to those entrusted with responsibility and duty. Oftentimes, in the wake of proposed government and organization when initiative superposes authority on the liberties of the individual, respect and precaution are ignored, evaded or bypassed in efforts to correct imperfect procedures for strength. As a result inconsistencies, discrepancies and differences develop to embarrass those who

endeavor to operate the government.

The Church seemed to feel the stain and stigma of this very thing at times; so did the General Overseer. Though he sustained the weight and care of all the churches they had grown to such proportions he found it impossible to counsel them individually. On August 20, 1919 he expressed himself freely.***

***"I am very heavily burdened this morning about the work. The responsibilities are very heavy . . . I feel like raising my hands to heaven and crying out to God for help. Our new building is not yet complete and the financing of this is a heavy burden as well as all the other departments with the limited means at hand. O God, please help me this morning. Besides these responsibilities . . . and a thousand other cares I have the care of all the churches. I feel almost crushed under the load this morning, but I must roll it off on my Saviour who has promised to bear all our burdens for us. I'm sure God will help me as all of this work is His. I did not put myself in this position, I was forced into it, yet I accepted it willingly to do my best, and this I am doing. Lord, please help me this morning to bear up under the Load." (From the book, "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar . . . Pages 176, 177)

Bishop Tomlinson, dedicated to the gospel of Christ and His Church, gave of himself, his talents, his means, his family, his all in the promotion of the work. He bought and built necessary buildings on his own, and made contracts and bought printing equipment and other . . . all on his own.

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(October 29—November 4, 1919)

The Fourteenth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God convened at Cleveland, Tennessee October 29—November 4, 1919.***

***In His address the General Overseer mentioned the dates as October 30—November 4, 1919, therefore beginning on Thursday. However, the introductory services were held Wednesday evening according to the minutes of the particular Assembly.

Last year the Fourteenth Assembly had been planned for Harriman, Tennessee but was postponed because of the epidemic of influenza. Those who planned to attend the Assembly were

advised not to bring babies or children because of lack of accommodation. Day services at the Assembly would be conducted in the local church, but since there was no large auditorium available the night services of the Assembly would have to be conducted at three places—the local church where the day services were held, the tabernacle at South Cleveland and Sunnyside. In addition a large tent was to be erected to help accommodate the delegates. Moderator of the Assembly was Bishop A. J. Tomlinson, and he greatly stressed the need and work of an orphanage.

ASSEMBLY ZEAL RUNS HIGH

On Wednesday morning, October 29th the early trains brought in many delegates. Registrars were at their place early in the

Bishop A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Churches of God, taken during some of his exceptionally active days of 1919-1922 perhaps. He served as leader from the time he first took the covenant June 13, 1903. Under his leadership the Church grew and expanded, reaching into many new fields and some foreign countries. He saw greater vistas ahead, and the forward progress, the posture and spirituality of the Church seemed almost unparalleled.



morning, registering the incoming delegates and giving everyone an opportunity to make a contribution to the new addition of the Evangel building. There were guided tours of the building by J. S. Llewellyn and J. B. Ellis, and when delegates reached the "upper room" they were privileged to listen to the lectures of M. S. Lemons and remain as long as they desired, testifying, shouting and praising the Lord.

At this Fourteenth Assembly there were delegates from 25 states, and Canada and the Bahama Islands. There were 836 people who registered from out of town. This does not include those from the city of Cleveland, Tennessee.

THE GENERAL OVERSEER'S ADDRESS
(October 30, 1919)

Promptly at 10:00 o'clock, Thursday morning October 30, 1919 the Fourteenth Annual Assembly was opened for business. After a short period of devotion the General Overseer read the twelfth chapter of Romans and prayed. At 10:30 a.m. he proceeded with his address of approximately 14,100 words, and expressed his gratitude of the occasion by saying: "Indeed this is a twofold homecoming. Back in the Assembly once again No. 1, and back at Cleveland, Tenn., Headquarters of the Church of God No. 2."

The address contained thirty-one subheads—Introductory, Noah's Part, The Assembly, New Discoveries, Government and System, Change of Minds, Searching for Truth, Heroes of Faith, Protected by the Government, Going This Way, Trials Overcome, Commendation, Stick to Your Job, Financial System, Ministers Pay Tithes, Equal Distribution, Church and Government, Speaking Evil, Knowledge, The Colored People, System of Government, Some Hindrances, The Ministry, Unity Broken, Coming Together, Orphanage, Heresy, Sedition, Not Representative, The Council, and Purpose.

Concerning the government of the Church he said, ". . . it is the GOVERNMENT OF GOD FOR HIS PEOPLE. It is not democratic; it is not republican; it is not a monarchy, neither absolute nor limited; but it is theocratic—administered by the immediate direction of God."

He dwelt at length on the financial system of the Church, especially the tithes and their distribution, declaring emphatically "Because the tithes belong to the ministers." He assured the Assembly the Council of Elders had not fully worked out the system as yet, but with hearty cooperation of all officials and

members the problem would soon be solved. Some ministers were accused of not paying tithes, while others felt denied the privilege to pay tithes. The General Overseer explained that the Levites had no inheritance with which to make an increase upon which to pay tithes. But the other tribes were to bring their tithes into the storehouse, or treasury . . . and those over the treasury took the tithe (called the "heave offering") of these tithes . . . and paid it to the high priest. After this the nine tenths were to be distributed to the brethren. "Under this system the Levites paid tithes, but they did it through those who were over the treasuries . . . Under the system practiced the past two years every minister has paid tithes."***

***The system now practiced by the Church was that everyone pay tithes of the increase . . . 10 percent of all net earnings . . . into the local Church treasury.

2. The local Church treasurer take 10 per cent of all tithes paid into the treasury, and send this 10 per cent (or tithe) to Headquarters for the support of the Headquarters ministry (high priest). This was done as the second tithe . . . minister's tithe of tithes, typified by the system of the Levitical priesthood.

3. The nine-tenths to be divided, or given to the ministry. There is no Scriptural support for a third tithes.

Of the thirty-one subjects covered in the address none was more strikingly important and impressive than the one referring to integration. Bishop Tomlinson said, "Every subject on the program is of the utmost importance. But . . . I feel it my duty to mention one more. We have deviated from our former practice by giving a place on the program for our colored brethren. We have recognized them and loved and fellowshipped them as brothers and sisters and members and given them opportunity for extemporaneous utterances, but this is the first time they have been given a representation on the program. We feel they are due this recognition."

Regarding the duties of the Council of Elders he stated: "When the Assembly authorized the appointment of twelve bishops three years ago for counselors for the General Overseer there was nothing said about this body being a representative body. It was only meant to pattern after the practice of the early Church, and for strength and stay for the General Overseer . . . It was meant to select men that had the general interest of the Church at heart with whom the General Overseer can counsel . . . They are to be

broad and worldwide . . . The councilors, as a council, are not expected to frame and present measures to be adopted at the Assembly independent of the General Overseer, but in council there may be measures framed for presentation to the Assembly by and through the General Overseer. It should be emphasized that these counselors are not a body to themselves to represent the people, but they are selected for counselors and assistants to the General Overseer . . . The number that composed the council that assisted James in the early Church is unknown . . . James, the Lord's brother, was not a member of the council, neither was he an apostle . . . but he was the chief executive until the day of his death . . ."

In an epistle addressed to James by St. Clement, Bishop Tomlinson quotes, "Clement to James, the Lord's brother and the bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the holy Church of the Hebrews, and the churches everywhere . . . with the elders, and deacons, and the rest of the brethren . . ."

Before closing his address that lasted for more than an hour and a half Bishop Tomlinson said, "Taking everything into consideration we believe the time has come for us to select a place out on some street car line about Chattanooga or some other place and begin to prepare a place for national and world-wide camp meetings and not only have the Assembly there once a year, but have two camp meetings a year besides . . ."

COMMITTEES SERVING FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE NO. 1—To Receive Questions and Subjects for Consideration: J. B. Ellis, H. L. Trim, W. M. Rumler, E. D. Hopkins, E. B. Culpepper.

COMMITTEE NO. 2—To Investigate Grievances: F. J. Lee, Efford Haynes, Milton Padgett, S. W. Latimer, W. H. Cross.

COMMITTEE NO. 3—Watchmen: J. A. Davis, John Burk, J. W. Culpepper.

COMMITTEE NO. 4—Foreign Missions: J. S. Llewellyn, Z. D. Simpson, J. A. Self, W. G. Rembert, O. R. Rouse.

COMMITTEE NO. 5—Home Missions: T. S. Payne, S. O. Gillaspie, F. J. Crowder, S. J. Heath, Charles H. Randall.

COMMITTEE NO. 6—Sunday School Interests: George T. Brouayer, M. W. Letsinger, A. J. Lawson, E. E. Simmons, J. N. Hurley.

CALL OF STATES AND RESPONSE
(Thursday Afternoon)

The Call of States had become a regular feature during the Assemblies, and each overseer with his delegation usually sang songs, gave short talks and gave his report of the progress of the work in his particular state. The following were represented at this Fourteenth Assembly:

1. Alabama—70 representatives. Song, "Onward Mighty Army."
2. Arkansas—13 representatives. Song, "There Is Power In The Blood."
3. Bahama Islands—1 representative.
4. California—1 representative.
5. Canada—1 representative. Song, "I Belong To The King."
6. Connecticut—No response.
7. Delaware—1 representative. Requests prayer for the Holy Ghost.
8. Florida—20 representatives. Song, "Be Ready."
9. Georgia—97 representatives. Song, "Angels Get My Mansion Ready."
10. Illinois—8 representatives. Song, "If The Light Has Gone Out."
11. Indiana—1 representative. (Kind remembrance)
12. Kentucky—30 representatives. Song, "I Shall Be Home With Jesus."
13. Louisiana—3 representatives.
14. Maryland—1 representative.
15. Michigan—No response.
16. Mississippi—22 representatives. Song, "Just The Same Today."
17. Missouri—3 representatives. Remarks by E. L. Pinkley. Prayer.
18. New Jersey—1 representative. Song, "Thy Word Is A Lamp Unto My Feet."
19. New Mexico—1 representative. Remarks by Overseer.
20. North Carolina—49 representatives. Song, "Over Yonder By The Sea."
21. North Dakota—9 representatives. Song, "Anchored In Jesus." (General Overseer says this work is a result of Home Mission funds)
22. Ohio—4 representatives. Remarks by state overseer.
23. Oklahoma—2 representatives. Remarks by the overseer.

24. Pennsylvania—5 representatives. Song, "At The Cross."
25. South Carolina—17 representatives. Song, "I'll Be Satisfied."
26. Tennessee—183 representatives. Song, "A Call For Messengers."
27. Texas—8 representatives. Song, "I'll Meet You In The First Resurrection."
28. Virginia—31 representatives. Song, "I'll Be Ready When The Bridegroom Comes."
29. West Virginia—6 representatives. Song, "I Want To Be Ready To Go."

OUTSTANDING MIRACLE PERFORMED
(October 30, 1919)

The Thursday evening evangelistic service began promptly at 6:30, and a good altar service followed the sermon from Matthew 12:42, by Charles M. Grissam. The presence of God seemed to hover over the whole congregation, and the miracle took place. A man with both limbs broken and a broken back, had not walked a step for ten long years, was touched by the power of God and healed instantly. He leaped and shouted, left his crutches behind and walked from the building—made whole—and was followed by numbers of people who beheld the miracle.

TERMINAL BUSINESS FIGURES

In the following computations it is proposed to list totals only.

THE EVANGEL PUBLISHING HOUSE BUSINESS

Total receipts	$25,829.07
Expenditures	24,161.61
Gain	$1,667.46

TOTAL INDEBTEDNESS

Intertype	$2,449.28
Printing Press	259.15
Building	6,367.10
Total	$9,075.53

NOTE: General Overseer advised the appointment of a committee to audit the books if the Assembly thought best to do so.

M. S. Lemons said: "It is reported that Brother Tomlinson

makes no report, but we know he does."

J. S. Llewellyn said: "All kinds of false reports have gone out about Brother Tomlinson, but this is one report that we are thankful for. When you go home, you tell the people that the General Overseer does make reports. (Many 'amens' by the people) Some people say the Church of God is going down, but I say it is going up. I suggest that we all accept the report." (Page 26, Fourteenth Assembly Minutes 1919)

THE EVANGEL BUILDING

The cost of the Evangel Building, including the third addition, and the lot on which the structure was erected—a lot that was donated by A. J. Tomlinson and wife for the publishing house—to date totaled $6,442.10.

THE EVANGEL . . . THE CHURCH PAPER

F. J. Lee, in boosting the Evangel and Its Mission said, "I remember the time before the Evangel was printed when Brother Brouayer and wife, and Sister Clyde Cotton (Haynes) were in my home and we were praying about a paper for the Church of God. The Lord showed Brother Brouayer in a vision that a paper would be published for the Church and that A. J. Tomlinson would be editor. One reason the Evangel is going so rapidly is because it is in divine order." (Fourteenth Assembly Minutes, Page 26)

T. S. Payne boosted circulation, and created a greater love for the White-Winged Messengers. Others spoke of its blessing to many. Six hundred subscription blanks were distributed among the congregation, and F. W. Gammon told of getting twenty-seven subscriptions without a copy of the paper to show the people. Editor Tomlinson remarked that he felt his unworthiness of becoming editor. He said they simply would not let him out.

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE SELECTED

(Friday, October 31, 1919)

The Assembly selected a committee comprising M. S. Lemons, J. W. Culpepper and S. W. Latimer to select and recommend names for a publishing committee, and in the afternoon they brought the following report:

"We, your committee to present names to constitute the publishing committee submit the following: F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne, M. S. Lemons, A. J. Lawson, George T. Brouayer—The

committee."

The report was accepted and approved by the Assembly.

HOME MISSION REPORT

(November 7, 1917—October 30, 1919)

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
Brought forward	$ 18.14	Gospel car account	$903.74
Alabama	217.10	Alabama	32.10
Arkansas	19.58	Arkansas	44.50
Colorado	3.40	California	4.50
Florida	342.64	Florida	86.20
Georgia	789.20	Georgia	356.70
Illinois	61.19	Illinois	104.06
Kentucky	62.88	Indiana	49.20
Louisiana	65.38	Kentucky	195.73
Mississippi	90.84	Louisiana	1.00
Maryland	7.47	Missouri	6.00
North Carolina	105.49	Maryland	2.25
North Dakota	11.37	Minnesota	3.00
New Mexico	1.57	Michigan	73.50
Ohio	30.50	Mississippi	11.25
Oklahoma	4.46	North Carolina	89.45
Pennsylvania	13.50	North Dakota	123.00
South Carolina	52.31	Ohio	92.50
Tennessee	506.29	Oklahoma	92.25
Texas	44.04	Pennsylvania	18.50
Virginia	12.39	South Carolina	155.40
West Virginia	68.09	Tennessee	591.63
		Texas	143.50
Total	1,937.03	Virginia	71.50
Individuals	517.16	West Virginia	1.00
Total	2,454.19	Total	3,252.46
Deficit	798.27		
	3,252.46		3,252.46
		By deficit	798.27

Last Payment on car	$ 875.00
Incidental expenses	115.00
Deficit	798.27
Total	1,788.27

To balance against this is the gospel car, estimated value	1,500.00
Final deficit	288.27

The report was unanimously accepted, and an offering of $153.53 was received to apply on the deficit, leaving a mean balance of $134.74 deficit . . . all amid shouts and praise to God.

STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN

S. J. Heath explained how that ten dollars from the Home Mission fund helped him to get to Zirkle, Georgia for a meeting in which fifty people were baptized with the Holy Ghost.

W. L. Hance spoke of his work in North Dakota, and how he distributed literature with which to open new fields. He told how one woman phoned the sheriff that a German spy was at her house distributing literature. He was arrested and jailed, but the police could find no charges on which to convict him. He said some Indians in Canada readily received him.

Page 28 (Assembly Minutes) tells of a ball of fire being seen during the testimony service of the Assembly.

HOLY GHOST POWER SATISFYING

Singing, praying, preaching, testifying, shouting and praising the Lord all strengthened the souls of these devout followers of Christ and members of His Church. But their soul-hunger and thirst for more of God, their sweet abandon in spiritual enlivenment could never be satisfying with anything less than a mighty downsweep of the Spirit and power of God. Righteousness should flow as a mighty stream (Amos 5:24). This kind of spiritual intervention brought vile sinners, hardhearted men and women to their knees in penitence . . . it made a sober citizen out of the town "drunk" . . . it made the rogue and the thief mend their breaches with restitution . . . it brought penitence to the hearts and tears to the eyes of all kinds of people . . . it touched the heart of both the derelict and the saint . . . it melted unconcern to interest and appeal and drove nonchalance to zeal's highest pitch and standard . . . it exalted the name of Christ and the movements of the Spirit of God and left in the wake of its downflow a spiritual warmth and glow to radiate from bosom to bosom in an unparalleled paragon of glory and beauty. Many of them could unhesitatingly exclaim, "Behold the Spirit and power of God that changes the souls of

men!"***

***In the downflow of the Spirit on Saturday morning, November 1st the Holy Spirit gave a message, and the interpretation thrilled the whole Assembly: "This is my voice, listen unto me. Hearken unto my voice. I am with thee. Pay no attention to divisions . . . no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. I am on your side, I will preserve you. Weep not, mourn not. I have great things in store for you. I have great blessings for you if you will obey my Word." There was much praying and weeping before God, and many worshipped Him and clapped their hands for joy because of the encouragement.

TEMPLE AT HARRIMAN SOLD

Since it was decided to move the Assembly back to Cleveland, Tennessee the Church of God temple at Harriman was sold. Report of the transaction was given by the General Overseer.

THE ASSEMBLY BUILDING FUND	
Total receipts	$2,792.85
Total disbursements	2,692.73
Balance	100.12
SALE OF BUILDING	
Amount received for it	3,000.00
Total paid out	1,593.00
(Last note $1,585.00	
Interest 8.00)	
Balance	1,407.00
Balance of donations	100.12
Total on hands	$1,507.12

Bishop Tomlinson inquired of the desires of the Assembly concerning the disposition of the money on hands, and a motion made by M. S. Lemons that it be used to build a large tabernacle was carried by the Assembly, and the plans, erection, etc., of the tabernacle was left to the discretion of the General Overseer and the board of elders. The Holy Ghost set His approval upon Cleveland, Tennessee as the location for such a building. A spirit of "giving" seized the enthusiastic crowd and offerings and subscriptions eventually had to be curbed in order to be able to get ready for the next service. All contributions amounted to $694.70. This was proof enough the report had been accepted unanimously, and many said, "We never saw it on this fashion."

APPOINTMENT OF STATE OVERSEERS

Alabama	Z. D. Simpson
Arkansas	D. R. Holcomb
Bahama Islands	Milton Padgett
Florida	F. J. Lee
Georgia	S. W. Latimer
Illinois	T. S. Payne
Indiana	S. O. Gillaspie
Kentucky	George T. Brouayer
Louisiana	M.S. Haynes
Mississippi	E. B. Culpepper
Missouri	E. L. Pinkley
New Mexico and Colorado	O. R. Rouse
North Carolina	J. A. Davis
Ohio	Efford Haynes
Oklahoma	John Burk
Pennsylvania . . . (Col.)	C. F. Bright
South Carolina	W. H. Cross
Tennessee	J. S. Llewellyn
Texas	H. N. Scoggins
Virginia	F. W. Gammon
West Virginia	W. M. Rumler

When the appointments were made the General Overseer prayed for them.

BUSINESS SESSIONS ACTIVATED

Because of the postponement of the Assembly in 1918 extra work was initiated to care for any laxity resulting from the inconvenience. The committees discussed and examined measures to be brought to the floor, and when their reports were made the Assembly gladly accepted them. Resumption of committee work resulted in precaution, and they felt that before long things would be normal again, by next Assembly for sure.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAM INTEGRATED

(November 3, 1919)

Mentioned before by the General Overseer in his address to the Assembly this was the first time the Assembly program had actually been integrated, Monday afternoon, November 3, 1919. Notes on the afternoon program by the colored people are taken

from the Fourteenth Assembly Minutes:

1:30 p.m.—The Colored People and the Church. C. F. Bright, (colored)

Thos. J. Richardson and wife (col.) from North Carolina sang some soul-stirring songs, followed by short talks about their labors in North Carolina. They expressed their love for the Church.

Mrs. Richardson mentioned that she felt she would have to go to Africa in the future. After she finished her talk, the congregation voluntarily contributed an offering . . .

J. D. Shaw and Thos. B. Smith (col.) sang and talked some. One song that was especially interesting was "Didn't It Rain?"

THE ASSEMBLY COLLECTIONS

Expenses	$ 83.76
Auditorium and Orphanage	694.70
For the Evangel to be sent to the Bahamas	225.00
For Evangel Building	727.95
Home Missions	153.53
Total	$1,884.94

NOTE: The General Overseer gave his financial report to the Assembly, and the people seemed pleased with the present financial system. However, the report is too lengthy to include here. All other reports were read and accepted in proper order. An amendment to the Sunday School committee's report requested that all Sunday Schools in the Church use only Church of God literature.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: Is an officer in the Church of God in full fellowship with the Church, and entitled to transfer if he does not pay tithes?

ANSWER: All agree to pay tithes before receiving license, therefore, he must be admonished. If then he fails to pay tithes, he is not in good standing.

QUESTION: Has the church any votes in the selection of the deacons for a church, or does the pastor appoint them regardless of the views of the church?

ANSWER: Although the pastor does the appointing, the church should have a voice in it. All should work

together.

QUESTION: Shall we continue present ruling on unions?

ANSWER: The Spirit witnessed so wonderfully a few years ago when we reached a conclusion on this subject, I do not know that we could make any amendments. We cannot hold up for unions. The church stands for middle ground. See minutes of 1915.

QUESTION: Explain I Corinthians 12:12-14.

ANSWER: This Scripture was fully explained by J. S. Lewellyn in his discourse.

It is also fully explained in previous minutes. The Scripture does not refer to the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

QUESTION: Are all sinners devil possessed as some of our members are teaching?

ANSWER: Not necessarily. All sinners are not devil possessed in the sense meant by the expression of the Scriptures.

QUESTION: Has an overseer a right to license anyone without recommendation of the church?

ANSWER: The church first recommends as we have been practicing.

QUESTION: What about giving medicine to children in order to avoid being dealt with by the law?

ANSWER: This is a serious question in these days. We can't be too radical on this. It must be decided individually. I can't be a martyr for you, you must be a martyr for yourself. I can't tell you what to do.

QUESTION: What becomes of those who are converted and not sanctified when the Word says without holiness no man shall see the Lord?

ANSWER: Get sanctified and go to heaven. The Bible says that unless we become as a little child. That is, as innocent as a little child, we cannot inherit the kingdom of God. If people have not had light on sanctification, the atonement will cover their innocency.

QUESTION: He or she has his or her name on the Church of God book or holds papers with the Church of God as a minister, but is not a Church of God member, how could this be?

ANSWER: I wonder myself.

CONCLUDING THE ASSEMBLY

Although the Assembly officially closed at 4:45 p.m.,

November 4th the blessings of God continued to pour down among the vast throng of Spirit-filled people. It was the most wonderful of all Assemblies. Before long the large auditorium and an Orphanage would soon begin at Cleveland. One businessman promised to donate $500, and others promised different amounts toward the new structures. The General Overseer said, "The greatest victory was won at the Assembly that has ever been known." (Page 177, "A. J. Tomlinson")

TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH—1919

The Minutes of the Seventh Annual Assembly, held January 9-14, 1912, list twenty-five teachings of the Church that were made prominent, and practiced at that time. As the Church progressed none of these were abrogated but others were added. Records do not seem to indicate, nor clarify just when some additional teachings were approved and accepted, but the Minutes of the Fourteenth Assembly, held October 29—November 4, 1919, list twenty-nine teachings made prominent—four more having been added since the Assembly in 1912. The Minutes say:

The Church of God stands for the whole Bible rightly divided. The New Testament is the only rule for government and discipline. Below is given some of the teaching that is made prominent:

1. Repentance—Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:19.
2. Justification—Romans 5:19; Titus 3:7.
3. Regeneration—Matthew 19:28; Titus 3:5.
4. Born Again—John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9.
5. Sanctification subsequent to Justification—Romans 5:2; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Thess. 4:3; Heb. 13:12; 1 John 1:9.
6. Holiness—Luke 1:75; 1 Thess. 4:7; Heb. 12:14.
7. Water Baptism—Matt. 28:19; Mark 1:8-10; John 3:22, 23; Acts 8:12, 36, 38; 10:47, 48; 16:32; 19:3-5.
8. Baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to cleansing, the enduement of power for service—Matt. 3:11; Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:4-8.
9. The speaking in tongues as the evidence of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost—John 15:26; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6.
10. The full restoration of the gifts to the church—1 Cor. 12:1, 7, 10, 28, 31; 1 Cor. 14:1.
11. Signs following believers—Mark 16:17-20; Rom. 15:18, 19; Heb. 2:4.

12. Fruit of the Spirit—Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 5:9; Phil. 1:11.
13. Divine healing provided for all in the atonement—Psa. 103:3; Isa. 53:4, 5; Matt. 8:17; James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.
14. The Lord's Supper—Luke 22:17, 18; 1 Cor. 11:23-33.
15. Washing the saints' feet—John 13:4-17; 1 Tim. 5:9, 10.
16. Tithing and giving—Gen. 14:18-20; 28:20-22; Mal. 3:10; Luke 11:42; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-9; Heb. 7:1-21.
17. Restitution where possible—Matt. 3:8; Luke 19:8, 9; Rom. 13:8.
18. Pre-millennial second coming of Jesus.

    First—To resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to meet Him in the air—Matt. 24:27, 28; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

    Second—To reign on earth a thousand years—Zech. 14:4, 5; Luke 1:32; 1 Thess. 4:14; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14, 15; Rev. 5:10; 19:11-21; 20:4-6.
19. Resurrection—Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:5, 6.
20. Eternal life for the righteous—Matt. 25:46; Luke 18:30; John 10:28; Rom. 6:22; 1 John 5:11-13.
21. Eternal punishment for the wicked. No liberation nor annihilation—Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Rev. 20:10-15; 21:8.
22. Total abstinence from all liquor or strong drinks—Prov. 20:1; 23:29-32; Isa. 28:7; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Gal. 5:21.
23. Against the use of tobacco in any form, opium, morphine, etc.—Isa. 55:2; 1 Cor. 10:31, 32; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:3-8; James 1:21.
24. Meats and drinks—Rom. 14:2, 3, 17; 1 Cor. 8:8; 1 Tim. 4:1-5.
25. The Sabbath—Hosea 2:11; Rom. 13:1, 2; Rom. 14:5, 6; Col. 2:16, 17.

FOLLOWING ADDED SINCE 1912

26. Against members wearing gold for ornament or decoration, such as finger rings, bracelets, earrings, lockets, etc.—Isa. 55:2; 1 Peter 3:3; 1 John 2:16.
27. Against members belonging to lodges—Matt. 5:34; James 5:12; 6:14-17.
28. Against members swearing—Matt. 5:34; James 5:12.
29. Against members going to war—Ex. 20:13; 1 Chron. 28:3; Psalm 120:7; Matt. 5:38-48; 6:14, 15; 26:50-56; Luke 22: 49-

52; John 18:10, 11, 36; Romans 12:19.

COVENANT STILL HONORED

From all indications the early covenant was still honored:

"Will you sincerely promise before God and these witnesses that you will take the Bible as your guide, the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?" (From "The Last Great Conflict" by A. J. Tomlinson . . . Page 157)

Church Emerges From Trying, Turbulent Times With Great Assembly

35

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EVENTS OF 1920 . . . BRIEFS

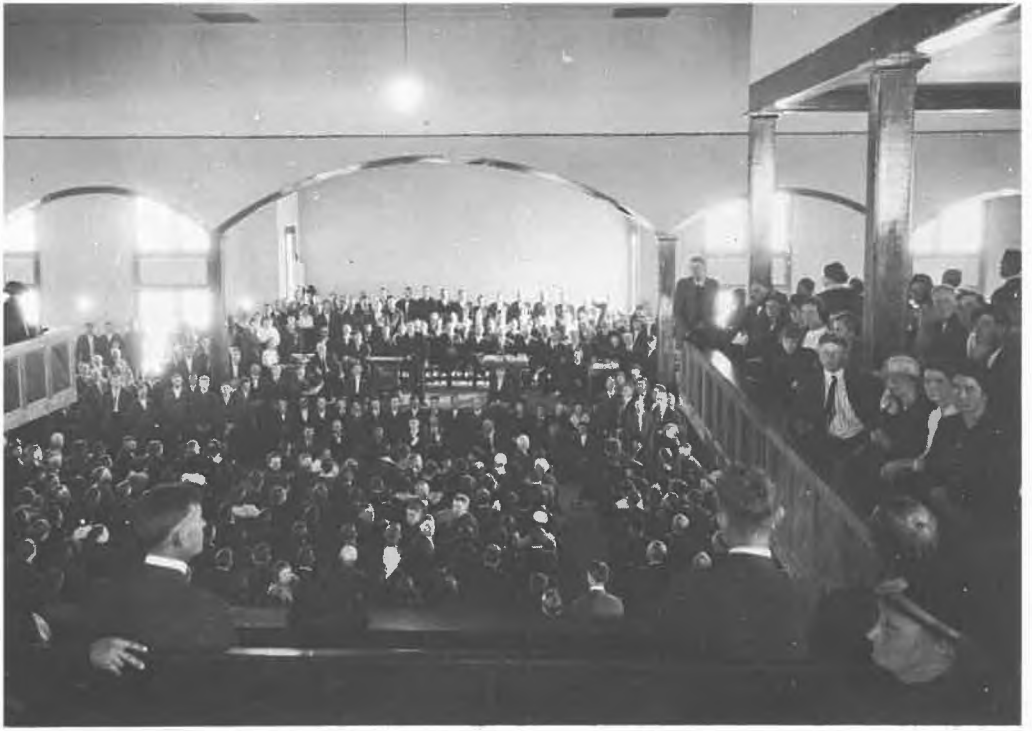
In March ground-breaking ceremonies were held at 11th Street and Montgomery Avenue, Cleveland, Tennessee, on the plot of land purchased for the sum of $1250, and which was the site of the spacious auditorium soon to be under construction. J. S. Llewellyn was acting architect of the structure, though active overseer of the state of Tennessee with 74 churches and 3,061 members, and the General Overseer said, "I just simply could not have gotten along without him . . ." They all labored together to get the spacious auditorium ready for the Assembly.

Unexpected events transpired, one of them being when Bishop Tomlinson's daughter Halcy Olive died, January 14, 1920. It was a shock, nearly unbearable since she was such an outstanding Christian woman.

His other daughter Iris Marea married Avery Denver Evans at 8:30 p.m. June 16, 1920, in a very colorful ceremony at the local church.

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 3-9, 1920)

The new auditorium at 11th Street and Montgomery Avenue in Cleveland, Tennessee was not yet completed but the Fifteenth Annual Assembly convened in it November 3-9, 1920. For four days prior to the Assembly the incoming trains brought crowds of people from many states and the Bahama Islands. When they registered at the Evangel office most of them left a dollar to assist in the expenses of the publishing house. A. J. Tomlinson said, "The great love of God dominated in every service, and the fellowship of saints was extremely pleasant . . . There was no debating or controversy on any subject . . . The great and wonderful Holy Ghost overshadowed and honored every service with His presence . . . It is given up by all that this was by far the greatest Assembly on record. E. J. Boehmer was elected permanent clerk for the Assembly. Besides the Cleveland, Tennessee people there were 1268 people who registered from out of town.



Here is an interior view of the spacious Auditorium on Montgomery Avenue, Cleveland, Tennessee, taken during the Annual Assembly, probably in 1921. Erected in 1920, and dedicated November 2, 1921, it housed the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Assemblies (1920, 1921, 1922). The view is looking toward the large rostrum where the General Overseer, the Twelve Elders and other Assembly personnel are located.

SOME FOND MEMORY

Thursday morning, November 4, 1920 the General Overseer introduced to the Assembly, Sister Tilley (Mrs. J. C. Murphy at the time of the first Assembly) in whose home the first Assembly was held. She had fed the twenty-one delegates to the first Assembly, held January 26, 27 1906.

COMMITTEES FAITHFULLY SERVE

There were thirty-four men, serving on seven important committees during this Fifteenth Assembly, and when called upon to report responded with reports favorable to unanimous acceptance.

CALL OF THE STATES

When the states were called for representation they responded, an usher leading the overseer with his delegation down the aisles of the mammoth Assembly auditorium amid the fanfare of brass

and stringed music, and sometimes the piano, their jubilee interspersed with different manifestations of the Spirit. It was certainly a day of rejoicing. The overseers and delegates sang, gave short talks, and a report of the work was given by the overseer. Twenty-five states, including the Bahama Islands marched, with 930 delegates.

SPEAKERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Besides A. J. Tomlinson's address F. J. Lee's address on Efficient Organization, according to I Corinthians 12:12-31 was most exhaustive and informative. Others who addressed the Fifteenth Assembly were just as sincere and tried to be dynamic as possible for the occasion: J. S. Llewellyn, M. S. Lemons, I. H. Marks, J. B. Ellis, George T. Brouayer, D. P. Barnett, T. S. Payne, Mrs. S. Stoneburner, Milton Padgett and Wm. R. Franks of the Bahamas, Mamie and Thomas J. Richardson, (Colored) F. W. Gammon. The names of D. R. Holcomb and F. J. Crowder appear on the roster of committeemen.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ADDRESS
(November 5, 1920)

Friday morning, November 5, 1920, at 10:45 General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson delivered his 13,400 word address, under fourteen subheads, to an anxious and enthusiastic audience of several hundred constituents. They honored him as their spiritual leader, and especially so after the Lord had so ordered it at the Tenth Annual Assembly, November 2-8, 1914 when divine providence had placed him in the position of General Overseer "for life" making the appointment permanent. He defended the position against undue criticism over the term "General Overseer" itself not being mentioned as such in the Bible, and assured his people there would be criticism if the Church had no General Overseer. He predicated the responsibilities of his office by direct reference to the epistle of St. Clement to James—the Lord's brother, and the bishop of bishops, ruling over Jerusalem the holy church of the Hebrews. James held the exalted position—General Overseer—in the early Church.

He complimented the efficient work of the Council of Elders, and said, "After a trial of nearly four years we are ready to say we made no mistake in our decision to select this body of men as Councilors." However, an interest of prime concern to the General

Overseer and the Church, regarding the twelve elders was the lack of provision by the Assembly for relieving any of them because of incompetency, and their replacement by someone else chosen for the important position. Bishop Tomlinson said: ". . . There were no provisions made in the face of the Assembly for relieving a member of his position in case of disloyalty, rebellion or other disorders, that would render him incompetent or unfit to serve in this high position. Having already met this condition of affairs in one instance we were compelled to take action and set aside the offender. This business had to be attended to and the eleven with the General Overseer reached a perfect agreement in the case and the General Overseer announced to said offender that he was no longer a member of the Council. Thus he was dismissed, but not, however, until every effort possible was made to restore him to perfect fellowship and fidelity.

This plan was considered legal because of the principle adopted years ago, that the same authority that appoints to a position has the same authority to recall when it becomes necessary. This principle places the power of dismissal in the hands of the General Overseer and the two chosen to assist him in making the appointments. Then the same principle places the authority with the General Overseer to dismiss the two appointed by himself. This is all very well as long as the two first chosen live, but if they or either of them should be called hence we would be left in an awkward position. The position of General Overseer is perpetual and whoever succeeds him has the same authority, but not so with these two men unless the Assembly in session declares it so. In such case the one appointed to succeed the departed would be given the authority vested in the first one . . . but I question the advisibility of such a decision . . . I recommend that all vacancies be filled by the next man below and the new one always come in at the last . . . as we never know when one of our number will be called to his reward."

In his concern for the financial system of the Church the General Overseer stated: ". . . It is my desire to keep moving toward the complete Bible standard. But it is not my purpose to speak from a personal point of view at this time. I am only to speak now of a sentiment among our people, and it may be stronger than some of us realize. That sentiment is in favor of a general headquarters treasury into which all the tithes are to be placed, with seven men to regulate and make, or order, the distribution among the ministers according to their needs and the efficiency of their work, and the responsibility of the position in

which they serve.

"And this may be the Scriptural System. And the Scriptural System is what we are striving for . . . To adopt this system would mean quite a change."

Bishop Tomlinson gave as his reason for introducing this change the existing sentiment among the people, and certainly not from personal conviction. It prodded the Assembly into thought and decision. Feelings perhaps existed that ministers felt underpaid for services rendered in underprivileged fields of endeavor . . . or felt that no equity of support existed . . . at the same time perhaps unused funds were accumulating . . . and others perhaps thought that sending all funds to a headquarters treasury would result in an accretion of power and prestige. In spite of the reasons sentiment seemed strongly inclined to this directive.

Among other things disclosed in his address the General Overseer referred to the need of a Church register or Church Directory at headquarters which would include the names of all churches, ministers and members with ample information concerning each. He referred to the thought of identification of all the churches. He spoke of the needs of the Young People and the Children. He made an appeal to reach the Spanish Speaking people, but before his stirring address ended he spoke on Church government.

FINANCIAL REPORT BY PUBLISHER

(Saturday, November 6, 1920)

F. J. Lee, chairman of the Publishing Committee gave a verbal report and spoke of the certainty of Brother Tomlinson being the editor. He stated, "We are proud of the manager and the Evangel force. We recommend that our present editor and force remain."

A. J. Tomlinson said, ". . . the Evangel has kept climbing until it has reached a subscription list of about 16,000, but now it is at a standstill, so I have about decided that it is time for some one else to take charge of it . . . Probably you have the man in mind who should be the next editor." He then read the financial report.

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
For merchandise	$20,304.95	Brought forward	$ 3,108.26
Donations	516.12	Merchandise	13,384.02
		(Includes purchase of paper of all kinds,	

		books, envelopes, Bible cases, Bibles, etc.)	
		Expenses	16,209.59
		(Includes hired help, repairs, postage, oil, gasoline, etc.)	
		Equipment	3,776.90
		(Includes payment on machinery and fixtures.)	
To deficit	15,657.70	Total	36,478.77
Total	36,478.77	By deficit	15,657.70

MERCHANDISE ACCOUNT		THE BUSINESS ALONE	
This does not include the expenses to prepare for selling.			
Cash received	20,304.95	Expenditures	29,593.61
Cash paid out	13,384.02	Total receipts	20,304.95
Gain	6,920.93	Deficit	9,288.66

TOTAL INDEBTEDNESS

Intertype	1,534.00
Printing press	2,600.00
Deficit (This year)	15,657.70
Deficit (Last year)	3,108.26
Total	22,899.96

ESTIMATE

1 Press	$1,100.00
1 Press	4,000.00
2 Presses and other equipment	1,250.00
1 Intertype	4,000.00
1 Stitcher	175.00
1 Stencil machine	150.00
1 Addressing machine	175.00
2 Addressing machines	84.00
Type metal	700.00
Type	400.00
Book machinery	800.00
Sundries added	500.00

Paper stock, etc.	5,000.00
Building and furniture	7,000.00
Total	$25,334.00

Bishop Tomlinson said: "I do not hold the Assembly responsible for this debt. I am willing to dig it out myself."

Flora Bohrman said, "I am willing to give ten dollars on this debt." W. R. Messer expressed his willingness to sell his coat to help pay the debt. He pledged ten dollars.

The large congregation expressed their love for the editor and the Evangel, and voluntarily contributed $804.27 toward the indebtedness, shouting and rejoicing and talking in tongues as they came forward.

F. J. Lee, Chairman, said, "I am really proud of the Evangel. It must go on . . ."

George T. Brouayer, another committeeman said, ". . . I have prayed much for this wonderful White-winged Messenger . . . There comes ebbs and tides in everything. I am more than confident we will come out on top . . . I want to say, I am much delighted with the Evangel, Editor and office force."

Another committeeman, T. S. Payne said: "We are not publishing this paper to give Brother Tomlinson a job, nor for financial gain, but to get the gospel to the people . . . Though it is in debt a little, we are not discouraged in the least, because God is with us. If we had no machinery, no building, no ground and no stock on hand it would appear differently . . . I don't see any need whatever of changing editors. God did not need a Joshua until Moses died . . ." He obligated himself to get twenty new subscriptions or pay $20.00 on the paper and send in twenty names. Then, about forty people promised to do the same thing.

M. S. Lemons, committeeman, said: "Our editor has done faithful work. We will keep him till he dies . . . we aim to stand by our editor and the paper."

From all indications the Church appreciated the efficient work done by Bishop Tomlinson as editor of the Evangel. With his other myriad of duties it was strenuous and time-consuming, and when he desired that the Church select another as editor he was not quailing from weakness but desired only that the paper increase and abound to greater blessings. He was a fearless, tireless and persistent laborer in the Master's vineyard. Whatever he did he sought to do it for God. He needed help, needed others to share some of the responsibilities possible without interfering with his greater challenges for God and the Church.

REPORT OF HOME MISSION TREASURER
(November 6, 1920)

Home Mission Treasurer T. L. McLain brought his full report to the Assembly, but we list below the totals only:

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
Total from the states	$1,594.45	By deficit	$ 798.27
Collections	153.53	Gospel Truck Expense	1,025.00
Individuals	123.28	To the states	734.97
Total	$1,871.45	Total	$2,558.24
By deficit	686.98		
	2,558.24		2,558.24
Report accepted as read.		By deficit	686.98

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSION TREASURER

Foreign Mission Secretary J. S. Llewellyn read a full report to the Assembly but only the totals are listed below:

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
Total from states	$1,580.21	To Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, China, India, Jamaica and South America	$1,679.04
Individuals	345.98	Sundry Expenses	12.52
Total	1,926.19	Total	1,691.56
		By balance	234.63
Total	1,926.19	Total	1,926.19
By balance	234.63	(Report accepted)	

FINANCIAL SYSTEM CHANGED

The change in the financial system was discussed at the request of the moderator, A. J. Tomlinson, and since there was no dissenting voice heard, the motion was carried and, "The Assembly unanimously approved of the financial system as given by the General Overseer in his Annual Address. Also decided that the General Overseer and elders work out the plan.***

***This plan called for practice of the tithing system after the manner of Melchisedec (as understood at the time) by sending all tithes to the headquarters treasury (both tithes and the tithe

of tithes as formerly practiced), to be distributed under the jurisdiction of the General Overseer and the elders.

APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEERS
(November 7, 1920)

ALABAMA	Z. D. Simpson
ARKANSAS	John Burk
BAHAMAS	Wm. R. Franks
FLORIDA	F. J. Lee
GEORGIA	S. W. Latimer
ILLINOIS	T. S. Payne
INDIANA	S. O. Gillaspie
KENTUCKY	F. W. Gammon
LOUISIANA	M. S. Haynes
MARYLAND	Paul Walker
MISSISSIPPI	H. A. Pressgrove
MISSOURI	D. P. Barnett
NEW MEXICO	O. R. Rouse
NORTH CAROLINA	W. M. Stallings
NORTH DAKOTA	J. W. Barker
OHIO	Efford Haynes
OKLAHOMA	B. H. Doss
PENNSYLVANIA	C. F. Bright
SOUTH CAROLINA	W. H. Cross
TENNESSEE	M. W. Letsinger
TEXAS	George T. Brouayer
VIRGINIA	J. A. Davis
WEST VIRGINIA	W. M. Rumler

***

***Overseers of Oklahoma and Mississippi were conditional on their soon ordination. Those appointed to Maryland and North Dakota, while only evangelists and not overseers with full authority, were to look after the interests of the work, and bring their reports to the Assembly.

ORPHAN'S HOME APPEAL

While there was no actual orphanage at the time, Mrs. Bertie Mae Juillerat spoke fervently of the need for the Church to have a home for the orphans. Her appeal was stirring, and while the Brass Band played "Home Sweet Home" there was much weeping and rejoicing over the sweet spirit of the service, and $926.11 was

laid on the platform for orphanage work, and pledges amounting to $2600 were made with which to begin the orphanage soon as feasible.

ADDRESS PRINTED FOR DISTRIBUTION

Chairman of Committee No. 1, W. H. Cross, suggested that the Assembly have the General Overseer's Annual Address printed for distribution and the Assembly pay for the cost of printing the same. An offering of $21.75 was given for this purpose.

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Since the publishing business was really an investment of the Church much attention was given its work during the Assembly. Moderator asked the Assembly if they wished a change of committeemen, but the Assembly decided to retain the same publishing committee—F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne, George T. Brouayer, M. S. Lemons, A. J. Lawson.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FINANCIAL REPORT

This report of the tithes of Sunday School offerings sent to headquarters was read by the General Overseer.

Cash received	$240.34
Cash paid out	29.46
Balance	210.88

COMMITTEE ON SUNDAY SCHOOL

We, the committee on Sunday School Interests, recommend the following:

1. We recommend that the overseers and pastors put forth special effort to advance the Sunday School Interest.
2. That the Superintendent of each Sunday School in cooperation with the pastor or district overseer appoint a Home Class committee for the purpose of organizing a Home Class Department.
3. We advise that the General Overseer's recommendation in his Annual Address in regard to the plan of getting all our families in the Sunday School be adopted.
4. Also we advise that Sunday School conventions be held in conjunction with our quarterly district conferences and that one

day be used for the boosting of the Sunday School interests. This day should be arranged before the convention by District Overseer, who should appoint three or more of his best Sunday School workers to have charge of this day's work. Their duty would be to see that each Sunday School in their district be urged to have in attendance as many as possible of the officers and teachers of their school, allowing children and members to demonstrate their work in their own way.

5. We further suggest that special attention be given to such days as Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, and Children's Day, providing programs that tend to the building up of interest in the Sunday School. This work should have the cooperation and assistance of the pastor, as well as the superintendent and his assistant. While we do not recommend anything of a worldly nature, such as Santa Claus for Christmas, etc., we do recommend that the entertainments be made as interesting as possible for the children and young folks in a way that will edify.

6. We further suggest that where new churches are set in order that Sunday Schools also be organized at the same time.

Alonzo Gann, Chairman.

DECLARATION
(Fifteenth Assembly)

Be it known to all people everywhere that we, the General Assembly of the Churches of God, now convened in business conference, at Headquarters in the city of Cleveland, Tenn., set forth the following declaration:

FIRST. That the minutes of all previous Assemblies are a true official record in substance and in fact as kept by the authorized clerks by said Assembly, and published by those fully and legally authorized to do so, and not the product or individual statements of A. J. Tomlinson, the General Overseer.

SECOND. That the names of all the local churches recorded in various minutes including this one are the result of the faithful services of the ministers and representatives of the General Assembly and when thus received by the said representatives of the General Assembly, they then became and composed a part of the General Assembly. We, therefore, do not recognize the right of any local church to withdraw from the General Assembly as a whole, but those who prove disloyal to the Government and teachings as promulgated from time to time by the General Assembly or otherwise disorderly are to be dealt with in individual manner and excluded as a member of said church.

THIRD. That all the ministers, whether General Overseer, elders, bishops, deacons, or evangelists have been and are construed legal representatives of the Church of God while in harmony with its government and teaching.

FOURTH. That the General Assembly of the Church of God is that organized body with full power and authority to designate the teaching, government, principles and practices of all the local churches composing said Assembly.

FIFTH. That the name of this church is the Church of God which is sometimes referred to as, with headquarters at Cleveland, Tenn., only with the purpose of distinguishing it from other churches calling themselves the Church of God, but that it is no part of its name.

SIXTH. That one of the first principles accepted in the earliest history of its organization was that we accept the whole Bible rightly divided, which is today one of its most sacred principles, therefore we meet together in annual conference to search the Scriptures and put them into practice. Our teachings and faith are the same as originally accepted in its original organization and all of the changes in government and management have been duly authorized by the General Assembly in its various annual sessions.

This read and unanimously approved by the Fifteenth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God on the 8th day of November, 1920.

A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer.
E. J. Boehmer, Clerk***

***The above Declaration, read by J. S. Llewellyn, may have appeared innocent in concept, principle and effect, but actually it was a steppingstone in preparing the way for the Church Constitution that was swept through the Sixteenth Annual Assembly, held just one year later—November 2-8, 1921.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
(November 3-9, 1920)

QUESTION: Should a man's wife pay tithes on money given to her by her husband which has already been tithed by him?

ANSWER: No, unless they are two instead of one.

QUESTION: Explain fully the kind of works mentioned in I Cor. 3:14.

ANSWER: This has reference to any kind of religious

work. It is necessary to get the best out of the work. There is such a thing as doing the right thing in the wrong way. People do many good works, but if they are not in harmony with the Bible, their work will be burned.

QUESTION: Please explain I John 1:8.

ANSWER: This is used by people who want to sin a little every day. If you say you have no sin (carnal mind) after you are converted you are mistaken. Read verse nine which fully explains the question.

QUESTION: I John 3:9.

ANSWER: This shows the highest standard marked out by the Bible. This doesn't necessarily show it is impossible to sin. We can't use one Scripture, alone. If we put Paul and James and John together it will take the mystery out of it.

QUESTION: Did Judas have the devil in him when Jesus sent him out to preach or when did he become a devil?

ANSWER: John 13:27 explains it. "And after the sop Satan entered into him."

QUESTION: Explain Acts 19:5. Some people teach this to mean sanctification.

ANSWER: When you go home, you tell them in a good sweet way that they are mistaken in their idea. It has reference to water baptism.

QUESTION: What position should we be in when we take the Lord's supper?

ANSWER: The Bible doesn't say to sit down or stand up. It seems that when it was first instituted they reclined, but no definite way is laid down for us in the Scriptures. The main thing is to be in the proper condition of heart, when we take the bread and drink the grape juice.

QUESTION: Is it necessary to belong to the church in order to be saved?

ANSWER: Many are walking the streets of glory today who never belonged to the Church of God. Salvation is not by the Church but through the blood of Jesus.

QUESTION: Is it improper to pay tithes to ministers?

ANSWER: This is not satisfactory. They should be paid into the church treasury.

AGGREGATION OF STATISTICAL REPORTS

Total number of churches 470

Increase over last year	109
Total number of members	14,606
Increase over last year	2,265
Total number of bishops	99
Increase over last report	14
Total number of deacons	252
Increase over last report	35
Total number evangelists	476
Increase over last report	88
Churches having pastors	389
Increase over last report	111
Total No. Sun. schools	281
Increase over last report	49
Total average attendance	9,217
Increase over last report	1,478
Property value	$202,929.69
Increase over last report	109,634.84

GENERAL OVERSEER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

(Fifteenth Annual Assembly)

The General Overseer gave his financial report of all the tithes handled at headquarters, and his accurate report showed a total of $22,620.03 had been received and $10,310.12 expended, and the report was accepted by the Assembly.

BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL

The Bible Training School, and Study By Correspondence, were boosted, explained and promoted at the Assembly, and by the first year ending October 1, 1920 there had been 788 students, having opened with 203 students September 29, 1919. Some difficulty was experienced in collecting the installment payments from students, but it was progressing very well. (Pages 66, 67, of Minutes of Fifteenth Annual Assembly held in 1920)

ALL MINISTERS REQUIRED TO REMAIN

Since so many ministers left the Assembly before it closed the General Overseer asked for a plan that would keep them present until the Assembly closed.

S. W. Latimer suggested that the Assembly make it a rule requiring all bishops, deacons and evangelists, who come to the

Assembly, to remain until it closes.

The suggestion was accepted by the Assembly with the following amendment:

That the General Overseer publish this in the Evangel, on the first page, some time prior to the Assembly. In case they leave before the Assembly closes without giving proper reason, standing will not be so good with the Assembly. (Page 68, Minutes of 1920 Assembly)

HEADQUARTERS ROSTER OF MEMBERSHIP

The Assembly heartily approved of having a register at headquarters of all the ministers and members of the Church of God.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHURCHES

General Overseer inquired as to how the Assembly felt in regards to the churches being recognized by the Assembly. After T. S. Payne indorsed it, M. S. Lemons said, "I think this is very important. If a church is organized and they do not accept the teachings of the Assembly, they cannot be recognized by headquarters as a Church of God." (This was accepted by the Assembly.)***

***From indications it seemed that many peculiar rules were finding their way into the governing system of the Church. With minor discussion they sometimes changed the course of practice, as well as action. This tended toward the legislative.

RESOLUTION

Be it resolved by this Fifteenth Annual Assembly now convened in business conference at Headquarters in the city of Cleveland, Tenn.

That the General Overseer and the board of trustees is hereby authorized to negotiate loans, execute deeds of trust to secure the payment of notes, bonds, letters of credit or certificates of indebtedness on any real estate owned and held by them in trust for the use and benefit of the General Assembly of the Churches of God, for the purpose of taking care of the indebtedness of the General Assembly that they may have now or hereafter. This to include the various interests and departments for the welfare of

the church.

This done in business conference of the said General Assembly, November 9, 1920.

A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer
E. J. Boehmer, Clerk.

REPLACEMENT OF ELDERS

On Tuesday afternoon, November 9, 1920 the General Overseer posed the question: "What steps shall be taken in replacing any elder, when there is a vacancy, caused either by death or disloyalty?" The question was discussed briefly, and the Assembly decided to grant the General Overseer and the elders the right to select and fill any vacancy that may be made from any cause." (Page 69, Fifteenth Assembly Minutes—1920)

MODERATOR EULOGIZES ASSEMBLY

"I believe I can truthfully say that this has been the most blessed Assembly that we have ever had. We have had no friction whatever. Perfect love and unity existed. Truly, the Lord has been with us, we are going to give Him all the honor and praise . . ."

All stood to their feet in thanksgiving to God, while the General Overseer dismissed the Assembly with prayer at 4:15 p.m.

A Year of Unwise Decisions that Reflect Grim Retrospection on Pursuit of God's Church

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EXCHANGE AND INDEMNITY DEPARTMENT
(Instituted 1920)

In spite of the general rulings and practices suggested and approved by the Assembly in session, emergencies and necessities sometimes arose that required untried, specific plans and procedures to cope with new situations. The Assembly generalized procedures, but some far-flung fields of endeavor requested special attention and plans or methods in any attempt to fuse effort with locale. It was simply impossible to generalize the essential specifics necessary afield, and vice-versa.

At the Assembly in 1916 the Assembly authorized a body of elders to act as councilors to the General Overseer. At different times and in different Assemblies the General Overseer with the Board of Elders were asked to work out plans and procedures for the advancement of the work of the Church, one of these being the financial system as referred to in the Fifteenth Assembly in 1920, concerning tithes. Other financial ventures were at the option of the General Overseer who was expected to formulate plans to build, care for indebtednesses and such like, or take under advisement any proposals to initiate drives for finance.

Finance was needed at Headquarters. The construction of the large auditorium, costing approximately $40,000.00 when complete and furnished, resulted in heavy Church indebtedness. Then too, there were increasing demands for the erection of a building for the orphan's home. Such demands necessitated additional plans for financial stability. So, the Exchange and Indemnity Department, of the Church of God Evangel was instituted in 1920, from the address at 2524 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee.***

***A pamphlet or booklet of twelve pages (plus limp cover), measuring 3-1/2" x 6" was published by the Church of God Evangel it seems, and was signed by A. J. Tomlinson (Department E.I.). A copy is on file, and obviously shows it was no secret document or script of Bishop Tomlinson's. From indications the Church knew about it . . . the Board of Elders knew about it . . . and it meant no personal gain whatsoever to the General Overseer. The publishing house evidently printed it for it was for the Church of God Evangel.

ORPHANAGE AND CHILDRENS HOME BEGUN

The General Overseer had referred to an orphanage in his address to the Fourteenth Assembly in 1919, and it was exposed fruitfully in the Fifteenth Assembly in 1920, but it was not until December 17, 1920 that a home was really opened as a Church orphanage, with a matron and four children. Within a short time there were fifteen children in the home, filling it to capacity.

The interest became stirred among the businessmen and civic leaders of Cleveland, as well as many of the good local people, and with all help possible the Church began construction of its first orphanage building, across the street from the auditorium.

FOUR ELDERS REQUEST MEETING
(March 28, 1921)

By letter addressed to A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer, Cleveland, Tennessee and dated March 28, 1921, four members of the body of elders wrote:

"We the undersigned members of the bord (board) of Elders respectfully request you to call a meeting of the bord (board) of Elders at the earliest convenience for the consideration of important matters that may be brought before them.

We do this on account of the deep concern that we have for the welfare of the church and in view of the fact that there is a growing and wide spread dissatisfaction on account of some recent developments of vital interests to the Church.

Some of our practices and costoms (customs) are ceriously (seriously) questioned from a legal standpoint, and the general interest of the church demands adjustment of matters in question.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed By: . . . M. S. Lemons
J. B. Ellis
T. L. McLain
J. S. Llewellyn"***

(NOTE: Our corrections in parenthesis)

***It is assumed that any member of the Board of Elders may suggest, advise or request such a meeting, being a councilor to the General Overseer, but to propose demands of the chief executive officer of the Church was in error. This was no control board, but a board of councilors to counsel with the General Overseer. The Assembly said of such meetings: "The time and the place to be decided by the General Overseer." (Book of

Minutes, Page 242.) When necessity demanded he called a meeting. Besides:

1. Was not the General Overseer aware of any growing and widespread dissatisfaction over recent developments in the Church?
2. Who, but the General Overseer, would know if the practices and customs of the Church were being questioned by legal authorities? Whom did such authorities approach for information?
3. Who would better understand any "needy adjustments" than the General Overseer who had the general oversight of the Church? It was his duty, and certainly his official prerogatives to ascertain the vital interests and developments of the Church he had at heart as General Overseer . . . moreso than any board, group or individual. Who could share the responsibilities of the exalted office without being, or having been General Overseer himself?
4. Was this request tinged with encroachment on the office of General Overseer? Did it strain the limitations of counseling?

CHURCH AUDITORIUM IS DEDICATED
(November 2, 1921)

On the evening of November 2, 1921, Wednesday at 6:30, the spacious and beautiful auditorium, with an estimated seating capacity of 4,000, was sacredly and officially dedicated to God, in an inspiring and impressive dedicatory service in charge of the General Overseer. He preached the dedication sermon, (Scripture Lesson 2 Chronicles 20:5-16), and prayed the dedicatory prayer. At times the power and presence of God left the immense audience in tears, while some shouted, danced in the Spirit and spoke in tongues.***

***One message flashed down over God's wireless, and interpreted, said, "Humble thyself under the mighty hand of God even as Moses and Aaron did. Remember how I kept them. I led them across the Jordan into the promised land. I will stand by thee. This must move. I am at the back of it. Am I not giving thee power and understanding? Am I not strengthening thee? I am talking to thee. I am back of this. I will be with thee. I will care for thy children. Remember the Word. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

BISHOP TOMLINSON, THE CHURCH LEADER

It seems unfair, and to some extent unjust, to traverse the

episodes of 1921 without referring to some of the incessant labors and achievements of General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson. In his Journal entry of September 2, 1921 he says: "The past has been the hardest year of my life in many respects. Since the Assembly I have filled the place of General Overseer of all the Churches, distributed the money to the ministers since January 1 this year, editor and publisher of the Evangel, business manager of the publishing house, superintendent of the Bible Training school, both the home school and by correspondence, preached a lot of funerals, performed a number of marriage ceremonies, started and superintended the orphanage and childrens home, financed the debt on the auditorium, preached a number of times for the pastor when he was sick or gone, superintendent of the Sunday School, which has grown up to three hundred and thirteen last Sunday. I have worked on an average of eighteen hours a day and then I feel that I am falling behind all the time.

"In the office and publishing house I employ from twenty-six to thirty employees all the time . . . payroll is from four to five hundred a week . . . The strain has been intense, often more than I could stand but for the grace of God and the strength He imparts . . . The Council is to meet the twentieth of this month and the Bible school opens the twenty-sixth. Then in November comes the Assembly . . . I have instituted and directed a number of city Sunday School drives, and one tremendous orphanage drive, besides overseeing B.T.S. drives for students, and preparing dormitory and school room for them. I will be fifty-six years old this month, and the work and the responsibility is increasing . . ." (1)

While some people found time to criticize, and wirepulled for position, Bishop Tomlinson had no time for either in his dedicated services to God.

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 2-8, 1921)

The Sixteenth Annual Assembly of the Churches of God was held in the spacious auditorium on Montgomery Avenue, Cleveland, Tennessee, November 2-8, 1921. The preliminaries, the dedication of the auditorium, and the devotional and introductory services consumed the service time for the Wednesday evening of blessings. Then Thursday morning, November 3rd at 10:00

1. From the Book "A. J. Tomlinson," Pages 185, 186 . . . Ibid.

o'clock the General Overseer announced the Assembly open for business, reading Isaiah 61, and praying for guidance.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

First thing on the agenda was the appointment of committees for the Sixteenth Assembly. Sometimes committeemen were changed.

COMMITTEE NO. 1—To receive questions and subjects for consideration: C. M. Padgett, O. R. Rouse, W. S. Wilemon, S. J. Heath, Guy Marlow.

COMMITTEE NO. 2—To investigate grievances: Milton Padgett, Z. R. Thomas, H. B. Simmons, F. J. Crowder, W. G. Rembert, E. L. Pinkley, C. H. Prince.

COMMITTEE NO. 3—Watchmen: John Burk, W. M. Lowman, W. M. Stallings, W. A. Walker.

COMMITTEE NO. 4—Foreign Missions: H. A. Pressgrove, E. D. Hopkins, W. M. Rumler, John Attey, Z. D. Simpson.

COMMITTEE NO. 5—Home Missions: A. Gann, J. A. Davis, C. H. Randall, I. H. Marks, Thos. B. Smith.

COMMITTEE NO. 6—Sunday School interests: M. W. Letsinger, John L. Stephens, R. S. Robinson, Thos. J. Richardson, A. L. Jenkins.

CALL OF STATES AND THEIR RESPONSE

This had grown to be an annual affair at the Assemblies, and to most of the zealous delegates it was interesting and appealing, while to some it may have become a little monotonous. Most of Thursday was spent by the marches that ended at 5:50 p.m., and a total of 954 delegates represented the twenty-three states and the Bahamas, in a spiritual fanfare of music of Brass Bands and Stringed Bands, and one Saxaphone Band from Florida.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS

Like the Call of States, the General Overseer's Address had become an annual feature of the Assemblies. The spiritual host looked forward to his timely and spiritual encouraging words . . . 14,500 of them in this eleventh address that took him approximately two hours to deliver, on Friday.

In addressing himself to the needs of the hour he said, "It was the mission of the early Church to propagate the principles and

doctrine taught and advocated by the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is no less the mission of the Church of God today, and if in its earliest history it has strong oppositions in the advocacy of heretical teachings, why should it be thought strangely of in the last time? If it were true that grievous wolves entered in, not sparing the flock, in that early time, could it be any the less expected in this time? If it were true that from among themselves men arose speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, how much more should it be expected in this distant time? . . . First class love and fellowship makes us stick together at such times. And this is not all—it will prevent would-be leaders from rising up and showing their importance in rebelling against the teaching or government . . . regarded as extremely sacred by the multitudes now in this way."

Does this indicate tension and a growing tendency for arrogance among some of the ministers and members? Bishop Tomlinson sought to warn the Church against any intrusion of their liberties by the forces of the enemy. He said: "Love is not bitter, neither is it unduly severe or reproachful . . . It will not bend to every wind of doctrine that blows, but it will always yield to God and His Holy Word. Instead of wounding and bruising it will heal the brokenhearted, and set at liberty them that are bruised . . ." He spoke with gravity and concern because he had upon him the weight of all the churches, as well as the ministers, and sought to forestall any divisive aspirations or projections, dissuading all inclinations thereto.

He recommended consideration of the Courts of Justice as mentioned by some. He suggested the appointment of Seventy Elders in addition to the Twelve, saying, "The twelve to be the immediate counselors to the General Overseer, and the twelve and seventy jointly, with the General Overseer, to compose the official part of the General Assembly . . . making a total of eighty-three vested with official authority, but not excluding the brethren and the whole Church . . . I, therefore feel constrained to urge that this Assembly give it careful, prayerful and deliberate consideration . . . The Church of God is a theocratic form of government, and this principle must be adhered to in all deliberations and decisions."

He referred to the change in the financial system at the last Assembly since it had not gone along too well, saying, "The sentiment for the change of the system was much stronger than I believed it to be . . . I do not think I was responsible for it . . . some may have thought I recommended it, but I did not. I only

referred to it as being favored by many . . . When the system was adopted unanimously . . . the Assembly selected the General Overseer and elders to take hold of the business and organize the system and put it into practice." He said there had been some dissatisfaction though it had been in practice only about ten months.

He referred to such subjects as Love, Perseverance, The Assembly, Orphanage and Childrens Home, Prepare for the Storm, Courts of Justice, The Seventy, Anchored, and the Financial System. In his reference to the subject of Progression he boosted the forward progress of the Church, and said, ". . . the progress of the Church has far surpassed any previous year . . . the highest reported for a given month was that reached in August, when the number that were baptized with the Holy Ghost reached the sum of 1316, and there were 1162 added to the Church." He spoke of the Ministers, finalizing his address with the subject The Outlook, in which he said, "We have fought together for years . . . We have had ten months of valuable experience with the Bible financial system. The churches are getting fairly well organized; the names of all the members are being gathered into Headquarters as ordered by the last Assembly . . . The Sunday School work is on the boom almost everywhere; the members are more loving toward each other; the ministers are on fire; the Bible School both at Headquarters and by correspondence, is preparing soldiers for the field . . . Yes, the outlook is glorious. The fields are ripe everywhere . . . There seems to be a closer fellowship among the members and ministers, and a closer walk with God . . ." To many this was a gem among his several addresses to the Assemblies.

ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES ON NEW ISSUES

Usually, when new issues were introduced by the General Overseer in an address, able speakers were chosen to expound the subjects and support and expose them from whatever angle seemed best suited so the ministry and membership of the Church would better understand things that effected them.

According, on Friday afternoon, November 3rd at 2:45, M. S. Lemons of Chattanooga, brought an appealing message on "Courts of Justice—Judges." His text was I Corinthians 6:1-5, during which explanation he said the following: "The saints shall judge the world. I can see here a court of justice. God wants judges to decide every case. They can decide it from a point of

truth and judgment . . . Some people among us have trivial cases to be settled, these could be settled before this court of judges. Paul says to bring it before the saints and not before the unbelievers."

F. J. Lee of Florida, was the scheduled speaker to expose and explain things relative to "the Seventy" as suggested in the Overseer's address, and at 2:40 Saturday afternoon, November 5th he approached the podium with a message, "Puissant Organization—Going the Bible Way," using Titus 1:5 as his text. He qualified the "Seventy" of Moses' day and assured the anointing of the office would come upon those selected as "The Seventy" at this Assembly (if passed upon). He said, "Seventy seems to be a special number, a sacred number, we find it many times in the Bible . . . Beloved, let us move forward and get these men in their places and then will the mouth of the gainsayers be stopped even if they should rise up in our own ranks to pull away disciples after them, we will have such a perfect government and organization that they cannot stand." The sentiment seemed to express a desire to share some of the General Overseer's responsibilities, with Scriptural support.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: When a member is transferred from one church to another and that church refuses to accept him, should they immediately notify the former church?

ANSWER: It is possible that a man might be transferred and not be in good standing. If the church to which he is transferred knows he is not and they refuse to accept the transfer, they should notify the other church immediately.

QUESTION: If a man transgress the laws of God and backslide, then be reclaimed, shall his transgressions show on the record or be blotted out?

ANSWER: If a man has backslidden to that extent that he has been excluded from the church, the record of course will be made and the reason for his being excluded written down. If he is reclaimed and taken back, the record should be made that he is taken back, but the former record should remain.

QUESTION: What shall come from the grave at the resurrection? Some say an immortal body, some say the spirit, some say nothing.

ANSWER: The body will raise incorruptible and the man will come out of the grave. Paul compared the body to a grain of wheat or other grain. See I Cor. 15:35-38.

QUESTION: Can a man whose wife has not received the Holy Ghost be a deacon?

ANSWER: There was a time when we ordained bishops and deacons before their wives were filled with the Holy Ghost and before they were, too, but since we got the light, it is the custom to be more careful and not recommend people until their wives have the Holy Ghost. When people are set forth as deacons they must be set forth with the qualifications and be recommended by the church, and if they have not the qualifications they should not be set forth for deacons.

QUESTION: Is it legal to turn a member out of the Church of God when there is sufficient outside evidence but no Church of God members know about the case, when the ones who know are friends to the cause?

ANSWER: The matter should be investigated so members will be satisfied and if it becomes necessary to get any information from outside parties it is alright but you must be sure that the members or those who are looking after the matter actually know the thing. Be sure and do not exclude any one without knowing what you are doing. This does not mean to discountenance the word of good honest men of God. To exclude people is a very particular job. Much praying should be done. Try to save him first instead of getting lots of evidence and just throwing him out without trying to restore him first.

QUESTION: What steps should be taken to dismiss a minister from the Church or have his name dropped from the church record when he proves disloyal?

ANSWER: The facts concerning the matter should be gotten together and stated to General Overseer and state overseer of that particular state. They should look into the matter and if the evidence is sufficient they should recall his ministry and he is then just a lay member. The church should then deal with him as any other lay member.

QUESTION: Does the Church of God stand for other ministers who are not in the Church to fill their pulpits when they will not preach the Church or come in with them?

ANSWER: That depends on who it is, how the matter is and many different things. As a rule, however, this

should not be done, but there are always exceptions to rules. If the person seems to be satisfactory and is permitted to preach, the pastor should always be there. He should not turn a man over to his flock and not be there. It is possible for a man to have a good experience and not come into the church, but don't let him preach in the pastor's absence.

QUESTION: In case there is a deacon appointed where there is already a treasurer in the church and he is giving perfect satisfaction should the treasurer be forced to give up his office, to the deacon by virtue of his office?

ANSWER: Wait till he is ordained, then he may be the treasurer. If he is satisfied and the church is too, then the treasurer doesn't have to give up his office.

QUESTION: Is it right to work on Sunday when we do not have to do it—work just because there is big money in it, when we do not have to work to hold the job?

ANSWER: I think we ought to go to church and Sunday school on Sunday. If the ox gets in the ditch it might be alright, but our place on Sunday is in church and Sunday school. As far as I am concerned I would lose my job before I would work on Sunday, but there is no compulsion to this.

QUESTION: What is the difference in the carnal mind, the carnal nature, and the carnal flesh? Do we get rid of the carnal nature in this life?

ANSWER: There is a real difference of understanding about the carnal nature. That which we talk about is taking out the Adamic nature and getting rid of sin. It does not take out the human nature.

QUESTION: Should a member of the Church of God come into a town where a minister is pastoring a work and run a tent meeting without consulting the pastor? He says he has no license from the Church and can go and do as he pleases.

ANSWER: If he can do any good let him go but it is better for him and the pastor to work together.

QUESTION: Who is Melchisedec?

ANSWER: Probably those who were here last year remember Brother Lee's explanation. He showed that Melchisedec is the Lord.

QUESTION: James says to call for the elders of the church to pray for the sick but we have only twelve and they are usually too far away. What are we to do?

ANSWER: Get anybody to pray for you, that can pray. Many people have just as much power to pray for the sick, as the twelve. This means anybody that is established and has faith in God.

QUESTION: After a member of the Church of God has been disloyal, rebelled, and has been excluded, but comes back to church and testifies to having a real experience, also works at the altar, but never makes a confession to the church, should anything be done? If so, what?

ANSWER: It is very probable that when folks get exactly right they will make confession and ask to come back. Some don't believe they are disloyal, don't think they have any confession to make. Do the best you can with them. If fruits are good in altar, let them alone; if not, give admonition and pray for them.

QUESTION: If a deacon's wife were to backslide when he is a good man and a good deacon would it deprive him of his office as a deacon in this Church?

ANSWER: It is very serious for any minister's wife to backslide. Deacons are required to have wives filled with the Holy Ghost to be ordained. If they backslide it renders deacons unqualified to hold position. Pray and cry and mourn and weep. In most cases they will come back to God.

QUESTION: If divorced people who have been saved can not come into the Church of God, what shall we advise them to do?

ANSWER: Say like Jesus said, Go and sin no more. Jesus will open some plan to help them along. It is difficult to give advice on things like this.

QUESTION: Should members pay tithes direct to a minister?

ANSWER: All tithes that are paid anywhere should go through headquarters—one channel. Only sinners or outsiders should pay tithes direct to a minister.

QUESTION: If the state overseer gives a man that is not licensed the privilege to preach, has the district overseer any right to interfere with him?

ANSWER: If the man is straight and alright, which he is expected to be if the state overseer gives him permission, the district overseer should not interfere with his work but encourage him.

AN EXPLANATION:—Someone has asked for the decision concerning labor unions to be explained.

Explanation or statements concerning the labor unions:

It is the intention of the Assembly for members of the Church of God not to be members of anything else. Members have been allowed to have their dues taken but they are not to take the oath and attend the union meetings. Church of God people cannot compromise.

THE ORPHANAGE WORK

Sunday afternoon, November 6th Bertie Mae (Juillerat) Pressgrove inspired the audience with her message from I John 3:17, and following this stirring message relating to the Orphans Home the congregation contributed $769.30. General Overseer Tomlinson introduced Matron Mrs. Lillian Kinsey, and referred to her as the mother of the fifteen orphanage children. It was the first fruits of a real orphanage work.

FOREIGN MISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

While the full report lists contributions by states and individuals as well as disbursements to foreign fields of endeavor, only totals are given here. (Foreign Mission Treasurer, Evangel Office)

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
Brought forward	$ 234.63	To Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, Jamaica and Trinidad	$1,155.83
From the states	1,049.50		
From individuals	149.16		
Total	1,433.29	To balance	277.46
To balance	277.46		

(REPORT WAS ACCEPTED)

HOME MISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
From the states	$1,078.54	Deficit last year	$ 686.98
Individuals	141.23	To states	1,544.21
Total	1,219.77	Printing	10.00
To deficit	1,021.42	Total	2,241.19
	2,241.19	By deficit	1,021.42

(REPORT WAS ACCEPTED)

EVANGEL FINANCIAL REPORT

Chairman F. J. Lee of the Publishing Committee requested that

the present editor (A. J. Tomlinson) be retained, and explained that it had been a hard year. Following report was read and accepted:

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
For merchandise	$30,172.65	Brought forward	$15,657.70
Donations	2,048.05	Merchandise	11,994.42
Total	32,220.70	Expenses (Labor, etc.)	23,995.33
		Equipment	7,753.82
To deficit	27,180.57	Total	59,401.27
Total	59,401.27	By deficit	27,180.57

MERCHANDISE ACCOUNT (This does not include the expenses to prepare for selling)		THE BUSINESS ALONE	
Cash received	$30,172.65	Expenditures	$35,989.75
Cash paid out	11,994.42	Total receipts	30,172.65
Gain	18,178.23	Deficit	5,817.10

Estimated Value of Property and Equipment	$37,794.00
Total indebtedness	33,018.05
Gain (Including last year's gain $2,434.04)	4,775.95***

***Since the Publishing Department was principally a new enterprise in the Church, starting from a "shoe string" by A. J. Tomlinson, it was of prime interest at this time, and was being watched carefully by many.

The same Publishing Committee was retained—F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne, M. S. Lemons, A. J. Lawson, George T. Brouayer—for another year.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S FINANCIAL REPORT
(Sixteenth Annual Assembly)

AUDITORIUM ACCOUNT

Cash received	$12,901.22
Cash paid out	36,096.10
Deficit	23,194.88
*Cost of building to date	36,096.10
*Cash received	12,901.22
* Deficit	23,194.88

ORPHANAGE ACCOUNT

Cash received	7,981.08
Cash paid out	2,916.92
Balance	5,064.16

TITHE REPORT

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
Churches	$71,207.32	Ministers	$71,113.60
Individuals	8,350.31	Expenses	6,561.51
Total	79,557.63	By balance	1,882.52
Balance	1,882.52	Total	79,557.63

Total receipts	$79,557.63
Total disbursements	77,675.11
Balance	1,882.52***

***The ministers have received all tithes paid in by the churches except $93.72. The tithes of individuals have over paid the expense of the system to the amount of $1788.80. Folks pay tithes here who are not members.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TITHE REPORT

Brought forward	$210.88
Cash received	402.60
Total	613.48
Cash paid out	383.10
Balance	230.38

All reports of the various funds were accepted without question.***

***The bookkeeper made a statement that was quoted by the General Overseer, "Reports came out to a penny on every angle."

AUTHORIZING THE SEVENTY

At 10:00 o'clock Tuesday morning, November 8, General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson presented the subject of "The Seventy" mentioned in his Annual Address and introduced by F. J. Lee. After favorable discussions the measure was adopted before the moderator could reach his chair. The terms fixed for these "Other Seventy" to serve were: Full Term—five years; second section—four years; third section—three years; fourth section—two years; fifth section—1 year. Fourteen were to be appointed each year.

COURTS OF JUSTICE
(November 8, 1921)

Tuesday morning at 10:40 the measure pertaining to Judges—Courts of Justice was brought to the floor for Assembly discussions, after which A. D. Evans suggested the measure be passed on. Prayer followed, and the measure was immediately adopted.

Courts of Justice to be composed of the state overseer, one of the Seventy and a local bishop of the state . . . to serve one year terms.

AGGREGATION OF CHURCH STATISTICS
(November 2-8, 1921)

470	Churches last report
28	Decrease in 1921
133	Churches established in 1921
575	Churches this report
105	Increase over last report
14,606	Members last report
1,744	Decrease
5,702	New members in 1921
18,564	Members this report
3,958	Increase over last report
99	Bishops last report
106	Bishops this report
7	Increase over last report
252	Deacons last report
263	Deacons this report
11	Increase over last report
476	Evangelists last report
542	Evangelists this report
66	Increase over last report
281	S. S. last report
384	S. S. this report
103	Increase over last report
9,217	Average Attend. last report
15,000	Average Attend. this report
5,783	Increase over last report
$202,929.69	Approximate value of local church property last report
265,199.65	Approximate value of local church property this

	report
62,169.96	Approximate increase over last report
75,000.00	Approximate value of Auditorium
40,000.00	Approximate value of Publishing House
6,000.00	Approximate value of School Building and Dormitory
12,000.00	Approximate value of Orphanage, Houses and land
265,199.65	Approximate valuation of local church property
398,199.65	Approximate valuation of all property owned by the Church of God

THE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

(Adopted November 8, 1921)

"The General Overseer made a few remarks in which he mentioned a written constitution. Some of them are:

The elders in council with General Overseer have concluded there is need of a constitution for the Church of God. Remember this is not setting forth any laws or creeds that are binding us. We are only setting forth that which we have been practising for years.

The General Overseer then read the constitution which was drawn up by the General Overseer and elders in council.

CONSTITUTION
PREAMBLE

We, the Church of God, the ministry and membership of the General Assembly of the Churches of God in conference assembled at Cleveland, Tenn.

In order to form a more perfect union, establish the principles of Theocratic Government, set forth the teaching, principles and practices as heretofore interpreted by the General Assembly as further herein provided and for the general welfare of its membership; do ordain and establish this constitution for the General Assembly of the Churches of God.

ARTICLE 1.
Purpose of Organization

Section 1. This organization is and shall be known as the General Assembly of the Churches of God.

Section 2. The object and purpose of this organization is to

propagate the doctrine, principles and practices of the Church of God, as set forth in the New Testament, as interpreted by the legally authorized officials of this organization, which interpretations may be found in the minutes of the annual sessions of the General Assembly, also filed at the business headquarters of the Church of God.

Section 3. To promulgate rules and regulations to govern the local churches of said organization, and otherwise promote the general interest of the General Assembly.

Section 4. To search out the Bible plans of government and discipline and interpret the same.

Section 5. To provide a general government in which is vested full power and authority to dictate and promulgate rules and regulations from time to time to govern the local churches composing said Assembly.

Section 6. To provide a general convocation for the mutual fellowship, spiritual development and general welfare of its membership.

ARTICLE 2.
Membership

Section 1. The Membership of the General Assembly is and shall be composed of all the local churches as recorded in the minutes of said Assemblies.

Section 2. When a new church is set in order by any legally authorized minister of the Church of God, this new church as a product of his labor becomes a member of the General Assembly and shall be subject to the government, teachings, principles, and practices as promulgated from time to time by said General Assembly.

Section 3. No local church shall withdraw from the General Assembly as a whole, but such individual members of said local church who may become disloyal or otherwise disorderly, shall be dealt with and excluded from membership in such local church.

ARTICLE 3.
Government

Section 1. The government of this organization is and shall be Theocratic in form, as interpreted by its officials.

ARTICLE 4.
Officers

Section 1. The officers of the General Assembly of the Churches of

God are and shall consist of General Overseer, general secretary, council of twelve elders and other seventy elders, presbytery, state overseers and trustees.

Section 2. The duties of the General Overseer shall be the general supervision of all the work of the general Assembly, and to sit as chairman of said Assembly when in session.

Section 3. The duties of the general secretary shall be to keep a careful record of the General Assembly, and act in conjunction with the General Overseer in execution of any and all legal documents authorized by the General Assembly.

Section 4. The duties and powers of the council of the twelve elders shall be to consider all questions that may properly come before them pertaining to the general interest and welfare of the Church of God. It is, and shall so be understood, that the twelve in conjunction with the General Overseer shall be the supreme council.

Section 5. The duties of the seventy elders shall be to faithfully represent the government and teaching of the Church of God in their various fields of labor, and to sit in joint session with the twelve in the Assembly to make final decisions on all questions that shall come before said Assembly.

Section 6. The twelve elders and the seventy elders shall together with the General Overseer be understood and so construed to be the official Assembly while in joint session, which shall have full power and authority to designate rules of government, teachings and principles for the local churches, those present to constitute a quorum.

Section 7. The duties of the trustees of the General Assembly is and shall be to hold in trust all property belonging to the General Assembly for the full use and benefit of said Assembly, and to see that no property or part of the same shall be converted to any other use than that which is in harmony with the plan and purposes, government and teachings of said General Assembly.

Section 8. The presbytery and their duties:

The General Overseer and the state overseer shall constitute the presbytery in the respective states or provinces, who, after all investigations necessary and other proceedings provided and authorized by the General Assembly shall have full power and authority to license or ordain candidates for the ministry.

It is further understood that it shall be within the power of the presbytery to take final action in revoking the license or ordination of any minister for any reason or cause satisfactory

to themselves.

Section 9. The duties of the state overseer is and shall be to have the oversight of his state or territory and as much as possible conduct or order a general evangelistic campaign over his state during the year. To see that every church is supplied with a pastor as much as lieth in his power. In short, oversee every interest of the work in his territory.

Section 10. The term of all officials shall be fixed by the General Assembly while in session.

Section 11. Any official is subject to impeachment for an offence rendering him unworthy of the position that he occupies.

ARTICLE 5.

Judicial

Section 1. There shall be a supreme judicial body composed of seven of the twelve elders who shall decide all matters which shall properly come before them, whose decision shall be final.

Section 2. There shall be a judicial body who shall sit in the various states where churches are established, to consider all matters coming under their jurisdiction, said body shall be composed of the state overseer, one of the seventy elders, and one bishop.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the board designated in section 2 of this article to examine all candidates for the ministry, and if found satisfactory they shall refer them to the presbytery for license or ordination.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the board designated in section 3 of this article to try all ministers for any offence committed within the state where they shall convene; if, for any reason their decision should be unsatisfactory to either of the litigants, he shall have right to appeal to the body mentioned in section 1 of this article.

Section 5. It is and shall be within the power of the local church to try its members for any offence contrary to the governmment, teaching, principles or practices of the Church of God. Their jurisdiction, however, is limited to lay members only.

Section 6. No business conference or any act shall be legal unless presided over by a legally authorized moderator.

Section 7. Any lay member of the local church who has been tried for any offense and convicted and excommunicated who, for any reason, may feel that he has been improperly or illegally dealt with, shall have the right to appeal from such decision to the body set forth in section 2 of this article. And if, for any

reason, he may be dissatisfied with the decision of this body, he shall have right to appeal to the body set forth in section 1 of this article.

Also if there be a litigation between two or more members of a local church, and if, for any reason, they be dissatisfied with the decision of the local church, they may have a right to appeal to the board set forth in section 2 of this article, and if, for any reason, they should be dissatisfied with the decision of the board set forth in section 2 they may have right to appeal to the board set forth in section 1 of this article.

ARTICLE 6.

Finance

Section 1. It is and shall be recognized as an accepted principle, and a part of God's financial plan that all the membership shall pay tithes of their net earnings or income.

Section 2. It is and shall be ordained that the tithes are for the support of the ministry only.

Section 3. For the love of the gospel and the general welfare of the Church it shall be the duty of the membership to make free-will offerings from time to time as the needs may require.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of all persons intrusted with finance belonging to the Church of God for any purpose, as treasurer of said church, to deposit the same in a reliable bank to the credit of the Church of God.

Section 5. The power to regulate and operate the financial system shall be vested in the supreme council.

ARTICLE 7.

Education

Section 1. A Bible Training School shall be maintained as long as advisable, for the education of our ministers and workers, which shall include the extension department of the Bible Training Correspondence Course and any other educational pursuits that the General Assembly may from time to time deem necessary.

ARTICLE 8.

Amendments

Section 1. As the work of this organization progresses, and the number of Churches increase, the General Assembly may create new and other positions and fill them as needs may require.

Section 2. This constitution may be amended by a unanimous agreement of the official Assembly in any regular session.

After General Overseer read the constitution he asked the Assembly if they wanted it reread or if they wanted any explanation.

Following the reading were a few questions, explanations, and deep consideration, after which T. A. Richard suggested that the Assembly accept the constitution as a whole.

It was unanimously agreed to accept it.

General Overseer said, "In order to show our appreciation of His presence and it seeming good to us and the Holy Ghost, let us all kneel before the Lord and reverence Him."

All knelt and thanked the Lord.

After prayer all stood and praised God while the orchestra was playing.

The General Overseer exclaimed, "BEHOLD WHAT GOD HATH WROUGHT!"***

***Bishop E. H. Griffith, a minister and General Secretary under former General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson for a number of years, told this writer that he inquired of Bishop Tomlinson as to just what he meant by saying "Behold What God Hath Wrought." He explained to Bishop Griffith that there was usually some confusion when discussing Assembly issues, but since this particular measure was passed on so quickly and quietly, without any confusion or further discussion, he made the statement . . . and that he meant quietness.

APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEERS
(Assembly 1921)

ALABAMA	W. S. Wilemon
ARKANSAS	John Burk
BAHAMAS	Milton Padgett
COLORADO	O. R. Rouse
FLORIDA	F. J. Lee
GEORGIA	S. W. Latimer
ILLINOIS	S. O. Gillaspie
INDIANA	F. W. Gammon
KENTUCKY	C. H. Randall
LOUISIANA	H. B. Simmons
MARYLAND	Paul Walker

MICHIGAN	Efford Haynes
MISSISSIPPI	H. A. Pressgrove
MISSOURI	E. L. Pinkley
NEW JERSEY	T. S. Payne
NEW MEXICO	J. A. Davis
NORTH CAROLINA	Geo. T. Brouayer
NORTH DAKOTA	J. W. Barker
OHIO	W. G. Rembert
OKLAHOMA	B. H. Doss
PENNSYLVANIA	W. M. Rumler
SOUTH CAROLINA	J. W. Culpepper
TENNESSEE	M. W. Letsinger
TEXAS	H. N. Scoggins
VIRGINIA	F. J. Crowder
WEST VIRGINIA	E. L. Simmons

APPOINTMENT—THE OTHER SEVENTY

Complying with the requirements of the Assembly the General Overseer and Twelve Elders made the appointments of the "Other Seventy" as follows:

ONE YEAR TERM

1. Capshaw, W. A., Cleveland, Tenn.
2. Churchill, C. A., Sapa, Miss.
3. Franks, W. R., Coopers Town, Bahamas
4. Grisam, C. M., N. Chattanooga, Tenn.
5. Jenkins, A. L., Trenton, Ark.
6. McClendon, T. M., Point, Tex.
7. Messer, W. R., Kannapolis, N. C.
8. Mullen, J. W., Holcomb, Miss.
9. Padilla, Juan, Alcreek, Colo.
10. Raney, W. E., Charleston, Miss.
11. Smith, E. C., Parkersburg, W. Va.
12. Smith, Thos. B., Miami, Fla.
13. Stallings, W. M., Kannapolis, N. C.
14. Walker, W. A., Madisonville, Tenn.

TWO YEAR TERM

1. Attey, John W., Frankfort, Ill.
2. Brooks, J. H., Alarka, N. C.
3. Byerly, T. J., Dayton, Tenn.
4. Curtis, C. R., Cleveland, Tenn.
5. Doss, B. H., Sapulpa, Okla.

6. Ford, T. S. Louisville, Ky.
7. Gammon, F. W., Terre Haute, Ind.
8. Marks, I. H., Tampa, Fla.
9. Middlebrook, T. J., Atlanta, Ga.
10. Pinkley, E. L., Couch, Mo.
11. Rider, E. C., Morgantown, Miss.
12. Scoggins, H. N., Paris, Tex.
13. Simmons, E. L., Huntington, W. Va.
14. Yates, J. O., Logan, Ill.

THREE YEAR TERM

1. Priest, J. T., Brookhaven, Miss.
2. Randall, C. H., Dahl, Ky.
3. Rembert, W. G., Circleville, Ohio
4. Richardson, T. J., Miama, Fla.
5. Robinson, R. S., Mentone, Ala.
6. Rogers, Jesse, Mountain City, Ga.
7. Rogers, W. H., Augusta, Ga.
8. Rumler, W. M., Cedar Grove, W. Va.
9. Simpson, Z. D., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
10. Simmons, H. B., Kentwood, La.
11. Stephens, J. L., Tampa, Fla.
12. Thomas, Z. R., Buhl, Ala.
13. Turner, L. L., Whitwell, Tenn.
14. Wilemon, W. S., Oneonta, Ala.

FOUR YEAR TERM

1. Burk, John, Barton, Ark.
2. Crowder, F. J., Max Meadows, Va.
3. Culpepper, E. B., Lake Park, Ga.
4. Davis, J. A., Hayesville, N. C.
5. Eneas, W. V., Nassau, Bahamas
6. Fritz, P. F., Norfolk, Virginia
7. Holcomb, D. R., Fort Myers, Fla.
8. Johnson, R. P., Bushnell, Fla.
9. Martin, W. M., Orlando, Fla.
10. Murray, J. W., Valdosta, Ga.
11. Nelson, J. W., Soddy, Tenn.
12. Padgett, C. M., Williston, Fla.
13. Padgett, J. C., Lake Park, Ga.
14. Pressgrove, H. A., Charleston, Miss.

FIVE YEAR TERM

1. Bryant, W. F., Cleveland, Tenn.

2. Cross, W. H., Miami, Fla.
3. Culpepper, J. W., Lake Park, Ga.
4. Gann, Alonzo, Atlanta, Ga.
5. Heath, S. J., Hazlehurst, Ga.
6. Hockett, W. C., Norwalk, Calif.
7. Hopkins, E. D., Cullowhee, N. C.
8. Letsinger, M. W., Jefferson C., Tenn.
9. Padgett, Milton, Miami, Fla.
10. Richard, T. A., Nashville, Tenn.
11. Rouse, O. R., Raton, N. Mex.
12. Self, J. A., Miami, Fla.
13. Simmons, E. E., Fort Myers, Fla.
14. Trim, H. L., Olney, Ill.

APPOINTMENT SUPREME JUDGES—COURT OF JUSTICE

Provided by the Assembly and appointed by the General Overseer to serve till the Assembly in 1922.

M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, J. S. Llewellyn, T. L. McLain, S. W. Latimer, J. B. Ellis, E. J. Boehmer.

APPOINTMENT—STATE EXAMINING BOARDS AND COURTS OF JUSTICE

These boards are authorized by the Assembly and appointments made by the General Overseer, to serve till the Assembly in 1922.

Alabama—W. S. Wilemon, R. S. Robinson, Z. R. Thomas
Arkansas—John Burk, A. L. Jenkins, E. L. Pinkley
Bahamas—Milton Padgett, W. R. Franks, W. V. Eneas
Colorado—O. R. Rouse, J. A. Davis, Juan Padilla
Florida—F. J. Lee, J. A. Self, E. E. Simmons
Georgia—S. W. Latimer, John C. Padgett, S. J. Heath
Illinois—S. O. Gillaspie, John Attey, John O. Yates
Indiana—F. W. Gammon, S. O. Gillaspie, Tony S. Ford
Kentucky—C. H. Randall, Tony S. Ford, R. M. Fielden
Louisiana—H. B. Simmons, J. T. Priest, J. W. Mullen
Michigan—Efford Haynes, W. G. Rembert, J. B. Burkhart
Mississippi—H. A. Pressgrove, E. C. Rider, W. E. Raney
Missouri—E. L. Pinkley, John Burk, B. H. Doss
New Jersey—T. S. Payne, W. M. Rumler, P. F. Fritz
New Mexico—J. A. Davis, O. R. Rouse, Juan Padilla
North Carolina—Geo. T. Brouayer, E. D. Hopkins, J. H. Brooks

Ohio—W. G. Rembert, Efford Haynes, J. B. Burkhart
Oklahoma—B. H. Doss, John Burk, H. N. Scoggins
Pennsylvania—W. M. Rumler, T. S. Payne, E. L. Simmons
South Carolina—J. W. Culpepper, W. H. Rogers, W. R. Messer
Tennessee—M. W. Letsinger, L. L. Turner, T. A. Richard
Texas—H. N. Scoggins, T. M. McClendon, B. H. Doss
Virginia—F. J. Crowder, P. F. Fritz, W. M. Lowman
West Virginia—E. L. Simmons, E. C. Smith, Jas. Cline

SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS BORROWED

Financial conditions of the whole country were critical, and the Church of God was no exception for her finances slowed up with the economy of the country. It was a very dark period for the Church in 1921, when it looked as if they would lose everything—publishing house and all. The Assembly was coming on . . . little money was in sight. This is vividly explained in a letter by A. J. Lawson; at the time he was the oldest deacon in the Church, a few excerpts from his letter follow:

". . . there is not another person in the Church, or anywhere else, that has been as closely connected with the financial dealings of Brother Tomlinson as I have. He has called me scores of times to help him get money from the bank to tide over hard places to keep from burdening the Church with it.

"At one time it looked like we were gone for good, and would be closed out any day, publishing house and all. I think it was just before the Assembly of 1921. Brother Tomlinson called me to the office, and when I arrived he said, 'We are up against it and I have prayed day and night and no relief in sight. I do not want to burden our workers with this and do not want to mention it in a way that will discourage any of them, what about you and I going to the bank and borrowing six thousand dollars to tide us over the coming Assembly?' He further stated that 'the offerings that usually come in at the Assembly will take care of it.'

"In reply I said, 'I do not believe the bank will take just you and I alone for six thousand dollars since we are already carrying so much of the Church debt.' He said he would ask the bank and see . . . and the bank let us have six thousand dollars on a note with his and my name on it. And if you remember, the offerings at that Assembly were very low, as it was a hard year.

"Sometime after the Assembly Mr. Harle, the president of the bank, asked me to try to arrange to pay that as early as we could for it would embarrass him if the inspectors found it dragging.

But there was nothing to relieve it with . . .

Yours in Him,
A. J. Lawson" (7/17/23)***

***The six thousand dollars borrowed is referred to: Page 29, Assembly Minutes 1921; Page 136, Cyclopedic Index of Assembly Minutes . . . In the General Overseer's Annual Address to the Seventeenth Annual Assembly, 1921.

QUESTIONING REFLECTIONS

Apparently the Sixteenth Annual Assembly was a success, and one of the best, in spite of the lack of the customary spiritual down-pourings so cherished by the multitude of delegates. Though the speakers were dynamic in appeal and revelation, some of them newer ministers, not very many messages and interpretations were given by the Spirit to sanction approval, though enjoyed by the delegates.

From indications it seemed that some of the warmth and glow of closeness and fellowship related to partisan group-ins though the great throng sought to be drawn into closer union of motive, plan and purpose. For some reason and purpose God was missing at times when it seemed He was needed most. J. S. Llewellyn said, as strength, "God still sets His approval on it. He is still walking among us . . ." Bishop Tomlinson had said, "First class love and fellowship makes us stick together . . . it will prevent would-be leaders from rising up and showing their importance in rebelling against the teaching or government . . ." F. J. Lee said, "Hasn't it been demonstrated in the case of our General Overseer? Every false thing imaginable has been told on him, but it has never hurt him . . ." A treacherous enemy was moving into the rank and file of the covenant-bonded saints, and an astounding "distance" was gradually developing.

While accomplishments in the component facets of Church growth were in arrears of last year's record, yet the aggregated totals surpassed last year's progress. The General Overseer said there were about 600 churches with approximately 20,000 members by now. Financial obligations wearied the Publishing House personnel . . . indebtedness was heavy, especially since the country was in a recession.

The committees that did Assembly floor work acted in the greatest and most renown faith, looking ahead. While the opposing forces worked hard against the Church stalwart warriors

of the Cross of Christ were activated by Divine Grace.

Seven years ago, in the Tenth Annual Assembly, November 2-8, 1914, convening at Cleveland, Tennessee Bishop A. J. Tomlinson had been anointed General Overseer of the Churches of God for life, and the whole Assembly had accepted it as a fact. It was a colorful encomium from God! He accepted the anointing with the gravest, deepest sense of humility, daring not to flinch from the duties of the office . . . not in motive, nor purpose, nor issue . . . but with courage and vigor face every opposition.

NO REASON IS GIVEN

The record in the Minutes of the Sixteenth Assembly is silent as to why the 29th teaching of the Church, as listed in the Minutes of both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Assemblies, was deleted from the Minutes. This particular teaching was:

29. Against members going to war—Ex. 20:13, 1 Chron. 28:3, Psalm 120:7, Matt. 5:38-48; 6:14, 15; 26:50-56, Luke 22:49-52, John 18:10, 11, 36, Rom. 12:19.

SIGN POSTS TO DISRUPTION

Sometimes signs point in a direction that may never reach a particular destination, and sometimes they point only to dangerous areas to avoid or beware of, but many signs may be turned to point in an opposite direction. So is it with signs in the Church . . . many of them point the way we want them to point, and they can be right or wrong. They are left for the individual to read. At the very First Assembly they adopted as a first measure, "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only." They never claimed to be a part of anything but the continuation of the early Church as designated in the Scriptures. In a swiftly changing world it was not always easy to sustain such a resolution but it is evident they sought to do it. As a young organization they endeavored to establish a safe system of government according to their interpretations of the Scriptures, but sometimes the signs pointed toward dangers to avoid. Look at these:

1. At the Twelfth Assembly in 1916 the Assembly authorized the appointment of Twelve Elders as counselors to the General Overseer (Book of Minutes Page 242). The sign post was probably too distant to discern at the time but it pointed to the dangers of this body of elders aspiring to become members of a control board,

and who could blame them. Well, were not all the bishops and deacons elders, any of which the General Overseer could call in for counsel at his convenience? But he needed close-in advisors.

2. A DECLARATION—(Listed on Page 50 of 1920 Minutes) Was this needed? It was introduced and accepted by the Assembly. This was not a Declaration of Faith in reality, but a giant stride toward such, in spite of the fact that all members took a covenant, and were given the right hand of fellowship to become members of the Church, accepting the whole Bible as the Word of God . . . It was a step toward other such things as concocted by men.

3. The CONSTITUTION. As another great step and inclined to be legislative this instrument was introduced and passed by the Sixteenth Assembly in 1921 (Book of Minutes, pages 60-65). Was it needed? In the United States of America the Church and State are distinct and separate. The State cannot make rules to determine the worship of religion and subject the adherents. Did not the Church at its Sixth Assembly in 1911 (Book of Minutes Page 45) decide it best to not incorporate and secure a charter? The Church had a right to establish its form of worship.

(a) It was read by those in authority, including the General Overseer. It was not slipped through the Assembly with no one knowing about it. But, after it had passed and the Assembly was over, the General Overseer had opportunity to read, pray and study over it, and he saw the danger signs involved in its acceptance.

(b) It showed plainly that people were subjected to the Constitution and its pressures, rather than the New Testament as their rule of faith, government and discipline under which covenant they had become members.

(c) Whether or not J. S. Llewellyn is wholly responsible for the Constitution is questionable, but since he presented it to the Assembly he is held accountable, and blamed for it.

(d) The body of elders had been appointed—the seventy appointed at the 1921 Assembly included—to safeguard the government, the doctrines, principles and practices established by the Church . . . like a staff of counselors similar to the way the President's cabinet operates . . . and certainly not to attempt to change it. If they were tired of the system of Church government, tired of the administration, then why?

(e) Did this Constitution make the General Overseer feel the supporters of it desired to "oust" him from the office and influence the members to follow them in their renaissance? What was the

Church claiming to be free from?

(f) The 'General Assembly of the Churches of God" was the name given the Church, according to Article 1, Section 1.

(g) The Constitution designated the twelve and seventy, with the General Overseer (83 of them in all) the official Assembly while in joint session, with full power and authority to designate rules of government, teachings and principles for the local churches, those present to constitute a quorum. This could mean that if six or eight were present at an advertised meeting they could make decisions that would effect the board of 83, besides the whole Church. (Article 4, Section 6) Was this theocratic, or oligarchical? (Check Article 1, as well.)

(h) Until the body of elders was authorized every member of the Church brethren had a voice in the Assembly. But after the self-perpetuating board of elders was established they controlled the business sessions of the Assembly.

(i) Obedience to Article 5 seems to conflict with 1 Corinthians, Chapter six.

(j) At the Tenth Assembly in 1914 the office of General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson was made permanent, and Article 4, Sections 10 and 11 appear tinged with the spirit of revenge.

(k) Provision for amendments was a severe warning . . .

Smooth Sailing Is Disturbed by the Fury of Merciless Storms Never Experienced by Church

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FAITHFUL STANDARD MAGAZINE STARTED
(April 1922)

The Faithful Standard Magazine, edited by A. J. Tomlinson and christened the "Monthly Journal of Full Salvation" started with its first issue—Volume 1, No. 1—dated April 1922 . . . single copy 15 cents and subscription price $1.50 a year. Including the cover it was a twenty-eight page periodical with a single page format size of eight by eleven inches, about 50#Mf paper and the body type of eight point, apparently. It had no uniform style for page format—columns might be three of 13 ems, or two wide columns, and sometimes the lines of type stretched across the entire page. The masthead on page twelve headed the editorials, and included the names of the Publishing Committee—F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne, M. S. Lemons, A. J. Lawson, Geo. T. Brouayer. It was a product of the Church of God Publishing House.

It carried inspiring and soul-stirring sermons and messages and appealing, informative articles and features, besides the short fillers that spiced some of the pages with testimonies of miraculous healings and other events. It was an attractive magazine appreciated by many church homes.

It carried full-page advertisements on both inside cover pages, as well as the outside back cover page, besides column and smaller "ads." Such concerns as R. E. Winsett (Religious Song Book Publisher) of Tennessee; Fleming H. Revell of New York; Church of God Bible Training School, etc., and column advertisement by the Sunday School Times and John C. Winston, both of Philadelphia. The friendly Merchants Bank of Cleveland, the "Bank that thinks and lives with its customers" patronized the magazine. Listed with some of the advertisements was A. J. Lawson, Real Estate broker.

The eight issues of the magazine, April-November, paid its way with a net profit of $60.00 besides. When the new Editor and Publisher, J. S. Llewellyn, assumed his duties December 1, 1922 the magazine was discontinued as a product of the Church, and publishing headquarters for the periodical were moved to The Faithful Standard Publishing Company, 424 West 33rd Street, New York, N. Y., where it was handled by Homer A. Tomlinson, as business manager, but was still bearing the name of A. J.

Tomlinson, Editor, Cleveland, Tennessee. An editorial in the Church of God Evangel, dated February 24, 1923 gives more information.

Sometime after the October 1923 issue was distributed the magazine was discontinued.

AN UNJUST, CONTROVERSIAL AUDIT

In 1920 the Assembly adopted a change in the financial system of the Church. It provided for the churches to send all tithes to the established Headquarters Treasury, and the General Overseer and elders were to work out the plan for distribution (Minutes 1920 Assembly, Page 43). The plan was formulated and launched for operation about ten months when the 1921 Assembly convened. The General Overseer was in charge of the allocation of these funds, since he was treasurer of the tithes fund.

The new system met with difficulty, and the Church as a whole was pressed with the heavy indebtedness on the newly constructed auditorium, and the newly launched orphanage work. The financial status of the Church was questioned by some, and at the request of J. S. Llewellyn a committee composed of J. S. Llewellyn, F. J. Lee and J. B. Ellis was appointed to investigate the financial affairs of the Church. They employed an audit firm from Chattanooga (Lee A. Battle Audit Co.) and a Mr. Blackwell was sent to audit the books, or accounts of the Church. He prepared what he called "a preliminary examination of the books on file." He admitted he did not have all the books, and that his audit was not complete. However, because it seemed he had no place else to put it, he charged A. J. Tomlinson with the shortage of $14,141.83 to offset the amount of the notes payable. The whole thing was erroneous and was later declared by the Court as "utterly worthless."

Both Bishop Tomlinson and Deacon A. J. Lawson declared the elders in council had given the General Overseer the right to borrow from one fund to assist another when necessary. When certain notes came due on the auditorium and the other headquarters buildings and business, rather than suffer a foreclosure and perhaps plunge the Church into bankruptcy, the General Overseer used some of the tithes that belonged to the preachers on the field—a little at a time, hoping to get in enough funds to reimburse the ministers. But the funds did not come in as expected and his chagrin was indeed humiliating. Through tears he explained everything to his Board of Councilors, and they wept

together. He promised to explain it to the forthcoming Assembly in 1922, which he did, and the considerate ministers agreed to donate their back tithes to the cause.***

***Charlie Frazier (speaking in behalf of the Church of God—Elders) and W. M. Lowman (speaking for the Church of God of Prophecy) both told this writer the General Overseer wrote the ministers and explained what he had to do with the tithes to save the Church, and that they would be paid back as soon as money came in. Both said they answered him and gladly gave it as a donation to the headquarters property. Though hundreds of miles apart at the time, both said, "It was wrong . . . A. J. Tomlinson never stole a cent of money."

The General Overseer was accused of mis-appropriating funds when he did this, but in view of the prerogatives granted by the body of elders he seemd unjustly accused.

A. J. Tomlinson said: "I think all the ministers that attended the Assembly agreed to turn all that was due them out of the tithes the past year over to the publishing house debt, but in order to keep a correct record we need a letter from each one to that effect." (The Church of God Evangel, November 18, 1922.)

Evidently this was done, at least to some extent, for when a drive for publishing house financial assistance was launched "these tithes (or a part of them) donated by the ministers already" were included in the total amount of the drive by J. S. Llewellyn, editor and publisher. It seems strange that these "tithes" were now accepted as a donation or contribution by the very forces that had so severely condemned and criticized Bishop Tomlinson for mis-appropriating them, though given the prerogative to borrow from one fund to help another in emergencies to save the Church.

When the Church should have forgiven and exonerated their General Overseer from the alleged mis-appropriation charges, as the Court later did, some of them used it as leverage in an attempt to assassinate his character and destroy his reputation, his influence and religious prestige.

TRUTH AGAINST FALLACY

"We will first call attention to the final report of the finance committee concerning the Evangel drive that was put on shortly after J. S. Llewellyn took charge of the Publishing House. I was in Cleveland at the time the paper came out that contained the first report . . . When I learned that they had applied the $19,000 on

the publishing house debt it was very easy to see the fallacy of the report of the Evangel drive. When I subtracted $19,000 from $28,335.65 I found that the outstanding debt on the publishing house was only $9,335.65. Then when I saw that their report showed that at that time the outstanding debt was only $3,934.47, I subtracted that amount from $9,335.65, the amount of indebtedness after the $19,000 had been applied, and found that only $5,401.18 had been raised in the drive. But in their fictitious report they made the public believe that $24,401.18, the difference between the amount of indebtedness at the time the report was given and the amount before the $19,000 had been applied, had been raised . . . I am persuaded that Brother Boehmer was right when he said that the report was a feather in J. S. Llewellyn's cap . . .''***

***Taken from a document on file that was written by J. P. Hughes, 2707 Trunk Street, Cleveland, Tennessee, and printed and distributed by the . . . Bureau of Information, A. J. Lawson, General Manager, Cleveland, Tennessee. This writer solicits publisher's courtesy.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
(November 1-7, 1922)

The Seventeenth Annual Assembly convened in the large auditorium on Montgomery Avenue, Cleveland, Tennessee, November 1-7, 1922. As usual crowds came in on the early trains, many of them coming into Cleveland several days before the Assembly opened. When the introductory service opened Wednesday evening November 1st there was much of the customary hand-shaking and fellowshipping manifested among the happy throng. J. S. Llewellyn brought the welcome—Home-Coming—address, followed by songs and then short talks by Mamie Richardson, Flora Bohrman and Lettie Cross. Despite the attitudes of the genial delegates the Church of God was destined to experience one of her most stormy, shameful, remorseful Assemblies on record. It was most unfortunate, as Bishop Tomlinson was aware of the wirepulling, the political chicaneries, aspersions on his leadership of the organization, and men who rose up to draw away disciples after them. It troubled him though he sought to circumvent the issues much as possible and prevent disruption.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF ASSEMBLY

At 8:30 Thursday morning, November 2, 1922 devotion began with songs and prayers. General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson then opened the Assembly by reading I Peter, 2nd chapter as the Scripture lesson. In the face of conflict he realized the need of God's intervention and proceeded to pray one of his most dramatic soul-touching prayers on record:

"Our Father who art in heaven; in Thy sacred presence we bow ourselves before Thee. Thou hast told us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and Thou would exalt us in due time. Some time we want to make heaven our home. We want to be exalted as high as heaven. We want to see the great prophets and the great leaders of the past and above all we want to see Jesus, His loving face, who gave Himself to redeem us from sin that we might live a righteous life.

We thank Thee for the Holy Ghost which He so wonderfully gave to guide us into all truth and take the things of His and show them unto us. This blessed Spirit has wonderfully revealed unto us His Church. Oh, how our hearts feel grateful for this wonderful introduction of His own. We thank Thee because things have been made so plain to us and we have gathered here in this Seventeenth Annual Assembly to expect some advanced revelations, some more of the same kind of truths that have been revealed to us in the past.

Our hearts well up in us this morning in gratitude and thanksgiving for we remember we are taught to make our request known with thanksgiving. Lord, we want to thank Thee because so many are here today. We thank Thee that, in spite of hard times, the brothers and sisters have gathered together from the north, south, east and west to learn more about His precious Word and the necessary things to know about the great Church of God.

Now, Father, we just want to ask Thee to let Thy presence be with us all the way. As Thou wast with Moses, wilt Thou be with us? As Thou wast with the apostles and the early Church members, we pray that Thou wilt be with us in this Assembly. As Thou wast with us in the past Assemblies, let Thy presence be with us. We don't want to go forward without Thou art with us. We would rather stop now than to fail to have Thy presence with us. If it

were possible we would like to make a deeper consecration because we want to draw nigh to God.

God help every one of us to grace this institution by living holy lives and unspotted from the world, and we want to be so united and live such lives before the world that they will see and know that this is the way.

Lord, give us all the grace we need. Give us all the power we need. Give us all the glory we need. Bless our souls together. Bless our bodies together. Bless our deliberations. Bless the speakers. Bless the overseers and the members as they represent the different states. We pray that Thou wilt bless us some how and take us in Thy great arms that we might grow closer together. May heaven bend low and kiss the earth. May the glory be so that the angels will hover close and desire to look into it, and we will certainly give you the praise in Jesus' name."

APPOINTMENT OF ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES
(Seventeenth Assembly—1922)

No. 1— To receive questions and subjects: W. G. Rembert, S. D. Cooper, S. J. Heath, E. D. Hopkins, H. N. Scoggins.

No. 2—To investigate grievances: Milton Padgett, T. A. Richard, F. J. Crowder, C. H. Prince, W. S. Wilemon.

No. 3—Watchmen: John Burk, W. A. Walker, Milo P. Cross.

No. 4—Foreign Missions: Z. D. Simpson, J. L. Stephens, J. P. Hughes, C. H. Randall, R. A. Fielden.

No. 5—Home Missions: E. L. Pinkley, R. P. Johnson, R. S. Robinson, E. C. Smith, I. H. Marks.

No. 6—Sunday-school Interests: S. R. Mitchell, E. L. Simmons, L. A. Richard, Floyd Rollins, L. L. Turner.

No. 7—Education: F. W. Gammon, E. C. Rider, J. N. Hurley, J. W. Nelson, T. J. Richardson.

No. 8—Better Government: Alonzo Gann, J. A. Self, M. W. Letsinger, J. W. Culpepper, John Attey, Z. R. Thomas, J. A. Davis.

CALL OF STATES AND THEIR RESPONSE

This annual feature of the Assembly was enjoyed by many who looked forward to seeing many friends and acquaintances march to represent the progress of the work in other states, and this Seventeenth Annual Assembly followed like pattern. Delegates

sang and the overseer gave a talk.

1. ALABAMA—W. S. Wilemon, overseer . . 151 representatives.
2. ARKANSAS—John Burk, overseer . . . . . 27 representatives.
3. BAHAMA ISLANDS—Milton Padgett, overseer . . . . . 1 representative.
4. CALIFORNIA— . . . . . 2 representatives.
5. CHINA and CANADA—No representatives but greetings were sent by the way of the throne.
6. COLORADO—O. R. Rouse, overseer . . . . . 2 representatives.
7. FLORIDA—F. J. Lee, overseer . . . . . 55 representatives.
8. GEORGIA—S. W. Latimer, overseer . . . 149 representatives.
9. ILLINOIS—S. O. Gillaspie, overseer . . . . . 14 representatives.
10. INDIANA—F. W. Gammon, overseer . . . . 18 representatives.
11. JAMAICA— . . . . . No representatives.
12. KANSAS— . . . . . 1 representative.
13. KENTUCKY—C. H. Randall, overseer . . 100 representatives.
14. LOUISIANA—H. B. Simmons, overseer . . . . . 17 representatives.
15. MARYLAND—Paul Walker, overseer . . . . 7 representatives.
16. MICHIGAN—Efford Haynes, overseer . . . . . 3 representatives.
17. MISSISSIPPI—H. A. Pressgrove, overseer . . . . . 75 representatives.
18. MISSOURI—E. L. Pinkley, overseer . . . . . 13 representatives.
19. NEW JERSEY—T. S. Payne, overseer . . . . 2 representatives.
20. NEW MEXICO—J. A. Davis, overseer . . . . . 3 representatives.
21. NEW YORK— . . . . . No representatives.
22. NORTH CAROLINA—Geo. T. Brouayer, overseer . . . . . 54 representatives.
23. NORTH DAKOTA— . . . . . No representatives.
24. OHIO—W. G. Rembert, overseer . . . . . 30 representatives.
25. OKLAHOMA— . . . . . 2 representatives.
26. PENNSYLVANIA— . . . . . 6 representatives.
27. SOUTH CAROLINA—J. W. Culpepper, overseer . . . . . 37 representatives.
28. TENNESSEE—M. W. Letsinger, overseer . . . . . 350 representatives.
29. TEXAS—H. N. Scoggins, overseer . . . . . 13 representatives.
30. VIRGINIA—F. J. Crowder, overseer . . . . . 47 representatives.

31. WEST VIRGINIA—E. L. Simmons, overseer .....
50 representatives.

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS
(Seventeenth Assembly—1922)

About 10:25 Friday morning, November 3, 1922 General Overseer Bishop Tomlinson began his honest and sincere, down-to-earth annual address of about 17,350 words, the most lengthy yet delivered, and probably the most inspiring, thought-provoking address he had delivered at any Assembly. Though it was impossible to ignore and bypass the smoldering issues that threatened to drive wedges into the unity of the people, yet he sought to assuage the difficulties by circumventing issues that tended to division and disruption. Despite his peaceful desires it was imperative that he refer to some of the problems confronting the Church, and attempt, if at all possible, to rectify errors that tended toward divisive motives. To some of them he alluded only, others he mentioned and explained, but on others he took a bold stand against them . . . for they were wrong, and the Church of the Bible could never afford to tolerate them. Portions of his address are mentioned below in sub-heads to reveal his concern.

CHURCH OF GOD PEOPLE

"Is not the Church of God composed of God's chosen people—is not every member one of the chosen? Does He not set the members in the body as it pleases Him? Has anyone ever become a member independent and separate from God's influence or providence or the movement of His Spirit? Are there not others who are not of this fold who must be brought in, that they may be one fold and one shepherd? Is not the Church of God the greatest institution now in existence in this world? Why would it not be, when it was started by the Son of God Himself? What other institution did He set up as a rival to His Church? Well then, if He set up no other, all others must have been founded by inferior personages . . . Those not of this fold are constantly coming."

THE CHURCH . . . WHERE THERE IS TROUBLE

"Did not the early Church suffer persecution from those without, and were they not tormented by false brethren within? Did not Paul declare that grievous wolves should enter in among us, not sparing the flock? And did he not also say that from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things,

to draw away disciples after them? Is it strange that men from our own ranks will try to set themselves up as leaders and oppose the Church and cry it down every way they can? What else could be expected when the disposition of men is ever the same? Wolves among us and men to draw away disciples after them—that's the Church of God because it is demonstrated before our eyes. Where else could you look for the Church of God except where there is trouble and wolves, and men that want to be leaders and take the place of the God-appointed leaders and those chosen for specific purposes? . . . God will vindicate His Church. You need not doubt this. Some will be sorry someday when they see what they have lost by not standing steady in the day of conflict. Slide out if you want to, but you'll regret it some day. Stay with the Church and be a true-blue loyal soldier and the glory will be revealed in you in due time, and you'll be glad someday."

GOD'S GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE

". . . the Church of God is a government by the Lord for the people. And this will never run smoothly and fit the governments of the world. There will always be, more or less, friction . . . We do not vote and let the majority rule. If we should do this, we would fit in the world and have smooth sailing . . . What would be the result in a short time? The Church of God would be short of her power and God would soon cease working with us, confirming the Word with signs following. We must have God's favor no matter what the cost may be. We must have His approval. We must not take the government out of His hands. To do so, the Church would cease to be the Church of God. We must hold to the form given us by James, the Lord's brother, when he said, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us." This was a decision made in the fear of God which gave Him the preeminence and the honor due Him. We must never leave the Spirit out and conform to mere legalism.

STRIVING TO AVOID VARIATIONS

"Indeed it is no child's play to pilot the great Church of God over the rugged sea and follow the instructions of the chart and the pointing of the magnetic needle . . . little influences are the danger points. A big influence that is plain to everybody is not so dangerous, but one that can scarcely be detected . . . is the worst to encounter. We are striving to avoid any variations, but if there are any we must find them and get back on the line marked out by the chart—the Bible . . . we cannot believe that the Lord will allow us to follow the wrong course very long. I wonder if we are a

little out of the way now, and the Lord is working to try to get us back in line. A few times in the past we have found ourselves slightly out of line, but, when discovered, we were glad to make our way back. This we did and thus we have traveled on from faith to faith and from victory to victory."

DELEGATES IN HIGH ENCOMIUM

"The past year, with its joys, victories, labors, heartaches, disappointments, and glorious achievements, has passed over the tide . . . A glance backward tells of hard battles fought, glorious victories won, difficulties met with courage, blistered feet, tattered garments, patched clothes, a scanty supply of food, deep groans for prayers, sleepless nights, days of sunshine following days of clouds and storms. A few have not been able to stem the tide and breast the storm and have given out by the way and quit the battlefield, but a large majority of the tried-and-true soldiers have marched into camp with banners flying, songs on their lips and rejoicing in their hearts because they have made it through another year . . . Church of God people can endure the most, toil the hardest and look the happiest of any people on earth . . . Is forty thousand dollars too much for us to pay for a home like this? . . . There are some things that must be made known by the Church that will never be made known any other way."

JUDGES OR COURTS OF JUSTICE

"We have had one year's trial and experience with the judges . . . It can hardly be regarded as a success after the experience of a year. I recommend that this subject be considered by the Assembly and possibly some modifications or amendments made . . . to vest the authority in the State Overseer to select his men to act when needed, and not have any under permanent appointment . . . And the act instituting the state judges could be repealed, and thus fall back to the former practices entirely . . . it might be possible to discover something new that would be better than any of our former practices . . . difficulty has been caused principally by an insufficient supply of money for expenses.

"Nothing has developed this year that has proven the supreme judges to be of any value. They have had nothing to do. Three cases have been appealed to them, but on account of distance, expense, and insufficient funds these cases have not been heard . . . The system as described in the constitution is fine, but in my judgment it is so bunglesome and expensive that it renders it impracticable . . . It appears to me that a system must be found

that will provide for a settlement of all cases within a limited territory . . ."

STATE HEADQUARTERS SUGGESTED

". . . it is only a matter of time until it will be necessary for each State Overseer . . . to have a place for headquarters where he can watch over and direct the work in his state through the district overseers, the same as the General Overseer watches over and directs the work everywhere through the State Overseers."

CHANGE IN FINANCIAL SYSTEM AUTHORIZED

"It was in July (1922) that the financial system reverted back to about what it was before the Assembly decided to try the General Treasury plan. This change did not seem to frighten the members of the Church . . . Some were disappointed and surprised, but raised no disturbance. A simple message went out from Headquarters which stated that the volume of money coming in was insufficient to operate the system then in operation, and the change was ordered to better aid and supply the workers on the field . . . It is not considered by those who ordered the change that the decision of the Assembly two years ago (1920) was all wrong . . . Truly it was a great educator. And the sixteen months of practice has woven itself into history never to be erased."***

***This authority to change became the option of the General Overseer in council with the body of elders (Article 4, Section 6, the Constitution), a quorum of which constituted the official Assembly.

CONTENDING WITH DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

"The subject of divorce and remarriage has been hanging over the Church without a settlement or an agreement for many years. There are reasons to believe that it has hung in this quiet manner long enough . . . We cannot afford to ignore one point of teaching in the Bible much longer. The ban must be removed so that men and women may speak their convictions on the subject, but how much better will it be for all to leave this Assembly speaking the same thing on this subject than for them to go away divided, and one preacher preach it one way and one another . . . Let it be fornication for a man to marry a woman who has a living husband instead of the act of adultery . . . I do believe we should consider removing the bar which has been on the subject so long and give a chance for both parties to teach it as they see it even if it does

cause some confusion—we must open the subject some way before our people so they may be able to consider both sides of the question . . ."

REACHING THE COLORED PEOPLE

"I feel that the time has come that some mention should be made about our colored people . . . Several appeals for us to set them off to themselves have been made. They wanted their own overseers and the privilege of holding their assemblies . . . If there could be some plan instituted that would meet the requirements so as to bring all the colored people to the Church of God instead of them going away so often, it would surely be Scriptural and right . . . Surely a basis of fellowship and union could be agreed upon that will meet all requirements and not only save to the Church of God all who are now members, but bring back all who have gone away."

CONCERNING THE CONSTITUTION IN THE CHURCH

"In reflecting back over the past three or four years, I can see how we have been slowly drifting toward making the Assembly a legislative body rather than merely a judicial body as has hitherto been claimed . . . We have claimed that the Bible contained all the laws we need, and in the Assembly we have endeavored to search them out and apply them and make such explanations necessary to make them plain. This has been the chief principle and aim from the beginning . . . I feel that I must say something here . . . for I fear to wait another year will be too late . . . it may cause me to lose my standing in the Church of God that I love so well—it may be the cause of many thousands turning against me—but I fear God and must stand for my convictions if I have to be turned off alone. I want to say it kindly; I want to say it reverently and without any reflection on anyone more than myself. I consider that we made a grave mistake one year ago when we adopted what we called our constitution. When I awoke to what we had done in the early part of this year, I became frightened and I have never been free from this scare . . . I feel that the fair face of the Body of Christ has been marred . . . I am so grieved over it that I have trembled like a leaf. It puts a spirit of weeping in my soul . . . I have held it before me and prayed over it for almost nine months. I can't get away from it. I almost rebelled against making mention of it here, but I'm afraid not to do it. I must be free to hold up the blessed old Bible and declare as of yore, that this is our only rule of faith and practice. As it is I can't do it, and this has been the very

cause of trouble in some places this year—they felt compelled to lay down the sacred Book of all books and take up the constitution or be counted disloyal . . . No, the minutes of our Assemblies are not to be considered as laws, but only records of our findings . . . What can be done? There is only one thing to do—and I may lose my position for saying it—and that is to abrogate the whole thing and make a record to that effect and, as far as possible, even erase it from our memory, and once more raise the Book high up in the air and declare, "THIS IS OUR ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE."

THE EMBARRASSING FINANCIAL STRAIT

"In order to save the Church and Publishing House from bankruptcy I felt compelled to use some of the tithes . . . I loved the reputation of the Church better than my own. I have almost given my life for the Church this year. And I suppose I have given my position, but I have saved the reputation of the Church . . . Just before the last Assembly some bills had to be paid, and I borrowed from the bank the sum of six thousand dollars on my own responsibility to carry us over the Assembly with a hope that there would be enough sales of books, subscriptions for the paper, donations and other helps to pay it back. But the hard times struck our people and the Assembly failed to net the amount needed . . .

"But at last I saw my way to pay this off. Some good loans were sent and some extra sales of Sunday School literature and other things made me able to wipe out three thousand dollars . . . In just a few weeks the other was wiped out, but this time I had to use some of the tithes to finish it up . . . A little later . . . notes on the orphanage property and the auditorium property came due, besides a lot of bills and dues on both . . . besides the insurance and running expenses of the Publishing House and the payments on the machinery. All of this required thousands of dollars, but I only used the tithes a little at a time, each time with a hope that I would get enough back in a few days to replace them and save the ministers as well as the Publishing House and the Church. But, as often, it failed, and I was so distressed at times that I was almost sick. All of this time I had to keep the business going.

"A careful record has been kept which shows the exact amount due each minister, and this can be paid when the Evangel debt is met. However, quite a number of the ministers have already gladly donated everything due them . . . I have shared with the others in this sacrifice. According to the allotment there is due me

six hundred dollars that I have not taken out. This is much more than is due any other minister. I am willing to give it all for the sacred cause I love—to keep the Publishing House going . . ."***

***General Overseer Bishop Tomlinson carefully explained and assured the ministers that he had used tithes that were to have been sent them, in order to save the Church and Publishing House from bankruptcy. His explanation seemed to satisfy the rank and file of the ministry. However, some accused him of misappropriating the funds, but this is questionable in view of a letter from A. J. Lawson, dated July 17, 1923, in which he testified that J. S. Llewellyn had explained that "the Assembly has given the right to take from one fund to help in another when it is absolutely necessary." This same thing is attested to by Bishop Tomlinson who said he was authorized to borrow money from one fund to help another. Undoubtedly this had been practiced before to keep the organization going, while Bishop Tomlinson's property was constantly under mortgage.

THE OFFICE OF GENERAL OVERSEER

"I would refrain from making any mention of the position and office of General Overseer did I not believe it to be a subject of vast importance and very necessary at this time . . . I do it for the purpose of preserving the dignity of the office. This office must be kept sacred no matter who the divinely appointed person is that occupies it. I am only doing my Scriptural and Christian duty when I attempt to hold it up to its exalted standard . . . We have long ago concluded that this position was instituted by the Lord . . . We did not create it. For years your General Overseer acted as chairman and moderator of the Annual Assemblies because he was chosen . . . for that purpose from year to year. The position always seemed sacred to me . . . A few times I took some of my brethren into my confidence and told them I was incapable of serving in such a high position and begged them to select another . . . It was not until the year 1913, that there was any appearance of divine appointment . . . The next year when the time came to select a General Overseer, the manifestation of God's presence was so great that, after the selection was made, it was regarded as a divine appointment and brought forth such expressions from the brethren as the following:

"'There is such unity and harmony prevailing in this selection that I don't see any need of ever making any change until God takes him away.'***

***This excerpt was taken from the remarks made by F. J. Lee, at the Tenth Annual Assembly, November 2-8, 1914 (Page 173, Book of Minutes).

"'I think you can all see that God's approval is on this selection, and I don't see any use of ever saying anything more about a change.'***

***This expression was by M. S. Lemons . . . same Assembly and same page in the Book of Minutes.

"In the Minutes following these expressions is a note which reads, 'This remark met a unanimous approval.'

"I give this bit of information to explain the reason that, from that time to the present, there has been no provision made on the programs for the selection of a General Overseer. It has been the general opinion that the present General Overseer is in the position by divine appointment. And this opinion has been confirmed in many ways . . . All of this has put a peculiar fear upon me that no one living can understand because no other person has occupied the position. Had it not been for this sacred tie that has kept me bound, I believe I would have resigned, and am sure I would have gladly recommended a change at some of the Assemblies, and especially the last two."***

***Few weeks before this Assembly began J. S. Llewellyn is said to have called the General Overseer by telephone, and after abusing him, said, 'I'll get you out of that Evangel office if I have to spend the last penny that I have through the courts.'

Bishop Tomlinson's notes say: "Brother Lee's talk to me just before the Assembly trying to get me to yield to them, that he thought J. S. Llewellyn would soon move to Florida, and he would soon care but little about the Church . . . He told of those men bawling him out till he cried, but he forgave them and wanted me to give way to them in the same way. He said they were pulling him heavy to take sides with them and against me, and they told him they were praying for his eyes to be opened. He was then with me."

To what limits will antagonists go, and what price will they pay to destroy innocent souls? Jealousy is cruel and unmerciful with its stealth and deceit, and lurks in the shadows for the devout, the chaste and the innocent. This antagonism never happened in a day and a night . . . it grew in soil that was prepared for it.

"And were it not for this same condition existing, I would step aside at this Assembly and ask that another be selected. But I am afraid . . . I did not put myself in and I am afraid to put myself out. If God put me in, I must let Him put me out. If the Assembly put me in in the year 1914, and God had nothing to do with it, then let the Assembly put me out. Or if the Assembly wants to assume the responsibility of putting me out, I shall offer no objections . . . Put me out if you want to, and I'll consider that as God's way of putting me out, but if you do, for heaven's sake, don't mock God by trying to put me back in again . . . I would rather spend the balance of my days behind the bars than to be disloyal and untrue to my God, who, I must acknowledge, placed me in this position . . ."***

***Who had spread discord against their General Overseer? Who was wirepulling for the job . . . or the controlling influence in the Church? The strength of group psychology can predispose good or evil on a pivot of influence. Bishop Tomlinson said, "Last year (1922) was an awful year . . . All of this time I did my work with an aching heart because four men, all of whom I had always considered my best and most to be depended on friends, rose up against me and made it awful hard for me. These men, I hate to name them, but I feel I must, were M. S. Lemons, J. S. Llewellyn, J. B. Ellis and T. L. McLain, and I might also add W. F. Bryant . . . Their influence turned a few others. While I was working and wearing my life away for the Church of God, they were wireworking and planning against me so they could oust me from my positions at the Assembly . . ." (1)

OVERSEER PENITENT OVER INFLUENCE USED

"Satan must have thought he had the hood pulled over our eyes . . . when we prepared and adopted that constitution. I confess it was over my eyes . . . But I awoke from my stupor several months ago . . . I feel under divine obligations to present all these subjects to this Assembly; then, when I am through, the responsibility falls upon you. What I have said has been in the fear of God. I may go down in shame and defeat before this Assembly, but if I do I will go down fighting for freedom from the galling yoke of that constitution, which is the preamble of laws, discipline, and penalties if it is continued . . . I love the brethren well enough to open my heart to them at the proper time. I must stand between

1. "A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar . . . Page 194.

them and danger. I believe God has forgiven me for using my influence in getting the instrument through the Assembly last year. I ask you to do the same . . . I am only a man—but I trust I am God's man."

YEARS AGO AND NOW—WIREPULLING

"Years ago when we were crawling along on our knees in search of the Bible truth, laws and government, it was often remarked that the Church of God did not practice "wirepulling" in order that one might make gain over another . . . We had no axes to grind, there were no office seekers to my knowledge, no advantages were sought . . . It would certainly be a grief to our hearts to find that there are men of our ranks who would mar the beautiful and lovely face of our Lord's Body by stooping to concussing, wirepulling and other chicanery for advantage . . . We want to follow the instructions of the lowly Nazarene . . . We want to act, talk and walk in a way to preserve the dignity and honor of the Church, and to keep ourselves pure and unspotted from the world."

THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN THE CHURCH

"We recognize the government of the Church of God as being theocratic in form . . . we are following God's Bible, and we recognize His Bible as His words to us. We say God settles our disputes, that is, we go to the Bible to settle our debatable questions. We claim that in the Book we can find laws and rules, either in statute, type or prophecy, or principle, sufficient to govern the Church of God without making any new ones . . . We may miss the mark occasionally . . . but we should not censure ourselves too severely for that when it is discovered, but only proceed to make corrections to put us back in line again."***

***This address dealt with the corrections that the General Overseer considered to be serious mistakes made of late.

CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE TWELVE

"When it was finally decided in the year 1916 that it was Scriptural to institute this board of counselors . . . a plan for the selection of the twelve was instituted and accepted . . . This plan provided that the General Overseer select two men and then the three select the other ten . . . No special exceptions have ever been taken to the manner of appointment that I know of, but I wish to state today that it was certainly not the Scriptural order. No trace

of such a method can be found between the lids of our sacred Lawbook . . . I can't think of it being Scriptural for the General Overseer of the great Church of God to have less authority in selecting his counselors than the President of the United States.

"While we are making corrections let us correct this error also—not with the thought of disbanding the present members of the Council and having them reappointed, or others in their place, but merely vesting the authority of appointment in the Overseer, to make appointments when there are any vacancies, and thus get around to Bible order . . . I want to get everything on a Scriptural basis, ready for the next Overseer."***

***Corrections referred to included four major changes of system, effecting the "Judges—Courts of Justice" . . . "Financial System" . . . the "Constitution" . . . "Appointment of the Twelve." Were there too many corrections in the one Assembly to suit some of the brethren who had grown into an opposition force? After all he was not only General Overseer of the eighty-three member business council of the Assembly but the whole Church and the people. He was not obligated to present the viewpoints of his Board of Councilors but issues that effected the whole Church, which approach should command the most ardent respect of every member of the Council. Would they ever fear, blame and accuse him of a desire for autocratic powers if all of them walked fearfully and softly before God? Changes and corrections had to be made at times.

J. S. Llewellyn recommended, during the Thirteenth Assembly (1917), "That the General Overseer's address be accepted, also that his recommendations be made a matter of business in the Assembly." (Book of Minutes, Page 271)

In concluding his address the General Overseer embraced great confidence in God who alone could ameliorate the anxiety and tension of the hour, and he sought to interfuse every delegate with the same feeling. He had exhorted them to godliness and faithfulness to the Church . . . just as a father might counsel his son. The situation was tense and he was well aware of it, as were many others, but he insisted, "YONDER IS THE GOAL!" He tried to show the people that he trusted in God above everything else, and desired unity and fellowship among the ministry and membership of the Church, though important issues had to be discussed, and disagreements allowed. Certainly God was omnipotent, and surely He would move among His people to affect the right choice in decisions. He closed his address by reading Isaiah 54:2-17 . . . the prophet with his song of conquest

and victory. (The clerk made the notation as recorded in the Book of Minutes, Page 38.)

"At 3:30 P.M. the General Overseer concluded his Annual Address and called the people to prayer. God in a wonderful way took hold of the people and a volume of prayers ascended to the throne. After which the people came forward and showed their love and appreciation for their General Overseer. Song, "TELL HIM NOW" by Alabama Boys.

This heart-touching, soul-searching, conscience-rending song brought hundreds of delegates forward to shake the hand of their spiritual leader, Bishop Tomlinson, and through tear-filled eyes and sobs and cheers of gratitude they expressed their love, respect and appreciation to him. He had preached to them . . . suffered with them . . . helped to bear their burdens in time of sorrow and rejoiced with them that rejoiced . . . he was one of them, ready to stoop as low as anyone to help lift the sinner and the unfortunate one from the gutters of sin . . . ready to stoop and try to wipe away some of the uncleanness, the dirt, the very grime and stains of sin and discover in the debris a plain naked soul who needed God. That was his life . . . that was Bishop A. J. Tomlinson—servant of God!

GENERAL OVERSEER'S ANNUAL REPORTS (1922)

AUDITORIUM ACCOUNT

Cash received	$13,310.54
Cash paid out	38,165.29
Deficit	24,854.75

SUNDAY SCHOOL TITHES REPORT

Brought forward	$ 230.36
Cash received	259.85
Total	490.21
Cash paid out	400.28
Balance	89.93

ORPHANAGE REPORT

Brought forward	5064.16
Cash received	3682.04
Total	8746.20
Cash paid out	5213.75
Balance	3532.45

This surplus is not on hand but has been used in the

general fund for the general expenses of the Church work.

FOREIGN MISSION REPORT

Receipts

Brought forward	$ 277,46
Churches	891.32
Individuals	84.56
Total	1,253.34
To balance	181.01

Disbursements

Bahamas	213.15
China	732.58
Jamaica	126.60
By balance	181.01
Total	1253.34

HOME MISSION REPORT

Receipts

Churches	613.76
Individuals	57.53
Total	671.29
To deficit	822.33
Total	1493.62

Disbursements

Deficit last year	1021.42
Cash paid out	472.20

(This amount was to help workers, also for tracts and literature)

Total	1493.62
By deficit	822.33
Deficit last year	1021.42
Deficit this year	822.33
Difference	199.09

All the above financial reports were accepted.

MISCELLANEOUS THINGS

Report of the Bible Training School showed total number of students present (Average) 760, with 116 graduates, and an indebtedness of $977.32 on October 2, 1922, but this was covered by outstanding accounts to be collected in due time. This report

was tabled at the present.

Chairman of the Foreign Mission Committee mentioned that $891.32 had been sent in from about 550 active churches which averaged about $1.62 per church, and recommended that every member of the Church lay aside not less than ten cents a month, per year for Foreign Missions.

Home Missions Committee recommended that 50 per cent of the money sent to Headquarters for this purpose be returned to the particular state sending it, to be used in developing the work of that state. It was decided by the Assembly that the general treasurer act in conjunction with the state overseers in the distribution of this money.

Other committees reported when called upon, each suggesting things of importance relative to their particular work.

It was decided to appoint a colored man to superintend the colored work, giving him the same authority of a state overseer.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON BETTER GOVERNMENT

(Monday, November 6, 1922)

We, your committee on Better Government, recommend the following:

First, That this official Assembly select two as co-workers with our General Overseer.

Second, Their position, duties, power, manner of appointment and length of term to be determined by this Assembly.

Third, That the appointment of elders remain unchanged.

Fourth, In regard to our constitution, we recommend that it be retained with such amendments as may be deemed necessary for the preservation of the Church of God.

Fifth, We recommend that the financial system remain as it is being practiced at present.

Sixth, We recommend that such adjustment be made of labor unions as may be necessary for our benefits.

Seventh, We recommend that a colored overseer be appointed over all the colored churches with the same authority as state overseers, however, his territory of labor is not to be limited.

A. Gann, Chairman.

Brother Llewellyn offered the following amendment:

Whereas, we have pledged ourselves to walk in the light as it was shed on our pathway and that it has been our cherished principle to accept the whole Bible rightly divided and especially the New Testament for our government and discipline. We find

that the duties and the responsibilities were judiciously distributed among various officials that they might share the burden of government together in order that the safety of the government might be preserved and the interest of the people protected for it is written, in the multitude of councilors there is safety.

We, therefore, advise the official assembly as provided in our constitution and that in accordance with our constitution, article 8, section 1, that we create the office of Editor and Publisher whose duty shall be to edit our publications and be general supervisor of our printing plant and be the treasurer of all the funds belonging to the general organization, except the tithes of the tithes for any and all purposes, who shall deposit all of said funds in a reliable bank to the credit of the Church of God and as treasurer of said Church of God and he shall keep a careful record of all said funds and pay all bills over $1.00 by check and file all bank settlements and make them a part of his records. He shall be the supervisor of all the work at business headquarters except as herein after provided.

We further advise that the General Assembly create the office of Superintendent of Education who shall have the general supervision of all our work of education. We further advise that from and after this assembly that it shall be the imperative duty of the General Overseer to travel over the states and oversee the work in general, hold state conventions and sit in council with the overseers of the respective states on their fields of labor and give all matters of importance his personal attention.

We further advise and recommend that the General Overseer, the Editor and Publisher, and the Superintendent of Education shall form an Executive Council who shall council together on all matters of general interest to the Church of God and any and all departments of the Church work, such as selecting teachers, managers, clerks, book-keepers, etc., and that no investment, improvement, or new enterprise, or anything that would in any wise burden incumber or obligate the Church of God in any of its departments in a moral or legal way without the approval of the Executive Council and that no appropriation of any funds belonging to the Church of God outside of the regular authorized channel shall be made without the approval of the said council.

We further advise that each of the officials composing the said Executive Council shall be selected by the official assembly for a term of one year, beginning with this assembly. The selection to be made in harmony with Acts 1:23-26. We advise that competent

men be selected for these positions that it may be said of these as was of James, Cephas and John who seemed to be pillars.

We further advise and recommend that the overseers of states be appointed by the Executive Council and it shall be the duty of the Executive Council to plan the work of the assembly such as making the necessary arrangements and arrange programs and other necessary work. We further advise that the publishing committee be discontinued and their work left to the Executive Council.

We further advise that the twelve elders including the Executive Council shall meet not less than once each year and consider all the business affairs of the Church and give such counsel and advise as in their judgment they may deem necessary for the general welfare of the Church, and make such recommendations to the General Assembly as they may deem necessary.

We further advise that the General Secretary be the treasurer of the tithes of tithes who shall handle the same in accordance with the provisions of our Constitution together with the requirements herein provided.

Some time was spent in discussing the amendment but no conclusion was reached. The matter was continued to the next day.

Then Tuesday morning November 7th, the discussions continued.

9:30 A.M. The amendment to the report on Better Government was again considered.

After a lengthy discussion the amendment to the original report was accepted.

The original report was then considered and accepted subject to the provisions of the amendment.

After the amendment was accepted a suggestion was offered and passed upon that the twelve elders counsel among themselves and suggest to the Assembly three men to compose the Executive Council.

After some time of counseling together the following named brethren were suggested: A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer, J. S. Llewellyn, Editor and Publisher and F. J. Lee, Superintendent of Education.

This suggestion was accepted by the General Assembly.

The labor unions were discussed at length but agreed to let it remain as it is.

Article 5, section 2 of the Constitution was revised to the extent

that the state overseer can call in two bishops in his state to constitute the State Board.

REVIEWING THE MEASURES PASSED
(Seventeenth Assembly . . . 1922)

The Scriptures do not indicate that there existed in the early Church any such instrument as a constitution, the very document that now threatened to disrupt the unity of the Church. While it had been in operation only about a year, yet, its tentacles of man-made creeds had so entwined the ministry and membership of the Church that many of them found it difficult to muster hope of release from its shackles.

At the very first Assembly of the Church in 1906 a humble group of twenty-one delegates crawled on their knees before God in search of "His way" for government and discipline and declared in their very first resolution adopted, "We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only." This same feeling toward God's protective custody was embraced Assembly after Assembly . . . times when the energetic, Spirit-filled Church assembled together, fellowshipped, sang together, prayed together, preached together, shouted together, and many of them danced and spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. Outsiders beheld their enthusiasm and zeal and praised their unparalleled unity and Spirit. It was definitely a new order of the day's religious society.

At the Fifteenth Assembly in 1920 A "Declaration" was read by J. S. Llewellyn, and the Assembly unanimously approved it. All the contents are not objectionable nor are some of them favorable, but the intentions were amiable to say the least. It could hardly be called a Declaration of Faith yet in principle it may have been accused of infringing the rights and liberties of the Church as a whole, or in part, and was apparently unessential to the cause espoused. Actually it was the precursor to the Church Constitution the stigma of which was not easily erased.

The General Overseer who had the oversight and supervision of the Churches of God everywhere became vitally concerned and stirred about the Constitution in the Church. Upon him came daily the care, the weight and the welfare of all the churches. No one could justly and conscientiously declare he understood the duties and responsibilities of the office of General Overseer, except Bishop Tomlinson, for he alone had occupied the office since it was instituted by the Church. Sometimes, Bishop Tomlinson said, he

wondered if he himself understood all of them. But, in his suffrages he eulogized the Church and her closely associated endeavors with the Lord Who established her . . . back there on the mountain with only a handful of faithful brethren. He felt the Constitution was definitely a departure from Bible government. In his address he had recommended that the Constitution be abrogated, and if possible erased from memory, and that the Church return to its former practice of taking the Bible as the only rule of faith, government and discipline.***

***No where in the covenant for membership was the "Constitution" mentioned. The covenant read: "Will you sincerely promise before God and these witnesses that you will take the Bible as your guide, the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?" This was the practice before the Constitution ever appeared, and is mentioned in Chapter Twenty, "The Last Great Conflict" by A. J. Tomlinson . . . 1913.

Through influence and secret promotion opposition rallied in some unsuspected areas where the delegates were unfamiliar with the trickery and movements of those who had determined to have a change of rule and government in the Church. Basically this seemed to be the issue at stake judging from the meager records at hand. However, the august body—Committee on Better Government headed by Alonzo Gann, chairman—was not beholding to any man or group of men. The General Overseer had appointed them to this trust of confidence, and they were to be impartial and unbiased in their findings and deliberations to bring in honest and sincere recommendations to the Assembly. They were to listen to the counsel of the elders but were under no obligations to respect the views, the ideas and opinions of others; always they were to counsel with the General Overseer on any questionable issue. This viewpoint is certainly sustained in a recommendation read by J. S. Llewellyn at the Thirteenth Annual Assembly in 1917, and accepted without delay by the Assembly. This says in part: "That the General Overseer's . . . recommendations be made a matter of business in the Assembly." (Book of Minutes, Page 271.)

However, in their deliberations the Committee on Better Government disrespected and rejected the recommendations and advice of the General Overseer, and evidently followed the influence and counsel of someone else. They recommended that

the constitution ". . . be retained with such amendments as may be deemed necessary for the preservation of the Church of God."

This committee's presentation opened a broader channel for wounds in indifference and disunity and the adversary drove his infernal wedges deeper into the hearts of men. It set brother against brother, sister against sister and church against church. Had the Constitution been abrogated as recommended by the General Overseer, there would have been no need of further amendments to continually plague the Church. The element of destruction would have been foiled in its attempt to disrupt the unity of the Church, and the strange, un-Christ-like antics would have been washed out of the Church by righteousness that would have swept down like a mighty stream. After all, it was God's Church! It usually showed brilliance and virtue amid the tempests of trial and test, skirmish and battle as it moved steadily toward the goal of perfection and presentation to the Lord. To the zealous group of approximately 20,000 members the vision was thrilling and real, and their vistas of expansion and growth, progression and perseverance commanding—their aim was to build . . . build . . . build.***

***"We are intrusted with the greatest and most important business under heaven—BUILDING THE CHURCH OF GOD. Not building up a name for ourselves; not "salting ourselves down" in earthly security. But rather spending and being spent for that which the gates of hell shall not prevail against." (From: "In Old Church Paths" by R. O. Covey, Page 32 . . . Published by the White Wing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee)

The unbeliever and skeptic, and the religion-worn veteran, considered this a mere day-dream perhaps but the zealous group believed it to be a God-sent entity. Though now undergoing some discouragements and a strain on their spiritual resources they sought patience and time to digest the incursions that had come upon some of them without warning. Some of them were unawares of the reasons for disturbances in such an august convocation, for they knew nothing about the seeds of divisiveness that had been sowed where they would thrive and flourish most. It was the enemy of mankind that sowed his tares among the wheat, trying to choke out the good grain. It was unfortunate indeed for the Church to have to be exposed to such a catastrophic intrusion of variance and discord. And it was worse still for minds of erstwhile happy fellowshipping brethren to become divided over issues that

could have been easily settled in humility and counsel with God. Sometimes, arrogance and self-esteem induce some people to follow the Lord "afar off", too far . . . maybe!

Scriptural advocates of a unified Church condemned selfish motives, arrogance, contention and dissension, and these great men of God declared that the only relief was emancipation through penitence and tears at the base of the Cross. They were great men of God . . . men who were filled with the Holy Ghost and fire. Some of them were so enshrouded with the divine presence of the Lord that their hearers might feel a seraphim had anointed their lips with coals of fire direct from the altar of God.

Though some things had changed recently they were still Church of God members. Differences had arisen . . . animosity had been propagated . . . division had been anticipated. It was a sad plight for everyone. It could be felt and seen that unity was lacking. Where were the favors of God usually revealed through Holy Ghost messages and interpretations as messengers were anointed by the Lord? Delegates at this Assembly declared that some of the brethren of influence had forbidden such demonstrations and working of the Holy Ghost, fearing lest their nefarious scheme be exposed and ruled out by God. This writer was not at this Seventeenth Assembly, but if these accusations are true—no reason to doubt them—it was a grievous error and grievously has the Church borne it. Christians seem to suffer most from false brethren, for those whom they endeavor to help most are often quicker to raise their heels of accusation against them. Too bad . . . too bad! People expect Christians to be what they are trying to get others to become . . .

From all indications the Seventeenth Annual Assembly was the most unpleasant on record, the business sessions stormy and plagued with acrimony. Many humble delegates bathed their faces in tears, and with crushed hearts and hopes cried out with the Psalmist, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

Another recommendation by the Committee on Better Government was that the official Assembly select two as co-workers with the General Overseer, and their positions, duties, power, manner of appointment and length of term to be decided by the Assembly. Whether or not the deliberations of the committee coerced the amendment read by J. S. Llewellyn or vice-versa is questionable. However, its aim was indicative of foresight in the interests of the Church in offering additional assistance to relieve the General Overseer of some of the pressing, taxing responsibilities some from which he had long sought relief.***

***The General Overseer wished to be relieved from the Publishing Committee, as mentioned on Page 234, Book of Minutes, Twelfth Assembly in 1916. He desired to be relieved as Editor of the Evangel but he was forced to continue to edit the paper by request. (Minutes of Fifteenth Annual Assembly (1920), pages 39, 40) He carried many responsibilities that others felt no obligation to sustain.

The amendment to the Constitution provided for the creation of two new offices in the Church:

1. Editor and Publisher, whose duties and responsibilities were specifically outlined.
2. Superintendent of Education, whose duties and responsibilities were also clearly outlined.

The amendment further recommended that the General Overseer, the Editor and Publisher, and the Superintendent of Education form an Executive Council with certain duties and responsibilities specified. By this amendment the office of General Overseer was subordinated to the Executive Council . . . any two in agreement could then overrule the third member, accordingly. The amendment stipulated that members of the Executive Council were to serve a term of one year.***

***Evidently those who indicted the amendment felt it precocious and unwise, and perhaps too froward a move at the time to attempt to unseat the General Overseer from the prestigious position in which he had been placed by divine appointment. At the Ninth Annual Assembly, 1913, page 145 of Book of Minutes, it says, ". . . I have placed him there and I will take him away when I am ready." At the Tenth Annual Assembly, 1914, page 174, Book of Minutes, it says, "The sentiment of the entire Assembly was to make this selection final."

This had already been established and it was unwise to intrude the sacred premises of God. So the amendment curiously, maybe stealthily, tried to circumvent the divine appointment of the office of General Overseer by specifying the length of the term of office to be served by members of the Executive Council. Obviously the General Overseer was expected to be a member of this Council for the Assembly could not be expected to accept and indorse any Executive Council that would tend to subordinate the office of General Overseer who had the supervision of all the work by divine appointment, and even sanctioned by Article 4, Section 2 of the ill-famed Constitution.

The Committee also recommended the financial system remain as it was being practiced at the present time—all tithes to be paid into the local church treasury, the local treasurer to send ten percent to Headquarters treasury, and the ministry on the field to be paid from the nine tenths remaining in the local Church treasury.***

***At the Assembly in 1920 the system had been introduced that all the tithes be sent to a General Headquarters treasury, and the disposition of all funds be controlled by the group, or board of elders who were to work out the plan and launch it soon as details could be worked out. (Page 43, of 1920 Minutes.) But after sixteen months' practice, it was learned that the volume of money coming in was insufficient to operate the system, and therefore the financial system of the Church reverted to its former practice in operation before the change to the new system had been inaugurated (1922 Minutes, pages 21, 22).

In the amendment offered by Llewellyn the Executive Council was to plan the work of the Assembly, such as making the necessary arrangements and arrange programs and other necessary work, and make recommendations to the Assembly.

It also advised that the General Secretary be treasurer of the tithes of tithes.***

***It was recommended in the amendment that the Editor and Publisher be treasurer of all monies coming into headquarters except the tithes of tithes. This removed from the hands of the General Overseer all monies coming into headquarters.

There was much controversy in discussions concerning the report of the Committee on Better Government, with the stipulated amendment that was read by J. S. Llewellyn. As there was much bitterness and animosity manifested because of the obnoxious measure before the Assembly for consideration the General Overseer called the Assembly to prayer as was his usual custom. While engaged in prayer an event occurred that teemed with disdain and reproach. Bishop Tomlinson refers to it in his Journal thus: ". . . when we were in prayer J. S. Llewellyn ran up to me in a rage and shook his fist and pointed his finger almost against my face and said, 'How dare you block this measure in any such way. You dare not do it, you shall not do it,' and walked away, white with madness."***

***From Judge Portrum's opinion (Court of Appeals of Tennessee) later, an excerpt says: "It is charged that in the passage of this amendment the General Overseer was intimidated by the threats of Mr. Llewellyn, who approached him while engaged in prayer, shaking his fist in Tomlinson's face and stating to him, 'How dare you block this amendment.' . . ."

The selfish, divisive "rule-or-ruin" spirit evidenced the sinister motives of the opposition to truth . . . so unlike Christ who loved those that hated Him, and did good to those who despitefully used Him. If one was ever so bad an enemy the Book commands followers of Christ to love him. How unwise for Llewellyn or anyone else to rush up in contempt and intercept counsel with God, at a time the Assembly needed help most! God never prompted nor promoted such a dereliction of grace for the Bible condemns such fury. Anger has too many associates for its own safely!

Hours were spent in distorting some issues of the report, disturbance, dissidence and dispute, and the report with the amendment could not be accepted by the Assembly on Monday . . . the issues seemed so questionable and unjust. In the opinion of Judge Portrum of the Court of Appeals of Tennessee, he says: "This amendment had the effect of vesting the administrative duties principally in the publisher and remove the General Overseer, who was the nominal head of the church, to the field. In other words, the general overseer was deposed without the knowledge of the church members who composed the original General Assembly, and whose prerogative it was to elect the general overseer."

However, after much discussion on Tuesday morning, November 7th, the report, with amendment, brought by the Committee on Better Government was accepted. The twelve elders as commissioned by the Assembly suggested as members of the Executive Council, A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer, J. S. Llewellyn, Editor and Publisher, and F. J. Lee, Superintendent of Education.

EVANGEL PUBLISHER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Receipts

For Merchandise	$32537.97
Donations	7898.82
Total	40436.79

To Deficit 24173.65
Total 64610.44

Disbursements

Deficit last year brought forward $27180.57
Merchandise 8178.88
(Includes purchase of paper of all kinds, books, envelopes, Bibles, etc.)
Expenses 23949.26
(Includes hired help, repairs, postage, oil, drayage, lights, motor power, etc.)
Equipment 5301.73
(Includes payments on machinery and fixtures.)
Total 64610.44
By deficit 24173.65
Deficit last year 27180.57
Deficit this year 24173.65
Difference 3006.92

This deficit has been taken care of by the tithes, loan department and two notes of $1000.00 and $276.87.

All the machinery is paid for except about $2,000 on one intertype and $400.00 on the big press.

The Magazine has paid for itself for the seven months and about $60.00 over for the house.

Report accepted.

TITHES REPORT TO ASSEMBLY

Receipts

Brought forward .....$ 1882.52
Churches 59874.44
Individuals 5992.23
Total 67749.19
To Balance 19571.26

Disbursements

Ministers $45415.30
Expenses 2762.63
(Includes postage, fixtures, printing, office work, etc.)
By Balance 19571.26
Total 67749.19
Total receipts 67749.19

Total disbursements	48177.93
Balance	19571.26

TITHE OF TITHE REPORT

Cash by churches	$ 2826.61
Cash by individuals	1201.38
Total	4027.99
Cash paid out	2005.14
Balance	2022.85

While this is a balance to this account, yet it has been used to make up for Evangel indebtedness.

Notes and mortgages outstanding amount to $31,489.00. All the rest of our indebtedness is carried by our funds inside the church. The property of the church is valued at $100,000.00 round numbers. This estimate is taken from actual cost. This includes the Publishing House, Auditorium, Orphanage and Bible school property.

Report accepted.

GENERAL OVERSEER TENDERS RESIGNATION

At 4:30 Tuesday afternoon, November 7, 1922 Bishop A. J. Tomlinson tendered his resignation as General Overseer, to take effect as soon as his successor was installed. In his notes Bishop Tomlinson says, "They . . . took the divine appointment of the General Overseer out of the hands of God and ignored the work of the Holy Ghost and did some other things that I could not bear for I knew they were wrong, and by them ignoring the Holy Ghost, and reappointing me General Overseer, I offered my resignation in protest of their dastardly acts, and the acceptance of the Assembly of their plans and measures. But the people who . . . did not understand begged me so hard that I finally consented to remain General Overseer, but I did it with a broken heart—I only accepted for the sake of the people who did not understand the evil works of those men. (2) When I offered my resignation, which I did in as mild a manner as I could, M. S. Lemons rose up in a rage and before two thousand people bemeaned and spoke against me in terms probably worse than criminals are accustomed to hearing. He threatened to put me in the penitentiary and used

2. It was said that F. J. Lee begged and plead with Bishop Tomlinson all night to keep him from resigning, assuring him that should he resign J. S. Llewellyn would be certain to be elected.

abusive language foreign to a gentleman, much less a Christian . . . This raised a storm of criticism against him and there was such commotion I was forced to call order and have him sit down as well as the rest." (From: "A. J. Tomlinson", by Lillie Duggar, Pages 195, 196.)

The Assembly did not approve his resignation and refused to accept it. They were divided on important issues evidenced by the uncertainty on measures passed, and the turn of events among an erstwhile spiritual group. No messages and interpretation in demonstration of the Holy Ghost were allowed by the opposition group, some of whom it is said forbad those used before to be so exercised of the Lord. Apparently the sudden resignation stunned the Assembly, and perhaps the opposition forces were unprepared for the impact.***

***"A short while after the General Overseer had offered his resignation, J. B. Ellis got up before the General Overseer and said, 'We can't do without Brother Tomlinson as General Overseer, we will go into bankruptcy without him. God has annointed him for this place.'" (Notes by A. J. Tomlinson)

The whole Assembly needed time, and everybody present needed to pray, for disruptive tactics were being mercilessly injected into deliberations while spirituality was at a low ebb.

At 8:00 o'clock Tuesday evening, the last service of this stormy Assembly, Bishop Tomlinson said, "I told you this afternoon that I would reconsider my resignation. Since it seems that you all want me and are not willing to let me go, I withdraw my resignation and I will serve you another year in the capacity of General Overseer."

They gave him a standing ovation, and the Alabama Boys sang again the impressive song, "Tell Him Now."

ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT
(Assembly 1922)

Aggregation

No. Churches last report	575
Churches this report	666
Increase over last report	91
Members last report	18,564
Members this report	21,076
Increase over last report	2,512

Bishops last report	106
Bishops this report	115
Increase over last report	9
Deacons last report	263
Deacons this report	263
Evangelists last report	542
Evangelists this report	545
Increase over last report	3
Sunday Schools last report	384
Sunday Schools this report	391
Increase over last report	7
Average attendance last report	15,000
Average attendance this report	16,148
Increase over last report	1,148
Approximate value of local church property last report	$265,199.65
Approximate value of local church property this report	292,613.45
Approximate increase over last report	27,413.80
Approximate value of Auditorium	75,000.00
Approximate value of Publishing House	40,000.00
Approximate value of School Building and Dormitory	6,000.00
Approximate value of Orphanage houses and land	19,500.00
Approximate value of all property owned by Church of God	429,320.45

Report was accepted.

APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEERS

(Assembly 1922)

ALABAMA	G. C. Dunn
ARKANSAS	E. C. Scarbrough
BAHAMAS	Milton Padgett
COLORADO	O. R. Rouse
FLORIDA	John L. Stephens
GEORGIA	S. W. Latimer
ILLINOIS	S. O. Gillaspie
INDIANA	J. N. Hurley

KENTUCKY	C. H. Randall
LOUISIANA	T. A. Richard
MARYLAND	Paul Walker
MICHIGAN	Efford Haynes
MISSISSIPPI	E. C. Rider
MISSOURI	J. M. Viney
NEW MEXICO	O. R. Rouse
NORTH CAROLINA	Geo. T. Brouayer
NORTH DAKOTA	John Attey
OHIO	W. G. Rembert
OKLAHOMA	John Burk
SOUTH CAROLINA	J. W. Culpepper
TENNESSEE	M. W. Letsinger
TEXAS	H. N. Scoggins
VIRGINIA	J. A. Davis
WEST VIRGINIA	E. L. Simmons
Colored	Thos J. Richardson

THE TWELVE ELDERS
(Assembly 1922)

1. Boehmer, E. J.
2. Brouayer, Geo. T.
3. Ellis, J. B.
4. Gann, Alonza
5. Gillaspie, S. O.
6. Haynes, E.
7. Latimer, S. W.
8. Lee, F. J.
9. Lemons, M. S.
10. Llewellyn, J. S.
11. McLain, T. L.
12. Payne, T. S.

SUPREME JUDGES—COURT OF JUSTICE

1. Lemons, M. S.
2. Lee, F. J.
3. Llewellyn, J. S.
4. McLain, T. L.
5. Latimer, S. W.
6. Ellis, J. B.
7. Boehmer, E. J.

REGARDING THE AFTERWORD

Contrary to the advice of both General Overseer and General Secretary, newly elected Editor and Publisher J. S. Llewellyn included the following:

"We are closing the minutes of the 17th Annual Assembly of the Church of God and sending them forth with the hope that they will be carefully read and understood and prove a blessing to

many.

The General Overseer's Annual Address is not to be understood or construed as a part of the action of the Assembly, but only as a recommendation and suggestion for action.

The reader's attention is especially called to the report of the committee on Better Government and the amendment thereto, which was adopted by the Assembly which action placed a new endorsement on our constitution with some amendments to conform to the report of the committee on better government and some other matters.

The reader would do well to observe that it has long since been decided that customs and practices establish constitution and laws. Therefore, to abolish our constitution would virtually repeal every action and dissolve the entire organization. A careful study of the constitution and its amendments together with the book of minutes which can be had at this office is respectfully advised.

THE PUBLISHER"

DETERMINED FOR A CHANGE

With due respect to both pros and cons it is not difficult to see and partially comprehend the determined spirit of conquest for power in the Church. The opposition forces wanted a change of administration, and they were determined to have it at any price. A quest for power and influence often drives men to foolish ends, especially in group participation. To those so driven group psychology becomes unreasonable and dangerous when controlled by adverse agents, but such psychology never survives the divine inspiration from God that breaks out in a thousand hearts, in a thousand places. But the forces of opposition wanted a change and this invariably left them at loggerheads with the established system now in practice.

The twelve and seventy, with the General Overseer composed the business part of the Assembly, but the recommendations of the General Overseer were ruled out, and the forces of opposition spearheaded the decisions to accept the report of the Committee on Better Government, and the amendment that was read by J. S. Llewellyn. The long established system and practices were changed, and it took them from their knees to a council table where a triumvirate of men as an Executive Council shared equal rights and privileges of discussion and decision. It left them at option to choose, accept or reject divine directives. It was truly a precarious situation involving the Church that had embraced

great unity, love, fellowship and strength until the last two years. Perhaps some of them felt the "end justified the means" but it was expensive.

There were considerations for both sides since some mistakes were shared together. Things would be different as observation revealed. Though perhaps a little overly energetic at times, Bishop Tomlinson, with his outgoing personality and dynamic Christocentric appeal, had sought to magnify and exalt the office of General Overseer and hoist its prestige, its power and influence to enhance the posture of the Church for more rapid advancement and expansion. Nonetheless, it was now obvious that the sacred office with its spiritual influence and decision in the crucibles of man's conflicts was, to some extent, disrespected and subjected to ulterior motives that seemed to rule out the intervention of God. But this move was concealed by verbiage.

As heretofore explained many of the delegates were "in the dark" concerning the motives that sparked the disruption in the Seventeenth Annual Assembly which is still marked by embarrassing retrospection. The office of General Overseer had been the prime source of influence and prestige, of power and authority, and Bishop Tomlinson had led the Church successfully from a meager beginning to an organization with an approximate Church property value listed at $429,320.45, and a publishing business that began with him and now was worth thousands of dollars. But the Assembly changed things. The General Overseer was detailed to the field, almost like an itinerant minister, while other forces took over headquarters and Bishop Tomlinson was almost like a visitor. Was this what the Church wanted? Or, was it what a group of opposers wanted? So many injustices are experienced in a power struggle that years cannot erase! While it is true that the Church, or any other organization, cannot build on their yesterdays, too many remember to forget the "rock from whence they were hewn" and the trunk of the vine from which it all started.

Nevertheless, the ground work was laid for division. Bishop Tomlinson had asked to be relieved as General Overseer . . . in vain. Too often power is demonstrated by destruction, and the opposition forces seemed determined to try to destroy the man of influence—A. J. Tomlinson.

Church Constitution Manifests Tragic Mistake of Other Councils and Divides the People of God

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THE CHANGEOVER BECOMES EFFECTIVE

The routine work of the Church had been changed by the Assembly. Changes in the paper and other publications, as well as the aspects of the publishing house itself, were expected under the new management. The newly elected Editor and Publisher, J. S. Llewellyn, was anxious to assume his duties but events were not too pleasant for him.

Through the medium of the Evangel the General Overseer notified the people of the changeover, and cautioned them to address all mail intended for the publishing house, as well as the mail concerning the Orphanage, Missions, Foreign Missions and Sunday School tithes, to the Church of God Publishing House, 2524 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. He instructed the ministers and treasurers of the churches to send their reports and the percent of tithes to the Church of God, General Secretary. Any mail intended for the General Overseer should be addressed to A. J. Tomlinson, Cleveland, Tennessee. He explained that it would take time for the changeover. The Church of God Bible School was now under the direction of F. J. Lee, superintendent.

A. J. Tomlinson, F. J. Lee and J. S. Llewellyn now composed the Executive Council of the Church, a combination as varied as an official trio may suggest. A. J. Tomlinson was bibliophile, deeply spiritual, zealous for the Church, very energetic and dynamic in appeal and approach. F. J. Lee, spiritually appealing, sound in thought and principle, dedicated, leaned aspiringly to theology. J. S. Llewellyn, according to reports was a dynamic speaker, influential, persistent and somewhat of a business man, having acted in this capacity with A. J. Lawson before the disruption occurred later.

The business was turned over to J. S. Llewellyn, Editor and Publisher as planned, and A. J. Tomlinson says: "I did not turn the business over to J. S. Llewellyn the first of December 1922 as if I had sold out to him. The business belonged to the Church, and no invoice was made because I supposed he was to walk into my place and still run it for the Church, but he seems to act as if the business was purchased by himself." (Notes from Bishop Tomlinson.)

With such friction existing between the leaders at the

headquarters of the Church, especially since the close of the Assembly, it is not too difficult to anticipate divisive reaction when such feelings of merciless animosity mushroomed on the field. The strange tension continued to build. Sympathizing groups, pro and con, began to take on significance and before long pressures were destined to become radical, fierce and unyielding. The whole situation was embarrassing to the inspiring posture of the Church that had grown strong with impact and influence.

TO INVESTIGATE ALL DEPARTMENTS

A committee of three—J. B. Ellis, F. J. Lee and J. S. Llewellyn—was appointed to investigate the different departments of the Church. Since A. J. Tomlinson as General Overseer had the supervision of the Church was this a divisive attempt to diminish his commission? If they were authorized to investigate they held the indelible rights to do so, if done unbiasedly. Was it done honestly and objectively without respect of person or department? The person the opposition element sought was A. J. Tomlinson, and from prevalent indications this spirit would not want to stop short of his religious demise.***

***"Tomlinson . . . built the church up from nothing to an institution worth many thousands of dollars, the property at the least estimate being worth more than $150,000. As stated before, he undertook this work with no money in view, trusting on his own efforts to raise it . . ." (Judge Portrum, of Court of Appeals of Tennessee)

ATTITUDES REFLECT ANNOYING DISCORD

Bishop Tomlinson confessed he made mistakes in his efforts for the Lord and the Church, but when he was convinced of them he asked forgiveness and sought whatever vindication necessary. Instead of cowering and wallowing in the dust over them he sought God until forgiven, then arose and dashed out again in pursuit of his goal to reach the lost and build up the Church of God. At times he declared his failures were good for him—they helped him to know how to seek God for forgiveness and mercy. But he never made all the mistakes of which he was accused; others had their share as well but were now nearly concealed by the magnitude of the General Overseer's condemnation. When people are tried and tested in the crucibles of man's judgments it

is generally conceded that the mania for criticism, accusation and condemnation seldom concurs with godly humility and reason. Sometimes little incidents indicate a biased attitude and a growing sense of discord.***

***For instance, it seems rather puzzling when the General Secretary (treasurer of the tithe fund) refused to advance the General Overseer a month's wages ($150.00) to go to the Bahama Islands to preach the gospel of Christ and His Church. So the General Overseer had to borrow expenses to the Bahama Islands to preach. Yet, the same General Secretary advanced J. S. Llewellyn three months' wages ($420.00) as payment on an automobile. (From notes of A. J. Tomlinson) Such feelings are regretted but they reflect the sensitive attitudes prevailing.

It is not the concern of this writer to justify nor condemn the exotic maneuverings of the Church period, for it was a hectic time for everyone involved. To cast Bishop Tomlinson into the pit (as was Joseph) and attempt to bury him beneath every conceivable error, mistake, ciriticism, aspersion and condemnation would seem basely unfair, unjust and unmerciful. His sacrifices had been unparalleled it seemed in spite of the much sufferings of his fellow-ministers. Ten years ago when he directed the Church work, furnished the office and publishing house, edited and printed the Church paper with a deficit of $123.18 on January 1, 1912, took the price of his family's bread and meat to travel and promote the gospel of Christ and His Church was he complimented or condemned? After nearly giving his life for God and the Church was it in vain? Were his labors not worth consideration? Had wisdom taken a vacation? Were reason, common sense and consideration beaten to the dust by lust and drive for power and authority?

This was not a spontaneous, spur of the moment scheme, but seemingly a well-devised plan that built influence and gradually encroached the humility, the divine inspiration and government of the Church, following the Assembly in 1916, when the body of elders was appointed, it seems.

The wrangle over the funds that were claimed to have been misappropriated seemed an excuse to condemn and destroy the influence, the reputation and prestige of Bishop Tomlinson. But the real instrument of disruption, now evident on every side, was the Constitution and the amendment that ruled out the directives of God and replaced them with man-made creeds. The organization (then referred to as the Ten Elders by many) that

was also victimized by the disruption in 1922-23, repealed, or abrogated, the Constitution in 1926. General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson had recommended that the Constitution be abrogated and erased from memory, just four years earlier—1922, and perhaps if the Assembly had heeded the warning the Church may never have suffered the disruption, that set brother against brother, sister against sister and church against church. They later abolished the Seventy elders, and in 1932 the Supreme Judges—Court of Justice was repealed, or discontinued.

What became of the man, Mr. J. S. Llewellyn who is credited by many with having led the Church into disruption? How long did he serve the Church? He was a soul . . . So God have mercy!

While standing at "Berkley's Square" men wax strong, bold, arrogant and daring and become adamant and inconsiderate in their merciless deliberations, all under the guise of strict adherence to established laws, rules and regulations, but what will they do, how will they feel and what will they say when they stand before the Cashier at the Gate where man-made creeds are never recognized? They never get by there according to Romans 14:12 which states, ". . . every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

FAIR EXCHANGE IS OFFERED

Since the financial affairs of the Church and Publishing House were such as could be used as a defense, or scapegoat for other aspirations, A. J. Tomlinson says he made an offer to the opposition forces . . . that he would assume all the financial obligations and relieve the opposition forces if they would turn the property and everything over to him and the Church. Or if they would accept the financial obligations and everything, take the property and all, then they were to release him from all of it. They refused to do either, he says.

A. J. Lawson says: "I asked one of them the second time this morning if they would be willing to make a peaceful division or separation. He asked what I thought we ought to do. I said I think we ought to agree on this line—You take all the Assembly Property here and assume all the debts on it and relieve us, or we will take it and pay all the debts and relieve you. He said, 'We will not do either.'***

***Both these propositions seem reasonable for a peaceful solution to an embarrassing problem, but it would take both

parties in absolute agreement. This was the same kind of proposition, in a respect, that Abraham offered Lot, but Lot made his choice and this settled the trouble between them, and their herdsmen.

ELDERS MEET IN COUNCIL
(June 12, 1923)

The Council had been notified of the meeting to be held June 12, 1923, giving the Twelve, the Seventy and others the privilege to attend. Quite a number was present. By virtue of his office as General Overseer Bishop Tomlinson was chairman of the Council, a duty inherently placed upon him as executive officer of the Church. The Assembly had made no other provision, and no board or group of men had an Assembly right to infringe this commission.

The General Overseer was charged for various reasons, chiefly things pertaining to the financial affairs of the Church. From all indications the report, or audit of the accounts was apparently biased to the views and influence of the present Editor and Publisher, J. S. Llewellyn, yet paid for with unauthorized Church funds—the Assembly had never authorized this move to be paid from Church funds. Bishop Tomlinson explained why he could not accept the auditor's report that charged him with $14,141.83 shortage. He denied being short that amount, that inventories were not a true assessment of the stock and merchandise value on hands. However, he stated that if a detailed audit was made, with all books and accounts included, and it showed he was short this amount he would get a job and try to pay it all back.

At this same council meeting charges were presented against three of the elders—M. S. Lemons, J. B. Ellis and J. S. Llewellyn. Charges were presented by C. T. Anderson, and read by the General Secretary, spoken to by about twenty-five who favored it, the list of charges bearing about seventy signatures. These charges were left in the hands of the General Overseer and the other nine elders to decide the course of action to be pursued. In an exercise of matchless patience, brotherly kindness and great consideration they agreed to defer the charges against the three until the cloud of blame had been lifted from the General Overseer.***

***Some seem to think this was an unwise move in view of the rising discord now prevalent, and the cruel dissension being

propagated. Many seem to feel that had the charges been pursued tension would have eased and disruption might have been prevented. Serious as it may seem some feel it was tinged with a mis-application of justice. Ten hours had been consumed in this conclusion. T. S. Payne, it is said, vowed to revive the charges but never did.

Bishop Tomlinson said: "When the time came to consider questions relative to myself, I vacated the chair because requested to do so and because of a message and interpretation advising us to submit ourselves one to another. I explained that there were no provisions for such action on my part but I would submit to the request, as I wanted to do my part in obeying the message. I did not want to appear to be stubborn. They selected another and proceeded with the business behind closed doors in my absence. I was to go back to the chair later, but they finally dismissed the council in my absence and dispersed without giving me any more privileges. Other records will show the proceedings and results. I regard all their proceedings as unjust and illegal and I have utterly ignored the whole thing except to take action as recorded elsewhere . . . Other records will show the call for the twelve to come together again July 24 (1923) to complete the work of the council called for June 12 . . ." (Pages 209, 210 . . ." A. J. Tomlinson" by Lillie Duggar)***

***It is expected that an administrative executive be endowed with a degree of protective administrative immunity and required to give answer only to his superiors in the higher echelons of the government he represents—in Bishop Tomlinson's case it was the Assembly. He was appointed by the Annual Assembly and if he was dismissed from this office the Assembly in an Annual session would have to do it. (Remember the Seventeenth Assembly in 1922 took the appointment out of the hands of God as was accepted in the Assemblies of 1913 and 1914.) The Eighth Annual Assembly had established a precedent for replacement if an emergency arose: "If the office of General Overseer should be declared vacant, a General Overseer shall be selected by the state overseers to fill the office until the next Annual Assembly." (Book of Minutes, Page 97) There was no authority to demand Bishop Tomlinson to yield the gavel to Efford Haynes. He explains this above.

According to the testimony on file of George T. Brouayer the date was set—June 21, 1923—for a meeting of the Supreme Judges—Court of Justice, after he and S. O. Gillaspie had left the

meeting, and they never knew anything about it.

CHARGES AGAINST THREE ELDERS
(Introductory Note)

A word of explanation as to why we are putting out this instrument of charges.

Some have tried to put the responsibility of this paper here or there, but it is our purpose to get the matter in its true light before the people.

Directly after the annual Assembly last year—1922, C. T. Anderson began to agitate this matter and in a few months after he returned, he says that he wrote up the charges against the Elders therein named, but did not present it owing to the fact that the General Overseer did not approve of it.

When the Hazlehurst, Ga., convention came off in the spring, C. T. Anderson went up to the meeting and together with S. W. Latimer and S. J. Heath decided on a course to pursue. When it was presented to Brother Latimer he was very enthusiastic and urged Brother Anderson to circulate it, and solemnly pledged his support.

At this meeting Brother Anderson obtained additional charges and it was decided to also incorporate them. And Brother Anderson was asked to write the charges and include this new evidence. He has the first MS. in his possession yet.

This was done in the presence of Brother Tomlinson, but he plainly told them he would not have anything to do with getting it out, more than to give the information that was asked of him.

It was clearly understood that these charges were to be presented at the first meeting of the Elders Council, but at that time it was not known when the Council would meet, and Brother Latimer promised in all earnestness that he would back it with all his energy when it came up. He never did make a statement to the contrary. And it was expected he would be as good as his word, or at least if he thought it were wrong to tell Brother Anderson not to present it.

It was presented by Brother Anderson to the Elders Council on June 12, 1923, and read by the General Secretary, and spoken to by about twenty-five who favored it, having seventy signatures of brethren whose names are attached hereto.

We present it to the public just as it was presented to the Council.

It consumed about ten hours to get through with the

introductory speeches.

Finally the matter was given to the defense and after a short debate submitted it to the other nine Elders for their consideration and decision.

There were no objections to the charges except that they were brought prematurely, and they agreed that the charges would be presented at the proper time and these three men dealt with properly. T. S. Payne solemnly pledged himself to bring the matter up even should others fail. The matter was never brought up again.

The Elders meeting continued in session several days trying to draw the two Elders that stood for Brother Tomlinson away, but when they could not do this they closed their meeting pending the decision of Brother Tomlinson, but when Brothers Gillaspie and Brouayer were out they called a secret council and did not let these two men know about it and hatched up charges against them.

CHARGES

To the Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of God, Cleveland, Tenn.:

Whereas, the Church of God has recognized A. J. Tomlinson as having been made General Overseer over the Church of God, by the Holy Ghost (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 12:28), and in his exalted position we feel that due honor and respect should be accorded him at all times and on all occasions, and

Whereas, Brother Tomlinson presented some things in his annual address before the Seventeenth Annual Assembly that were unusual, among other things the appropriation of tithes to other than the usual disbursement, and

Whereas, the Assembly noted this and unanimously agreed to accept the expenditures as it stood, and to forgive Brother Tomlinson's unavoidable misdirection of funds, and

Whereas, no one objected to the plea for forgiveness, all felt that the matter had been laid to rest, but when Brother Tomlinson saw fit to tender his resignation, the matter was again resurrected and in abusive and vindictive language our General Overseer had to bear, indignities publicly hurled at him as few criminals have had to bear, and

Whereas, the language employed and the extreme viciousness of deliverance, together with a very excited and enraged personage, we feel is unbecoming to any person who bears the gentle name of a Christian, and

Whereas, M. S. Lemons, J. S. Llewellyn and J. B. Ellis were most prominent by their wire pulling and chicanery, passed certain measures in the Seventeenth Annual Assembly which were both unscriptural and not pleasing to the Holy Ghost, and

Whereas, one of these men went to our interpreter and so intimidated him that he was miserable during the entire Assembly, said man having in a manner given him orders not to attempt to give any interpretations during the entire Assembly, and

Whereas, these men so intimidated one of the committees that they could not act in the capacity as being free men before the Lord which prevented them from making their report to the Assembly as they wished, and

Whereas, said J. S. Llewellyn in a discourse of two hours or more in length before the Eleven and Seventy in joint session, used such words and terms in trying to ruin the influence of the General Overseer and his family, that were unbecoming for a gentleman, or a political trickster and much less for one professing the Christian religion, and

Whereas, by these open and boisterous discourses said Lemons, Ellis and Llewellyn have proven themselves to be brawlers and contentious, which renders them all unfit to be bishops in the Church of God, and therefore they are not fit to be elders and councilors, and

Whereas, the Assembly was forced by these men into cold formal business that kept the Spirit grieved, and the saints in tears most of the time because of grief, and at one time when the General Overseer called the Assembly to prayer about a measure which has been his custom for seventeen years, J. S. Llewellyn rushed up to the General Overseer in a rage, where he was praying, and shook his fist close by the side of his head and roared out: "How dare you block the passage of this measure in any such a way? You dare not do it! You shall not do it!" and would not pray, but turned pale like he was mad and walked the floor while the praying was going on, and

Whereas, many of the ministers were so distrubed and discouraged because of the measures passed by the influence of these men, and the way the Assembly ended, that many of them could not go to their respective fields of labor with any degree of victory and joy, to toil and labor for the Church of God, and many said they did not know how to preach the Church of God any more, while such men are allowed to be in control, and

Whereas, these and other dissatisfactions existing caused by

those aforesaid men which renders them unqualified to take active part in the governing of the Church of God, many of which would surprise the thousands of members of the Church of God if divulged and which will be if circumstances compel such action, and

Whereas, they kept the General Overseer grieved to such an extent for nine months or more prior to the Assembly that he was not able to render his best services as editor and publisher nor in his position as General Overseer, and

Whereas, the General Overseer has never made any defence, neither has he offered any resistance to their railings, brawlings, misrepresentations and accusations, we feel that it has come time for definite action to not only vindicate our General Overseer and family, but to rid the Church of God of such unscrupulous and unprincipled men, so that it may go on in good order and fellowship as it used to years ago when every action that was taken in the Assembly could be recognized by an expression from all, "It seems good to the Holy Ghost and us," but alas, in the last Assembly there seemed to be not God in the passage of any measure, and

Whereas, on the Seventh day of November, 1922, on the last day of the Assembly, A. J. Tomlinson offered his resignation as General Overseer, as a protest against the passage of certain measures, and to show his disapproval of the business part of the Assembly, and how the Holy Spirit was ruled out of it, said resignation was not accepted, but contrariwise two or three special actions were taken which kept him in the place by unanimous vote and one voice and acclamation, and since he finally consented to remain he is still the General Overseer of the Church of God everywhere established with headquarters at Cleveland, Tenn., and

Whereas, it has been the privilege of some of us to study the general parliamentary usages in both religious and secular public gatherings, but we have never seen such humiliating confusion in any place as was practiced by these aforesaid men on our General Overseer as chairman of the Assembly of the Churches of God, and

Whereas, these aforesaid men not only publicly humiliated our General Overseer, but defamed the Holy Ghost, in open defiance to Paul's specific injunction, "Forbid not to speak with tongues," therefore

Be it resolved, that these men, namely, M. S. Lemons, J. S. Llewellyn and J. B. Ellis for all these sacreligious indignities

heaped upon our kind and patient General Overseer, as well as putting Lord Jesus to an open shame, should have a sharp rebuke administered, and that there be no more recurrence of a like disgrace on the Church of God, that these men be divested of all station of honor and trust in the Church of God, and a charge of disloyalty be presented to their respective places of local membership, for action in the Church.

To the Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of God, Cleveland, Tenn.:

If by any means, whether by testimony or otherwise, it is discovered that any others of the twelve have been accomplices with the men in question, M. S. Lemons, J. S. Llewellyn and J. B. Ellis, in carrying into effect things contained in these charges such shall be placed under question and charges of a similar nature preferred against them. This also to apply to other ministers and members in proportion to their guilt.

Signatures of those signing the charges against the Elders of June 12th.

C. T. Anderson, J. I. Baldree, P. W. Chesser, H. L. Chesser, W. R. Sexton, J. M. Baldree, O. N. Yingst, L. E. Camp, J. L. Dorman, W. T. Jackson, R. B. Spring, G. R. Sanders, T. P. Douglas, W. S. Pinder, R. L. Carroll, G. B. Langford, Newton Harrell, J. H. Pierce, C. H. Randall, Guy Marlow, James Daniel, W. H. Prewitt, G. G. Williams, H. R. Jacobs, J. T. Priest, J. O. Hamilton, E. C. Rider, W. G. Rembert, Geo. T. Stargel, Perry Kimlin, F. W. Stone, J. M. Mullen, A. C. Murray, B. F. Griffin, J. B. Mullen, W. L. Bass, F. D. Hardee, Dock Hardee, R. L. Crisp, T. L. Little, C. H. Deans, A. M. Brantly, I. H. Hinton, G. B. Holder, D. F. King, W. M. Brannett, M. A. Chapman, Jessie Ballers, L. F. McCarson, C. Z. Chapman, T. M. Sensing, C. C. McGowan, W. J. McCormack, A. W. Sanders, J. A. Davis, F. J. Crowder, J. W. Jones, J. H. Bennett, W. M. Lowman, J. R. Crowder, Geo. T. Brouayer, E. J. Hanks, L. L. Turner, J. R. Smith, J. H. Curry, R. Williams, Fred Beneby, David Le Fleure, G. C. Sapp, Thos. J. Richardson.

Others who endorsed it and spoke for it in the Council: J. N. Hurley, E. L. Pinkley, T. A. Richard, Jesse Hughes, A. J. Lawson, H. A. Pressgrove.

Others we did not get.***

***From a document, published and distributed by the Bureau of Information, A. J. Lawson, Manager, Cleveland, Tennessee. Courtesy of Publisher is hereby solicited.

These charges aroused great interest among those present, and after hearing both complainants and defendents the matter was referred to the General Overseer and nine of the elders for consideration. It was decided to postpone action on these charges against the three elders until the cloud was cleared from over the General Overseer.***

***Perhaps things might have been different had these charges been preferred against these three elders that seem to take the lead against the General Overseer, who was General Overseer until the Assembly in 1923. Without the swaying influence of the trio what might have happened? The Church would probably have never sustained a disruption; who knows. When once the General Overseer was out of office no one would dare prefer charges, though Bishop Tomlinson stated that T. S. Payne openly vowed to re-instate the charges himself, but never did. This seemed to give leeway to the illegal procedures, and the board of elders lost no time in their prosecution efforts.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECISION OF SUPREME JUDGES—COURT OF JUSTICE

THE CASE OF: A. J. Tomlinson, S. O. Gillaspie, Geo. T. Brouayer

IMPEACHMENT
FILED BY: A. Gann, T. S. Payne, and E. Haynes

These defendants are charged with repeated violations of the rules and government of the Church of God as shown in the charges to which reference is here made. The complaints were filed and restraint sought from further injurious violations which was granted on June 21, 1923. These defendants were restrained any further official duties or ministerial activities on the date above mentioned.

These defendants were duly notified of the sitting of the supreme judges, the time and place of the hearing, also to appear and answer the complaints filed against them and that default by them, the charges would be taken as confessed. These defendants failed to appear or file any pleadings, therefore the charges were sustained and taken as confessed.

The final order of impeachment was made and the three defendants so judged as guilty of the complaints filed and by this decision are removed from any and all position of honor or trust

and any and all positions occupied by them in the Church of God are judged vacant.

It is further judged and so decided that the ministry of each of them shall be revoked and their credentials declared void.

The undersigned Supreme Judges—Court of Justice was duly appointed as provided by the Assembly of the Church of God to serve as Supreme Judges till the close of the Assembly of 1923 (see page 106 of the minutes of the Seventeenth Annual Assembly of the Church of God, held at Cleveland, Tennessee, November 1-7, 1922.) For further authority see page 62 of the same minutes Section One, which reads as follows: "There shall be a Supreme Judicial body composed of seven of the twelve Elders who shall decide all matters which shall properly come before them, whose decision shall be final." These complaints was (were) filed and jurisdiction waved of any other judicial body or council claiming jurisdiction. On page 61 of the same minutes, Section Eleven, "Any official is subject to impeachment for an offence rendering him unworthy of the position that he occupies." In view of the authorities referred to, it is judged that these three defendants having confessed to the charges by their default in refusing to appear and make defense that they are unworthy of the respective positions that they have hitherto occupied.

C. T. Anderson also included in the complaints filed but due and sufficient notice not yet served, his case is deferred until a later date.

The undersigned all concurring in the conclusions and decisions reached as above set forth.

SIGNED BY:

M. S. Lemons
F. J. Lee
T. L. McLain
J. S. Llewellyn
S. W. Latimer
J. B. Ellis
E. J. Boehmer

BISHOP TOMLINSON CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

(July 24, 1923)

Council Meeting of Elders, Held at Cleveland, Tennessee, 24th Day of July, 1923, Moderated In Accordance To Instructions Contained In Seventeenth Annual Assembly Minutes . . . 1922

TO THE FAITHFUL AND LOYAL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD.

Notice is hereby given that at the Council of Elders held in

Cleveland, Tennessee on the 24th day of July, 1923, agreement was mutually reached by the General Overseer and loyal Elders in Council, in accordance with the doctrines of the apostles and practices of the Church of God, that the Declaration signed by many of the members of the Church of God truthfully sets out the teachings of the Church of God, and the action in repudiating the man-made creed or constitution is fully in accord with the Scriptures, for the Church of God is God's Government for His own people and we can have no Guide but the Holy Ghost and the Word of God.

Certain of the Elders refused to attend the Council but boldly declared their allegiance to that organized body provided for in their "Constitution" under the name of "General Assembly of the Churches of God" to be the dictator of the teachings and principles of the Church and the maker of the laws for the local churches in the place of God's laws and government.

After long prayers for guidance by the Holy Ghost and deliberate consideration, the General Overseer and Elders in Council in perfect harmony and agreement concluded that the hereinafter named Elders had renounced the Church of God and had accepted the General Assembly with its Constitution as their faith and practice instead of God's Government set out in the Holy Scriptures as the only true faith and practice of the Church of God, and that by their disloyal conduct and teachings the following named have vacated their office as Elders in the Church of God, to-wit:—

J. B. ELLIS, J. S. LLEWELLYN, T. L. MCLAIN, M. S. LEMONS, F. J. LEE, S. W. LATIMER, E. J. BOEHMER, A. GANN, E. HAYNES AND T. S. PAYNE, and the Council further agreed that as each of the above named had refused to discuss their disloyalty to the Church of God with the Council that each of them be notified that by their refusal to continue the teachings and doctrines of the Church of God as laid down in the Blessed Bible, and by their heresy in insisting that they, as members of the "Official Assembly" created by their constitution, were the lawmakers of the Church of God and that all must follow their laws instead of the Word of God, that they had thereby vacated their office of elders.

It was also mutually settled and agreed by the Council that it became the duty of the General Overseer to notify each of the above named Elders that by vacating their respective offices of Elders in the Church of God, they had also vacated any other office in the Church to which they had been appointed; and the

General Overseer was directed to immediately notify them of the action of this Council and to also notify the true and loyal members of the Church of God that the following offices in the Church of God are vacant, to-wit:—

TEN ELDERS— Offices vacated by T. S. Payne, E. Haynes, A. Gann, E. J. Boehmer, S. W. Latimer, F. J. Lee, M. S. Lemons, T. L. McLain, J. B. Ellis, J. S. Llewellyn.

SEVEN JUDGES—Offices vacated by M. S. Lemons, F. J. Lee, J. S. Llewellyn, T. L. McLain, S. W. Latimer, J. B. Ellis, E. J. Boehmer.

DIRECTORS OF BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL—vacated by J. S. Llewellyn, E. Haynes, T. L. McLain, F. J. Lee, M. S. Lemons.

HOME MISSIONARY SECRETARY—vacated by T. L. McLain.

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SECRETARY—vacated by J. S. Llewellyn.

ORPHANAGE COMMITTEE—vacated by T. L. McLain, J. S. Llewellyn, E. J. Boehmer.

and that such of these offices now vacant, as may be found in the Scriptures be filled in accordance with the teachings and practices of the Church of God from loyal, qualified men who love the Church of God.

The foregoing findings and decisions reached by the General Overseer and Council of Elders are presented to the members of the Church for consideration so that each member may determine whether he or she will continue with the Church of God, adhering to God's law and God's Word, instead of the man-made creed adopted at the Assembly.

We love the Church of God, we know it is God's government for His people, and that His Church cannot fail, and we will not falter but will continue to follow in the wake of the Apostles and the early Church, and we call on all true lovers of the Church of God to join with us in serving under God's government so that we may all once more speak the same thing and be so perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment that it will be said of us: "They are of one heart and one soul."

Let us all join together, unhampered by a burdensome constitution, so that we can truthfully say: "Lord, we will follow Thee whithersoever thou goest," for: "Thou art the way, the truth and the light."

We are glad we are back on the right road and traveling God's way for we have repudiated man's creed and constitution.

A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer
S. O. Gillaspie, Elder
Geo. T. Brouayer, Elder

ATTENTION: This was the continuation of the meeting (supposed to be announced at the convenience of the General Overseer, chairman of the Board of Elders) from the June 12, 1923 meeting when the Elders met in council, but the ten elders absented themselves from this officially called Council meeting of July 24, 1923, while the quorum rendered official decisions. Quorum was composed of George T. Brouayer and S. O. Gillaspie, and the General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson.

INDEPENDENCE DECLARED FOR THE CHURCH

In his Address to the Seventeenth Annual Assembly in 1922 the General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson recommended the complete abrogation of the instrument known as the Constitution, which had been inaugurated by the Assembly in 1921, and which had caused much disturbance in the churches. Obviously through wielded influences the Assembly never favored the recommendation to abolish it. In view of this Constitution and the events that followed this 1922 Assembly, in June of 1923 the General Overseer with the two loyal elders—George T. Brouayer and S. O. Gillaspie—and others declared themselves free of the galling yoke of the man-made Constitution, and announced the return to the Church of God of the Bible.

THE DECLARATION

In-as-much as differences and dissentions have arisen among certain of the Elders and Members of the Church over the government of the Church of God, much of which has been occasioned by the acceptance of a man-made constitution at the 1921 and 1922 Assemblies instead of relying solely on the government of God as set out in the Scriptures and previously practiced by the Church of God, WE, the undersigned members of the Church of God make the following Declaration:—

Whereas, the Constitution accepted at the 1921 Assembly and amended at the 1922 Assembly is contrary to the Word of God, the fundamental doctrines of the Church of God and the elemental principles of Theocratic Government, in that, the Constitution undertakes to create a general form of government with a

delegated power to certain officials to dictate and promulgate rules for the government of the Assembly, as well as local churches, in direct conflict with the teachings of the Scriptures, and the long established practice of the Church of God that all matters of government should come before the Assembly and be discussed with love, humility and meekness and be settled by mutual agreement in love and harmony under the guidance of the Holy Ghost according to the Scriptures; And,

Whereas an extended search of the Scriptures and a deliberate and careful consideration of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Apostles prove that the true government of the Church of God is strictly theocratic in principle, and that the members are to be so closely united that it can be said of them, that they are one heart and one soul, that they are all to speak the same thing and have no division, and are to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment and to continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine of the early Church; And,

Whereas, according to the Scriptures, the original and only Church of God was established with Jesus Christ as the Great Head of the Church, and after Christ ascended to His Throne on High, there was a General Overseer selected to direct the affairs of the Church under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and this has been the continued practice of the true Church of God, until, in a moment of darkness, a man-made creed or constitution was accepted by the Assembly to rule the church instead of the Government of God; And,

Whereas, the Constitution has cast an almost impenetrable cloud over the Church of God, and has caused certain of the Elders to depart from the true and accepted doctrines of the Theocratic Church Government under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and has caused them to follow a man-made creed instead of the Word of God as laid down in the Blessed Bible according to the accepted interpretation by the Church of God; And,

Whereas, our eyes have been opened and by a careful search of the Scriptures and earnest prayers to God we have become enlightened as to the dangers and pitfalls that confront the Church of God, and the time has come when we must either be bound, body and soul, by a man-made constitution and creed, or else we must repudiate the same and cling to the laws of Jesus Christ and the Government of God on which the Church of God was established.

NOW THEREFORE, we declare that we stand for the Church of God as originally organized and as set out in the New

Testament, that we believe in the government of the Church as established by the Assemblies prior to the adoption of the Constitution which undertakes to set up iron-clad rules and regulations for the government of the Church instead of the Word of God as set out in the Scriptures and the accepted interpretation thereof, Excepting, however, the money system and Declaration at the 15th Assembly.

We further declare that we repudiate and denounce the Constitution accepted at the 1921 Assembly and amended at the 1922 Assembly as the same is substituted for the Word of God as the ruling spirit of the Church; and we affirm that no man-made creed can or should dictate the policies and doctrines of the Church, but God shall be given a free hand to guide and rule the Church of God and its members until that Great Day shall come when we who remain steadfast to the faith shall sit on the right hand of God.

We further declare that the man-made constitution is a yoke of bondage thrust upon the members of the Church of God in a moment of darkness and we call upon the members to throw off this burdensome yoke and unite in one body and soul to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience and the government of God as laid out in the New Testament and the long established teachings of the Church of God.

We further declare that according to the Scriptures, and the established practices of the Church of God, that the Assembly is not a legislative body but is rather a judicial body, one that searches out the law and offices made and created by the early Church of God as conducted by the Apostles, and we aver that the Assembly of 1922 had no power or authority to create an Executive Council to dictate and manage the affairs of the Church of God, as the government of God set out in the Scriptures and accepted by the established Church of God (which) provides that the General Overseer shall have full power and authority to direct and manage the affairs of the Church when the Assembly is not in session.

We therefore call upon the General Overseer to take charge of and direct the affairs of the Church of God in accordance with the established practice of the Church prior to the enactment of a constitution, and to perform his duties as defined by the Scriptures.

We feel that we must cling to the Bible for our laws if we keep in favor with God, and we declare that the Church of God was established on the Bible as the Word of God and in conformity

with the teachings of the New Testament, and the rules and practices of the Apostles in the interpretation of the Scriptures. But to the Elders who desire to turn away from the Blessed Bible and the fundamental principles and doctrines of the Church of God and seek to be governed by a man-made constitution instead of the Word of God: we say: as Abraham said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, between my herdmen and thy herdmen,(") separate thyself in order that we may stand by the true doctrines and teachings of the Church of God and continue to receive its spiritual benefits.

We further declare that we adhere to the true teachings and doctrines of the Church of God and take the Blessed Bible as our only Rule of Faith and Practice, and like the prophet Isaiah, "we feel that the Spirit of the Lord God is upon us, because the Lord has anointed us to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent us to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

And we, like the Apostles of old, will go forth into the world and carry on the work of the established Church of God unfettered and unhampered by any man-made constitution or creed.

A. J. Tomlinson	H. A. Pressgrove
Geo. T. Brouayer	J. F. Dover
S. O. Gillaspie	A. J. Lawson

NOTE: The above named men signed the document that was distributed to let the membership of the Church and friends know the stand that had been taken for the Bible and its doctrines.

IF THEY MUST . . . LET THEM SEPARATE

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, GREETINGS

Ever since the black hand of the enemy of souls was thrown over our people at the last assembly, there has been a degree of sadness, dissatisfaction, unrest and burdens hanging heavily on the hearts of the members and sympathizers. Many have felt weighted down until they could not work for the Church and her interests with freedom and victory they had previously enjoyed.

These clouds have hung heavily over our heads and hearts for several months, and even those in authority at headquarters could not perform their duties in harmony and agreement owing to the hampering yoke of a Constitution instead of the Holy Ghost for

guidance; so the Twelve Elders were called in Council but after a ten days session even the Twelve could not agree as some of the Elders desired to obey the iron-clad rules of the man-made creed or constitution, while the General Overseer and other Elders desired to obey the Word of God and continue the work of the Church according to the government of God and the practices of the Church as set out in the Blessed Bible.

As the Elders who were following after the man-made creed would not discuss the affairs of the Church and the plan of Church government with love, humility and meekness so that all matters in dispute could be settled by mutual agreement in love and harmony under the guidance of the Holy Ghost according to Scriptures, but withdrew from the Council without an agreement; the General Overseer and Elders Geo. T. Brouayer and S. O. Gillaspie counselled together and with other devout members of the Church, and after earnest prayers to God for guidance, the accompanying Declaration was made.

Complying with this Declaration, and in order that all members of the Church of God, who want to be freed from the yoke of bondage placed upon our hearts by the iron-clad rules of the man-made Creed or Constitution, and who desire to worship God in the manner set out in the Scriptures, may join in this Declaration.

I, A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer of the Church of God, make this suggestion to all members of the Church of God, consider this matter deeply and take it to God in prayer, and let all members who want to remain in the Church of God and to worship our Lord Jesus with freedom and a pure heart and remain true to the teachings of the Scriptures join with us in this Declaration and mighty shall be the Church of God; but to those members who want to be ruled by a man-made creed instead of the Government of God as interpreted to us through the Scriptures, let them separate from us and follow their man-made ideals.

Dated at Cleveland, Tennessee this 27th day of June, 1923.

A. J. Tomlinson, General Overseer***

***Courtesy of "Bureau of Information" (of the Church) A. J. Lawson, General Manager, Cleveland, Tennessee. This Information Bureau was instituted to inform the people of actual happenings, after the disruption when Bishop Tomlinson and those who stood for the Church as designated in the Scriptures, were denied the services of the Evangel as a medium of Church expression. They had to resort to other means for communication, until the White Wing Messenger began.

CALL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH
(August 8—10, 1923)

From the Minutes of the Call Council of the Church of God, held at Chattanooga, Tennessee, August 8-10, 1923 we take the following extractions:

"The special call Council of the Church of God, called by the General Overseer, Brother A. J. Tomlinson, to convene at Chattanooga, Tenn., opened for business, 2:45 P.M. Wednesday, August 8, 1923, at the residence of Brother H. A. Pressgrove, 2301 Vance Avenue, with Brother Tomlinson in the chair.

First, Brother Tomlinson asked for an expression from all to show their appreciation to Brother Pressgrove for opening his home for the meeting.

Brother Tomlinson said, 'The thing we are about to do is something we have never done before. We came today to try to get together so we may know the Lord's will completely in the matters of grave importance that may come before us."

Chairman read for a Scripture lesson Romans 12, and commented, and after announcing the Council open for business, he was reminded that he was General Overseer and chairman of the Council.

C. T. Anderson was unanimously chosen secretary for the Council. Attorney Westberg addressed the Council, and A. J. Lawson was selected to serve as Church Treasurer until the Assembly, the date of which would be announced later.***

***Minutes of this Council meeting comprised 24 pages, and was furnished by the Church Information Bureau, A. J. Lawson, General Manager, Cleveland, Tennessee.

THE PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION

The Proposal made by the General Overseer, A. J. Tomlinson gave everyone an equal opportunity to consider the Constitution's departure from the Bible Church, and to make their own personal decision of the direction they would pursue.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, GREETINGS:—

The time has come when we must all ponder, pray and consider whether we are members of the Church of God or whether we have transferred our allegiance from the Church of God to that

organized body known as the "General Assembly of the Churches of God" created by the constitution heretofore adopted at the Assembly.

If we are to remain members of the Church of God, we must remember that the Church of God is His Church, the government is His, and so we should submit ourselves to His government and thus fulfill the prophecy, remembering that Jesus said: "Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

If we want to be members of the "General Assembly of the Churches of God", bound body and soul by a man-made creed, we must submit ourselves to such laws, rules and regulations as may be made from time to time by the "Official Assembly" composed of the General Overseer, 12 elders, and 70 elders, or such part thereof as may meet in joint session; remembering: "There is a way which seemeth right unto man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."

In order that all members may fully understand the question before them, we have compiled the following extracts from the Minutes of the different Annual Assemblies for your consideration and thought. Read it carefully and study the Scriptures and then decide if you want to follow Jesus or a man-made rule.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF GOD?

It is patterned from the meager history on record after the early Church outlined in the New Testament. Its government is theocratic in principle, a government by the immediate direction of God. To be a member of the Church of God one is expected to follow the Bible teachings because the Spirit and the Word always agree, and all members should cling to the Bible for it is the only rule of faith and practice of the Church of God. It is God's Government for His people.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ASSEMBLY?

According to the record laid down in Acts 15:13-28, Acts 16:4, 5, the purpose of the Assembly was judicial only, and was composed of the Apostles, Elders and the whole Church, and met at Jerusalem with James as the General Overseer for the purpose of considering and determining in harmony what were the true teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and upon determining the same, sending its decrees to the cities so that all the churches were established in the faith.

The Assembly of the Churches of God today should be a union

of all the churches to search out the Scripture, counsel together and under the direction of the Holy Ghost recommend to the local churches the teachings of Jesus Christ and the holy Apostles.

AT THE FIRST ASSEMBLY held in Cherokee County, North Carolina it was agreed by the Assembly:

"We do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body but judicial only."

It was also agreed that an Assembly composed of elders and chosen men and women from the churches should assemble once each year with the Spirit of Christ in their midst, and, after much prayer, discussion, searching of the Scriptures and counsel to recommend necessary things that they may be ratified and observed by all the local churches.

AT THE SECOND ASSEMBLY, it was said: "Care should be taken to be led by the Spirit rather than by ecclesiastical bodies or rulers." And Christ has pledged Himself that when we agree we can have so much more power.

AT THE THIRD ASSEMBLY, it was again determined: "This Assembly is not legislative or executive but judicial only." It was also determined: "That the above minutes are not laws made by the Assembly but only the laws given us by Christ and His disciples, searched out by that body and brought to light that the churches might take action on the same as they see fit."

AT THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY, it was determined: "This Assembly is not legislative or executive but judicial only."

Each year as the Assembly met it continued its search in the blessed Bible for the perfect government. The Assembly made no laws, it simply adopted the government of God as laid down in the Bible.

AT THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, it was decided to reconsider certain decisions made at former assemblies because the decisions made had been questioned by some not in attendance. The right to question the decision of an Assembly was then recognized, and the decisions were again discussed with humility after much prayer and searching of the Scriptures in order that any mistake made might be pointed out and rectified.

As was said in this Assembly: "The Church of God is the greatest, wisest and most glorious government that has ever been

inaugurated on this earth. To be called upon as is this honorable body and sacred Assembly, to search out and apply the laws of the greatest, wisest and most glorious government that has ever made its appearance on this earth should certainly be considered the highest honor conferred upon man."

AT THE FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY, it was said: "Our purpose now is the same that it has been at all previous Assemblies. We have always claimed that the Assembly is not a legislative body, but a body for the purpose of searching out and preparing for practice the laws already made."

AT THE FIFTEENTH ASSEMBLY, it was said: We recognize Christ as the head of the Church and the Supreme Ruler. He speaks to us by His Word and by the Holy Ghost, and we settle all questions and disputes by the word of God, and as it seems good to the Holy Ghost and us."

BUT: Did not Paul declare that grievous wolves should enter in among us not sparing the flock, and did he not also say that from among your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them? Is it strange that men from our own ranks will try to set themselves up as leaders and oppose the Church and cry it down every way they can?

And so, at the FIFTEENTH ASSEMBLY a "Declaration" was read and approved, the import of which was not at the time recognized by the faithful and God fearing members of the Church of God, but two sections of this Declaration are the opening wedges that have turned us from the government of God as laid down in the New Testament and accepted by the Church of God.

"SECTION 2: We, therefore, do not recognize the right of any local church to withdraw from the General Assembly as a whole, but those who prove disloyal to the Government and teachings as promulgated from time to time by the General Assembly or otherwise disorderly are to be dealt with in individual manner and excluded as a member of said church."

This section bound the local churches absolutely to the General Assembly.

"SECTION 4: That the General Assembly of the Church of God is that organized body with full power and authority to designate the teachings, government, principles and practices of all the local churches composing said Assembly."

And under this section, the General Assembly was given full power and authority to designate the teachings, government,

principles and practices of all local churches.

The Constitution accepted at the SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH ASSEMBLIES creates the General Assembly as the ruler and dictator of the Church of God in place of the Holy Ghost and government of God.

WHAT IS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY UNDER THE CONSTITUTION?

ARTICLE 1, Section 1 says: This organization is and shall be known as the General Assembly of the Churches of God.

SECTION 3: To promulgate rules and regulations to govern the local churches of said organization, and otherwise promote the general interest of the General Assembly. (Not the Church of God).

SECTION 5: To provide a general government in which is vested full power and authority to dictate and promulgate rules and regulations from time to time to govern local churches composing said Assembly.

ARTICLE 2, Section 3: No local church shall withdraw from the General Assembly as a whole but such individual members of the church who may become disloyal or otherwise disorderly shall be dealt with and excluded from membership in such local church.

ARTICLE 4, Section 6: The twelve elders and the seventy elders shall together with the General Overseer be understood and construed to be the official Assembly while in joint session, which shall have full power and authority to designate rules of government, teachings and principles for the local churches, those present to constitute a quorum. (Was this the Bible way?)

ARTICLE 8, Section 1: As the work of this organization progresses, and the number of churches increase, the General Assembly may create new and other positions and fill them as needs may require. (Under God's way, we searched the Scriptures and when we found an office under God's government, we filled it at the Annual Assembly.)

HAVE WE DEPARTED FROM THE CHURCH OF GOD BY THE ACCEPTANCE OF THIS CONSTITUTION?

Under ARTICLE 4, Section 6, the members of the Church created by this Constitution no longer have the right to meet in annual assembly to consider and discuss with brotherly love all perplexing questions and settle them with mutual agreement in perfect harmony with the Scriptures, but now the Official

Assembly composed of such of the twelve elders, the seventy elders and the General Overseer as may meet in joint session (only a few need meet, even all the Official Assembly need not agree) shall designate the rules of government, teachings and principles for the local churches.

Are we now following in the way of the Apostles and the early Church according to the government of God as set out in the blessed Bible, or have we departed therefrom to accept a man-made creed?

This is a matter we must all consider deeply, we must pray over it, we must search the Scriptures, and then decide whether we will follow God's way or Man's.

Even the greatest minds change, and it is not bad to change. (If) We have been dissatisfied, let us be sure we are right and then get settled.

Heretofore, we have desired that all our teachers hold steadfastly to the Apostles doctrine and teach that which they know the Church stands for rather than venture into something that will be detrimental to the cause.

This Constitution creates the General Assembly as an organized body to take the place of the Annual Assembly where each one had the right to speak and discuss the Scriptural Way.

Under this Constitution certain of the Elders and the General Overseer could meet in joint session and as the Official Assembly of the churches of God, dictate rules of government, teachings and principles for the local churches and create offices and fill them regardless of God's government and the Bible way.

This is not the way of the Church of God. It takes us away from the Apostles doctrines. It makes the Official Assembly created by this Constitution our lawmaker and guide instead of God and the Holy Ghost.

Shall we take this "Official Assembly" as our guardian and guide instead of the Holy Ghost?

NO. We MUST NOT! The Church of God cannot fail.

The organized body created by the Constitution is the General Assembly. It is not the Church of God.

By accepting this Constitution we have discarded the Church of God, and formed an organization known as the General Assemblies of the Churches of God. For the Constitution says . . . ARTICLE 1, Section 1: "This organization is and shall be known as the General Assembly of the Churches of God."

The error having been discovered, we are going to correct it. We are going back to the Church of God for we want to do things in

God's way. We want the Holy Bible for our only rule of Faith and practice with the Holy Ghost for our guide. We are going back to the Church of God as it was before the Declaration approved at the Fifteenth Assembly.

What will you do? Will you cling to the organized body known as the General Assembly of the Churches of God, and submit to man's rule, or will you go back to the Church of God and submit to God's government where we can all be one under the Holy Ghost?

We, the undersigned in council August 10, 1923 at Chattanooga, Tenn., have reached the above decision and have rejected the constitution and are clinging tenaciously to the Bible and hereby declare our allegiance to the Church of God—God's government for His people.

Geo. T. Brouayer, Neptune, Tenn.
S. O. Gillaspie, Olney, Ill.
C. T. Anderson, Williston, Fla.
J. A. Wilkerson, Akron, Ohio
Guy Marlow, Louisville, Ky.
J. F. Dover, Chattanooga, Tenn.
J. N. Hurley, Terre Haute, Ind.
H. R. Jacobs, Liberty, Miss.
C. C. McGowan, Southside, Tenn.
J. E. Green, Norris City, Ill.
H. H. Irwin, Cleveland, Tenn.
J. O. Hamilton, Starksville, Miss.
A. J. Tomlinson, Cleveland, Tenn.
J. H. Brooks, Alarka, N. C.
T. A. Richard, Kentwood, La.
H. A. Pressgrove, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Bertie Mae Pressgove, Chattanooga, Tenn.
C. H. Randall, Somerset, Ky.
Mrs. J. F. Dover, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Mrs. A. J. Tomlinson, Cleveland, Tenn.
Maude Pangle, Chattanooga, Tenn.
H. D. Hughes, Chattanooga, Tenn.
A. J. Lawson, Cleveland, Tenn.
Thos. J. Richardson, Miami, Fla.

This, Brother Tomlinson explained was gotten up as an educator for the people if approved by the Council. Approved.

APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES

At this Council held at Chattanooga, Tennessee, August 8-10,

1923 it was advised to fill the vacancies now existing in the Church of God. So, Bishop Tomlinson said: "Dropping back to our former regulations when the General Overseer was to select two, then these three to select the other ten, and only bishops to be used as elders. I have with me Geo. T. Brouayer and S. O. Gillaspie, and then we in acting together have selected the following: C. H. Randall, H. A. Pressgrove, J. H. Brooks, J. N. Hurley, J. O. Hamilton, Guy Marlow, T. A. Richard, J. A. Wilkerson, G. T. Stargel, Thos. J. Richardson.

The other appointments to be filled by the General Overseer are as follows:

For the Bible School Directors: Geo. T. Brouayer, S. O. Gillaspie, C. H. Randall, H. A. Pressgrove, J. O. Hamilton.

For the Orphanage Committee: T. A. Richard, J. N. Hurley, Guy Marlow.

For Foreign Mission Secretary: H. A. Pressgrove.

For Home Mission Secretary: J. A. Wilkerson.

For Publishing Committee: A. J. Lawson, Geo. T. Brouayer, S. O. Gillaspie, H. H. Irwin, J. F. Dover."

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ACTION OF TEN ELDERS

To explain to the Call Council at Chattanooga, August 8-10, 1923 that this was not an Assembly, General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson said it was only a council to decide, if possible what was best to do. On the last day of the Council they adopted the following resolution:

"The resolution previously called for condemning the action of the ten elders of the twelve for placing F. J. Lee in to act as General Overseer, and other disloyal and illegal acts were presented by the secretary which follows:

Whereas, Certain of the Twelve Elders, viz., J. S. Llewellyn, F. J. Lee, T. S. Payne, J. B. Ellis, T. L. McLain, S. W. Latimer, A. Gann, E. Haynes, M. S. Lemons and E. J. Boehmer in open rebellion have taken matters in their own hands to manage the affairs of the Church of God, and

Whereas, the aforesaid elders have wholly disregarded all rules and regulations of the Church of God, therefore

Be it resolved that we, the members of the Church of God in regular order, in this Call Council, do hereby openly and publicly denounce a spirit as they have shown in dealing with our God-appointed General Overseer, Brother A. J. Tomlinson, and elders,

S. O. Gillaspie and Geo. T. Brouayer. And do reject their appointee, F. J. Lee, to act as General Overseer, and all other appointments and actions.

We declare that no provision is made for such action either in the Bible, nor the Constitution, nor the Minutes.

We heartily endorse the action of our General Overseer, Brother A. J. Tomlinson, which was concurred in by Brothers S. O. Gillaspie and Geo. T. Brouayer. We declare our allegiance to the cause which they espouse, and condemn the work of the ten elders as being entirely out of the Spirit of Christ."

The resolution was adopted.

THE WHITE WING MESSENGER

When questioned concerning the propagation of the true details of the Church it was finally decided that a publication (perhaps a weekly) should be started with A. J. Tomlinson as editor who was to negotiate means to start soon as possible.

While praying over the name of the paper, during one other meeting of the Council a brother told the following vision he had: "When I was praying this morning I saw a vision which showed me the name of the paper in the most beautiful form that I have ever seen. The name appeared in arched form, THE WHITE WING MESSENGER, with a beautiful dove bearing an olive branch in its claws just beneath the arch."

Several commented on this and it was the sentiment that it seems good to the Holy Ghost and us that our paper be called The White Wing Messenger.

At the request of General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson, his son-in-law, A. D. Evans borrowed $50.00 with which to have the paper printed, and the first issue of the White Wing Messenger was dated September 15, 1923, Volume 1, No. 1. Format size of this first issue was 18 x 22 inches—four pages.

NO LONGER MEMBERS

"The Church of God at Cleveland, Tennessee, convened in business conference on September 10, 1923.

After due notice had been given of the time and place, A. J. Tomlinson, Mary Jane Tomlinson, Homer A. Tomlinson, Geo. T. Brouayer, A. J. Lawson and H. H. Irwin were duly and regularly excluded from membership in the Church of God.

Due notice is here given that these parties are no longer

members of the Church of God.
J. B. Ellis, pastor
F. G. Chambers, clerk"***

***The above notice appeared in the newspaper. In view of Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution accepted at the Assembly in 1921, it is rather strange they did not use the name agreed on, which is, "the General Assembly of the Churches of God."

THE DEFINITE MOVE FORWARD

Branded as a thief, falsely accused, suffering social and civic injustices Bishop Tomlinson still retained the great respect of his business friends in Cleveland. With God "setting his soul aflame" with new vistas and horizons of spirituality and achievements A. J. Tomlinson rose up with new courage and ambition and moved fearlessly forward for God and the Church. He explains some of this:

"The opposition forces were in possession of all the property and almost all of my twenty years of labor was swept away . . . I walked out on a street corner in Cleveland, Tennessee, under the starry sky with the Church of God banner and started building again . . . By November 1923, we had purchased a lot on Central Avenue at a cost of $900 and erected a tabernacle, and held our Eighteenth Annual Assembly November 22-27, 1923." (From: "Answering the Call of God." Ibid.)

Bishop Tomlinson felt the Constitution was a severe blotch on the virtues of the Church of God, and he recommended its abrogation at the Seventeenth Annual Assembly, but to no avail. So when he cast it aside and stepped out to declare the Church of God as designated in the Holy Scriptures it brought much persecution, sufferings and antagonism, but he forged ahead for God, spending his time in an effort to reach the lost, and to build up the Church he loved so ardently. He frowned on the persecution of his enemies.***

***This writer and Bishop Tomlinson had breakfast together at the home of Sister Tomkins, Cedar Grove, West Virginia, Spring of 1934. When asked by someone, about those who had persecuted him so severely, he dropped his head in tears, then finally said,

"God bless them . . . God bless them. The did the best they could, I guess . . ."

DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD

In less than twenty years the Church had grown from a small back-woodsy church of perhaps twelve or fifteen members to an aggregate of 666 churches in many states with a total membership of 21,076, all under the leadership of A. J. Tomlinson, which he assumed in June 1903, when he was ordained Bishop June 13, 1903 and became pastor there.

But most of his labors were swept away except some of the good loyal and faithful ministers and members who were pure gold for God during the terrible days of the revolution when they threw the Constitution overboard and took their stand for the Church of God designated in the Scriptures. After this they never professed to belong to the General Assembly of the Churches of God that supported the Constitution . . . they never wanted any part of it. In their assertions they professed to belong only to the Church of God of the Bible.

From New York, during those troubling days when he had to carry on part of his work from New York, from the home of his elder son Homer A. Tomlinson, he asked S. O. Gillaspie to bring $500 and come to New York at once. When S. O. Gillaspie arrived with the money it thrilled Bishop Tomlinson and gave him great courage and ambition to launch into the work again, with greater efforts than ever. He had been discouraged for the first time, and confessed that he couldn't get the inspiration he once had. But he felt it was good for him.

The disruption had succeeded in an embarrassing separation. But Bishop Tomlinson's vistas saw brighter roads ahead where the light of the great Church of God of the Bible would not again be dimmed by man-made creeds or constitutions. His wife and family had suffered untold miseries, heartaches, abuse and criticism, besides sacrificing the necessities, the bare necessities of a home. Otto Hoffman (deceased) told this writer of the many times he knew the Tomlinson home had scarcely any food on the table . . . no coal or wood at times, picked on and preyed on by "free-loaders" of all kinds, but they never turned one aside, Otto said. The family shared the work with Bishop Tomlinson. Mary Jane Tomlinson, his faithful companion, on February 25, 1923, wrote:

"*Dear husband and children,*

God bless you all today . . . Milton and I have had a time getting things in shape to live this week, and we both have such bad colds. He went to Sunday School today and

meeting. I have been shut in with my cold today. I am so hoarse I can't hardly talk . . . I got my feet damp sweeping the water out of the kitchen when the pipe bursted, and I slept cold the first night . . . We did not get any coal until yesterday, and it was hard to keep warm with trash. Have a warm fire today. I am at home alone

Lovingly,
Mama"

While A. J. Tomlinson had thousands of friends and close acquaintances his family never forgot him. They loved him and respected him as the head of the family, and his daily devotions were praiseworthy. From New York, by letter dated October 3, 1922 his son Homer writes:

"Dear Papa:

I have seen your accusers fall one by one, the one in one way and the other in another. To all it has come . . . You have ten thousand friends everywhere to every enemy . . . Papa, God bless you. I love you more than ever. I'll stand with you, like ten thousand others, and you will go through all right. It is a noble struggle you are making . . . We are looking forward to coming down to see you Christmas. By that time things will be changed . . .

Lovingly and devotedly,
Homer."

His daughter Iris Evans and her husband traveled much of the time with Bishop Tomlinson, and sacrificed and suffered as they labored for God and the Church. At the time of Mary Jane Tomlinson's letter referred to above, they were with Bishop Tomlinson in the Bahama Islands.

GOD SOUGHT FOR A MAN

God ". . . sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap" (Ezekiel 22:30). The writer implied that no one was found. But this was not true of today. God found the man to stand in the gap with a light for wayward souls. The anointing of the office was upon him . . . he knew it . . . others knew it and saw it working within his every move. His enemies had sought to destroy him, but like Joseph in Israel's time, God meant it all for good to save the beautiful principles practices and doctrines of the Church Jesus had purchased with his own blood. Yes . . . He was God's man for the hour!

His surging challenge was . . . VICTORIES ON TOP OF VICTORIES!

DISRUPTION AT JOHNSTON CITY

All over the country churches were disrupted with the disruption at Headquarters. Faithful members had been hounded and in many places driven from the very churches they had sacrificed to build. The wound was terrible and the sufferings, the heartaches and separations excruciating. Johnston City, Illinois was no different, with their church located at the corner of 12th and Benton Streets. E. L. Simmons was both pastor and state overseer, as the pastor Stanley Joplin had resigned about four months before the trouble.

In an affidavit dated February 16, 1972, and signed by Myrtle Land, Marie Briscoe, Mae Owens and Edgar Owens, and notarized the following is recorded:

"Many things were said on that memorable night when the local Church gathered. The building was filled to capacity. Several ministers were present, including our state overseer. A successful minister, Rev. D. P. Barnett, told about a dream that seemed to cause him to worry. After no small stirring among the people the moderator spoke in no uncertain words: 'ALL OF YOU THAT ARE GOING WITH A. J. TOMLINSON STAND TO YOUR FEET.' At this time seventeen (17) faithful children of God stood up. Thus our names were erased from their records, from the records of the very Church of God we had faithfully served and supported . . . one of their number told another that they had swept the trash out the back door.

"The seventeen (17) of us that stood with the Church of God, with A. J. Tomlinson General Overseer were: Mr. and Mrs. Clate Litton, Mr. and Mrs. John Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Land, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Briscoe, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Roach, Mrs. Lizzie McCollum, Mr. And Mrs. Ode Briscoe, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Hampsey, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Owens.

"Having no building in which to worship we began to have services in our homes, and I can say we were richly blessed in our meetings. We could hardly contain ourselves. In the wintertime, when the heating stoves would be red hot many times they would be handled with bare hands, and many times the sick would be instantly healed . . ."

The above statements were made by Edgar Owens, long time deacon in the Church.

This one example shows the cruel terrors of this disruption in the Church in 1922-1923, but it is only one out of many that were maltreated under the guise of justice.

(This testimony made possible through the courtesy of Leonard F. Kendrick in cooperation with Edgar Owens and others.)

LEADER OF DISRUPTION CONFESSES

As heretofore mentioned most people, or a goodly number of those aquainted with the man, blame J. S. Llewellyn for triggering the disruption in the Church 1922-1923. He seemed seduced by an uncontrollable spirit of power-lust and greed for authority and control. Yet, those who knew him and were close in give him credit for being a dynamic speaker, influential, ambitious and persuasive. He was a businessman in his own status-quo, and sometimes shared business interests with A. J. Lawson, who before the disruption was a Realtor. From all indications he was adept at planning and scheming for advancement, and leaned more to the legalistic aspects of the Church than to the spiritual part, especially during the cruel conflict. He lived to see the ill-famed Constitution he had so adroitly sponsored repealed, or abrogated, by the very group he had induced to conform to the Constitution rather than to the New Testament. Undoubtedly it caused him to suffer, and perhaps many a penitent hour had been spent in solitude and retrospection and remorse. But everyone is a soul, and there comes a time he must decide for himself. Dissatisfied with the accounts and balances he made an illustrious appeal at "Berkley's Square" with his group participants, but four years had buried and caused to disappear the very baby he had cradled for disruption, assisted by others. Now, approaching the Cashier at the Gate . . . What to answer?

From a notarized affidavit of F. F. Johnson, who pastored the Church of God, of which A. J. Tomlinson was then General Overseer, Cleveland, Tennessee, from October 3, 1932 to October 1936 good news has been received. Brother Johnson says:

"It was during my pastoral work at this church that I became acquainted with Brother J. S. Llewellyn. He was one of the original Twelve Elders . . . At the time of my acquaintance with Brother Llewellyn, he was in very bad health. I visited the Brother every day. It was during one of these visits that Brother Llewellyn asked me to bring Brother Tomlinson with me to see him . . . My next visit I brought Brother Tomlinson with me. Brother Llewellyn seemed so glad to see him. It was during this visit that

Brother Llewellyn asked Brother Tomlinson to forgive him. This Brother Tomlinson gladly did. Then Brother Llewellyn said, "Brother Tomlinson, God has placed something on my heart and that is to write a letter and have it notarized, witnessed by you and Brother Johnson and send it to every subscriber of the Evangel, The Ten Elder's Church Paper, telling them of my part in the disruption program and trying to ruin Brother Tomlinson." Brother Llewellyn then looked at Brother Tomlinson and said, "What do you think about that Brother Tomlinson?" For quite some time, Brother Tomlinson remained silent. Then he said, "Brother Joe what happened back there hurt a lot of people, and perhaps lots of them gave up in disgust. Now if you go ahead and fix this paper it might hurt a lot more of our people and cause them to give up. What's done is done, you meant it to wreck me but God meant it for good and to get the Church out from under the constitution." Brother Llewellyn seemed to be terribly disappointed.

". . . Brother Llewellyn died and I conducted his funeral on June 17, 1934 in the Church auditorium on Montgomery Avenue where many of the General Assemblies had been held. The auditorium was filled for his funeral. Just about all of the Elders were present . . . just before the funeral, Sister Llewellyn asked me to give an opportunity for anyone to express themselves and their feelings about Brother Llewellyn . . . I gave this opportunity and Brother A. J. Lawson was the first one to express himself. He said he felt like Brother Llewellyn had made everything right and had asked him personally to forgive him. Then Brother E. L. Simmons was the next one to express himself. He said, 'This has been a wonderful funeral service and I appreciate the Lord very much. I too, feel that Brother Llewellyn has fixed everything.' Then Brother W. F. Bryant said, 'I'm satisfied that Brother Joe has made everything right and has made it home safe.' Quite a few more expressed themselves. Altogether it was a very strange and wonderful service but one that I feel that was ordained of God."***

***Brother F. F. Johnson conducted the funeral of R. G. Spurling, 78 years old, May 25, 1935, the minister who took A. J. Tomlinson in the Church, June 13, 1903. He also conducted the funeral of his widow, Barbara Spurling, age 81, August 28, 1939.

LLEWELLYN ACKNOWLEDGES BISHOP TOMLINSON

In an affidavit notarized January 4, 1972 Bishop Joe C. Crews

says:

"Testimony of Bishop Joe C. Crews concerning a conversation with J. S. Llewellyn at one of the first Assemblies I attended.

Bro. Crews: "I was standing on Central Avenue where the first small office building was located. We were talking about the Church in general when A. J. Tomlinson came across the street from the Tabernacle. He waved and spoke to both of us as he passed by. Then Brother Llewellyn stated, 'Bro. Crews, there is the smartest man God ever put breath in and I believe that he is being led by the Spirit of God.'

"I am uncertain of the exact year, but I believe it was in 1930. Respectfully submitted

Bishop Joe C. Crews"
(Fort Myers, Florida)

LLEWELLYN SAID HE KNEW

In the early 1930s this writer got acquainted with J. S. Llewellyn, and while sitting on a porch across from the front of the tabernacle on Central Avenue, conversing, Brother Llewellyn slapped me on the right thigh with his left hand and said, "Seems like you are having a great time in the Assembly . . . I want to tell you something, Brother Davidson. Stick to Brother Tomlinson. He's right. I know . . ."***

***These little statements may sound insignificant but they mean a lot coming from the man who actually acknowledged that he knew who was right.

PENITENCE SWEETENS THE SOUL

The first year A. J. Tomlinson pastored the Church in Cherokee County, North Carolina one of the first members he took into the Church that year was M. S. Lemons, who became an ardent companion of A. J. Tomlinson in the early years of their togetherness.

Records do not say just what precipitated the disruption of their fellowship and togetherness but apparently it happened for M. S. Lemons arrogantly participated in the disruption of the Church of God in 1922-1923, abusing Bishop Tomlinson, and even threatened to have his long-standing friend incarcerated behind the prison walls. What a shadow over the real Spirit of the Christ they had served together!***

***"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." (Pro. 5:21)

M. S. Lemons was among men of strong support, strong influence, and several of them together formed an impenetrable, psychological group in the defense of the man-made constitution that tended to subsidize, and even subvert if possible, the powers and authority of the General Overseer and the Annual Assembly. He became a participant and active accomplice, and is so blamed by the records extant.

But a change came in his latter years and he sought God through penitence and tears, and evidently found emancipation through the mercies of the Lord Jesus Christ, so this writer believes after having visited his home and stayed during the Assembly in the latter 1930s, and other conversations. He sought the forgiveness of Bishop Tomlinson, the man whom he had so mercilessly condemned, and A. J. Tomlinson refers to this in his Diary dated August 13, 1930, barely seven years after M. S. Lemons and the group tried to illegally depose him, and bury him with unscrupulous accusations.

"August 13, 1930:—One of the callers yesterday was M. S. Lemons, who came to confess he had done wrong in acting as he did in 1922, and in assisting in starting the lawsuit, and asked me to forgive him. He came again to my home last night and talked a long time, and seems to have a penitent spirit, and shows a desire to make amends for his wrongs, and get straightened up again . . ."

No Christian can revel in the downfall of his fellowman, through an avowed enemy, for Jesus Christ left the Beatitudes as the guardian of one's life and duty.

Even the Major and the Minor Prophets say: ". . . they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks . . ." Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3.

THE WRITER'S AFTERWORD

There are things that had to be brought out in this history that probably many of us never heard before, and there are things that serve to embarrass all of us at times. There have been mistakes made on both sides of the disruption and we all regret them and remember them in grim retrospect. God help us all to walk more softly, more carefully, and try to remember the peace that Jesus Christ brought to us.

But, looking at events from this side of the Church disruption the disastrous maneuverings of influence-bound aspirants and opposition forces are evident, according to the records and testimonials extant. This writer, and thousands of others were not connected with the Church of God of the Bible when the disruption occurred, and so, this "hind-sight" of ours may seem more exacting and clear than could then be seen by those actually embroiled in the conflict at the time. It is obvious that some few apparently wanted a change, or desired some difference that they themselves could not explain, but dissemination of such unstable opinions and ideas became a danger to those involved. Yet, they caught afire behind the scenes and smoldered where possible though denounced by spirit-filled men continuously. As a rule when people are in arrears of spiritual strength and guidance they lean on other things and most always become arrogant and demanding.

In contrast to the God-inspired, Spirit-filled Assemblies from 1907 through 1919, the Assemblies of 1921-1922 seemed pressured by man-made rules, procedures and influence and were obviously seen as less spiritual, especially the 1922 Assembly. Having had time to examine and study the Constitution that had swept through the 1921 Assembly, and becoming aware of the errors and evils of its Scriptural departures, General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson recommended that it be abrogated. It cast a shadow over Biblical theocratic government. In Article 1, Section 1 it declared the name of the organization was the "General Assembly of the Churches of God." But, at the Assembly in 1907 it was unanimously decided that the name of the Church was the Church of God. This side of the disruption many of us are made to believe this move to be of man-made intent, erroneous and a Scriptural departure. This section alone seems to condemn the whole structure of the Constitution.

For the opposition forces this Constitution provided the means to strike at the very heart of the Church's outreach and spiritual strength and guidance. Opposition forces struck at the office of the General Overseer, to lessen its prestige, power and influence . . . then they struck at the man who filled the office—Bishop Tomlinson—to pull down his prestige as a devout Christian . . . to smear his character, and if possible destroy his reputation and religious standing in the cities and countries where he had preached and led people to Christ and His Church, and in a broader sense completely ruin his Christian name. This kind of wirepulling and Spiritless arrogance was nothing new . . . it had

split and torn to pieces many other organizations. Somehow, people seem to forget or bypass Paul's admonitions to the members of the early Church as recorded in 2 Corinthians 2:5-7 and Ephesians 4:29-32.

The disruption in the Church was unfortunate, and the reactions and repercussions are embarrassing and retrospective. The separation came. It was heart-rending, but maybe this is the way it had to be then . . . but it does not have to continue to be this way if the "fight in men" is subdued by the fresh-flowing blood of Jesus Christ. He declared ". . . there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16)

So, Bishop Tomlinson denounced the "General Assembly of the Churches of God" and took his stand for the Church of the Bible. The mis-appropriation of funds, of which Bishop Tomlinson was accused, was apparently an excuse to attempt to assassinate his character and Christian influence, and is credited by some of precipitating the disruption . . . but the actual cause of the conflict and disruption was the seducing spirit that possessed some people, and the adoption of the man-made Constitution. Sad . . . but real. Maybe it had to be this way . . . maybe both churches will reach thousands of souls and lead them to Christ, which otherwise may never have been reached. Let them solve those problems they are able to solve, then be big enough to leave the impossibles to God!

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Hebrews 4:1.

THE TOMLINSON FAMILY

AMBROSE JESSOP TOMLINSON—Born September 22, 1865, near Westfield, Indiana. Married Mary Jane Taylor April 24, 1889 at Bentonville, Indiana. Converted at 23, baptized with Holy Ghost January 12, 1908, joined the Church of God, and ordained as a minister June 13, 1903. Colporteur, evangelist, pastor, and General Overseer of the Church of God. Died at home, 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee, October 2, 1943 at 10:00 o'clock. Funeral at Assembly Tabernacle, October 6, 1943, and interment followed at Fort Hill Cemetery, Cleveland, Tennessee.

Four children: Halcy Olive, Homer Aubry, Iris Marea, Milton Ambrose.

MARY JANE (TAYLOR) TOMLINSON—Born November 2, 1868, Rush County, near Carthage, Indiana. Christian at early

age, joined the Church of God in August (September) 1903. Baptized with Holy Ghost August 21, 1908. Was a fine Christian, and a "Martha" of the age. Died at home, 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee, March 22, 1945. Buried at Fort Hill Cemetery, Cleveland, Tennessee, March 25, 1945, Sunday afternoon.

HALCY OLIVE TOMLINSON—Born March 28, 1891, Westfield, Indiana. Baptized with Holy Ghost August 10, 1908. Married Horace D. Hughes November 30, 1911. A chaste Christian, faultless. Died January 14, 1920 at Chattanooga, Tennessee in childbirth. Buried with her baby January 16, 1920, at Cleveland, Tennessee.

HOMER AUBRY TOMLINSON—Born October 25, 1892, Westfield, Indiana. Baptized with Holy Ghost August 18, 1908. Married Marie Wunch November 22, 1919. World War I veteran, minister, bishop, overseer. Died December 4, 1968 at home in Queens Village, New York. Buried December 8, 1968, following funeral at 3:00 p.m.

Children: Jess and Homer E.

IRIS MAREA TOMLINSON—Born January 8, 1895, Westfield, Indiana. Baptized with Holy Ghost July 23, 1909. Married Avery Denver Evans June 16, 1920. Good Christian, personnel manager and cashier at White Wing Publishing House. Died April 20, 1953, at home on Poplar Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. Buried at Fort Hill Cemetery, April 21, 1953.

Children: Denver A. Evans.

MILTON AMBROSE TOMLINSON—Born October 19, 1906, 2525 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. Baptised with the Holy Ghost April, 14, 1927. Married Ina Mae Turner (of Cleveland, Tennessee) September 18, 1928—ceremony by A. J. Tomlinson at the Assembly. Deacon, pastor, bishop—ordained October 13, 1943. Selected to serve in capacity of General Overseer, October 7, 1943, which position he now serves.

Children: Wanda Jean and Carolyn Joy.

JESS TOMLINSON—Born April 12, 1923 at Queens Village, New York. Married Kathrine Jaremko, November 14, 1942. Ceremony by father Homer A. Tomlinson.

HOMER E. TOMLINSON—Born July 1, 1926, Queens Village, New York. Married Freda Wollwerth January 8, 1949. Ceremony by father Homer A. Tomlinson.

DENVER AVERY EVANS—Born May 12, 1929, Cleveland, Tennessee. Married Barbara Lee Phillips, Ringgold, Georgia, July



Here is the Tomlinson Family as of 1939. Reading from left to right, front row: Iris Marea (Tomlinson) Evans, Marie (Wunch) Tomlinson, Ina Mae (Turner) Tomlinson, Wanda Jean Tomlinson, A. J. Tomlinson, Mary Jane (Taylor) Tomlinson. Standing, left to right: Avery D. Evans, Milton A. Tomlinson, Denver A. Evans, Homer E. Tomlinson, Jess Tomlinson and Homer A. Tomlinson.

23, 1950. Ceremony by S. O. Gillaspie.

WANDA JEAN TOMLINSON—Born January 12, 1931, Cleveland, Tennessee. Married Hugh Ralph Edwards January 21, 1950 (At Wildwood Avenue Church) Cleveland, Tennessee. Ceremony by C. T. Davidson.

Children: Michael and Vicky.

CAROLYN JOY TOMLINSON—Born December 18, 1943, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Married Verlin Thornton October 2, 1962.

Children: Becky.

It is with great admiration and respect that we list the members of this family, their families and their families' families that readers may acquaint themselves with them to some extent. They ribbon their way through the masses of mankind toward a goal that shall glisten like the thousands of stars of the firmament—the goal where nothing but ultra-happiness reigns. May God bless them!

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This writer and the publishers solicit the courtesies expected of other writers and publishers who endeavor to share like privileges for limited reference quotations. If we have failed to give a "bi-line" of reference in any place it is unintentional, and please indulge our errors. By no means does the listing of reference books indicate we have quoted from all of them; they have been read, or used as support references, and much valuable source material has been obtained by a perusal of them.

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