

THE PLAIN TRUTH

a magazine of understanding

COMBINED ISSUE
JUNE-JULY 1979



Showdown Over Namibia

WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED SINCE
MR. ARMSTRONG'S OFFICIAL VISIT IN 1977?



Personal from...

Now It Must Be Revealed— How the Worldwide Church of God Began

Now it must be revealed—the true story of how Jesus Christ prepared His servant far in advance—then called him in poverty and hunger—and the history of the struggle to raise up this era of God's Church in financial stress and on sheer living FAITH!

As a young man, I had been successful in the advertising profession, earning, while still in my twenties, an income comparable to \$150,000 a year today.

I was then unconverted and proud—ambitious and full of self-confidence. I did not then know Jesus Christ as personal Savior, Lord and Master and coming King!

The living Christ well knew that before He could effectively use me, I had to be humbled, subdued, CONQUERED by Him. I know now that God had guided my life *from the beginning*, preparing His future servant for His purpose—even as He had prepared Moses, Job, Paul and others, in advance. Even in my birth, rearing, and early business life, He was guiding me.

When I was age 16, my employer in my first summer job away from home sparked in me the flame of AMBITION to make something of my life—and with it, the willingness and determination to work hard and pay the price of success.

When I was 18, a book called *Choosing a Vocation* put me through a self-analysis, leading me to choose the advertising profession.

I had developed an intense driving energy. I studied nights, learned by experience during the day.

By age 25 I was well established, with my own office in Chicago's downtown Loop, as a successful publisher's representative in the banking field. My business contacts were with officers of the nation's great banks on South LaSalle Street and on Wall Street in New York—and with presidents and board chairmen of many Midwest industrial corporations.

I was married at age 25 to the wife I was later to know God had selected for me—a marriage that lasted 50 years—until death did part us. She was the help I needed.

But a flash depression in 1920—when I was 28—put my major clients (industrial corporations) into receivership. Ninety percent of my income was lost in that depression.

But I had acquired the business training which was later to be needed in the Work of the living Christ. And I had become proud. God did not make His calling known to me at that stage. First, Christ took me through a humbling experience. By 1926 I was in Portland, Oregon, reduced to poverty, hunger, wearing threadbare clothes. Then a pair of supremely important challenges came. God's time had come to call me.

I was taken through the humiliating experience of finding that everything I had believed, or perhaps better stated, taken for granted, about God and the Bible was proven wrong. By spring 1927, my mind had been swept clean of the religious beliefs I had carelessly assumed, and Jesus Christ had come into my life. Self-confidence was replaced with a living FAITH. I was in desperate financial straits. I had taken a real beating. I had been CONQUERED by Christ Jesus. I repented, was baptized and a totally new life begotten within me.

When I was baptized in the spring of 1927, I received the supreme gift of God's Holy Spirit. God's TRUTH was being opened to me. God had now called me and put me in His Work.

I was used by Jesus Christ, in 1933, in raising up the parent church of the Worldwide Church of God. I had hitchhiked—or walked—to hold services in a one-room country schoolhouse eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon. My one pair of shoes had holes in the soles. I said, in humor, "I have a suit for every day of the week—and this is it!" My wife was wearing her younger sister's cast-off clothes. Our children had been sent to school hungry. It was then the midst of the Great Depression. Church brethren took up a collection to buy me a new suit of clothes.

But now GOD was using me! I had started broadcasting at a cost of \$2.50 (Continued on page 38)

Part Five:

7 PROOFS OF GOD'S TRUE CHURCH

Where is the one and only true Church today—the Church founded by Jesus Christ in A.D. 31? Seven major eye-opening proofs identify it unmistakably.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

The first five proofs of the true Church appeared in the February, March, April, and May Plain Truths. This installment continues with proof number six.

Proof Six:

WHAT AND WHY THE CHURCH?

When we come to the question, **WHAT** and **WHY** is the Church, it is indeed astonishing that the one original true Church of God, still extant after 1,900 years of persecution, opposition, martyrdom, remains **UNIQUE** in having the answer.

The real **PURPOSE** and function of the Church is as little understood as the knowledge of who and what God is, what and why **MAN** is, what was the gospel of Jesus Christ, the government of God and His supreme creative achievement—holy righteous **CHARACTER**.

Isn't it incongruous? Man invents numerous religions for the worship of God—yet doesn't know **WHO** or **WHAT** God is. Man does not know what **HE** is! Or **WHY**! Seven hundred million who do not know the purpose or function of the church join "Christian" churches!

True, indeed it is, that the whole world has been **DECEIVED**!

Church Error Number One

The first and most widespread false belief in this world's churches is the assumption that this is God's world—that God is desperately trying to get everybody "saved," while Satan is trying to *keep* everybody "lost." If that is true, Satan is surely winning that battle!

But 1) God is **NOT** trying to "get everybody saved" spiritually, *now*! And 2) those uncalled are **NOT** "lost"—just not judged—**YET**!

We need first to understand the world out from which God's Church has been called to be a separate, holy people.

Let me restate it briefly. The first

man Adam was given two **MUSTS**: 1) to *reject* Satan's way of "GET" and 2) to give himself to God's way of "GIVE"—the way of God's law—out-flowing **LOVE**, thus developing the holy, righteous **CHARACTER** to *qualify* to restore the government of God on earth.

But Adam rejected God's way. He rejected God as the Source of basic knowledge and as the God to be worshiped and obeyed.

But let it *now* be emphasized that when God sentenced man, on Adam's choice, to 6,000 years of being *cut off* from God, the Eternal retained the prerogative of specially calling to Himself those He chose for special service. And, **ALWAYS**—in every case—those specially called *were called for a mission* **PREPARATORY TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD**!

Understand this! Everyone God called was chosen for a special mission **PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD**!

God is no respecter of persons. He called no "favorites" merely to bestow upon them His gift of eternal

salvation. Each has been called for service to prepare for the KINGDOM OF GOD.

BUT, understand *this* also: That special mission or service to which each called-out one has been chosen was GOD'S MEANS of developing in him the holy, righteous CHARACTER to QUALIFY him to reign and rule with and under Christ in God's KINGDOM—in THE WORLD TOMORROW!

In ancient Old Testament Israel only the prophets were called in this sense. The Holy Spirit was never made available to others in Old Testament Israel. The purpose for the special calling of that nation has been covered in proof number four.

Remember, God creates in DUAL stages. The first stage of man's creation was the *physical* stage. It began with Adam. The second phase of man's creation is the spiritual phase and begins with Christ.

As a group or nation, Israel was called under the physical stage of man's creation. The SPIRITUAL stage began through Christ with righteous Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets in Israel. But as a *group-calling*, the Church of God begins the spiritual phase.

The Church was called for a very special PURPOSE in preparation for the KINGDOM—a purpose not fully realized from the first century until the present generation.

Adam's Creation Not Complete

The first Adam, formed altogether from the dust of the ground, was given a spirit to empower the human brain with intellect. This was explained fully in proof number three. But he was *incomplete*—he was created to *need* also a *second* Spirit—the Holy Spirit of God. Old Testament Israel was not given God's Holy Spirit.

Man, possessing only the one "human spirit," is, truly, "*not all there*"—yet he is unaware of the fact. He is a natural-born carnal person. He has only the physical, carnal mind.

And what says God of the carnal mind? It is hostile against God and not subject to the law of God, "... neither indeed can be" (Romans

8:7). Also, as Jeremiah explained, this natural carnal mind is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). Hundreds of years of Old Testament Israelitish experience proved this! They were given God's revealed knowledge which was hidden from other nations, yet they rebelled and sinned even above other nations!

The World into Which Jesus Came

It was into such a world—and to such a people (Judah)—that Jesus came. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

First, before teaching or preaching His gospel of the Kingdom, Jesus had to QUALIFY to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD and establish the KINGDOM OF GOD. In the most titanic battle ever fought for the greatest stakes in the universe, Jesus overcame Satan, rejected Satan's "GET" way, proved 100 percent obedient and loyal to God (Matthew 4:1-11).

He called and chose the disciples He trained to be His apostles.

Then He said, "... Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell [the grave] shall not prevail against it. And I will give *unto thee* [His chief apostle] 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 16:18-19). Plainly Jesus was speaking to one man, His chief apostle, when He spoke of binding and loosing—not to the Church.

For 3½ years Jesus taught His apostles-to-be about the Kingdom of God.

Church Members Must Qualify

The first Adam, in order to qualify to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD on earth, had to overcome Satan—Satan's way ("GET")—and prove obedient to God. Adam failed.

Christ, the second Adam, had to qualify by overcoming Satan and proving loyalty to God and God's way. He QUALIFIED!

Each one in the Church must also qualify in order to sit on Christ's throne with Him! "And he that over-

cometh [Satan], and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron..." (Revelation 2:26-27). Again, "To him that overcometh [Satan] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame [Satan], and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

I have shown that the whole world, except those specially called by God, is CUT OFF from God—cut off from access to Him who has eternal life to give. Jesus CONFIRMED THAT plainly and definitely. He said, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..." (John 6:44). No scripture can or does nullify that! All others are CUT OFF from God. No one of them CAN COME to Christ!

The Church of God Founded

Jesus was crucified, resurrected after three days and three nights in the tomb (another incidental proof of the one true Church), and after 40 days ascended to the right hand of God in heaven.

Then, on the day of the Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost), A.D. 31, God sent the Holy Spirit in an amazing display, founding His Church!

The number of disciples who still believed after Jesus' 3½ years of preaching was a mere 120 (Acts 1:15).

"... 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 Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-3).

I have purposely emphasized certain words in this scripture, because it was a ONE-TIME-ONLY incident. It never occurred before. It never has since. Modern "Pentecostal" meetings and "tongues speaking" are emphatically not the same thing at all.

Notice carefully! First, they were all *of one accord*—something often
(Continued on page 43)

PART EIGHT:



THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY



America and Britain are going down—but why? Why are these nations losing strength, will, prestige? Is it just due to the natural flow of world history, or is it because they have rejected the source of all the blessings that have been showered down upon them? Bible prophecy foretells what will happen to America and Britain—and humanity in general—unless we repent!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

How great, how powerful, and how wealthy did the British and American people become? And what is suddenly happening to us now? Why has Britain already *lost* most of her colonies—her possessions—her resources, wealth, power and influence in the world? Why is Britain no longer considered Great Britain—a GREAT world power?

Why is the United States now discredited, despised, hated throughout so much of the world? Why could we not *win* the Korean War? Why couldn't the United States whip little North Vietnam?

First, realize just how great—how rich and powerful—the American and British people did become.

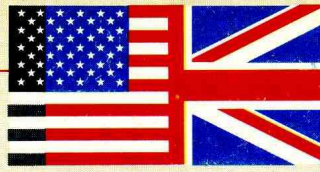
People are prone to take their status—and that of their country—for granted. Few realize what unprecedented affluence our countries enjoyed. We judge all things by *comparison*. The average Briton, Australian or Canadian has never traveled through the illiterate, poverty-stricken, disease-infested backward areas of China, India, the Middle East or black Africa. He has not observed the squalor, the stench, the poverty and wretchedness in which the largest part of mankind lives.

Nor has the average American visited those vast underprivileged areas, nor even the countries of Europe—prosperous compared to the teeming illiterate masses, yet poor by comparison to American standards. No, our people generally have not realized. Nor have they been grateful. Nor have they given God thanks, nor accepted the responsibility that accompanies their lavish blessings.

Few realize that every desired, prized possession imposes with it the obligation of responsibility for its use. Does the eight-year-old boy who is given a shiny new bicycle by his parents feel a consciousness for the responsibility imposed on him—unless the fact is impressed on him by his parents—for the *care* of it, and the carefulness with which he must ride it to avoid injuring himself or others?

When God lavished on our peoples such wealth and power and economic possession as no peoples have ever before enjoyed, did we appreciate what we had or feel the commensurate sense of RESPONSIBILITY for its wise and proper use?

WE DID NOT! We didn't even recognize HOW GREAT was our blessing, let alone feel a sense of obligation for our



custodianship before our Maker! Just HOW GREAT, then, was this birthright blessing?

The Birthright Wealth

Read again the prophetic promises of Genesis 22:17.

To Abraham God said: "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."

And again, the inspired prophetic parting blessing upon Rebekah, leaving her family to become the wife of Isaac: "And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them" (Gen. 24:60).

Earlier we quoted the correct Fenton translation: "... and your race shall possess the gates [plural] of its enemies." As explained there, the "gates" of enemy nations are the strategic SEA GATES of entrance to or exit from these nations. Although all wealth comes from the ground, prosperity and affluence on a national scale always have come also by industry and COMMERCE. And commerce between nations has been transacted almost altogether by the SEA-LANES of the world—by SHIPS, and, within a continent, by railroads.

How significant, then, that Robert Fulton operated the first steamboat in 1803—precisely when Britain and America suddenly began to MULTIPLY in national wealth! And also that it was the nineteenth century that saw the development of the railroads!

As explained before, since the birthright pertains to NATIONS, the "GATE" of our enemies would be such passes as Gibraltar, Suez, Singapore, the Panama Canal, etc.

Britain and America came into possession of every such major "gate" in this world! So we MUST be modern Israel. World War II hinged on these "gates." They had become not only strategic passes, but the world's greatest fortifications. But today, we have lost most of them, most recently, the Panama Canal—and it appears that soon Gibraltar, too, will be lost. Why?

Notice Genesis 39:2, 23: "The Eternal was with Joseph, and he was a PROSPEROUS man. . . . the Eternal was with him, and that which he did, the Eternal made it to PROSPER." And God *did* prosper Joseph's descendants, Britain and America, with the fabulous birthright promised Joseph's sons!

Consider Moses' dying prophetic blessing, foretelling what would happen to each of the tribes in these latter days.

"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof . . . let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph [Ephraim and Manasseh both] . . . His glory is like the firstling [firstborn—birthright holder] of his *bullock*, and his horns are like *the horns of unicorns* [Great Britain's national seal today]: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh" (Deut. 33:13-17).

Whoever is Ephraim and Manasseh today must have been in possession of the earth's choicest agricultural, mineral, and other wealth—the great gold and silver mines; iron, oil, and coal; timber and other resources.

What nations fulfill these prophecies? Why, *only* Great Britain and America!

More than half of all tillable, cultivatable, temperate-zone lands of this earth came after A.D. 1800 into the possession of our two great powers alone! The rich agricultural lands of the Mississippi Valley; the vast wheat and grain fields of the Midwest, of Canada and Australia; the great forest lands of the Pacific Northwest and many other parts of the world; the gold fields of South Africa, Australia, Alaska and the United States; the great coal mines of the United States and British Isles; the natural waterfalls and means of power and consequent prosperous industrial and manufacturing districts of England and the eastern United States; the choicest fruit lands of our Pacific Coast and Florida. What other nations *combined* ever possessed such material wealth?

And nearly all this wealth came to us after A.D. 1800!

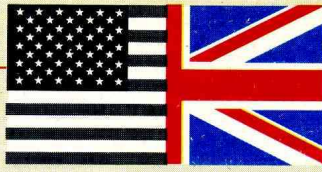
The Actual Statistics

Just to what extent has Almighty God fulfilled His promises *in us* to the descendants of Joseph in these latter years since A.D. 1800—promises of "the precious fruits brought forth by the sun . . . the chief things of the ancient mountains . . . and the precious things of the earth"?

Said Charles M. Schwab, steel magnate, before the Massachusetts Bankers Association, January 5, 1921: "Our United States has been endowed by God with everything to make it and keep it the foremost industrial and commercial nation of the world."

World petroleum output in 1950 was almost 3,800 million barrels. Of this total the United States *alone* produced more than one-half—nearly 52%. Together, the British Commonwealth and the United States produced 60% of the crude petroleum, not including our vast foreign investments. But by 1966—the fateful year in which the British Colonial Office in London closed its doors, marking the official death of the British Empire—that 60% of all the world's crude petroleum output had been reduced to 32%.

Britain and America mined 1½ times as much coal as all other nations combined. But by 1966 our portion had shrunk to less than one-third of the world production—30.9%!



Together, the British Commonwealth and America produced, in 1950, three-fourths of the world's steel—the United States alone producing almost 60% or 105,200,000 short tons in 1951. We produced 1½ times as much pig iron as all other nations combined.

By 1966, this basic index of wealth had skidded down to one-third (33.6%) of steel production and only 17.8% (one-sixth) of the pig iron.

We possessed nearly 95% of the world's nickel (chiefly from Canada); 80% of the world's aluminum; 75% of the zinc. But where did we rate in 1966? Only 3.6% of the world's nickel; 40.2% of its aluminum (aluminium); 12.4% of its zinc.

In 1950, the British Commonwealth completely dominated the production of chromite (from South Africa). Together Britain and America produced two-thirds of the world's rubber, and dominated the world's copper, lead, tin, bauxite and other precious metal outputs. But by 1966, we produced only 2.3% of the world's chromite, 23.4% of its copper, 9.9% of its lead, no tin, and 6.3% of its bauxite.

The British Commonwealth produced two-thirds of the world's gold—about £266,000,000 (\$642 million) in 1950—while the United States had three times as much gold reserve as the total for the rest of the world. But by 1966 the U.S. gold supply had been drained so much that the dollar was in serious jeopardy.

We produced and utilized two-thirds of the world's output of electricity—the United States producing 283 thousand million kilowatt-hours in 1948, and the United Kingdom and Canada outstripping Russia, Germany and France combined. But by 1966 we produced only 20.1%!

Great Britain and the United States *did* possess well over half of the world's merchant fleet tonnage. But by 1966 the figure was only 32.5%. The British Isles constructed more vessels than any other place on earth. But less than two decades later two or three Gentile nations had already outstripped Britain and America. In 1950, we also possessed about one-half of the world's railroad mileage. By 1966 our combined railway freight shipping was only 26% of the world total.

Whereas the United States alone once produced 73% of the automobiles, by 1966 the U.S. combined with the U.K. produced 55%—44% from the U.S. alone. Japan, Germany, France, and Italy are making huge gains.

How Did We Get It?

How did we come into possession of all this vast wealth of the earth? Did we acquire it through our own human wisdom, foresight, energy, ability and power?

Let Abraham Lincoln answer: “We *find ourselves* in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth, as regards fertility of soil, extent of territory, and salubrity of climate. . . . We . . . *find ourselves* the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. *We toiled not in the acquirement or the establishment of them.*”

Again, in his proclamation of April 30, 1863, for a nationwide day of fasting and prayer, this great President said: “It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God . . . and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations *only* are blessed whose God is the Lord We have been the recipients of the choicest blessings of heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power *as no other nation ever has grown*; BUT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN GOD! We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.”

And because Lincoln saw a nation who had forgotten God—a nation drunk with a success not due to its own efforts—a nation taking all the credit and glory to itself, this great president called upon the nation for a day of fasting and prayer to confess this national sin before God. The fate of the nation hung in the balance when he issued that proclamation. But God heard and answered that great national prayer offensive—and the nation was then preserved!

But today the threat to our fate is a thousand times more seriously hanging in the balance. And today we do not have a president or a prime minister with the vision, understanding and courage to bring our nations to their knees!

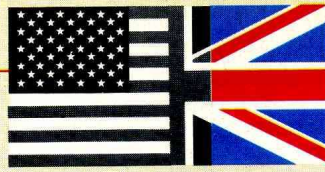
Abraham Lincoln *knew* these great material blessings had not been earned, but had been *given* to our people by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel.

And we should face the facts today and *know* that we were given all this vast unprecedented material wealth because God *promised* it, unconditionally, to Abraham. And He promised it to Abraham because Abraham obeyed God, kept God's laws and commandments.

The birthright blessing was *denied* our forefathers after Moses' day because they *REFUSED* to live by God's laws.

And today God warns us, through many prophecies in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Micah, and many others, that unless we of this generation *REPENT* of our sins, and turn to Him with fasting, and with weeping, and earnest *PRAYER*, He will destroy our cities, all our fortresses, with the foreign sword; that He will punish us at the hand of a *CRUEL ONE*; that we shall be invaded, defeated, reduced to *SLAVES!* *GOD HELP US TO HEED THAT WARNING!*

In conclusion, we ask: If *we* are not national Israel—the so-called “lost” Ten Tribes—prosperous Joseph-Israel—birthright Israel—actual inheritors of the birthright blessings which were to be bestowed beginning A.D. 1803, then who else can be? No other nation or combination of nations possessed these blessings of the birthright—for we held more than two-thirds—nearly three-fourths—of all the raw materials, resources, and wealth of this entire



round earth, and all other nations combined shared among them only a small part.

Do you know of *stronger proof* of the divine inspiration of the Holy Bible as the revealed Word of the living God? Could mortal men have written, without divine inspiration, those prophecies we have considered in this series; made those PROMISES to Joseph-Israel; and, after a lapse of 2520 years, beginning the exact years of 1800-1803, have had power to bring them about in fulfillment? These are no small or trifling promises. They involve possession of the great wealth and vast natural resources of the whole earth.

Present these facts as a challenge to your atheistic and agnostic friends. Ask them to answer, if they can, whether any but the power of the Eternal Creator Himself could have made and had committed to writing such promises thousands of years ago, and, at precisely the promised time thousands of years later, brought about their fulfillment!

How any American—any English-speaking inheritor of God's choicest material blessings—can, in the face of such stupendous, overwhelming fulfillment of prophecy—such awe-inspiring demonstration of the power and might and faithfulness of Almighty God—accept and partake of these blessings, and then carelessly ignore God's WARNING that our sins today are INCREASING, or fail to get to his knees before the great Almighty, repent, and INTERCEDE in heartrending PRAYER for all Israelite nations, and HELP in every way he can to warn our people now of their impending PERIL, seems impossible to conceive.

The Prophecies for the Immediate Future

The birthright, once we received it, was stupendous, AWESOME—unequaled among nations or empires! But what have our peoples done with that awesome blessing?

They were still ISRAELITES, even though they themselves knew it not! They were still rebellious, “stiff-necked,” stubborn!

Once the British peoples and the Americans—the “lost” Israelites now supposing they are Gentiles—found themselves basking in the pleasant sunshine of such wealth and power, they were less willing than their ancient forefathers to yield to their GOD and HIS WAYS. They felt no need of Him, now! It seems few ever turn to God until they find themselves in desperate need or trouble.

But after God had withheld the birthright 2520 years, and then, when our peoples deserved *nothing* from God, He *suddenly* bestowed on us national blessings unparalleled in history—the unconditional promise to Abraham was kept! *No longer* is God obligated by His promise to *continue* our undeserving peoples in world prestige, wealth and greatness. Once we had been *given* such unrivaled position, it was up to us whether we should keep it.

So now back to Leviticus 26. We had previously covered verses 1 through 18. God said that IF, for all these

previous punishments, the Israelites would not listen to and obey Him, He would punish them the duration of 2520 years. Then what?

If, after that 2520 years of *withholding* the birthright, our people—with the birthright—still rebel, God continues, *verse 19*: “And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass.” God has already begun that!

We Had Pride in Our Power!

God could not speak about breaking the pride of our national POWER until after that birthright power had been bestowed! He put our nations in the position of possessing the greatest national power any nation or empire ever possessed. We had great *pride* in that national power—in our national prestige.

I remember hearing President Theodore Roosevelt tell of HIS PRIDE in that power—and how he used it when he was president. The Germans were sending a battleship steaming toward Manila Bay, threatening to take over the Philippines. The Philippines were then a United States possession. President Roosevelt sent the kaiser a terse note demanding that the German warship be immediately withdrawn.

“The kaiser didn't know, then, that *I meant it!*” snapped Mr. Roosevelt. “So I sent another note. Only, I didn't send this second note to the kaiser. I sent it to Admiral Dewey, in command of the United States Pacific fleet. It ordered the entire fleet to steam full speed toward the German battleship, and if it did not turn around and go back, to SINK IT!” said Mr. Roosevelt with emphatic *force!* In those days, before World War I, we had *pride* in our national power!

... But We Lost It!

Today even little nations dare to insult, trample on, or burn the United States flag—and the United States, still having power, does no more than issue a weak protest! What's *happened* to the PRIDE of our power?

We have already LOST IT! God said, “I will break the pride of your power!” And HE DID!

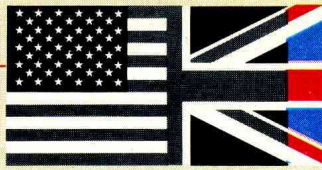
Other prophecies reveal we are to have soon such drought and famine that disease epidemics will follow, taking millions of lives. When our heaven is as iron, our earth as brass, we will realize rain does not come down from iron, and an earth hard as brass is not getting rain, not yielding food!

Verse 20: “And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.”

But will America and Britain *heed?* They never have! Then what? After all that, THEN WHAT?

Verse 21: “And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring *seven times more plagues* upon you according to your sins.”

There again, as in verse 18, is that Hebrew word



shibah. Actually, in the Hebrew in which Moses wrote, there are not the two Hebrew words, one meaning “seven” and the other “times.” There is just the one word, *shibah*.

As explained in the last installment, the word is defined as “seven times,” and also as “sevenfold.” The “seven times” conveys *duration* of punishment. The “sevenfold” meaning of the same word conveys *intensity* of punishment.

Now More Intense Punishment

Because of its use and construction in the sentence, and because of what actually happened, it is certain that in verse 18 this Hebrew word *shibah* refers to DURATION of punishment—seven prophetic times, which, during this punishment, was an actual 2520 YEARS!

But also, because of the very *different* sentence structure and because there cannot now be *another* 2520-year WITHHOLDING of what has now been bestowed, it is just as certain that the *shibah* in verse 21 refers to a sevenfold INTENSITY of punishment.

Notice, the wording in verse 21 is entirely different from verse 18. This time it is not worded “seven times more for your sins,” but “seven times more PLAGUES.” The expression “seven times” in verse 21 is descriptive of PLAGUES to be brought on them.

So now, if twentieth-century Ephraim and Manasseh—Britain and America—refuse to turn to God in obedience—refuse to live the way that *causes*, retains, and increases blessings, God will punish them in a manner far more INTENSE—and even strip entirely from them this colossal, unprecedented national blessing—returning them to captivity and slavery—as continuing verses of this prophecy show.

Do you think so great a fall could not come to so great powers as Britain and America? Do you say, “It *can't* happen HERE?” Do you think the GREAT GOD who was able to GIVE them such unprecedented world leadership and power and wealth is not able to take it away from them and throw them, like their ancient forefathers, back into SLAVERY?

You need to OPEN YOUR EYES to the *fact* that Britain’s sun *already* has SET! You need to WAKE UP to the *fact* that the United States, even still possessing unmatched POWER, is *afraid*—fears—to *use it*, just as God said: “I will break the PRIDE of your POWER”; that the United States has *stopped winning wars*—that America was *unable*, with all its vast power, to conquer little North Vietnam! The United States is fast riding to the GREATEST FALL that ever befell any nation!

The handwriting is on the wall!

You need, now, to UNDERSTAND the *remainder* of this prophecy of Leviticus 26—and also of Deuteronomy 28—and the many other prophecies relating to them and events soon to VIOLENTLY affect YOUR life!

You need to look at the prophecies of Jesus, of Jere-

miah, of Isaiah, and others describing how much more intense is to be the punishment God is going to lay on the British and American people.

For MANY prophecies warn us of a CERTAINTY that it will be trouble such as NEVER happened to any nation or people!

Knowing our identity—knowing *how* the British and American peoples are identified in the prophecies—you need now to become AWARE of what is said about us in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Hosea, Amos, and the other prophecies—*what* JESUS *foretold*—as well as in these prophecies written by Moses!

Why This Intensity of Punishment

And you need, also, to know why a just and loving God is going to punish His chosen people—people He *chose* for a glorious PURPOSE they have refused to perform.

The very *fact* of punishment implies CORRECTION. We need to understand that correction is applied to correct WRONG WAYS harmful to *us*—to turn us around into RIGHT WAYS that will *cause* desired blessings! Understand! God *punishes* every son He *loves* (Heb. 12:6).

Understand also human nature! Human nature wants to *be* good—to consider itself and *be* considered *good*, while it wants only to *do* evil. It wants the good *result*. But it wants to receive the *good* while it sows the evil. It somehow fails to grasp the truth that *as* we sow, so also shall we reap! It’s all a matter of CAUSE and EFFECT!

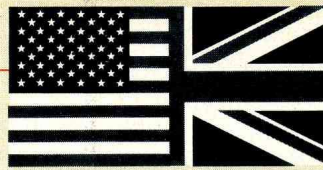
God’s punishment only reflects God’s LOVE—turning us from *causing* evil results to the way that brings *happy* results! God is now about to STOP US from bringing colossal evils on ourselves! God is not angry because we are harming HIM—but because we are harming *ourselves*—whom God *loves*!

Punishment Is Correction

The prophecies do not stop with revealing the unprecedented multiplied *intensity* of punishment already beginning to descend upon America and Britain. The prophecies record also the RESULT of that intensified punishment. The *result* will be a corrected people. The result will be an eye-opening realization of what we have done to ourselves. The supreme punishment will teach us, at last, our lesson! The punishment will *break* our spirit of REBELLION! It will lift us up from the cesspool of rottenness and evil into which we have sunk. It will teach us the way to glorious peace, prosperity, happiness, abundant well-being!

On beyond the frightful national calamities now descending upon us will come a BLESSING inconceivably greater than the national material birthright we have possessed.

We have to learn that material goods are not the SOURCE of happiness. I have often mentioned the many rich men I have known—men whose bank balances were full—but their lives were empty! Material prosperity is indeed desirable—but it is not the source of happiness.



After all, real happiness is a *spiritual* commodity! The birthright was only one of TWO major promises God made to Abraham. The sceptre promise involved not only a dynasty of human kings. It need not have included them at all—had the Israelites retained and been obedient to GOD as their King. The sceptre pointed primarily to CHRIST and spiritual salvation through Him.

Our peoples have basic lessons yet to learn. The TRUE VALUES are spiritual. Actually, God's law is a spiritual law. It involves physical acts—but it is based on *spiritual* principles. And it requires God's Holy Spirit dwelling in the mind to fulfill!

PUNISHMENT implies CORRECTION. Correction means a change of course. It means REPENTANCE—and repentance means *turning around* and going the OTHER WAY!

Now, before I give you these sensational prophecies, understand WHY national punishment must come, and *who needs* the correction! ONLY those who are sowing EVIL need it—who are transgressing God's right WAYS—God's law! Those, and only those, who are bringing on themselves the evils that result from transgression.

And UNDERSTAND THIS: Although the NATIONS as a whole are to be put through this unprecedented punishment, yet those *individuals* who yield to accept God's correction *without the punishment* shall be protected from it! No one need suffer this intense tribulation!

Sevenfold More Plagues

Now notice again what is laid down in Leviticus 26.

After the national birthright had been withheld 2520 years and *then* bestowed; *after* God gave our peoples that national POWER, and has now, because of our national rebellion against His laws, *broken* the pride of our power; *after* He shall have punished us with unprecedented DROUGHT and epidemics of disease in its wake, then IF the British and Americans still continue in their evil ways—still refuse to repent and turn to their God—He warns: “. . . I will bring seven times more PLAGUES upon you according to your sins.” Read that in the Revised Standard Version: “. . . I will bring more plagues upon you, sevenfold as many as your sins” (verse 21).

What people do not seem to realize is that SIN does bring upon the sinner the *consequences* of sin—the plagues of suffering. The Bible defines sin as the transgression of God's law (I John 3:4), and the law of God is a *spiritual* law (Rom. 7:14).

Material Goods Not Enough

Let's understand this! I have said that *money* is not the source of happiness. Money can buy only material things or services. But there must be the *spiritual* content, as well as the physical, to happiness. Material things *alone* do not provide satisfying happiness. God's law is a *spiritual* law. In other words, it is THE WAY to peace, happiness, abundant well-being. Going that way is what God supplied to CAUSE real happiness.

Conversely, then, can we not see that transgressing that way is to cause *unhappiness*, pain and suffering, emptiness, heartaches, fears and worries, frustrations? All these *evils* are *caused* by transgressing God's law. The sinner is really *plagued* with these evils he brings on himself.

Now study again that 21st verse of Leviticus 26. Punishment is CORRECTION. To *teach* us the lesson we have failed to learn by experience, God is going to plague our peoples SEVENFOLD more than our sins already *have* plagued us—sevenfold *more* punishment than we have brought on ourselves!

Or, as the Authorized Version says, “seven times more plagues upon you *according to your sins*.” Sevenfold INTENSITY of punishment—OF CORRECTION!

Slavery Once Again

Notice now verses 23-25 (RSV): “And if by this discipline you are not turned to me, but walk contrary to me, then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will smite you sevenfold for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you . . . and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.”

SLAVERY once again!

Get the real meaning of this! Our SINS have brought punishment. This punishment we have brought on ourselves. If we still refuse to learn the lesson, and be corrected for our own good, God says, “I myself will smite you sevenfold.” We have brought the consequences of SIN on ourselves—now God will Himself bring on us sevenfold more intense punishment—punishment that is CORRECTION!

Now read on to verse 27 (RSV): “And if in spite of this you will not hearken to me, but walk contrary to me, then I will walk contrary to you *in fury* [the seven last plagues—Rev. 15:1], and chastise you *myself* sevenfold for your sins. . . . And I will LAY YOUR CITIES WASTE. . . . And I will scatter you among the nations.”

God is going to keep multiplying chastening—correction—upon our peoples *until* they *do* turn from their evil ways—until they turn *to* the ways that *cause* peace, happiness, prosperity, all the *good things*!

How UNTHINKABLE!—that our Maker shall have to *force* our peoples to be happy, to have peace, to be able to *enjoy* prosperity, to yield, to accept—our own choice—*eternal life* in abundant well-being and JOY for all eternity!

How UNBELIEVABLE!—that human nature, *desiring* these blessings, has insisted stubbornly in going the way that cuts them off and *causes* PUNISHMENT—CORRECTION—and then refuses to *be* corrected until it is MULTIPLIED in *intensity sevenfold*! Yes, sevenfold—three successive times!

How GREAT is our God—and WHAT LOVE for our peoples He expresses, in patiently tolerating and correcting us UNTIL we accept His boundless BLESSINGS! □

(To Be Continued)

Personal from...

(Continued from page 1)

per week for radio time. The money came BY FAITH! Everything, from that time, came by living FAITH.

God gave miraculous answers to fervent prayer. The sick—even cancer victims—were being healed.

No operation could have started smaller. But God blessed it, and it grew at the rate of 30 percent per year for 35 years.

In 1947 God used me in founding Ambassador College—on sheer FAITH! The Church of God began to GROW—steadily.

I had to realize God was dealing with me, in principle, as He had dealt with Job. God allowed Satan to take away every material thing Job had to bring him to God—but then, after Job was humbled and brought to repentance, God DOUBLED Job's former wealth—and he had been the greatest and wealthiest man in the East.

Also my experience resembled that of the apostle Paul, in principle.

And now, 46 years after the founding of the present era of the true Church of God, the ever-living Christ continues to give me severe tests of faith.

As God's Church, then named the Radio Church of God, began to grow, God led me to incorporate it in such a manner that I would always be UNABLE to profit financially from its growth.

It is doubtful whether any institution in human history started from as humble and small beginnings. When GOD starts something on His power alone, it is BIG from the beginning. For example, the creation of the UNIVERSE—the creation of the earth. But when God starts something through humans, it usually, like the grain of mustard seed, starts the very smallest and most humble, and then grows as the spiritual character of the human develops.

I had rejected a salary of \$3 per week prior to the start of the Worldwide Church of God. As for me and my family, we received almost *no* financial aid at our beginning in God's service. It was, indeed, a Work of FAITH. I trusted God in faith to

supply the need. We paid \$5 per month house rent. I had to pay \$2.50 per week at the radio station—in advance—before every broadcast. God was supplying the need as He promised (Phil. 4:19).

One Sunday morning dawned without even the \$2.50 for the Sunday morning broadcast. My wife and I knelt in prayer, asking God to supply the need. I was aroused from prayer by a knock on the front door. A man at the door said, "Here's my tithe," and dashed off, saying he had to hurry for an appointment.

Another Sunday morning when I did not have the \$2.50 on hand, no one came to the front door. Yet, in faith, I started walking to the radio studio. On the way a man I did not know handed me the needed money.

I could give you the story of many other similar occurrences.

But after I was actively in God's Work, although it had to be carried on in living FAITH, we never again had to be hungry, without food—although we often did have to eat beans and the least costly food. It was a financial struggle from the beginning. After moving to Eugene, we rented a house costing \$7 per month.

After two years, I was able to add a second radio station in Portland, costing \$10 per broadcast. Once, on starting to drive to Portland for the Sunday afternoon broadcast, I lacked the \$10 I had to pay in advance. I stopped at Salem, Oregon, for lunch, and somebody—I do not now remember who—handed me the needed broadcast money.

I was still going with only one pair of shoes and one suit of clothes, but was no longer hungry.

When I was 19 years of age, a multimillionaire called me to his office. He was starting me out as an employee of his corporation, and my job would entail some long-distance rail travel. He wanted to give a young man some good advice.

"When you travel, always (when you can afford it) travel in a Pullman car. Always stay at the best hotel, even though you take their minimum-priced room. This throws you among the more successful people, and everyone we contact has an influence on us."

But when I had to stay overnight

in Portland, or a year later in Seattle, I could not afford the best-quality hotel, so I stayed at the second or third best. I always tried to live within my means.

A newspaper writer, in a story about the Worldwide Church of God, said he had learned that when royalty or overseas VIPs visited us in Pasadena, I did not take them to McDonald's or Jack-in-the-Box for lunch or dinner, but to Perino's (Los Angeles's best restaurant). But royalty is accustomed to the best in quality, and it would be virtually an insult to take people of that stature to a low-price restaurant. If I had to fast without food a few days in order to afford to take such guests to the quality place to which they are accustomed, I would do it. I do take such guests to the type place they expect to be taken.

What would I have done, when I had to go to the lowest-price places myself and had only one pair of shoes and one threadbare suit of clothes? Well, I did not have royalty or VIPs visiting me in those days. I probably would have been forced to find some way to avoid having to host them at all.

In train travel back in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, I traveled often in day coaches on trains, and ate at low-price lunch counters. But GOD has promised to supply all our need (Phil. 4:19), and in the Work of God in these days certain things are *necessary* in order to serve God—and He provides what is needed.

I have never engaged in extravagance. "Extravagant" is defined in the dictionary as "exceeding the limits of reason, or necessity; extremely or exceedingly elaborate, profuse or unreasonably high in price."

The best quality of things may be expensive, but not extravagant.

At this point let me inject a little current news. Some of the dissidents who brought this civil lawsuit on God's Church spread the rumor that in fact this was not a suit against me or against the Church, but against Mr. Stanley Rader. Of course, that is not true, for every effort in their power was made to take over and confiscate the Church property—to turn all management of the Church over to the court-appointed receiver. They told the press the suit was

brought against us because they claimed that both Mr. Rader and I had been "siphoning off millions of dollars every year from Church funds." That wild allegation is so utterly false I have not considered it necessary to dignify it with a denial. Our Church members have PROVED by their loyalty, financial support and loving letters that they know well such a thing is impossible.

A couple days ago Mr. Rader went in person to the deputy attorneys general, told them of this persistent rumor, and offered that, if they would dismiss all charges against me and the three corporations, he would hand them complete records of all transactions involving him, on a silver platter. They know well their charges of our stealing millions of dollars are utterly groundless. But they replied that they cannot now afford to "lose face" by admitting that it is THEY, not we, who are guilty of wrongdoing. They said it would leave them "emasculated"—using that very word! Now they are going to try to make me move to a lower-cost residence and insist I travel, when I do, at something like third-class accommodations, etc.

So I am going to see that they learn that: 1) I own absolutely NOTHING, except the property in which my wife and I now live in Tucson, Arizona, until it is safe for me to resume residence in the college-owned home on the campus in Pasadena where I have lived for 13 years; and 2) the Pasadena property and all in it belongs to Ambassador College, and cost only \$17,500 of Church or college funds.

The very purchase of that property is an example of how God has been blessing us and His Work. Here are the circumstances behind the college acquiring that property.

Dr. and Mrs. Hal Lisman wanted to move from San Pedro to Pasadena. They wanted this particular property, said it could be bought for \$37,500—a bargain of bargains at that time. They offered to put in the \$10,000 down payment. We agreed that \$5,000 of their down payment could pay for five years' rent and the other \$5,000 could be taken off their income tax as a contribution to the college.

At the end of five years, they paid

another \$10,000 for another five years' rent. When Dr. Lisman died, Mrs. Lisman housed eight girl students. When neighbors complained that the property was not zoned for taking in roomers, we had to move them out. Mrs. Lisman felt it was too large a house for her to maintain alone.

That was when I decided to live there. After the Lisman had paid \$20,000 of the \$37,500, it remained for the college to pay only the \$17,500. There was a certain amount of repairing, which was done with our own labor.

My wife Loma and I lived there around two years before her death. During the remainder of the night after her death, I remarked to my son Garner Ted that I planned to move into a small apartment, and that I didn't know how to use that large home.

"Dad," said Ted, "no other minister but you could live here. It seems to me we'll have to turn it into a student social center."

I agreed; that was its only possible use. But then came the idea of inviting all senior students each year, in a number of small groups throughout the year, for a formal dinner with me at my home. And, in doing that, I decided it would be better for me to live on there. Many students yet today will say that the formal dinners they attended were the outstanding event of their four-year college careers. That home now has a bronze sign in front of the entrance marked "PRIVATE—Student Social Center." So, if the deputy attorneys general decide I must live elsewhere, what will become of the Student Social Center?

Among those who have been entertained in that house are King Leopold III and family, Judge Nagendra Singh (India's representative on the Court of International Justice at The Hague) and his wife, Dr. Franz Josef Strauss (often called the "strong man of Europe") and his wife, the president of Tokyo University and his wife, officials from the state of Israel, and others. Another guest was Gloria Swanson, the most glamorous star of Hollywood from the silent-movie days (she was lecturing at the college).

Of course, IF these deputy attor-

neys general and these court judges demand that I move into some third- or fourth-rate shanty, it would not be a new experience for me. I did have to live in poorer circumstances than most of our brethren for many years, and I would feel right at home.

Why is it, I often wonder, that if a Hollywood movie star lives ostentatiously, that is EXPECTED?—and they do nothing more of real value than entertain people. But if the servant of the living GOD ministers to multiple thousands, leading many to ETERNAL LIFE, some people expect him to live like a tramp or pauper.

How did Jesus live? We know little of that, but there is evidence that He owned His own property in Capernaum. He wore a robe that was of extra fine quality, for it was seamless. Even Jesus was accused of "extravagance," when a woman washed His feet with precious and expensive ointment. Jesus rebuked those who criticized this.

I know what it is to be POOR! I know what it is to go HUNGRY for lack of money for food. I have lived at as low a cost of living as my position in God's service allowed. And I would be willing to do it again—but I don't think the living Jesus Christ wants me to do that again, now. In the Kingdom of God there will be no paupers, tramps, nor the VERY poor. Our God has something better in store for us!

For fifty-two years now, since my conversion, I have tried to live simply, without extravagance, and to make every dollar of God's tithes go as far in His Work as possible! But the living Jesus Christ *does* guide His apostle and shows me HOW *He* wants His Work managed. Every dollar is made to go farther and more effectively than in any other organization in the world—because this Work is headed and led by Jesus Christ!

And it will continue to be administered as Jesus Christ leads me—and not as some state official or a court judge would MISmanage!

This is NOT the work of man's government but the work of the living God! Attorneys general or court judges, who do NOT follow Christ, *shall not* manage or operate this precious Work of the LIVING GOD! □

CHURCH

(Continued from page 3)

not true today. Second, the Holy Spirit came *suddenly*—they did not “work it up” by emotionally shouting, as is usual in such meetings today. Third, the Holy Spirit came with a *sound*—they *heard* it—like a blast of a rushing mighty wind. No such thing occurs today. Fourth, the Holy Spirit is here twice called “it,” not “he”—not a ghost or personage. Fifth, they *saw* the Holy Spirit. It appeared as divided tongues *like fire*. This was actually *seen*, sitting on each of the 120. No such thing is ever repeated in so-called “Pentecostal” meetings today!

Now, further, do they today speak with the *same kind* of tongues? Here again the REAL Pentecost experience is not in any sense duplicated today. Read on:

“... There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad [word spread rapidly of this once-only amazing experience—*hearing* and seeing the Holy Spirit], the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that *every man heard them* [the 120] speak in his own language” (Acts 2:5-6).

Study this again carefully. The Mede among these devout Jews who came running in heard *them*—the 120—speaking the language of the Medes. And he understood what they were saying! The one Mede heard and understood 120 Galileans speaking the language of the Medes! But the Parthian heard *them*—the same 120—speaking his Parthian language! And so on! It was not a gibberish—unintelligible—as “tongues people” speak in their meetings today! And it needed no interpreter. I well remember experiences in such meetings, where in service after service the same man rose to interpret—and although the gibberish of different ones was entirely different, the “interpretation” had been memorized, and in every case was the same! I saw that kind of experience drive sincere people hungry for God’s truth away in disgust!

Let me add here that God’s Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a SOUND MIND

(II Timothy 1:7). The one and only original Church of God was founded that day of Pentecost, A.D. 31. They were all of SOUND mind—like-minded—of ONE accord.

God Adds to His Church

The multitude who came running in were all amazed—in wonderment doubting and asking, “What does this mean?”

Then God’s chief apostle, Peter, stood up to explain—to deliver to these thousands the first inspired sermon by an apostle.

These devout Jews were “pricked in their heart” by Peter’s sermon and asked, “What shall we do?”

Peter gave no twentieth-century “altar call”—pleaded with none to talk them into conversion—but answered their question, saying, “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 Spirit” (Acts 2:38). It was the power of the Holy Spirit that had struck straight in their hearts. GOD HAD CALLED THEM!

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there *were added* unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41).

“And they continued steadfastly in the *apostles’ doctrine*...” (verse 42).

Note here this important point! They did not appoint among themselves a “doctrinal committee” to decide intellectually in which doctrines they could believe God’s apostle. God gave them the true doctrine through His apostle, and they continued together with one accord in “the *apostles’ doctrine* and fellowship.”

Now WHO added members to the Church? Not apostolic or evangelical salesmanship—but “the LORD added to the church daily such as should be saved [were to be saved]” (Acts 2:47).

Apostles Preached; Church Backed Them

But what was the FOUNDATION of the Church? It is referred to as a “building,” and a solid building must be built on a solid foundation.

Of course Jesus Christ is the foundational Rock. But the Church is

built on the FOUNDATION of the apostles (New Testament) and prophets (Old Testament), Jesus Christ Himself being the chief CORNERSTONE (Ephesians 2:20). Jesus taught the apostles. The CHURCH followed the apostles’ doctrine. Lay members were not free to set, change or decide doctrinal TRUTH—but only to receive and *believe* it.

A day or two after the Church was founded, Peter and John went up to the Temple. At the Beautiful Gate entrance was a crippled beggar, lame from birth. Peter, being asked for alms, took the cripple by the right hand, lifted him up, saying, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 3:1-6). “And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple...” (verse 8).

The beggar was known to all. This miracle drew a huge crowd. Peter, explaining, preached to them about the resurrection of Jesus. He proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom, saying the heaven had received Jesus *until* the time of restoration of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD by the KINGDOM OF GOD (Acts 3:20-21).

As Peter spoke, the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them and threw them into prison for the night.

Next morning, Peter and John were brought before the rulers, elders, scribes, the high priest and his family. Peter spoke briefly but boldly to them. They then threatened the apostles, forbidding them to preach any further about Christ and His Kingdom.

Peter and John, though now inspired by the Holy Spirit, were human, and naturally were somewhat shaken up and frightened.

Being released, they went immediately for moral support and encouragement to “their own company” (Acts 4:23), the Church.

The Church “lifted up their voice to God with one accord” (verse 24). And when they (the Church) had prayed, God answered by shaking the place where they were assembled, filling them with His Spirit, courage and power.

Another incident: The apostles had continued preaching, healing the sick and performing miracles. God added to the Church, but also the

persecution grew. Peter again had been imprisoned. Steven had been stoned to death. In Acts 8:1 "... there was a great persecution against the church . . . and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

By the following Passover, persecution had mounted. "About that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison . . . intending after [Passover] to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison . . ." (Acts 12:1-5).

Why Members Called

Now came another example of how the Church stood back of the apostles. Remember, the word *apostle* means "one sent forth." Jesus had given the great commission to Peter and the apostles. The other members of the Church were not sent forth with the gospel. They were called to support and encourage the apostles in getting out the gospel message, as GOD'S MEANS of developing in them God's holy, righteous CHARACTER, qualifying them for places as kings and priests in the KINGDOM!

So here came *another incident* showing how the Church supported the apostles. Continue, verse 5 of Acts 12: "... but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him"—Peter. The brethren stood loyally 100 percent back of God's apostles.

What happened when the Church so unceasingly prayed? "... The same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, *bound with two chains*: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands" (verses 6-7), and Peter followed the angel on out of the prison. Peter fled on to Caesarea.

Jesus gave His GREAT COMMISSION

to the apostles—those sent forth with the message. The lay brethren *were added* to the Church to *support* the apostles.

The Great Commission

Notice the GREAT COMMISSION as recorded by Matthew: "Now the eleven disciples [Judas had left them] went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. . . . And Jesus came and said to them [not the whole Church], All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. GO, THEREFORE, and make disciples of all nations . . ." Notice, "make disciples OF," or within all nations. A disciple is a student—one learning, being taught. "... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. . . ." Notice here, this does not and cannot refute Jesus' own statement that "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The GREAT COMMISSION was not a commission to try to persuade ALL in those nations to come to Christ. Jesus said plainly, "... make disciples OF [within] all nations." He referred to those whom God had *called*—and they were, comparatively, exceedingly FEW by proportion to the whole population. Then Jesus continued, "... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:16-20, Revised Standard Version).

The apostles were NOT sent forth on a soul-saving crusade, but to TEACH those whom God had called and made willing to listen. That is what God's apostle does to this day. Today we are able to utilize modern methods of MASS COMMUNICATION—radio, television, the printing press. We TEACH the good news of the coming KINGDOM to those whom God calls and makes willing to listen. In this way we TEACH and PROCLAIM the true GOSPEL MESSAGE to many MILLIONS worldwide. Our magazine, *The Plain Truth*, has more than TWO MILLION subscribers, and estimates are that each copy is read by at least three people—actually reaching six or seven MILLION people! And we teach all *who willingly listen* to observe all that God commanded His apostles!

Now notice Mark's account of the

GREAT COMMISSION: "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven. . . . And he said unto them, GO YE into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:14, 15). Naturally Jesus did not mean every human being on earth—but all they might reach who would hear. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. . . ." Yet only those God *called* would be able to believe—for Jesus meant they should believe what was SAID—believe the GOOD NEWS!

However, this is quoted from the 1611 King James Version, but nearly all other translations omit it, saying Mark did not write the words beginning in verse 9 through the end of the chapter, but that they were added by some later editor trying to make it harmonize with Matthew 28:18-19.

But the great commission was given to the apostles—not the Church as a whole—although as cited above, the Church completely, prayerfully, wholeheartedly backed up and supported the apostles. That was their part in the great commission. □

(To Be Continued)

WHERE WILL YOU BE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Yes, there is life after death. But it's not at all like the "heaven" and "hell" concepts commonly believed. If you'd like to have a better understanding of what the Bible says about the next life, why not request two free booklets *What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?* and *Just What Do You Mean . . . Salvation?* To obtain your copies, use the literature request card in this issue.

