

# Africa

## GOD'S GENERALS

THE SOUL WINNERS

BONNKE

IDAHOSA

BUCHAN

ADEBOYE

KAYANJA

WAIRIKU

THE OSBORNS

OYEDEPO

Endorsed by Bishop Dr. LaDonna Osborn

# EDDIE SEMPALA

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# EDDIE SEMPALA

“God has chosen to use people to advance His work by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world. The continent of Africa has received the light of the Gospel through many such voices, including my parents, Drs. T.L. and Daisy Osborn. We traveled as a family of four, going from nation to nation, living among the people and working with local pastors to organize and conduct historic Mass Miracle Evangelism crusades. Our first time on the continent was in 1956. Many of the evangelists in Africa that have served through the decades are sons and daughters of my parents’ ministries. As you read this historic record of specific evangelists, you will be introduced to Africa - God’s Generals that have impacted the nations of this great continent. Reading these stories allows the Holy Spirit to kindle a new or renewed passion for the work of evangelism in your heart, among your own people and beyond. If God can use these generals He can use you. The purpose of this book is not to place Gospel messengers on unattainable pedestals; it is to invite you to join this company of faith, obedience and purpose, bringing people to the light and truth of Jesus Christ.”

**Bishop Dr. LaDonna Osborn [www.osborn.org](http://www.osborn.org) AFRICA GOD’S  
GENERALS The Soul Winners**

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1st print 2020

Also available in French and Spanish.

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To the next generation of soul winners

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**EPIGRAPH**

**INTRODUCTION**

**BENSON IDAHOSA**

**THE OSBORNS**

**REINHARD BONNKE**

**ENOCH ADEJARE ADEBOYE**

**ANGUS BUCHAN**

**DAVID OLANIYAN OYEDEPO**

**TERESA WAIRIMU KINYANJUI**

**ROBERT KAYANJA**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I thank all who have supported me in different ways during the process of writing of this book. My sincere appreciation goes to them all, but most especially to Rev. William Lumry, Pastor Noah Sematimba, and Pastor Arthur Nsamba.

I always meet people who ask me how I get to fund these big projects. Well, I would not have made it if I didn't have those who have stood with me financially in the process of writing this book. Thank you to Bishop Isaiah Mbuga, Nicole Matovu among others who have given in to see that I complete this project successfully.

**INTRODUCTION**

One night I heard God tell me to step out of my boundary (Uganda) of research and documenting history stories about men and women of God. Even when people told me about writing beyond Uganda, I did not think this was part of my assignment. It was until God spoke to me that I immediately obeyed.

So much has happened in the church of Africa which needs to be documented in order to reach the next generation. We should not forget the people who have greatly impacted the church of Africa for the glory of God. Their stories need to be kept alive.

In the book, I share with you stories of some of the generals who have participated in mass evangelism in Africa for many years. These are men and women who stepped out of their comfort zones to do all it takes to win souls to the Kingdom of God. They deserve to be honored. They laid a standard for others to follow.

I have also included their stories in this book as a way of honouring and appreciating them for their contributions in changing many people's lives more especially in Africa because they deserve it.

The harvest is plentiful but the harvesters are few. Luke 10:2 says, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." There are still many people in Africa who need to hear the Good News of our Lord and Saviour. If others did it, you too can do it.

May this book encourage you to step out and reach others with the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



**BENSON**

## **IDAHOSA**

*The father of Nigeria's Pentecostalism*  
*The Father of Nigeria's Pentecostalism*

**On a particular day, Archbishop was in his little office of the then headquarters church when visitors announced. It was the top delegation of the cult members including a former Chief Judge of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to see him and into his office, they all crowded. The former Chief Judge who was the leader of the delegation addressed him on the reason for their coming. "Pastor Benson," he said, "you've been a good boy and we are proud of what you are doing. We also want to give you a staunch support. We will from hence forth pay for all your television airtime."**

**The Archbishop's heart skipped a bit. "What a proposal!"  
"But you must promise us one thing; you must from this day stop preaching against our cult. You may not praise us but just stop speaking against us and you will no longer have to worry about your TV airtime. Be a good boy."**

*In many areas of his life, Benson had every encouragement one could possibly lay claim to. But life was not easy in his family although he tried to make the best of it*

**A little shakily the Archbishop said, "I've heard what you've said but before I give you my reply, let us pray. They consented and went on their knees.**

**"Lord we commit this situation into your hands," he prayed "now you foul demons, you cultic spirits I rebuke you in the name of Jesus. I arrest you and I charge you come out in the name of Jesus. Come out in the name of Jesus! Come out!"**

**They got up on their knees blinking in indignation. "What have we been discussing?" they demanded. "Why did we have come to see this boy?" "Who would have thought this stubbornness could go this far?"**

***I must do something about this condition***

Benson Andrew Idahosa was born to non-Christian parents on September 11th, 1938 to a predominantly non-Christian community.

When he was eighteen months old, he was rejected by his father, John, for being frail and sickly. He constantly had fainting spells as a child, and on one of his spells, his mother, Sarah, was instructed by his father to abandon him at a rubbish heap presuming him dead. Hours later, he came to, and began wailing and was rescued by his mother.

He grew up in a poor household. Like most of the surrounding houses, his family home was a mud house. It came to pass the child got better and grew up as a normal African child, living with relatives and helping out as house help in these homes, engaging in animal trapping and hunting. He was sent



to work on the farm as a servant and was denied education until he was fourteen years old.

This was not a very happy childhood, watching his rejection by his father and the way his was reared in the name of discipline by relatives.

In many areas of his life, Benson had every encouragement one could possibly lay claim to. But life was not easy in his family although he tried to make the best of it. They were poor and the future looked bleak. He was never one to indulge in wishful thinking, but deep in his heart he knew that a change had to come some day, some how. He had convinced himself that hard work would bring a good harvest to anyone, so he put all his energies into his job of transporting goods in a wheelbarrow for a fee.

Every morning his mind would go to the success that lay ahead of him by God's grace in his daily work as a barrow-boy. It was not easy, but there has never been an easy way to success; it has always been a hard road to travel.

If ever there was a young man determined to succeed through struggle at every step, Idahosa was the one. And new vision opened up with God's help.

One day he painted the word "Opel" on the side of his cart, so that traders looking for quick service could easily identify it. Before long, he had effectively established himself as the barrow-boy who carried foodstuffs with the greatest security in the quickest possible time. Market women sought him, and traders longed to see him at dawn behind his "Opel" truck.

In all this, God was weaving a new pathway to greater heights. Many nights, as Benson Idahosa lay in bed counting the ceiling nails to while away the time, he would feel exhaustion in his body and excruciating pain in his aching back; fatigue was taking its toll on him.

"I must do something about this condition, change my job," Benson pondered.

Another holiday arrived, and he made his decision: "I must have a go at being a vendor."

So he rose each morning before anyone in the compound and made his way to the Vendor's Office. He was following a demanding schedule, dividing his time between selling newspapers and rushing over to push his barrow at the market as the early traders arrived. Though he worked long, hard hours, day after day, giving up was not a part of his vocabulary. He knew everything about success, but nothing of failure.

From the black moments in the mud-thatched classroom through to the scorching sun-filled months of pushing his barrow at Oba market, everything worked together by God's grace to lay the solid foundation for a better tomorrow.

Through thick and thin, Benson was enrolled through an initial western education system in the Salvation Army School, Benin city and the Methodist School, Owo, Ondo state. These, however, this only wetted his appetite for more knowledge. Accordingly, through a correspondence programme with the London Benneth College, he obtained a diploma in Business Administration, and a higher diploma in Office Management, while he worked in Bata shoe company – a job which was not to last.

As a result of his desire to excel and through hard work, coupled with God's favour upon his life, he soon ascended to a supervisory position at the company. Little did he know that his experience as a supervisor was part of God's way of preparing him for leadership in <sup>the ministry</sup>. **Benson accepts Christ, called to ministry**

Benson Idahosa had gone to play football at a pitch near a Salvation Army Church on a Sunday afternoon when he succumbed to the temptation to aim his shot at the head of Pastor Akpo through one of the open windows.

Five attempts to hit his target had failed, then he made what proved to be his sixth and last effort. It wasn't clear what the ball hit, but it came ricocheting back to hit him on the chest and knock him flat on his back.

He was in such great pain that a crowd soon gathered round him. This drew the pastor's attention; he came out, prayed for him and his chest that was rapidly swelling returned to normal.

Young Benson became the first Bini member of Pastor Okpo's small congregation. After his conversion, he read the whole of John's gospel and decided he had to witness to his friends. This was the beginning of Idahosa's preaching the gospel. Idahosa later sought after the experience of baptism in the Spirit and he asked the pastor at the Assembly of God to pray for him. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues.

In June 1967 Benson lost his father during the civil war riots. A year later, during one night, his room was filled with God's presence and he was awoken from sleep by a voice. It was the Lord speaking to him about his future mission; "I have called you that you might take the gospel around the world in my name, preach the gospel, and I will confirm My Word with signs following." Benson fell to his knees besides the bed: "Lord, wherever you want me to go, I will go." He prayed on through the night, renewing the vows to God and interceding for his people who were yet to hear the message of salvation. After this experience, he began to do more evangelistic meetings and outreaches. He did this while he worked for the Bata shoe company. He would ask Chiefs who head the villages for permission to conduct an evangelistic meeting in their village. They responded and more people got saved through his ministry. He directed the converts to existing Pentecostal churches such as the Assemblies of God.

### ***The God I serve can bring your baby back to life***

One day his pastor was preaching a message "All things are possible to all who believe. With God all things are possible." At the end of the service he walked to his pastor and asked "Pastor, this thing you are saying, if its true that means its even possible to raise the dead. The pastor said "yes I've never done it but if the Bible says it, then its true." Benson said "okay, am going to look for one. He was either 21 or 22 years.

From 11 am till 4:30 pm in the evening Benson took his bicycle with his Bible and went from street to street all over Benin City looking for a dead person. "Is there anybody dead here? He was asked why he was looking for the dead. He replied, "My pastor told me to raise them up."

He spent 5 hours looking for a dead person failed to find one. At 4:30 pm, he stopped for a visit at the home where his friend, Margaret stayed. It was

either the 6th or 7th place to stop at. He found the place full of her relatives. There was agitation on every face, and many of the women were crying. Every time he came to them they would call him out “pastor, pastor.” But this day was different. He brought out his small Bible and came in through the crowd.

“What’s going on?” Idahosa inquired. Margaret noticed him and said,

“Pastor, please, today is not like any other day. Somebody just died.” “It’s my uncle’s baby,” Margaret explained, wiping her tears with the back of her hand. “She was ill for several days, and this morning she died. She kept having convulsions, but the local doctors could do nothing to help her. We even made sacrifices at the juju shrine here in our house, but she died anyway.”

“I have been riding my bicycle all way through. This time I want to *By that time she* raise somebody.”

Margaret replied, “Please I beg you, don’t make a mockery of your God.”

The baby had died at 9 am and it was 4 pm.

She had already started changing colour.

By that time she would have been buried but the father had to first go to the secretary to get a death certificate. Benson did

*would have been buried but the father had to first go to the secretary to get a death certificate.*

not see any need for it because he had faith that the baby going to come back to life.

Benson said, “No, no, no, I want to them up because God has told me in the book “Behold I have given you power to tread upon scorpions and to raise the dead.”

“Where is the baby now?” he asked anxiously.

“There,” Margaret answered, gesturing toward the bedroom. “We have already bathed the body and bought the coffin for her burial.”

With feelings of righteous indignation burning within me, Benson turned to the father of the child. “The God I serve can bring your baby back to life,”

He asked confidently. “Will you permit me to pray for her?”

Startled, the father agreed, though he himself was not a Christian.

Benson walked boldly into the next room where the cold, still form of the baby lay on the bed. He ordered everyone out according to Mark 5:40. There was tension and expectation as the relatives waited outside. But as a stubborn, Margaret stood at the door peeping in and out of the room just in case something happens. Idahosa prayed,

“Child, be healed.”

After he prayed, he asked Margaret for the name of the child. “Inuaghata” she had been sick for about two weeks. After that convulsion hit her. He stretched himself and his small Bible on the child and said “Inuaghata, I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that has empowered me to raise the dead. Now, come back to life.”

Several minutes passed. Suddenly the startled family heard the baby sneeze. They rushed into the room to find the infant awake and looking completely normal.

“She is going to be all right,” Benson told the mother, who gathered the child into her arms. “Give her something to eat,” he instructed as he walked out. **Margaret accepts Jesus**

Margaret was deeply moved by the event and felt shame for her previous mockery of the gospel. Now she had seen believing faith in Christ Jesus in action.

“Maybe there is something to what Benson is preaching after all,” she thought.

She always heard messages of salvation and had even attended church but had never accepted Jesus. Though she didn’t know how to pray the salvation prayer, that night she knelt down and prayed, “Father, let Jesus

come into my heart right now and I need to know this power that raised this child.”

“Please if you are the one that raised this child up, come into my life and let me act and work and believe as that young man we call pastor believed and he did this.” When she finished praying, there was an abundant joy in her spirit. And the following day, Benson came and asked where the child was. Margaret told him about how she had prayed the previous night. To add on this, Benson prayed for her and led her as she prayed the sinners’ prayer.

### ***Release me and let me go***

God sent Idahosa to meet with S.G. Elton, a missionary who lived in Ilesha.

S.G arranged for him to be trained. He told him “the grace of God is upon your life young man but you need training so that you have the Word and last.” He arranged for him to go to Gordon Lindsey’s Bible School in the United States. He travelled to Christ For the Nations at its very inception. But he never completed because he had passion of ministering back home in Africa. The Bible School was for two years but after one year he came to Gordon Lindsay and said, “Why should I be sitting here in a classroom when Africans are dieing? Release me and let me go.”

They had a private consecration for him and was the only student who saw Gordon Lindsey release them. Before others graduated, Gordon Lindsey had already died.

He got on the plane back to Benin city. It is reported that those who came to welcome him, nobody could touch him. Everybody who was 20 yards away from him collapsed on the ground.

### **The start of Church of God Mission International**

The open air meetings witnessed people being healed of epilepsy and many other sicknesses. Other miracles were also happening in these meetings. The news about the open air meetings started to spread to other villages and this led to more evangelistic activities. In order to reach more people with the gospel he bought a motorcycle to help him travel to distant villages to conduct gospel meetings.

Due to his evangelistic activities Idahosa soon became a leader under Pastor Okpo (the pastor at the Assemblies of God Church where he became a Christian) who gave him directions in ministry. This ranked him the very first Bini, as Benin sons and daughters are called, to join that largely Igbo congregation. However this did not last long as Idahosa decided to follow his own vision and establish a church.

God told him, “Raise up an army for Me, to go with the gospel to all nations.

Gather together those whom I have called and I will send them with the fire of My Spirit. Give My Word and your example to many who will go to teach, preach and heal”.

Church of God Mission International, as it is known today, grew from a very humble beginning in 1962 as a prayer group first named Calvary Fellowship at a shop on Ivbizua Street, off Mission Road. It was officially inaugurated in 1965 by Rev. Edgar Perkins. *By the time Church*

On October 26th 1968, Rev. Perkins *of God Mission Iyaro* approached the Assemblies of God to *was completed the* release Benson Idahosa, then a Sunday *membership had risen* School Superintendent, to oversee the *tremendously the church* prayer ministry. The fellowship moved *was declared opened* to No. 26, Forestry Road, Benin city *by Gordon Lindsey and* with Pastor Benson Idahosa fully in *Elton.* charge. The membership of the fellowship grew numerically.

God gave the Benson a vision where he saw crowds rushing out of Iyaro. This led to the foundation building of the church in 1970. He moved the members to Iyaro church and on 18th September, 1974, the church was registered under the Land perpetual succession Acts and Certificate number 1245 was issued. By the time Church of God Mission Iyaro was completed the membership had risen tremendously the church was declared opened by Gordon Lindsey and Elton.

Church of God’s primary ministry was evangelism-Living up to her motto: Evangelism our Supreme Task, the church engaged in street evangelism and

open air crusades. Through these activities souls were daily added to the church and everywhere Benson went with the gospel churches were planted and solid structures erected.

In keeping with his belief of a ministry building that keeps up with the times, and to accommodate the influx of converts, the Benson Idahosa laid the foundation of another church called Miracle Centre.

The church was built on land measuring 50ft by 100ft plot of land, with the capacity to sit 500 people. Due to the rapid growth, the church became small even before it was completed.

By 1975 some 5 years after the foundation of the church was laid, Benson with the provision of God had build and dedicated a 700 seater capacity Miracle Centre, a project that was started with 120 pounds. On airport road, Benin city on Saturday 1st December, 1973 which was dedicated on Sunday 9th November, 1975 by Freda Lindsay. Archbishop Idahosa once said, “No man can take the glory for what you see today. God gave me a team of people to train, build and establish.” The Miracle Centre was opened on the night of November 1975 as a place for teaching, preaching and praying for the sick. *They had been*

In 1981, he was ordained as the first Pentecostal Bishop in Nigeria by David Duplessis (known as Mr. Pentecost) and two other Bishops.

*attracted by the open windows  
and peeping in, they had seen  
white men fast asleep*

In 1983, in far away Australia, the Archbishop heard God tell him to build Him a building that will bring glory and honour to His name. The auditorium which is believed to seat over twenty thousand people was the first stadium church in Africa. It was dedicated and opened on 2nd November, 1986. Coinciding with the growth of churches in Benin was the planting of branches.

***Are you ready for me?***



In October 1972, Benson had some missionary friends visiting them from England. In his home then, they had no air-conditioned or electric driven fans. They usually fanned themselves with newspapers but these English missionaries from Liverpool were not used to newspaper air conditioners.

Accordingly, they left their windows wide open when they went to bed at night. At about 3 am, 7 armed robbers paid a visit to his home. They had been attracted by the open windows and peeping in, they had seen white men fast asleep. Thanking their good fortune, they had woken up the men and demanded for their money at gun-point. Snapping out of sleep, the missionaries demanded who they were and what they wanted. "Men of the underworld are we and we are here to relieve you of your money and other valuables. Any resistance will be met with death. So now hurry!"

Sensing danger, they quickly informed the men that they were visitors and were therefore not the owners of the house. They asked for permission to contact the owner at the family sleeping quarters and the thieves agreed. They rushed and woke up Margaret.

"Miss Idahosa, there are 7 men outside who say they are thieves and want our money and personal effects and other valuables. Can you wake up Pastor?"

Margaret woke Benson up and they all began to speak in tongues. When the thieves heard the commotion of tongues inside, they shouted "Shut up!"

And they all shut up. Margaret said "Honey, let us pray". "I prayed before we came," said Benson. He got up, snatched his Bible and marched towards the door.

"Who are you? He shouted". "We are men of the night" was their response. Benson said "I am a man of the day. Are you ready for me? They said "Yes".

"Wait for me and in few seconds, if you are all not flat on your stomachs, certified dead, then I am not a man of God," he concluded. Uncertain of what he meant, they hesitated only for a while; then they jumped into the nearby bushes and melted away in the darkness!

**The Redemption Hour TV program starts**

When God told him about television ministry, he decided to request the Nigerian government for airtime. Accordingly he sent his secretary to request for airtime on the Nigerian Television Authority station. The manager of the program, a lady, ridiculed her and asked,

“Who is Benson Idahosa and what is his Christian program? He has no business with the government and television is not for religious purposes.”

With indignation Idahosa rushed for his car and drove to the television headquarters and asked to see the lady. When she knew who her visitor was, she did not grant him audience for an hour and 12 minutes. When she finally opened her door, the Archbishop went straight to the point. “Did you tell my secretary that the Lord Christ has no place on the Nigerian Television Network?”

“Yes,” she affirmed. *When the Archbishop*

*saw what had happened, he rushed to the television ministry headquarters and went straight to the chairman of the board.*

“Then am dismissing you from your position as a person in charge of television programming,” he informed her.

“You?” she asked incredulously, “What are you in the government to arrogate such a part yourself? What is your position in government?” she continued.

“My government does not operate from the earth. It operates from heaven. If you do not allow the gospel of Jesus Christ on

government television I will remove you from your position,” Benson replied and left.

Three days later, government auditors discovered a loss of N391,000 from the television station and they determined that this lady was responsible for the loss. She was dismissed. Six months of her back salary confiscated. The dismissal was announced on the same government television.

When the Archbishop saw what had happened, he rushed to the television ministry headquarters and went straight to the chairman of the board.

“What kind of replacement are you considering for the dismissed lady? The Archbishop asked him.

“We have decided on an honest Christian young man,” he answered.

The young man was to resume duties the next morning at 9 am. At 11:30 am the next day, Idahosa was at the television station knocking at the door of this new officer in charge of programs. After the door was opened, he went straight to the point.

“You must realise that I placed you in this position,” he told him.

“Did you know that four days ago I was here to place the gospel on the government television but your predecessor refused?” The young man sat listening. “I therefore removed her by my God

*A few days later the given authority,” he continued “and if you stand in the way of God’s Archbishop and the church choir spent three hours at the government television station producing a Christian television special which they called*

*“The Redemption Hour.”*

gospel on the government television I will not hesitate to ask the Lord to remove you tomorrow.” The man sat looking at him with surprise and question marks all over his countenance. “Did you say you removed her from position,” he asked.

“Yes,” the Archbishop answered. “Four days ago I removed her and

now you are here. It is in your interest to allow the gospel of the Lord Jesus on this television station to tell the marvelous works of Jesus Christ.”

“Thats alright,” said the man “get us the video tapes for the broadcast as quickly as you can.”

Now, the Archbishop said he had no video tapes.

“No video tapes? Come we produce the program for you,” he requested.

“That will be a great honour,” replied the Archbishop with excitement.

“Then bring your choir to the studio.”

A few days later the Archbishop and the church choir spent three hours at the government television station producing a Christian television special which they called “The Redemption Hour.”



**Benson and Margaret Idahosa**  
**Archbishop sued by his senior church members**

A bold caption “Archbishop to spend Christmas in prison was the title that appeared on one of the National newspapers in Nigeria. All over the city of Benin there was a stir. Those who had a glimpse of the caption hurried to get a copy of the newspaper. Other arms of the news media which observed this rushed their reporters to the premises of the law court.

In the week that followed, this law court hosted an unprecedented number of reporters who wrote down every statement which they thought could make news. A few senior members of the church had dragged to court the Archbishop and the Church of God Mission. They accused him for taking over the church that he started.

They continued daily to report about the case. Thereafter hardly any day passed without reporting on the proceedings of the case.

Across the country, cult group members who had stood against gospel and righteousness congratulated themselves on what they considered their good piece of luck, divinely sent.

When a troubled member of the church rushed a copy of the newspaper which seemed like the impending ruling of the law court to the Archbishop, he dismissed it as one of the many lies of the devil which will blow away like wind. Such accusations had been many. He had taught his admirers that

if you remember where you are coming from and you know where you are going, you are not troubled at where you are.

As the news spread rapidly believers poured into the Miracle Centre and prayers began. Like the sound of many waters, the intercessors could be heard praying to God. *In the midst of this crisis, Benson looked* What the devil meant for good turned *at the face of his grief* out as a blessing. During this time a new *stricken wife, Margaret* generation of fervent prayer warriors was born in church where little groups joined themselves in a prayer band.

In the midst of this crisis, Benson looked at the face of his grief stricken wife, Margaret and the faces of his troubled church members and made an open declaration which even got to the ears of the court which was already priding itself for a job well done. "I cannot go to prison. No court ruling can manage such feet. If need be heavens will intervene," declared the Archbishop. Judges and lawyers saw a challenge and determined to prove the words of the Archbishop an empty boast. The Archbishop later won. The court which had boasted that even if it were a few days it would sentence the Archbishop to prison concluded its ruling as follows: The Applicant (Litigants which were the plaintiff) is refused in its entirety and accordingly dismissed with costs in favour of the defendant/respondent assessed at N25.00. In later years this high school judge became converted and became a Bible student in All Nations <sup>for Christ Bible Institute International.</sup>

### **Stopping the witches conference**

*and the faces of his troubled church members and made*

*an open declaration which even got to the ears of the court*

Idahosa grew up in the midst of witchcraft and idolatry. His late father was utterly disappointed that Benson could not become the deity priest that he had desired while his grandmother remained a fervent idolater till death.

Some months after the dedication of The Faith Arena, then the largest church auditorium in the whole of Africa at Upper Adesuwa, Benin, by Archbishop, the news went round Nigeria, that witches from all over the globe had met in the State of Chicago in the USA and had decided to hold

their first international conference. The venue was fixed as Benin City. The chief host, an academician of Bini origin held a press conference and informed the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Benin as well as newspapers such as The Tribune, Sketch and Punch with arrogance that this first world conference hosting witches and wizards would hold in Benin.

Soon enough Idahosa was informed and true to himself, in the next edition of Idahosa World Outreach, he said it could not be true as it was impossible. The press met Idahosa and asked what exactly was not possible and what were the consequences if any? "Witches from the world could not come to Benin," insisted Benson, as he would "kill them all." The city became a buzz.

The press characteristically returned to the chief host to inform him about Idahosa's response and he boasted. "Not even God can stop it!" he went on.

The next day, all the headlines of the national dailies carried the story on their front pages. Idahosa was informed about the response to the chief wizard host, that God cannot stop the event from holding. "Yes, he is correct," said Idahosa.

"That is why I am here, God does not need to waste his time considering matters as trivial as stopping the conference of witches." Again Idahosa sought to know how many witches were expected in Benin. 9,800 of them, he was told.

His house was visited by pressmen who came to advise him against the risk he was taking by challenging witches openly. "Witches are not to be toiled with, be careful. Do not throw your life away, it is not compulsory to take up these challenges. You are already known by the power of God manifesting in your life. You don't have any point to prove," they said. Idahosa responded: "Those who take care do not take charge and those who take charge do not take care."

The chief host had also warned that Idahosa was a busybody, merely risking his life. When Idahosa insisted that there would be no witches conference in Benin, the media then asked if he was ready to tell the whole nation. They told him they intended to arrange a television program where he would meet face to face with the chief wizard to defend their individual positions.

True to himself, he replied in the affirmative. Idahosa loved open confrontations.

*When Idahosa insisted*

*that there would be no witches conference in Benin, the media then asked if he was ready*

*to tell the whole nation.*

got a resounding “Yes”. He faced Idahosa “Dr. Idahosa, are you sure you are going to be able to stop this conference of wizards and witches?” “It is not that I am going to stop it, I have stopped it,” replied the Archbishop now raising his voice.

About a week later they were both on air in a live program. The moderator started by saying, “Gentlemen, we don’t want anybody to get hurt.” He then asked Idahosa’s disputant, “Chief host, are you really sure you are bringing 9,800 witches from all over the world? The moderator

The moderator then told both of them: “Are you really ready? Because I am now going to grant you time to tell us how serious your position is and how strong the power of your God is.” He beckoned on Idahosa and the chief host and both of them said they were ready. Quickly chipping in, Idahosa requested to be allowed to pray before the program ended as he intended to kill that day. Reluctantly, the moderator accepted. The chief host was unshaken.

The wizard spoke first and for about 27 minutes, quoting copiously from the Old Testament of the Bible, sixth and seventh books of Moses, Egyptian hieroglyphics, British writings, Jewish scrolls, Indian Maharaja and other mystical books. As he ended, the moderator asked if Idahosa heard and again he said he did. “What do you have to say?” Idahosa was asked. “There is nothing to say. I said the proposed conference is cancelled.”

How? The moderator asked.

Archbishop then opened the Bible and read quickly some passages from Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy and some New Testament verses. He

asked how many minutes he had left and was told “just 5”. “Fine, it is time for somebody to report to his maker” he blurted rising up. There was pandemonium in the studio. With everyone watching, he turned to the self confessed wizard and chief host and asked: “I just need an answer from you and your life is hanging on your answer. A witch is not supposed to live and I intend to kill you now if you are one.”

At home in the studio, viewers were glued to their screens and tension was palpable all around. “Now answer me and this large viewing audience in one or two words. Are you a wizard? Just answer, yes or no?”

“I am not.”

“What did you say because I am ready to pray,” Idahosa prompted. “I said, I am not a wizard,” the frightened man replied.

“Then there is no need to go on, stand up and leave the studio!”

The chief host quickly walked out as sighs of relief filled the studio. The Christians among the television crew smiled and kept giving each other the “thumbs up” sign. Benson Idahosa began to fire in tongues.

Next morning, the chief host visited his office and even collected a Bible. He however still insisted to the media that the conference would still hold in 7 days. The media returned to Idahosa to inform him. “Is the conference still holding or not?”

“No comments,” Benson Idahosa responded “but if the conference still holds, I will burn my Bible. I will burn my Bible. I say it is cancelled.”

On the day of the opening, there was no conference. The next day, Archbishop Idahosa travelled to Lagos to see the President, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, a Muslim.

“As you are very well aware, I told the whole nation that the conference of the witches would not hold in this country and you can see that it did not hold.”

“Yes,” replied the military President.

“When I saw you and that fellow defending your beliefs and positions, I sent telex to all our embassies not to allow even one witch or wizard into Nigeria. They were all denied visas.”



## Miracle Centre to go down

It was again reported in the newspapers that Miracle Centre was to go down. It sounded like music to the ears of the ungodly. By early 1986, the Church of God Mission had completed another big and beautiful building in Nigeria. The building was name Miracle Centre. It is a centre where hundreds and thousands of people have come to *On April 6th, 1976, the*

*Christ and have been healed. then Federal government* Millions have been reached with the of *Nigeria announced* gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through *that the church building* the

Christian television programs which were recorded during church services held in the building and thousands have testified of physical healings as they touched their television sets as point of contacts when the Archbishop prayed in the television

*was too close to the airport and that the church building would be pulled down.*

program recorded in the building. Die hard criminals having been transformed, the mighty power of God had been recorded among worshippers.

On April 6th, 1976, the then Federal government of Nigeria announced that the church building was too close to the airport and that the church building would be pulled down. Everyone was shocked. But while saints were moved to holy indignation by the shock, sinners clapped, sang and danced for joy.

The church gave the matter much consideration. It was true that the church was close to the Benin airport but how was it affecting airport operations? The church could think of none. A popular complaint against Pentecostal churches in different parts of the world is that they are noisy during worship. However, the airport authority could not lay such a complaint because no such noise from the church could be in any way comparable to the noise of aeroplanes landing or taking off.

If the reason for the proposed abolition of the building was because of the authorities' intention expansion of the airport and runway, the walls of the Nigerian barracks which was separated from the church premises only by a street of 10 – 15ft wide, then the expansion of the airport could be turned away from military barracks, it could also be done for the Miracle Centre.

A possible reason for the proposed demolishing could also have been the height of the Miracle Centre church building which would affect the landing and taking over operation. But again the church reasoned the best could not be reason because the height of the Miracle Centre building was nothing as compared to the height of air force telecommunication mast which was located on the neighbouring air force barracks. One reason which the church thought could be the reason behind all the complaints was that the enemies of the gospel did not want the banner of Christ in form of a church building to distract visitors and users of the aircraft. They possibly did not want anything Christian close to the airport. Accordingly, the church decided that the Miracle Centre should not be pulled down although a federal military government had soon decreed.

On the Sunday following the Federal government's announcement, worshippers came to the Miracle Centre with heavy hearts and apprehension. On the Sunday the Archbishop stood on the top of the pulpit and from that height and position, he announced, "the Miracle Centre will not go down. Instead those who desire its fall will go down." He made the same announcements on radio and television during the usual airtime Christian programs. The head of state said, "How will he do it?" The Archbishop said, "I pray to God." The Miracle Centre building is still standing today. *The man does not deserve to be buried*

Idahosa's grandmother was a witch. She was a member of Ogboni fraternity. At that time the Oboni dominated Benin city. They told her to warn Benson that he was disturbing their meetings with the kind of prayers he prayed and if he does not change they will kill him. Because his grandmother loved him, he called him and told him to calm down "my son you don't know these people as I know. They will kill you if you don't stop."

He replied, "Ah, for saying that, the head of the fraternity is already dead."

His grandmother started crying and said, “No, no, no, don’t talk like that. You are provoking them more.”

Benson firmly said, “I said he has died.” The man died.

*Among other remarkable* Benson said to the people who had gathered for the funeral “Anybody *things where he acted* who attempts to bury him will die. The *with faith and boldness* man does not deserve to be buried.” *is when a*

*boy fell from a* When they were about to lower the

*three-story building and  
broke his skull on the  
concrete floor. His skull  
was cracked, his brain*

*was pouring out.*

man, the secretary fell into the grave and died. They sent the grandmother to ask him for mercy and put things right with him.

Among other remarkable things where he acted with faith and boldness is when a boy fell from a three-story building

and broke his skull on the concrete floor. His skull was cracked, his brain was pouring out. They called for Archbishop Benson. When he arrived, he gathered the skull and began to pray in tongues and the skull joined back together. There was no need to go to hospital.

### **Margaret comes back to life**

Benson’s family had gone to bed hale and hearty: there was giggling and there were smiles as they prayed. Benson said goodnight to his children; they waved back at him and banged shut their doors.

The next morning as he looked out over the balcony, the Word of God weaved through his mind: “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24 NIV).

The dewy darkness was dispersing, and he listened to the melodious singing of the early morning birds. It was time for him and his family to prepare for their daily devotions.

As his Margaret walked a little distance ahead of Benson, he noticed what seemed to him a slight miscalculation in her step. Before he could even ask what the problem was, he saw her miss one more step and slump onto the carpet with a thud. There at his feet lay his dear wife, gasping for breath! There were no moments for guesswork or unnecessary questions! Benson knew that Satan was up to his tricks, and he refused to play games with him.

As cautiously as he could, he knelt down at Margaret's side, while the children looked on in confusion and fear. With considerable care, he took her drooping hand in his. Then he noticed a sudden change come over her countenance: she blinked absent-mindedly. Benson said slowly, "Margaret, what is the matter; how do you feel?"

Repeatedly, Benson felt her pulse. Countless thoughts flashed through his mind. In the twinkling of an eye Margaret's hand went limp and cold with sweat. He needed no medical expert to tell him that a gradual countdown had begun, and every minute strangers to failure counted for life or death. He decided according to God's unfailing and infallible Word not to take no for an answer.

As he looked into the faces of his wife and children, tears filled his eyes. Margaret was dead! This could not be, no! But dead she was, stone dead. Benson called out to God; he cried out as never before. He sent the children back to their rooms to pray. With heavy feet and tear-soaked cheeks, they marched off. And there he knelt, all alone, beside his wife. She was suddenly lying dead in his arms. He did what he knew to do best – he prayed. He stood before the throne of God and pleaded according to His Word, Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:16). He quoted this verse aloud to the Lord. He refused to give up. He pleaded with Him in the name of Jesus.

A glance at the alarm clock in his room told him that thirty minutes had passed. As much as he prayed, there was no sign of life in Margaret. He began to perspire, but not to give up. The Word of God came forcefully to him, "Be still and see the salvation of the Lord." (2 Chronicles 20:17). He wondered how he could be still in such an hour. But he obeyed the Holy Spirit of God. "I knew that He is in control and He is omniscient."

Then the Holy Spirit told him, "Breath into her mouth, and she will come back to life." He acted immediately, without a moment's doubt. In uplifted faith, Benson Idahosa clasped his hands behind Margaret's neck and drew her up toward him. He breathed into her mouth. Immediately she opened her eyes, stared at his sweat-drained face, and clasped him firmly in a loving embrace. With a victorious shout of "Praise the Lord!" his children ran in to kiss their mother on both cheeks. Benson stood by and glorified the name of the living God!

### ***Why did we have come to see this boy?***

Before Idahosa received a commission to preach, there was a notorious secret cult in Benin city and

in the western states of Nigeria which exerted much influence on the lives of people. It was the reformed Ogboni fraternity.

In those days you could not be promoted in government position or parastatal unless you are a member of the cult. Your boss and indeed most prominent men in society were members. You could not easily win a legally suit in the

*were planned ambushes and assassination attempts against him. Gradually, results of his success began to come. Many prominent members of the cult began to renounce their membership of the wicked organisation.*

courts of law against a criminal because the magistrate or judge as well as the culprit were members of the secret cult. The case file would be missing

and in any case the prosecuting police officer who was a member of the cult would ensure that relevant document and evidence did not exist to any secret cult culprit and prison centres. You not even engage in a private and legitimate pursuit if you were not a member of the cult. By threats of death and other am twisting methods they operated like a crude mafia organisation seeking to control the whole of society. Honesty and justice in society didn't exist.

Then, under God's direction, Benson Idahosa stepped into the situation. He began to condemn the cult from the pulpit, on television, on the pages of newspaper and other available media. Immediately there was angry outbursts, curses and threats to his life but he never gave up. On several occasions there were planned ambushes and assassination attempts against him. Gradually, results of his success began to come. Many prominent members of the cult began to renounce their membership of the wicked organisation.

On a particular day, Archbishop was in his little office of the then headquarters church when visitors announced. It was the top delegation of the cult members including a former Chief Judge of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to see him and into his office they all crowded. The former Chief Judge who was the leader of the delegation addressed him on the reason for their coming. "Pastor Benson," he said "you've been a good boy and we are proud of what you are doing. We also want to give you a staunch support. We will from hence forth pay for all your television airtime."

The Archbishop's heart skipped a bit. "What a proposal!" "But you must promise us one thing; you must from this day stop preaching against our cult. You may not praise us but just stop speaking against us and you will no longer have to worry about your tv airtime. Be a good boy."

A little shakily the Archbishop said, "I've heard what you've said but before I give you my reply, let us pray. They consented and went on their knees.

"Lord we commit this situation into your hands," he prayed, "now you foul demons, you cultic spirits I rebuke you in the name of Jesus. I arrest you and I charge you come out in the name of Jesus. Come out in the name of Jesus! Come out!"

They got up on their knees blinking in indignation. "What have we been

discussing?” they demanded. “Why did we have come to see this boy?”  
“Who would have thought this stubbornness could go this far?” At the end  
they all moved outside the little office promising the Arch- bishop a hard  
time. **Idahosa commissioned to build a university**

Professor Don Petri was an educationist of higher repute with Oral Roberts University. Because of his initial interest and foundational work in Benson Idahosa university he was in the past referred as the university’s International Vice Chancellor. He had helped build universities in some parts of the world and the Lord had told him that his work was not over as he would build another one by the name of Christian Faith University. He did not know where that would finally be located but he had expected to be involved with it someday. He went into a supermarket in USA and found on the bookstand a little volume with the title “Fire in His Bones”. Leafing through it, he saw- that it was the biography of an African preacher by the name of Benson Idahosa. He had never heard of the man but bought the book and on reading it he saw that God had told this man, Benson Idahosa to build a university and that the name of the university would be Christian Faith University, his God given university. Immediately, he began to make inquiries about the whereabouts of this Benson Idahosa. He finally succeeded in obtaining his telephone number and he called. The excitement which the man on the other side of the line exhibited and his own excitement was mutual. Not very long after they both were able to meet together and to discuss Christian Faith University.

On his part although the idea of a private Christian university wasn’t cheap and he didn’t know what form of the university would take, the Archbishop had on hearing from the Lord that he would a university acquired a wide piece of land which he named “University Site”. This site was a stretch of land which was traditionally forbidden for human habitation as it contained about 100 traditional shrines with trees, many of which were over 300 years old. It was an evil forest with numerous shrines and the royal house located there.

By way of preparation, the Archbishop had helped a deacon in the Church of God Mission, now Rev. Dr. John Okhuoya, a lecturer in the University of Benin to proceed to the Oral Roberts University to study the requirements

of running a Christian private university and to sensitize the international community on the proposed Christian university.

On 5th August, 1992, the Lord God woke the Archbishop up at 4 am and said “I told you that I will take you around the world, that I have done and I’m still doing. I told you that I will build through you a Bible school for all nations and I have done so. I told you that I will open for you the avenue to preach My Word on television and I’m doing just that. I told you that I will build the Miracle Centre for the glory of My Name and I have done so. I told you that I will build a hospital for evangelism and I have done so. Now I am telling you to build a university and I will surely see it come to pass and the people to help you carry out this vision have already been called out.”

The next day, the Archbishop began the implementation of what the Lord had told him. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit he called three men, who were active and already in the ministry and unburdened his vision of the night. The three were the now Rev. Prof. John Okhuoya, Rev. Prof. Vincent Iyawe and Rev. Michael J. Okagbare. He told them that although the vision was given to him, the flow of the project will be the responsibility of the three. Having met these three constituted the work of the pioneering committee whose work and plan had led to the establishment of the Christian Faith University, Institute of Continuous Learning. They had also invited all members of the pioneering committee, some of whom had continued as functionaries in the university and its council. The then Rev. Dr. John Okhuoya was chairman, Rev. Dr. Vincent Iyawe was an executive member while Deacon Michael Okagbare was the executive secretary. Later, when the pioneering committee broke into different sub-committees, the now Professor Miss Uche Gbenedio became the chairman of the academic sub-committee.

Having submitted the necessary applications for university to the National Universities Commission, the pioneering committee prepared for an occasion which was held on September 12th, 1992.

In the opening speech on the occasion, the Archbishop said, “Hallelujah, this is the day about which the Lord God spoke. For you hold in your hands information concerning the first steps towards the fulfilment of a vision



of many years ago – a vision which relates to our world of education and intellectual development. This vision has crystalised into a name the ‘Christian Faith University’, an institution of such structural social height of the private sector in present day Nigeria may seem far fetched an initially I had my worries about its possibility but over the years, the Lord has constantly affirmed that before He gives a vision He has already laid a blueprint for its fulfilment. In other words, when God gives a vision and commission, He makes provision.

From the mandate which the Archbishop got from the Lord God, he stated his vision for the university in clearly “My vision in education is for sole and express purpose of glorifying God and his Son Jesus Christ. Through the operation of a Christian post secondary institution dedicated to the education of students in spiritual maturity, academic excellence and physically. Furthermore, we seek to establish a climate of free scholastic inquiry, provide direction whereby students may learn God’s revealed truths and develop Christian leaders and professionals who shall have high ethical moral standards and be responsible to God’s Word and Spirit.

Benson Idahosa University (BIU) will be an institution which will be new from the start, coming out of the ancient principles of the Bible yet with a strong emphasis on strong academics so that although the Bible is its main book, it would be full accredited as an institution of higher learning.

The entire process would absolutely require us to be on the cutting edge of what was new and proven in educational circles but ancient enough to stand on the eternal foundations of the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit and God’s authority. It can be done only if we believed, if we worked, if we stand uncompromisingly, if we trust God as our source and if we want to do badly enough, emphasis is more on the quality of students rather than the quantity. This also is related to the development of campuses, quality rather than quantity is the emphasis, manpower development is the objective. And it will be a university where quality of education over rides quantity.

While thousands of students from public universities roam streets with their degrees for lack of jobs, we intend to turn out students every year students with their careers who will have jobs already waiting for them before they graduate. In my travels all over the world I’ve seen university campuses on

single seven floor buildings producing graduates in various disciplines such as law, medicine, engineering, agriculture, education and the like. Ours will be a university where students and faculty will be a gift to their generation. Thus while we recognise that huge campus development is needful, we shall use resources as they come to provide functional facilities, doing great things with little.

When we laid the foundation of the Miracle Centre, I had only \$120 to start the project. When the 5th Miracle Centre was to be built, I had \$514 to begin the project and now that I have \$1,000, the Lord is telling me that now is the time to start the Benson Idahosa University.

To date Benson Idahosa University has remained a matured vision inside of me and am happy that the time for its birth has come. Together let us take onto ourselves the labor pains for an institution that will change the destiny of individuals, societies and nations. The Lord God has told me that this project which he has committed into our hands will outlive us and generations to yet unborn will remember us for what we are about to do.” ***The World will get up for you***

Tommy Lee had first responded to Benson Idahosa’s letters in 1962. Subsequently, a solid relationship was established over the years resulting in Osborn’s visits with his wife, Daisy to Benin on a few occasions, either for his crusades or specifically to Idahosa’s church.

Of all the visits however, one specific visit in the late 1970s was very unique. T.L and Daisy Osborn had stayed late ministering at the Miracle Centre of Church of God Mission just opposite the Airport. They therefore went late to catch their flight to Lagos which was supposed to be a connecting flight from Johannesburg to France, England and then the USA.

By the time Idahosa took his guests to the airport, they were told that the last flight for the day was overbooked. Not one seat was available, the passengers had boarded and the flight about to take off.

Not only that, the jetliner had begun to taxi towards the runway. Benson Idahosa’s new Mercedes sped towards the tarmac and screeched to halt in front of the plane. Benson came out and waved at the pilot frantically.

The plane stopped and his steps were lowered as the pilot came down to know what the issue was. Idahosa began “I have two of God’s important servants who must go to Lagos”. “But we are loaded to capacity. Every seat is full,” said the captain.

“Never mind. Let me on board. They all know me; they see ‘Redemption Hour’ (Idahosa’s TV program). Let me talk to them.”  
*As he approached the rear, a young*

*man rose from the back of the plane and asked the person sitting next to him to get*

*up.*

Idahosa obliged, climbed into the plane and walked down the crowded aisles. The passengers were annoyed. He prayed silently as he returned to the front. He turned round, facing the passengers and started “Excuse me friends, I have two of God’s special servants in my car. They must go to Lagos today on this plane. Two of you will get off now so God’s

servants can board. God bless you. He waited a minute, no one moved. The silence showed annoyance by impatient passengers. Some pretended to be asleep and others seemed were praying. Idahosa slowly walked the aisle again. As he approached the rear, a young man rose from the back of the plane and asked the person sitting next to him to get up. Yes, said Idahosa pointing, you can go tomorrow. You can travel later he said, pointing to the other man. They both gathered their belongings and proceeded from the plane.

Benson stopped the first man in the aisle of the plane. He asked him, “Young man, what is your name and what do you do?”  
“My name is Aliko Dangote and this is my assistant,” the young man replied.  
“I am a trader, a businessman.”

“Impressed,” Benson responded.  
“The World will get up for you.” The mostly Christian passengers

responded “Amen”.

“My God will take you and your business beyond Africa and bless you beyond measure.”

Just before descending the steps, Idahosa turned and raised his hands with tears in his eyes, praised the Lord and blessed the remaining passengers for their patience. They all broke out in spontaneous clapping. See you on “Redemption Hour” this Sunday evening he said. They clapped as T.L and Daisy Osborn boarded for the subsequent flight.

Aliko Dangote was born to Mohammed Dangote and Mariya Sanusi Dantata on April 10, 1957 in the then Northern Region (Kano State). An ethnic Hausa from Kano State, he showed his love for business by selling sweets even in primary school.

As a teenager, he began to work for his uncle, Sani Dangote and it was said of him that he served diligently. Sometime in 1977 and after his 20th birthday, he approached his uncle about his plan to establish a business outfit which would trade in cement, sugar, rice, pasta, salt, cotton, millet, vegetable, oil and other products. His uncle provided a loan of N500,000 but gave a caveat to Aliko to return the loan within a deadline of three months (this was the practice at the time).

Dangote first of all relocated to Lagos in June 1977, the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria to develop a strong distribution channel for the quick and efficient delivery of his products.

Currently, there is no family in Nigeria today that does not have a Dangote product in their home. If it is sugar, then it is salt or the house you are living in was built with a Dangote cement. Everyone has something to do with his business. He earns a little off everyone and that is the way to get wealthy.

Today, Aliko Dangote is the among the top 100 richest people in the world and richest in Africa.

This reminds what 2 Chronicles 20:20 says: Believe in the Lord God, so shall you be established, believe Also his Prophets, so shall you prosper (2 Chronicles 20:20)**Idahosa warned by the head of witches**

Idahosa's grandmother was a witch. She was a member of Ogboni fraternity. At that time the Ogboni dominated Benin City. They told her to warn Benson that he was disturbing their meetings with the kind of prayers he prayed and if he does not change, they will kill him.

Because his grandmother loved him, he called him and told him to calm down "my son you don't know these people as I know. They will kill you if you don't stop."

He replied, "Ah, for saying that, the head of the fraternity is already dead." The grandmother started crying and said, "No, no, no, don't talk like that. You are provoking them more."

Benson firmly said, "I said he has died." The man died.

Benson said to the people who had gathered for the funeral "Anybody who attempts to bury him will die. The man does not deserve to be buried."

When they were about to lower the man, the secretary fell into the grave and died. They sent the grandmother to ask him for mercy and put things right with him. *I am going home*

"I will go when my work is finished; therefore when I am gone no - body should be double-minded concerning the will of God for my death. I am going to go by the will of God, not the will of witches or wizards. No man can kill me. Many have tried to hurt me spiritually and physically to no avail. God has not given the key of the vault in which he has hidden me to any man or devil. He did not invest so much in me only to hand me over to the devil to fulfil his dark and unholy idiosyncrasies. I am indestructible by the grace of God, so are you if you know my Jesus. You know, here in Edo land, I do not know about you and where you come from, but here in Edo land, where I am from, when a man dies, the wife is always accused of having killed him.

I share a beautiful life with my wife Margaret, at least as beautiful as human nature and God's grace in my life can make it. She is not dreaming of killing me – she is the flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones, the wife of my youth and the mother of my lovely four children. No, when I go it will be by the will and call of God.

You may ask if I am preparing to die. Not at all. I hope to live for at least one hundred and twenty years. I look forward to when I will hobble into the church with my walking stick and sit back on my big chair to listen and watch my children in the ministry show forth the stuff which God has invested in them through the ministry of God committed to me. But, and this is the big But...if the Lord calls me before then, if He calls me Now, I am ready to answer "Here I am O Lord" with joy and expectation because death is gain. Yes, yes! Ha, I see heaven open and the

voice that I hear says "Come up hither!"

My going will be a glorious one; I will not be sick and be taken from one hospital to the other. Like Elijah, whew! I will be gone before you

*On Thursday, the*

*can say Jack Robinson... 12th, 1998, Idahosa started the day as always. In his office*

*he asked for a cup of tea which he did not drink up. He told one of his staff*

*members;*

*"I am going home".*

No. Nobody will mourn me with regret because of prolonged illness. Nobody will have the pleasure of sympathising with me because of long-suffering; that is one of the gifts which I do not have: the gift of Lo-oong suffering!

When my day comes, I may be sitting with people in the church and will go when I hear the call like Rev. Gordon Lindsay did. It is a glorious way to depart. I may be with people at home and while we are talking, I will

be done just like that. That will be a precious death."

On Thursday, the 12th, 1998, Idahosa started the day as always. In his office he asked for a cup of tea which he did not drink up. He told one of his staff members; "I am going home".

This was not strange. But when he repeated it unnecessarily, there was a reason to suspect the unusual but no notice was taken of it. Later that

afternoon, at lunch with his guests, he spoke about heaven. He asked them whether they believed it was possible for one to walk to heaven like Elijah did? He said he would prefer to be translated like Enoch and Elijah. He told them he had a heavenly drink in his cup. He took the “pure heaven” juice on the table and drank from it, making a humorous statement about going to heaven. The drink tasted like heaven’s drink he told his guests. His high sense of humour was on a parade.

On that day, he had received “members of an educational foundation team from the U.S. based Oral Roberts University” at the Christian Faith University after ministering in church. He excused himself to go to Miracle Centre, his church office and prayed with different segments of people at the church office and including the Bible school students before he went back to meet his guests at home.

It was a busy period at the headquarters of Church of God Mission, the Archbishop had just returned from one of his many tours, this time from the UK. Members of the Oral Roberts University Education Fellowship (OREF) were at the headquarters of Word of Faith Group of Schools for the yearly OREF program. They were led by Professor Don Petri, a friend of the Benson Idahosa University and a professor of christian education at the Oral Roberts University. Both he and all the American participants at the conference were guests at the Archbishop’s home.

It was an early afternoon and Idahosa and his guests were at the table. A characteristic humour of the Archbishop eliciting laughter and chatter punched with the lunch. It was a sumptuous meal and both local and international guests were satisfied. Then a fruit juice was passed around in packets of which were printed the brand name “pure heaven”

This caption started another round of conversation. It was about heaven. Then suddenly, there was a hush as the Archbishop broke into the good-natured conversation and asked “how many of you are ready to go to heaven right now? You see he continued; “all Christians talk about heaven and its beauty and desirability but no one is prepared to go there straight away”. I have news for you. I am prepared to go to heaven right now, anyone going with me? Everyone was silent. The mood of the diners changed and went to their rooms. The Archbishop called for Professor Don

Petri to join him in one of the mainly sitting rooms in the new Benson Idahosa University. He indicated those aspects of the master plan he had implemented and requested the professor to continue from where he was ending. Yet Professor Don Petri did not understand the meaning of the Archbishop's words. The Archbishop was the symbol of the university. It could not have entered the mind of anybody that he would be translated a few minutes after.

Shortly after he had spoken instructing a deaconess on what the guests should eat for dinner, he began to repeat the words "Thank you Jesus" then suddenly threw his head back on the easy chair and gave up the ghost. Professor Don Petri did not immediately understand until he saw the body slumping off the chair then Don Petri rushed at him calling for help and laying him on the rug. He tried all the resuscitation techniques that he knew but to no avail, they called for help from the Faith Mediplex but the doctors testified that from that moment he hissed that sigh of relief, he had clearly departed. His going was an air of finality, which the doctors knew but could not admit. He was not sick. He had never had high blood pressure. He was never down. Even the doctors were surprised that he died because he was not sick at all.

It was as he had said it:

I may be with people at home and while we are talking, I will be done just like that. That will be a precious death.

When he died, many people wailed on the streets. Nobody, even those who were not Christians wanted to believe that he had died. He had brought glory, honour and attention to the city of Benin. In the days of Archbishop Benson Idahosa Benin had become the headquarters of the gospel in Africa. Lagos was larger but more people would travel allover the world to Benin City.

He was the first Nigerian preacher to minister on radio and television, the first to own mass crusade equipment and even move from city to city in Africa and even abroad doing meetings. During his lifetime, he ministers in over 130 countries. Many of those meetings were not invitational; he went into missions with his own money. It is said that he spoke to more whites and blacks than any white or African.



Since Archbishop Benson Idahosa had been preaching prosperity with his lifestyle and story. He dressed flamboyantly, used the best cars and pursued big projects with big budgets. It would however be wrong to conclude that he only used the money for his benefit, because he helped people financially, gave scholarships to the poor, fed people, gave cars and spoke on behalf of the voices to the Nigerian government on several occasions. Benson was 35 when he married Margaret from a Royal lineage of the Benin Kingdom on June 4, 1969. They had four children and

these are; Feb, Ruth, Daisy, and Freda.

### **Expansion of his ministry and his credentials**

Benson Idahosa, the archbishop and founder of Church of God Mission International Incorporated with its headquarters in Benin City, Nigeria established over 6,000 churches throughout Nigeria and Ghana before 1971. Many of ministers he supervised pastored churches of 1,000 to 4,000 people. In addition to filling the position of Archbishop of Church of God Mission, he was also president of Idahosa World Outreach and president of Faith Medical Centre. He held positions in numerous organizations including the college of bishops of the international communion of Christian churches and the Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma.

Idahosa earned a diploma in divinity from Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas, which he attended in 1971, a Doctorate of Divinity in 1981 from the Word of Faith College, New Orleans and a Doctorate of Laws degree from Oral Roberts University in March 1984. He also received other degrees from the International University in Brussels, Belgium.

Soul winning was Benson's primary concern. With a motto "Evangelism our Supreme Task," he worked towards this goal of reaching the unreached in Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a black African, he found the doors of African countries were wide open and he ministered in over 123 countries all over the world.

Crusades played a major role in his ministry. He was involved in at least one crusade per month. A record of nearly one million people a night attended his Lagos Crusade in April 1985. He established the Redemption Television Ministry with a potential viewing audience of 50 million people.



**THE OSBORNS**

*The pioneers of mass miracle evangelism*

*mass miracle evangelism*

*The pioneers of*

**The Flint, Michigan, meetings with F.F. and Florence Bosworth, would serve as a “bridge” or “pivotal point” that would prepare T.L. and Daisy for unprecedented mass miracle evangelism in seventy-four nations of the world. This memorable event created hope and confidence in their hearts that they could effectively present Jesus Christ to masses of people. They would no longer be limited by their natural abilities, of time and energy, to lay hands on just a few individuals. They would now be able to help thousands, or scores of thousands of people, to receive salvation and miracle healing at the**

**same time. Having seen the world of suffering humanity, they knew that their faith must be raised to a level beyond the limits of their own human touch.**

**Although F.F. Bosworth had not crusaded beyond the United States and Canada, he was keenly interested in helping all to be blessed. He was concerned about suffering people who waited in long prayer lines for someone's special prayer, when they could embrace God's healing promises as soon as they heard them and be healed.**

Tommy Lee was born in December 23rd, 1923 to Charles Richard and Mary Osborn. He was raised on a farm near Pocassett Township, Oklahoma and schooled in the country. He was the seventh son and youngest in a family of thirteen children. He was raised on the Tfarm and schooled in the country.

Tommy's father, also, a seventh son, was a nonpracticing traditional Baptist. His parents were musicians, as were several of his brothers and sisters, and Tommy Lee started making music at a very young age. Growing up in the latter half of the 1920s, he saw his large family struggling through the depression years.

In 1930 when he was six years old, his father moved the family to Skedee, Oklahoma, in search for a more profitable farm. Some rich people in Oklahoma had evidently spot Charles with these six boys. That was alot of good labour. Because their father was poor, he saw this as an opportunity and he took on the big farm of about 3000 acres of land. Then the depression hit. Tommy supposed that in those days their dad had drifted away from God or was just busy. Charles and Mary Osborn used to read the bible alot but never prayed nor went to church.

When Tommy was twelve years old, his older brother, Lonnie, got saved at an old fashioned Oklahoma brush arbor meeting and received what he called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That day he returned home speaking in tongues. For three days and three nights Lonnie couldn't talk english. Charles thought that his son had gone crazy. They didn't know what to do.

*When the lady evangelist made the call for sinners to be saved, he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. From then on, he loved going to that little*

*church.*

The changes that he saw in his brother got his attention. He decided to attend a revival meeting in an old church down by the railroad tracks in Mannford, Oklahoma, with Lonnie. Tommy shared that he was dressed in his best country overalls and since he could play the piano, he played at the meeting. When the lady evangelist made the call for sinners to be saved, he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. From then on, he loved going to that little church. A few weeks after that Tommy also returned home speaking tongues.

After Tommy walked five miles and found his sister and her husband. She didn't know Jesus. He ministered to them and they got saved after his visit. Later, they helped him go to church because he had no way to go. He would have had to walk 3 miles to get there.

### ***I wanted to be a soulwinner***

Though he loved going to the little church, many times the work on the farm kept Tommy in the field until too late to attend the meeting. Many nights he wept from disappointment at not being able to go to church.

From that time, Tommy began discovering the truly good life when he was converted. His objectives and motives were changed immediately when he got converted. He now wanted what God wanted, and he wanted it for the reason God wanted it.

“I started doing whatever I could to witness to unconverted people in my area. From that day, I wanted to be a soul winner; I wanted to share with people what Jesus Christ meant to me.”

He began to print Bible verses with a toy press that he received as a Christmas present. He refers to these verses on scraps of paper, today as “the good life concepts.” These became his first tracts and he distributed them among the town's people, a population of less than 300. **Meeting with Oral Roberts**

In the mid 1930's, when he was still barely a teen and while “digging cockle burrs out of the corn rows” on his parents' farm, Tommy met Oral

Roberts. Oral was pastoring a small church in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. Even though Oral was six years older than Tommy, they became friends. Soon Tommy started helping him with evangelistic work in Sand Springs, ministering in street meetings. Oral was the preacher, and Tommy took care of most everything else, which included playing the accordion and piano for the musical part of the meetings. Roberts was a frequent Sunday visitor to the Osborn farm to have some fried chicken at their family dinner.

Tommy soon lost contact with Oral, but later was reconnected when they moved to Tulsa where Roberts' ministry headquarters were located. Tommy began to attend his tent meetings.

### **Tommy joins Ernest M. Dillard**

Gradually, each of his six brothers moved out of the family home until he was the only boy still living with his parents and helping his 60-year-old father on the potato farm. He admitted that he was reluctant, even scared, to ask his father's permission to move out and begin traveling. Finally, while sorting potatoes in the cellar, he plucked up courage to make the request and was greatly surprised when his father said "Yes"

At the age of fourteen, while walking in the woods hunting for the milk cows, he began to weep without knowing why. He stopped and prayed, kneeling beside some sandstone boulders. The Lord Jesus spoke to his spirit and made him to know that He had chosen him to preach His gospel.

At the age of fifteen, he left the farm and also dropped out of school after completing eighth grade to accompany a respected minister of their community, Ernest M. Dillard. Since Tommy was musical and had an accordion, Ernest wanted him to join him, with his guitar, providing music during the revival meetings. Each Friday evening, he insisted that Tommy preach. So little by little, Tommy found the words to express his feelings about Christ and His Gospels.

"I shall never forget the night when I walked out of my home leaving my father and mother in tears. The last of seven sons was leaving." Tommy knew there were many responsibilities on the farm and far too much work for his Dad to do alone, but he knew, also, that the Lord had spoken and he

had obey. He knew that the harvest field of a world was so much more important than those acres of land they were farming. He knew that the God who had called him would make a way for his parents, and He did.

He was reluctant, even a little scared, to ask his father for permission to leave Skedee and hit the road. That fateful day while sorting potatoes in the cellar, he was greatly surprised when his father said yes.

### *I love the violin but I want to be a missionary*

Daisy Marie Washburn was born September 23, 1924 to poor fruit farmers in Los Banos, California. The family had 11 children and Daisy was devastated by trauma in her young life. When Daisy and her ten siblings would pick fruit, they would ride on the back of a trailer. That's the way they lived. They were very poor and had nothing. If you had a cow to give the older one, you had nothing left over for the rest. Being the tenth child, Daisy cut her teeth in life watching their mother toil day and night as the homemaker.

All the water for household needs had to be pumped from the old well. Then it was carried in buckets to our rough wood floor kitchen. Mama built and stoked the fire to heat it in a big iron kettle for washNo stranger to - ing. She spent hours of back-breaking drudgery over the galvanized wash tub and scrub board, toiling to keep the family's home-made clothes and scanty bedding clean.

*heartache, Daisy lost three more family members before*

*she was out of her teens—two brothers*

She sewed all of their clothes, *to suicide and her father* hand-knitted all of their sweaters, *to murder* socks and woolens, grew the vegetables, cooked every meal over a wood stove, churned the butter, scrubbed the floors on her knees, canned the fruit, hand-quilted their bedding, baked their bread, etc.

Their mother got saved while Daisy was six years old. With permission from her husband, every Sunday they walked four miles as she took them for Sunday school providing they were back and had their meal on the table at 12pm.

When Daisy was six years old, her mother later got killed in an automobile accident and her older sister took Daisy and raised her.

At the impressionable age of eight years, Daisy lost her mother and an older sister in a tragic auto/train accident. The children were divided among foster and family homes, to be raised under the distant eye of State welfare agencies. Daisy was raised by an older, married sister who had two children of her own. No stranger to heartache, Daisy lost three more family members before she was out of her teens—two brothers to suicide and her father to murder.

At the age of 12, an evangelist came to their church. He preached a sermon about hell and he scared her and she accepted Christ. “And I was afraid of God from that day until I grew up and understood differently God’s love.”

Unfortunately this did not protect her from difficult times. Within a few years two of her brothers committed suicide and her father was murdered.

At twelve, a missionary came to Daisy’s church and asked for a volunteer. She wanted to show how Indian women dress and Daisy went up. She dressed her. When she finished, she took Daisy in her arms and said, “Honey, wouldn’t it be wonderful if when you grew up you will be a missionary.” As soon as she said it “in my heart I volunteered again.” And from that moment I saw myself as a missionary in India. I wanted to build an orphanage. I began to dream about being a missionary.”

Thriving on challenge and competition, Daisy did well in school sports. She mastered the clarinet and proudly played in the marching band. Then she won the honored position of first violinist in her school orchestra.

Daisy had opportunities that she turned down. She had an opportunity to become a concert violinist and her music teacher wanted her to become a protégé. She wanted to pay for Daisy’s school because she was from a poor

family. She had to ask from her sister “what should I do? I have this wonderful opportunity. She said, “Honey, you just need to pray. Do you want to be a concert violin or do you want to be a missionary?”

“And I said I want to be what Jesus wants me to be.”

Daisy prayed and had to go in the next morning and tell her music teacher. “I can’t be a concert violin. I love the violin but I want to be a missionary.” Her teacher cried and Daisy too cried and said, “What you have chosen is the best part of life.” She recommended her for it. She was a staunch Catholic woman and thought that was wonderful.

She was active in youth leadership at fifteen. The scars of earlier heartache and difficulty did not make Daisy a bitter person. To the contrary, she constantly sought out ways to encourage and to lift other people. Her philosophy of life, even at that young age, was to spread only good news about another person. **Love at first sight**

When Daisy was sixteen years of age, boys started notice her more than she wanted them to. Her sister used to say oil and water don’t mix. Light and darkness can’t mix and you don’t take evil companions into your bosom. She sowed seeds on that so Daisy never wanted to date any boys because they weren’t Christians.

“So I prayed when these boys wanted to take me here, take me there, that the Lord would give me a Christian friend that I could go places with, go to church, go to the CA rallies, go to fellowship meetings, be seen with so that these boys could leave me alone.”

And in two weeks, one night all her nephews were going to donkey baseball game (playing baseball while riding a donkey), Daisy too wanted to go but her sister didn’t want to let her go because good girls didn’t go to things like that. The boys went and Daisy had to stay at home. Right after they left her best friend came by with her mother and another elderly woman in church and asked her whether she would like to go to a revival meeting. She said “yes”

For two and one-half years, Tommy accompanied Dillard through Arkansas and Oklahoma, and finally to California. In a little Church at Almo,



California he met Daisy Marie Washburn who, with other young people from their Church in Los Banos, came to visit their revival. Daisy was 16 and Tommy was 17.

It was love at first sight. Daisy didn't dare presume that Tommy was in love with her because by the time they met she wasn't thinking marriage. But she remembered her prayer that she would have a christian friend that she could identify with so that the boys would leave her alone. But she didn't know how fast this was going to work. On the first night their CA president came and sat down by her so Tommy assumed that he was her date. He asked her if she could go to the CA rallies. She didn't have any plans to but immediately she accepted. The first thing that Tommy asked her was if she was going with anybody. She said, "No am not going with anybody." That was encouraging to him. Tommy told her where he was going to be. Daisy had to go to work and figure out to get there because in those days they didn't have wheels. She started working it out with people in church and she found a deacon and his daughter who were going to go so she went with them. ***Ruby, Ruby, am in love***

Accademic achievement and financial success were a gradueat motivator for her in school because her mother died, her father was an alcoholic, three brothers had committed suicide. Her life was school. "Well you always She was poor. She made a decision that she would grow up to be successful and to do something. When she was in 8th grade, her teacher said "You can't help how you were

*told me if I had to ask I wasn't and I don't have to ask, I know I'm in love."*

born but you can help how you die." That was a good seed planted in Daisy when she was about 13 years old. She decided that finances is the best field to go in because you learn how to make money, learn how to manage money and never be poor again. So when she met Tommy she already had a job lined up. She was to be an accountant of the biggest store in town, she had already lined up an apartment to be moved in as soon as she graduated.

After the service, he went to see her at the balcony. He wanted to know if she would marry him. At that moment Daisy accepted to marry Tommy.

She went home, walked to the front door and to her sister's home and said, "Ruby, Ruby, am in love. I'm going to get married as soon as I graduate." She came out of her sleep. She said, "What? what? How do you know you are in love? I said, "Well you always told me if I had to ask I wasn't and I don't have to ask, I know I'm in love."

They were alone together two times before they were married and they wrote to each other for eight months. In these letters they covered every topic that a person needs to cover before they enter into marriage. They sent each other a 24 page letter daily.

On Easter Sunday April 5, 1942, Osborn married graduating high school student and farmer's girl, Daisy Washburn, Osborn in Los Banos, California. He was 18 and she was only 17.

Tommy borrowed a suit from his brother-in-law and budgeted his precious few dollars to include a white carnation corsage for Daisy and a boutonniere for himself. To make ends meet, he managed to get a ride from Oklahoma to California with a couple who were driving west, but they stopped a hundred miles short of Los Banos, and he had to hitch hike the final lap of his journey.

The day after the wedding, the couple began their trip back to Sand Springs, Oklahoma, where Tommy had a job. They arrived with fifty-two cents. Tommy had measured his few dollars very carefully. He was burning to get back into the ministry of evangelism. He traded his only possessions, a cow and a calf at his father's farm, for a 1930



**T.L. Osborn at 18 years old**



**Daisy Washburn at 17 years old**



**T.L. Osborn as a young pastor**

“Model A” Ford coupe that needed overhauling. With twenty dollars from his brother Lonnie, and with Daisy working with him through the heat of the day, actually guiding him in making the necessary repairs, Tommy overhauled the engine. He said, “I could work on a mule, but I knew nothing about an automobile.” Daisy, on the other hand, had grown up with two nephews who were exceptional mechanics and they taught her a lot about engines.

Tommy and Daisy wanted to go to California, but they didn’t have any money. Daisy convinced her brother, Bud, to loan them thirty-five dollars so they could make the trip. Tommy was concerned that the old car might not perform, but Daisy said, “If it stops, we’ll find a way to fix it.” Tommy knew that they would not have enough money to stay in motels. Daisy said, “We can sleep in the car.” And they did.

Once in California, they sold the car for needed cash and began their preaching career in Campbell, at a church whose pastor had invited them to conduct a revival. They spent two years in California. Both of them had musical talent, so they played, sang, and preached in many of the little churches in the agricultural San Joaquin Valley. When Tommy was nineteen, he and Daisy had their first child. On March 25, 1943, their

daughter, Marie LaVonne, was born in Bakersfield County Hospital. She only lived seven days and Tommy and Daisy were deeply grieved.

In the spring of 1944, Tommy at 20 and Daisy at 19 drove to Portland, Oregon, to conduct gospel meetings in an old tabernacle-barn that was built and used by the early Methodists. It had about 19 people at that time. The meetings were successful; and, as a result, they pioneered Montavilla Tabernacle and became its pastors. When the challenge was first presented to them to establish a new church in Portland, Tommy didn't feel qualified. Daisy voiced, "It's an opportunity. Let's do it. We can learn." And they did.

While in Portland, their son, Tommy Lee, Jr., was born on January 20, 1945.

**T.L and Daisy had dedicated their lives, when they were married, to obey Christ and to**



**preach His gospel**



## **The church in Oregon where T.L. and Daisy were elected as pastors on their return to America from India**

### ***Let's go!***

After a year, the superintendent of the Pentecostal Church of God Churches to which Tommy and Daisy belonged was a man who had gone to India as a missionary. Whenever this man preached, he preached about India and about missions until, "he literally branded India on our spirits." The couple had just become pastors for the first time, when a missionary from India appealed to them to become missionaries. If ten persons were lifting a log, nine of them on the small end and only one on the big end, and if "we wanted to lift the log, on which side should we life?" Tommy was concerned about the risks that would be involved but, Daisy asserted, "Other couples have done it. We will succeed. We'll learn the language. We'll work together. Let's go!"

They decided that the people of India needed Christ more than the people in USA.

Three weeks after Tommy Lee, Jr's birth, they resigned as pastors of that growing church and began nine months of ministry across several states, preparing for their five-year mission to Lucknow, India. They invested everything they owned and had dedicated their lives to go to the other side of the world to win souls. They went to India with their 10 months old boy. At that time they were Tommy was 21 and Daisy 20 years old.

### ***Prove it and we will believe it***

People in India were so kind to them. Tommy found out the Muslims were talking about the same God they worshipped, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He didn't know that. He began to figure what what he was going to tell them.

Initially, both Tommy and Daisy were shocked when they discovered that the Muslims believed in the same God as they did. The Muslims called God, Allah, and we call Him God. Tommy thought "Allah" was a heathen god, but later learned that it was the Arabic word for God.

They also thought that the Muslim people worshipped dead gods, but learned that they worshipped the God of Abraham, the same God the Jews worshipped and whom we worship today. The Muslims also prayed five times a day and loved to talk to God. <sup>18</sup> The Osborns made many friends, including Muslim merchants.

Many times they would shake his hand and say, “Good morning, Brother Osborn.” And they might add, “Praise God.” He was shocked.

The Moslems in India loved to come and study the teachings of Jesus with them because they had great admiration for Him, as a prophet and as a teacher. They loved His teachings and even respected Him as a miracle worker.

They would stay for hours – sometimes all afternoon. They accepted Jesus as a prophet, as a great teacher – and as a healer. But they did not accept Him as the Son of God, raised from the dead, or as the Saviour of the world.

The Osborns knew that if they did not believe these facts about Jesus, there was no way that they would be converted.

These people did not believe either of these facts, so they could not be saved according to the Bible. They did not know what to do.

They could never convince them that Jesus was the Son of God. They were friends. They were lovely people.

A group of Moslems came one afternoon. They said, “All right, Mr. And Mrs. Osborn, prove to us that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is risen from the dead.”

Tommy said, “Sure, I can do that.” And he reached for his Bible and started opening the pages to locate the scriptures. But they interrupted him and said, “Wait, Mr. Osborn. We don’t believe the Bible is God’s word.”

And they reached for their black book and started to show Tommy what their book said.

There were with two black books on the table. One of them was called the Bible, the other was called the Koran – according to them, the word of God that came through the Prophet Mohammed.

The Osborns said that Jesus is the Son of God, risen from the dead. Theirs denied both.

Then Tommy began to get closer and he found out. He thought well: “If thou shalt confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your that God raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved.” He knew that that’s what they’ve got to believe. So he told them, “Yeah, its wonderful. He was born of a virgin.

“No, no, no!”

Conceived of the Holy Ghost.

“No, no, no!”

Died for our sins

“No, no, no!”

His blood was divine.

“No, no, no!”

God raised Him from the dead the third day.

“No, no, no!”

“Is this Jesus alive?” They said, “The said “Prove it and we will believe it.”

They felt defeated because they had failed to convince the Hindus or the Moslems that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, that He had risen from the dead, nor that He is alive today as the world’s only Savior. Because of this, the duo decided to go out of India because they thought they were embarrassing God, the Christian faith, themselves and they were not doing any good to anyone. They had spent a year in India by the time they experienced the greatest confusion and disap<sup>pointment</sup> of their lives. **The**

### **Osborns return to USA**

Although a few were saved in their meetings, after a long siege of sickness during which their son almost died of cholera and Tommy despaired of life for six long weeks with typhoid fever. In the fall of 1946, they decided to go home. They felt that it would be better to go back to America where most of the people already believed the *As they were coming home*, Bible (or at least claimed to believe

what the Bible says about Christ).

So they returned home, but in unbelieveable turmoil.



*a wonderful church elected them as their pastor, which was a great encouragement*

*to them, because they felt*

They had seen the masses. They had seen the need. They had seen the people who knew nothing of the gospel.

*terribly discouraged and ashamed to be coming home before their term had ended.*

As they were coming home, a wonderful church elected them as their pastor, which was a great encouragement to them, because they felt terribly discouraged and ashamed to be coming home before their term had ended.

In those days you did not go to a foreign country and preach for a few months, then come back. People just did not do that in those days. When you went, you went for five years. Some went for seven years. Some went for ten years or more.

They had gone for five years. To come home ahead of their time really meant disgrace. But they were determined to find the solution to their dilemmas.

They continued their search. They read biographies of men and women who had been used of God. They studied their Bibles. They read sermons. They went to hear evangelists, preachers, teachers.

They had to find the answer to the dilemma they faced. Then on March 13, 1947, T. L. and Daisy's daughter, LaDonna Carol, was born.



**The Osborns pose for a photograph to give to churches and friends who helped sponsor them as young missionaries to India**

***Lord, they are gone. Millions are still dying***

The search had begun with Smith Wigglesworth, but as they planned to go to one of his meetings, the legendary preacher died.

Later that year, during their ministry at McMinnville, a lady in their Church informed them of the death of the renowned Charles S. Price, a contemporary of Aimee Semple McPherson. Charles was known for his miracle ministry across the nation. They had never met Price, but had taken a large collection of his monthly magazines, *Golden Grain*, with them to India and had read scores of his sermons and pictorial reports of his crusades. He was scheduled to minister during the annual convention of the Assemblies of God in Brooks, Oregon, only fifty miles from their Church.

Because of their disillusionment about India, they passionately anticipated that event. They knew that miracles were the answer to effective gospel ministry in non-Christian nations, but they lacked knowledge in that field, so they hoped to learn from Price's ministry.

On hearing this Tommy went to the Church, laid on his face and wept and prayed for hours. It seemed as though he could not contain his grief. The faith heroes and heroines of previous years began to pass before his mind like a panorama. He thought of Smith Wigglesworth,

of Aimee McPherson, of Maria Woodworth-Etter, of E.W. Kenyon, of Price, and of others though they had never met any them or heard preach.

As he wept, he wondered why this should affect him like it did. He had not met these people. He had only heard about their ministries. He said, “Lord, those great heroes of faith are gone now, and millions are still dying. Multitudes are still sick and suffering. To whom will they now go for help? Who will stir our large cities and fill our large auditoriums with the magnetic power of God, healing the sick and

casting out devils? What will this world do now?”

***If You Ever See Jesus, You Can Never Be the Same Again***

God responded to Daisy and Tommy’s spiritual search in a marvelous way, though not immediately. Within a few months, they received four visions that totally changed their lives.

The distraught couple then learned that Price’s post had been handed to Hattie Hammond, known at the time as the greatest female preacher in the Assemblies of God. She was also known for the remarkable miracles that took place in her meetings. It was the Osborns’ meeting that marked a significant turning point in their ministry. They attended the camp meeting at Brooks, Oregon. The remarkable Hattie Hammond was chosen to minister in the place of Price.

*If You Ever See Jesus,*

She preached on the subject: *You Can Never Be the Same Again.*

Hammond encouraged them to look at their trip to India not as a failure but as their first glimpse into the massive harvest of souls that God had called them to reach.

They walked out of that meeting in tears, and as they drove home, they discussed her message. Tommy said, “Darling, maybe that is what we need. Maybe if we could see Jesus, our lives would be changed.” They loved Christ. They believed in the power of the Holy Spirit. They

were respected in their organization as good and effective pastors, good evangelists.

Tommy and Daisy methodically prayed for the sick. But there were few if any results. Others applauded them, but they felt insecure in their lack of understanding miracles. They had gone to India to convince the non Christians but they felt they had failed because they couldn't prove what they what was in Bible. This made them frustrated and discouraged. However, at Rev. Hattie's message that day they thought that seeing if they could see Jesus, their ministry could change. **Jesus appears to Tommy**

*Tommy and Daisy methodically prayed for the sick. But there*

*were few if any results. Others applauded them, but they felt insecure in their lack of understanding miracles.*

The went home and prayed late night and then went to bed. The next morning at 6 o'clock sharp, the Lord appeared in that room. Tommy looked on Jesus just as one looks at anyone.

He was real. He stood there. Tommy lay at His feet as a dead man. He could not move a finger or a toe. Water poured from his eyes, yet he was not conscious of weeping. It was an overwhelming experience. He did not know how long it was before he was able to move his toes and his hands. He did not remember how he got on his face on the floor, and he did not know how many hours he lay there.

Daisy had gotten up early in the morning to feed the babies and to take care of their baths-all of the things a wife and mother must do. She was really busy all morning. Then she was feeding the children their lunch and getting ready to put them down for their afternoon naps. About that time, Tommy came out of that room. And when she looked at him, she knew she had a new husband. Something had happened. He was changed. Tommy was now a new man.

Previously, he had become a successful denominational man. It had affected him.

Though he had seen the need of the people in India, he supposed

that, having failed as a missionary-or at least it seemed to them that they had failed-he supposed that as a husband and as a leader of the home, he was grasping for success. He responded to the denominational attention that was given him.

Tommy became almost by a drive to go to the top in that field. He wanted the favour of his superiors. His world was his organization. He felt he had failed as a missionary, so success in his church organization helped his self-image.

He was active in official functions. He had an almost unnatural esteem for their district and national officials.

But when he walked out of that room, he was delivered from that obsession to become something that was not what God wanted for him. Jesus had become Lord of his life.

From that morning, nothing else mattered. He saw himself in a different light. Something had happened to him. Everything had changed. He had a new perspective on life. He knew God loved him. He had sent Jesus to him.

For Osborn, it was his first of four distinct revelations of Christ. The second came when he encountered the ministry of Gordon Lindsay, a Kentucky native who founded Christ for the Nations.

### ***You can do that***

In the month of September 1947, Tommy and Daisy resigned the church in McMinnville and returned to Portland where they had been urged to resume the pastorate of Montavilla Tabernacle, the church that they had established before going to India. They expected to invest their lives in Portland, the beautiful City of Roses. But it was only to be a short step in God's design for their future global ministry.

Soon after that first vision, Gordon Lindsay brought the noted healing evangelist, William Branham, to Portland at the invitation of the ministerial association, to conduct a city-wide Healing Campaign.

This was a real test of loyalty. Up until then, Tommy was so loyal to their denomination that he never would have left the convention they were in the midst of, to go to another meeting.

When that happened in Tommy's life, he did not lose respect for their denominational officials. But he gained a new respect for himself as *They could have* an individual. He could see himself as someone important in God's *conventions anytime,*

*but an opportunity to see miracles might not come again. He*

*decided that, whether his organization understood or not, he had to.*

plan.

What made their situation awkward was that they were pastors of the headquarters church, and they were responsible to host the people attending the convention. That was the very week during which this man of God was in the city for the great miracle meeting.

Since Tommy was not the official host to the convention, but was also a member of the official board—one of the presbyters and the Secretary-Treasurer of the District – he saw no way to go to that miracle meeting. It would be disloyal.

Tommy had seen the Lord and longed to go see the miracles. But how could he just walk out of their own convention?

Daisy went first, then she came back and gave him a report. She went to a dear friend who was almost 90 years – a great woman of God. It was the first time in her life she had ever seen miracles, even though she had accepted Jesus at the age of 12. She was a grown woman, a wife, a mother, and had been a missionary in India, yet she had never seen an instant miracle. She had never seen deaf ears come open, or blind people receive their sight, or cripples get up and walk.

Tommy and Daisy talked that night and Tommy knew he had to go see the wonders of God. They could have conventions anytime, but an opportunity

to see miracles might not come again. He decided that, whether his organization understood or not, he had to.

Every Friday nights in their meetings, they prayed for the sick-not Tuesday or Sunday; only Friday. They did not see much happen, but they prayed.

Tommy made an announcement to their convention that he had to go see the man of God and the miracles, he told them that he did not want to be disloyal or to be misunderstood, but that in India he had failed as a missionary because his good sermons were not enough to prove to non-Christians that the gospel is true.

“I needed miracles. I had prayed for the answer. The Lord had appeared to me and I knew that He was alive. But now I had a chance to see His miracles in action, and I must go.”

He handed over the church to the officials. He gave them the funds and the checkbook and every facility they had, but excused himself and went to hear the man of God and to see miracles.

At that meeting they would get a chance to see Jesus together, because they were seeing Him demonstrate Himself in miracles. They were seeing His power in action through an ordinary person. “...we were actually seeing Jesus through a human person.”

Hundreds of people came forward and accepted Christ that night. That was what they had wanted so much in India. They loved those people but they could not convince them to accept and to believe on Jesus Christ. They knew He was real themselves, but they had to surrender their goals and return to the USA where they thought most everybody already believed in Him.

Those who were sick formed a long line and each one came before that man for prayer. Remarkable miracles took place.

The man stopped a little girl who was deaf and dumb from birth. Very kindly, that man of God said to the audience; “Everyone, please bow your heads and close your eyes. This little girl is possessed of a deaf and dumb spirit.

“Be reverent because this spirit will come out of her when I speak in Jesus’ name, and we do not want it to enter into someone else who is irreverent or unbelieving!”

Tommy had never heard anyone talk like that in his life. He knew Jesus talked like that in Bible days.

But, wow, this was for real!

He prayed a very simple, quiet prayer, speaking with absolute authority.

He put his fingers in the girl’s ears, and said, “You dumb and deaf spir - it, I adjure you by Jesus Christ the son of God, that you come out of the child and enter her no more.”

And then he was quiet.

Then he heaved a sigh of relief and said, “The evil spirit has gone from the girl now, You can lift your heads and look, the spirit has gone out of her. She is well.”

Tommy could not believe his ears. “How did he know she was healed? He had not examined her. He had not checked her ears.”

Daisy looked at Tommy about that time, and his eyes were a fountain of tears.

Over Tommy’s head, a thousand voices whirled and said, “You can do that! You do not have the gift of healing like he has, but you can do that! You have the same word of God that he has preached! That is what Jesus did! That is what Peter did! That is what Paul did! That proves that the Bible is good today! You can do that!”

They went home revolutionized. They sat down and talked most of that night.

***As I have been with others, I will be with you***

*Tommy locked*

*Thats when they decided to read the New Testament as though they*

*himself in their*

*basement to read and to pray.*



had never read it in their lives-like a brand new book.

Tommy locked himself in their basement to read and to pray. Daisy would have, but the children needed her care, which kept her from spending days alone in prayer as Tommy did. She committed herself to the same goal-between taking care of the babies and answering the phone.

He wanted God to speak to him, personally. So, he shut himself in for three days and three nights. He was there without food or a drop of water. Daisy got frightened when Tommy said, "Honey, take the church, pastor it. Preach or do whatever you want. But don't look for me. I don't know how long I'm going to be in this room, but I'm not coming out until I have heard from the Lord."

She was petrified because he had never had the responsibility of the church and of doing all of the preaching herself. When he went into that room and dropped on his knees and opened the Bible, in that instant God spoke to him.

But he did not know it God. He did not recognize His voice. He stayed in that room for three days and nights, without food or water, asking the Lord to speak to him, and every time, the same message would come again and again-until he finally accepted it.

The Lord told him:

"As I have been with others, so will I be with you. Wherever you go, I will give you the land for your possession. No demon, no disease, or no power can stand before you all the days of your life, IF you can get the people to believe my word."

He had heard the same revelation in the meeting when that man of God spoke and demonstrated that wonderful gift of healing. The voices over Tommy's head said, "You can do that! That is the way Jesus did it! That is what Peter and Paul did! You can do that! That proves the Bible is for today!"

He knew he could do that because he saw proof that what happened in the Bible was for today.

Then they discovered all of those scriptures where the Lord had giv

en them power and authority over devils and diseases, to cast them out and to heal the sick.

Now the Lord had said to him again and again: “As I have been with others, I will be with you. No demon or disease or power can stand before you, IF you can get the people to believe my word.”

Tommy did not have the gift of healing, but he had the living Word of God, and the healer was living in “me and in that word I could give to people.”

That was when they discovered what the Holy Spirit was for in their lives—that it was not just to make them feel good or to speak in tongues or to be holy, but that the Holy Spirit was in “us to help prove to the people that Jesus is the Christ, the risen Son of God.”

When he came out of that room, he knew they had to do something.

### **Tommy’s healing ministry begins**

So they began to make announcements on the radio and in the paper. They became bold enough to invite the people to come to their church and to bring those who were sick, assuring them that God would heal them.

Tommy knew Jesus was with them and He would do what He had done in Bible days. The people came from everywhere. The church was packed to the door.

He preached for them, and then the sick people came for prayer. One after another was miraculously healed as they prayed for them.

The first person they prayed for was a woman who had walked on crutches for 14 years. This woman had been injured in an accident and her hip was broken so badly that the bones could not be set. It had become rigid.

They had operated to correct the problem but were unable, at the time, to help her. She could never walk normally again. So she used crutches to move herself about.

While they were ministering to her, she took her crutches and started to hand them to Tommy and he took them from her and tossed them on the floor.

Tommy commanded her, "In the name of Jesus, walk!" She raised her hands high, and with her eyes closed, she began walking as perfect as everyone else did. Her face was shining like an angel! Her rigid hip became flexible and free.

She kept walking and she acted as though she was listening to something marvelous.

All they could think about were those masses in India-those Moslems, those Hindus-those wonderful people who knew nothing about the living Christ.

It was for them that the Osborns started their search. Now they could help them.

They loved them and they knew that they needed Christ, but they had not been able to prove to them that Jesus is the Son of God, risen from the dead. "Now we could prove it! As Jesus said, "The proof is in the miracles."

### **Over 9,000 people accept Christ in Jamaica**

They knew God had to do something. They had to go to the peoples of the world.

They had no funds to go to India. It would cost too much. But they had been invited to the island-nation of Jamaica, in the Caribbean. That was near enough to the USA that they could get enough money to go there.

So they left their house full of furniture. All they had was their car, kids and cases, and their destination was Jamaica. They were on their way.

They ministered in Jamaica for 13 weeks and they prayed for the people, individually, night after night.

Hundreds of people would line up, even out to the street, waiting for the Osborns to pray for them, one by one.

They prayed for them, hour after hour.

“That was the only way we knew to do. Mass healing was unknown.”  
It was impossible for Tommy to pray for so many people by himself.

So they would set their two children in chairs, beside one of the pastor’s wives. Daisy would stand on one side of the platform and pray for a line of people while Tommy stood on the other side and prayed for the other line.

People with crossed eyes, blind eyes, deaf ears, cripples-they were healed just the same in Daisy’s line, as in Tommy’s. The people did not care which one of them prayed for them.

Thousands were healed.

During that time, over 9,000 people came forward, knelt and prayed the salvation prayer and accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.

Over 90 totally blind people received their sight instantly-hundreds of others gradually.

Over 125 deaf mutes instantly talked and received their hearing. Scores of others were gradually healed.

They saw more fruit from their labors in a single night than they had seen in the seven years of their ministry before the Lord appeared to them. **F.F**

### **Bosworth stands with The Osborns**

After the Jamaica crusades, they returned to America, and received an urgent call from Rev. F.F. Bosworth. He asked them to come to Flint, *Tommy and Daisy’s*

Michigan, to continue Rev. William Branham’s crusade in the large *vision for a worldwide*

*ministry of mass miracle evangelism, was birthed in Flint, Michigan. F.F. Bosworth was the instrument God chose to seed a biblical basis for that ministry in their hearts.*

city auditorium, because Branham became exhausted and was physically unable to minister to the thousands who attended the crusade. That Flint crusade marked the real beginning of Tommy and Daisy’s ministry across the United States. It was also vitally significant in equipping and turning Tommy and Daisy in the direction of mass miracle evangelism worldwide.

Tommy and Daisy's vision for a worldwide ministry of mass miracle evangelism, was birthed in Flint, Michigan. F.F. Bosworth was the instrument God chose to seed a biblical basis for that ministry in their hearts. The Voice of Healing Revival was already underway, primarily across North America, and was noted for mass evangelism taking place under gigantic gospel tents. Up to this point the normal practice of praying for the handicapped, sick, and diseased was through long prayer lines and praying for people individually. This, in part, explained why Rev. Branham had become exhausted and physically unable to minister to the thousands attending and had to send for Tommy and Daisy to take his place. This "pattern" or "model" limited what God was able to accomplish through individuals, because of their natural limitations of time and energy.

The Flint, Michigan, meetings with F.F. and Florence Bosworth, would serve as a "bridge" or "pivotal point" that would prepare T.L. and Daisy for unprecedented mass miracle evangelism in seventy-four nations of the world. This memorable event created hope and confidence in their hearts that they could effectively present Jesus Christ to masses of people. They would no longer be limited by their natural abilities, of time and energy, to lay hands on just a few individuals. They would now be able to help thousands, or scores of thousands of people, to receive salvation and miracle healing at the same time. Having seen the world of suffering humanity, they knew that their faith must be raised to a level beyond the limits of their own human touch.

Although F.F. Bosworth had not crusaded beyond the United States and Canada, he was keenly interested in helping all to be blessed.

He was concerned about suffering people who waited in long prayer lines for someone's special prayer, when they could embrace God's healing promises as soon as they heard them and be healed.

He often discussed this with Tommy and Daisy. Rev. Bosworth talked about how two or three million Israelites marched out of Egypt to follow Moses to a new land and a new life, despite their history of four hundred years of slavery, abuse, disease, cruelty, and physical suffering. The Bible says that, "He brought them forth...and there was not one feeble person among their tribes" (Psalm 105:37 KJV). Rev. Bosworth taught: "If Moses had tried to

individually lay his hands on those sick people, most of them would have died before their turn would have come. Moses could never have ministered to all of them individually. The majority of them would have expired before he reached them.”

Another example that Rev. Bosworth used was the time there was rebellion in the camp of Israel, and many people died of poisonous serpents’ bites. The people cried to Moses, who prayed for them all at one time. The Lord told him to put a brazen serpent on a pole and to say: “Everyone who is bitten, when he or she looks upon it, shall live” (Numbers 21:8, paraphrase mine). Moses obeyed, and “if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived” (Numbers 21:9). Each person did his own “looking.” If everyone looked at the same time, then all were healed at the same time. There were further scriptural examples to substantiate this teaching. David said that God forgives all...He heals all. (Psalm 103:3.) If all who are sick believe at the same time, then all may be healed at the same time. *Tommy and Daisy had no way*

*of knowing that they would* Jesus repeatedly “healed them *face teeming multitudes of all.*” (Matthew 9:35; 12:15; 14:14; Mark 6:56; Luke 4:40; 6:19.) “They brought many sick and devil possessed people to Him. He cast out the spirits with His word and healed all that were sick” (Matthew 8:16, paraphrase mine). He did it with His Word. If all heard His Word at once and believed it, then all who were sick, were healed by that Word, at the same time.

*sick people in mass crusades all over the world. God used this dear, old veteran of the healing ministry to prepare*

*their young hearts for a greater and far more vast healing ministry than had ever been experienced in the history of humankind.*

Jesus promised: “Everyone who asks receives” (Matthew 7:8). If everyone asks in faith at the same time, everyone who asks can receive at the same time. There is no need for a multitude of people to form themselves into long prayer lines so that they may “ask” one at a time. Jesus said the truth is what makes people free” (John 8:32) and that truth is effective, as soon as any person hears and embraces it.

If a farmer plants thousands of seeds in good soil, those seeds do not need to wait for their turn to grow, one at a time. They all grow simultaneously. That is a mass miracle. Multitudes came to Peter’s meeting in Jerusalem, bringing demon-possessed folk and laying sick people on beds and couches, and they were healed, every one. (Acts 5:16.)

For some mysterious reason, God chose Rev. Bosworth to seed Tommy and Daisy with these and many other biblical reasons for the kind of faith to help multitudes to be healed at the same time. Tommy and Daisy had no way of knowing that they would face teeming multitudes of sick people in mass crusades all over the world. God used this dear, old veteran of the healing ministry to prepare their young hearts for a greater and far more vast healing ministry than had ever been experienced in the history of humankind.

F.F. Bosworth had been teaching “Faith Meetings” in the afternoons during the Branham campaigns. At night, Rev. Branham, who was divinely gifted of God, would address the crowds. Then the sick people would be called to form a long prayer line. Rev. Branham would only have the physical strength to minister and to pray for just so many of them.

Rev. Bosworth was deeply concerned about this dilemma. He passionately emphasized to the people that when God healed anyone, it was proof that He wanted to do the same for everyone. He stressed that the people did not need to wait for Rev. Branham’s touch and prayer, that whenever they saw God’s healing love poured out on one person, they should believe that it was present for everyone. He urged them to act on their faith at once and do as the Israelites had done when they looked (individually) at the brazen serpent, and lived!

During many conversations with Rev. Bosworth, God was preparing Tommy’s and Daisy’s hearts to minister His healing and miracle love to

millions of suffering people in great mass campaigns all over the world. Destiny was at work!

Tommy had stepped to the podium of the Civic Auditorium. Rev. F.F. Bosworth and Rev. Gordon Lindsay had introduced him and Daisy and told about their mission to Jamaica, where 125 deaf mutes and over 90 totally blind people had been healed during the meetings. The people in Flint, Michigan, had been witnessing the phenomenal and unique ministry of William Branham. The spiritual gifts of healing, the working of miracles, the word of knowledge, the discerning of spirits, and prophecy had been operating with divine precision. Tommy Had never knowingly received any of those gifts.

He told the audience: “Daisy and I come to you from thirteen weeks of miracle ministry in Jamaica. Our lives were transformed in Portland, Oregon, when we witnessed the phenomenal ministry of God’s servant, William Branham.”

He continued: “To my knowledge, I am not aware of having received any of the gifts that you have been witnessing here. But I have received Jesus Christ who is the giver of all of those divine gifts. And I do know that He is here with us to confirm His Word with signs, miracles, and wonders.” Tommy later related how he preached with trepidation, yet with confidence that God would confirm His gospel.

### **Pioneering mass miracle evangelism**

*How big is POSSIBLE?*

As Tommy preached, apart from the message he was preaching, he

*Are not all things*

*POSSIBLE—if you can believe?*

clearly heard the question: How big is POSSIBLE? He knew God was speaking to him. He had been pondering what to do at the close of his message. He had planned to pray first for the healing of the deaf or blind

people, so that the audience would see proof that God was with them. He was thinking of how long it would take Daisy and him to pray for that crowd of people. They might be there until midnight.



Would the people stay? They were in America, not back in Jamaica.

Then that question had come. God seemed to ask him: If you pray for one person and that one is healed by a miracle, does that not prove that I have heard your prayer?

In Tommy's spirit, he said, Yes, Lord! Then as he continued to preach, that question came again:

How big is POSSIBLE? Are not all things POSSIBLE—if you can believe?

Again Tommy responded, Yes, Lord! All things are possible!

Then the Lord seemed to ask, If you pray for one person and that one is healed, is that a miracle? How big is a MIRACLE? Suppose you pray for two persons at a time, is My power sufficient to heal two at once? How big is POSSIBLE?

Tommy answered, Yes, Lord! You can heal two at a time! He was excited because he was thinking that he could pray for twice as many people in the same period of time.

Then the voice came again: Could I heal five at a time—or ten—or a hundred? How big is POSSIBLE? How about all who are sick?

Then Tommy thought: If a hundred or a thousand sinners wanted to receive Christ, could not ALL who believe be saved at the same time? How big is POSSIBLE? Is God limited in healing the sick? Is not conversion a greater miracle than the healing of the physically sick?

Tommy knew God had spoken to him. He had birthed in Tommy's spirit, fresh faith to proclaim redemption to all people, knowing that all who would believe and who would put their faith into action could receive His blessings, at the same time. But Tommy needed to put that fact to a practical test.

After a great number of people had come forward to receive Christ as Savior, he led them all in a prayer to be saved, at the same time. Then they all thanked God for their salvation at the same time. Nobody questioned

their being saved all at the same time. What about the sick? Would God, could God, heal all the sick, at the same time, if they all believed?

Inside, Tommy knew the answer was yes! But he was still cautious. He limited his healing invitation to only those who were deaf in one ear. He later realized that this was like limiting a salvation call for only those who had committed a certain sin. Regardless, fifty-three people stood, indicating that one of their ears was totally deaf. Tommy invited them forward. There they stood – fifty-three people. The next step was crucial. Tommy asked them: “If I laid my hands on each one of you and prayed individually, do you believe you would be healed?”

They all responded, “Yes!”

Then he expressed that he believed the Lord wanted to heal all of them at once, if they would have simple faith in His Word. He reminded them that Jesus gave us power and authority over all devils, to cast them out, and to cure diseases. (Mark 3:15; Luke 9:1.) So he explained that all fifty-three spirits of deafness that had impaired their hearing were subject to him as a representative of Christ. They agreed. Next, Tommy reverently asked the Lord to confirm His Word so that the people would know that He was present to fulfill His promise. Then he addressed those spirits: “You deaf spirits, I have told these people the truth; I am a servant of the most High God and a follower of Christ. You know that He has given me authority over you, *This pattern, of ministering* so I now adjure you to leave these persons, in the name of Jesus Christ!”

*healing and miracles had shifted for Tommy and Daisy, as they embraced*

After that Tommy gave thanks to the Lord for the authority He had given him and for His loving compassion. He asked Him to recreate hearing in

*the new concept of mass miracle evangelism, where the people no longer needed to form long lines*

every ear that had been deaf. Then he told each one to stop up his or her good ear. He then commanded: “Hear me with your ear that was deaf! Listen to my words!” Then he said, “Thank You Jesus! Thank You for

*and be prayed for individually, but could receive their healing all at one time.*

healing these people! Thank You for Your presence and for Your love!”

The people before him began to break out in broad smiles, tears, or in astonishment. They could hear. Tommy asked them to come across the platform so he and Daisy could examine them. Each one (except three) could hear Daisy’s small wristwatch in one ear as well as in the other. God had confirmed His gospel.

What about those three who were not healed instantly? Within the week, each returned to show that his or her hearing was perfectly restored. That was one hundred percent proof of God’s Word, not only confirmed “in the mouth of two or three witnesses” (Matthew 18:16), but in the mouths of all fifty-three of them!

This pattern, of ministering healing and miracles had shifted for Tommy and Daisy, as they embraced the new concept of mass miracle evangelism, where the people no longer needed to form long lines and be prayed for individually, but could receive their healing all at one time.

### **Tens of thousands of people accept Christ**

Tommy and Daisy put the truths that God had revealed to them to the test in Jamaica. In Flint, Michigan, they proved that God’s “possible,” was big enough to heal all who would only believe. It was obvious, that to be a successful witness of Christ in other countries, miracles must validate the gospel message they preached. Tommy and Daisy knew how to reach everyone en masse, who needed a miracle. They were convinced that followers of heathen gods and dead religions would believe the gospel if

they could see proof that Jesus Christ is alive and real. They were also convinced that Jesus would heal them all at the same time.

Despite their remarkable experience in Flint, Michigan, Tommy and Daisy had another obstacle to overcome concerning mass miracle evangelism. If they witnessed of Christ inside church buildings, most followers of other religions would not come. So how could they minister to these people? They would have to go out where the people are, out in public places, where followers of any religion and worshippers of any gods, would feel free to attend. Then they would have to preach and demonstrate the gospel like Jesus Christ did.

In 1949, the Osborns instituted The Voice of Faith Ministry, later renamed Osborn Foundation, then code-named OSFO International (a.k.a. OSBORN International), but known today as Osborn Ministries International.

They were persuaded that if the people could witness the power of God to heal the sick as it was manifested in Bible days, they would accept Jesus Christ and become His followers. They went from nation to nation conducting gospel crusades out in public places, so all the people of different faiths could feel welcome. They proclaimed the gospel and urged each person to make a decision for Christ. After that, they prayed for the sick. Each miracle was proof that Christ is the living Savior and that His promises are true.

Tommy and Daisy were both powerful teachers and preachers of faith, and proven in miracle evangelism overseas. They influenced hundreds of preachers to turn from dull religion to dynamic redemption with faith and power. Tens of thousands of non-Christian people were convinced of the gospel and made public decisions to accept Christ. Multitudes were added to the churches wherever their crusades were conducted.

After the summer in the United States, Tommy and Daisy went to Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Central and South America. Everywhere they went, the results were invariably the same, regardless of national heritage, religion or cultural background.

In 1950, Tommy reported over 18,000 conversions in twelve days in Puerto Rico. In January, 1951, he reported 50,000 in Camaguey, Cuba. In 1952, he was arrested in Punto Fijo, Venezuela, for witchcraft. This happened as a result of the healings that were reported to doctors and the Roman Catholic priests. **Proof for the Moslems**

After the nation changing Thai crusades, Tommy and Daisy went to Java where the population was 95 percent Moslem.

Some of the Christians there were frightened. They did not know if it was wise to go out on a public field and call thousands of Moslem people together and talk to them about Jesus and pray for the sick, expecting miracles to confirm that Christ is alive.

That was their first time to preach, with miracles, to the Moslems.

The first night Tommy preached in Java, he thought it would be good to tell them that he did not expect them to accept Jesus unless they saw proof that He was risen from the dead.

He asked for anyone who was deaf in one ear, to come to the platform.

Quite a group responded and each one was instantly healed as they prayed for them. The very first person to respond was a Moslem teacher, a man about 60 years old.

He had been born with one ear totally deaf. He had never heard out of it in his life.

Tommy told the people that if his ear did not come open, they would know that he was a false teacher, and that Jesus Christ had not risen from the dead as the Bible claims.

But Tommy explained that if Jesus is alive, He would make Himself known; He would do the same miracles that He had done before He was crucified.

There were over 100 pastors on the platform. They said afterwards, that they were frightened about what the multitude might do if that Moslem teacher was not healed.

They were petrified. They viewed it as a radical and dangerous challenge. **Tommy started to put his fingers on his ear.**

However, Tommy did not touch the man. He just stretched his hand towards him. He did not want people to think that there was something mystical about his touch or that he had some strange power. "I wanted those people to understand that this was the power of the Living Jesus, who, though He had been crucified, was alive again, and was present in that meeting."

He looked at him and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ whom God has raised from the dead according to the scriptures-Jesus who is the Son of the Living God-I adjure the deaf spirit to leave your ear and I command your ear to hear now, so that all here may know that the Bible is true, that Jesus is the Son of God, that His blood was shed for the remission of our sins, and that He is risen from the dead to be the Saviour of the world. Amen."

Across that field was total silence. Then Tommy pulled the man to himself. He stopped up his good ear and faintly whispered in his deaf ear, and he jumped. The man repeated every word that Tommy had told him to. As the man broke into tears, the crowd started clapping. Then Tommy turned to the multitude to help them accept Christ.

Immediately he turned to the audience and asked, "Now, is Jesus Christ alive, or is He deaf?" Thousands raised their hands to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

They stayed for several weeks, preaching, teaching and praying, day after day, conducting two and three meetings per day. They proved afresh that, when you see Jesus, you can never be the same again.

### **More healings witnessed**

After the great Java crusades, they preached all over the world. But finally their dream came true.

They returned to India.

They went back to the same city where fourteen years earlier they had talked to those Moslems and Hindus and had not been able to prove whether the Koran of the Moslems, or whether the Bible was God's word.

This time it was different. They leased a big open field by the great stadium in the university city of Lucknow. They set up their platform and invited the public to come.

50,000 to 60,000 people attended the crusade. They proclaimed to the masses in India that Jesus is the Son of God, risen from the dead. There was such great faith among those masses in their India crusades. Hundreds of people were miraculously healed.

One night during this great crusade, far to the edge of the crowd, there was a young student from the university-agnostic-who hated everything that they were saying about Jesus Christ.

He was a member of the religious political party of India that had vowed to drive Christianity from their shores.

He stood with his arms folded across his chest, in a defiant mood. Then as they preached about Jesus, suddenly the Lord appeared right in front of him.

He opened His hands where the man could see His scars, and stretched them out toward the man. Then Jesus spoke these words, "Behold my hands! I am Jesus!"

### *Such methods*

That arrogant young student fell to the ground, in the dust, weeping and crying.

After he regained control of himself, he came running to the platform and grabbed the microphone with trembling hands, and appealed to the multitude"

"Accept this Jesus! What this man is telling us is true! I saw Him! I saw the scars in His hands! He is alive!"

Thousand of people that night believed on Jesus Christ.

**The first to proclaim to non-Christian nations**  
*had not been*

*witnessed since the epoch of the Early Church.*

The Osborns were the first to install a big platform, lights and public address system out on parks or fields or terrains, in non-Christian nations, and to preach the gospel publicly, praying for God's miraculous confirmation that Jesus Christ is the same today as He was in Bible days.

Those visual tools created by recording those apostolic crusades and biblical wonders—live, are not for church entertainment. They are a dynamic attraction for unconverted people to hear the gospel and to see it confirmed by miracles.

Such methods had not been witnessed since the epoch of the Early Church. T.L. and Daisy addressed audiences of tens of thousands throughout the dangerous years of nationalism when the awakening of many developing nations was repulsing foreign political domination.

Their example inspired national men and women, globally, to arise from their restrictive past, and to become leading gospel messengers and church builders in the unevangelized nations of the world. Many of them are numbered among the most distinguished and successful Christian leaders today.

“Daisy and I were the first gospel messengers, since those of the Early Church, to publicly proclaim Christ in non-Christian nations, out

in parks, stadiums, and terrains where people of all religions could hear the gospel and see it confirmed by healing miracles, like those recorded in the Bible.

Wesley pioneered proclaiming the gospel out in public places in the Christian world. We pioneered public evangelism in the non-Christian world. We invited the public to come, to hear and see for themselves that Christ is alive and that the Bible is true.” **Ministry in Nigeria**



In a meeting in Uyo, Nigeria, the newspaper estimated that at least 200,000 were present. Tommy preached on the “Healing of the Leper” in a narrative style, expounding as he read the story. Each time he emphasized a point, the multitude would break out in clapping. People seemed to be receptive to the crusade. As usual, they directed them in a prayer of salvation, accepting Jesus Christ and confessing faith in Him. Hundreds wept freely.

After a long period of prayer and thanksgiving, Tommy began to announce to them that it was time to accept the answer by FAITH and to put FAITH INTO ACTION. Some most remarkable miracles took place. A handsome lad, about 15 years old, had been deaf since he was two years old when he had had a bad fever. That night he could hear the faintest whisper from either ear.

Suddenly, a dear man mounted the stage, looking so happy. He had crawled on his hands and feet in a pitiful way. His knees had been stiff. It seemed that a deadening, stiffening paralysis, mixed with perhaps arthritis, had crippled him. His hands had been twisted and gnarled. But he rose to his feet and raised both arms heavenward and praised the Lord in such a precious way that hundreds wept for joy! He could now walk, bending his legs, and could do anything in a normal way. The multitude cheered and clapped for joy.

The next one who testified was quite an old man, who for the past eight years had only been able to move about by scooting on his haunches with his hands at his side. He pushed himself along in a most painful way.

Then a dear woman bounded up on the other side of the platform, crying: “Look at me! I was a leper! See my feet! Now I am healed. Look at me walk. Look! My feet are healed. I can feel them. They are well. I am healed!”

She stomped her feet. Some of her toes were gone. They had been angry open sores on them, but they were clearly drying up and closing. She was overjoyed! She left crying out: “I am healed! My feet are healed! I can feel them. They are not dead. They are alive.”

Then a man came who had been totally blind for several years. He was able to see everything. Next, a woman who had been blind came rejoicing

because she could see clearly. She had been led to the crusade. Now she rejoiced as she pointed out all the people. She could count the fingers of anyone who raised his hand out in the audience.

A dear mother brought her child which had one side paralyzed by polio. She was crying and thanking God because the child was healed and could run and jump and walk perfectly. Then an older man, who had been a witchdoctor, came up the steps. He was ashamed of the curses he had put on people and deaths he had caused. Now he wanted to receive Jesus so that he would never be a witchdoctor again. Tommy commanded the evil spirits of witchcraft to leave him and never torment or possess him again. The people were astonished; and then, as though someone had been defeated a great enemy, they cried out in joy and clapped for a long time.

Suddenly, Daisy brought up a young man about 25-28 years old. He was completely bald. For eight years, he had been a raving maniac. It took four men to bring him and to control him during the meeting. He had been in the University of Lagos, studying medical science. Then one day he suddenly began to lose his mind and became totally insane. A growth began to develop in his throat and neck area; it was large like a mango seed and extremely painful.

During the mass prayer, he began to be calm, returned to his absolute normal mind, and every trace of the growth in his throat disappeared.

### **Forbidden to Bring Sick People to the Osborn Meetings**

Tommy managed to avoid the competitiveness of the ministry of his day, including the controversial denominational battles, as he consistently turned his attention to overseas campaigns. “He also was untouched by the growing competition among the healing revivalists in the United States” and he “thus avoided the clashes between the evangelists and the Pentecostal churches in the 1950’s. Osborn worked for peace.” He was in numerous ways “less controversial than any other man.”

*He also was untouched by the growing competition among the healing revivalists in the United States and he thus avoided the clashes between the evangelists and the Pentecostal churches in the 1950’s.*

Osborn Ministries International's financial aid to foreign missions did not favor certain denominations and did not have any intention to compete with the various denominations on the mission field. More than 150,000 new, self-supporting churches have been established globally through the Osborn's ministry; however, none of them bear the Osborn name. They are named after their respective denomination or group. As a result, Tommy avoided the denominational assaults that were aimed at the healing and deliverance ministers of his day.

During their first few years, Tommy and Daisy were widely criticized for their presentation of the gospel, especially with the miraculous as evidence. It was revolutionary, and many leaders labeled their actions as sacrilege. In Costa Rica, the crowd was so large that they had to rent the massive Bull Arena, which attracted national publicity and bigger crowds, but it also opened the door to opposition. Media reports represented the Osborns as charlatans and deceivers, and also urged the faithful not to attend or bring any sick people to their meetings because they would be tricked or manipulated. When Tommy arrived at the national arena, the police had already locked the gates. At least ten thousand people had gotten inside and were seated, before the gates were locked. The chief of the National Guard dispatched a messenger to announce that the event was forbidden. Thirty official agents were on hand to prevent the public from entering. The pressing crowd in the street became so agitated that the law enforcement agents were forced to open the gates. The people poured into the stadium like a human river, ignoring the guards and filling every empty seat.

Opposition continued and the main newspaper headlined an article on the Osborns, "Forbidden to Bring Sick People to the Osborn Meetings." This article contained demeaning and defaming misrepresentations, but in spite of this, the stadium was filled to capacity during each event. According to the Osborn ministry, over two thousand people accepted Christ in each service. Now, over half a century later, mass healing evangelism has become the norm around the world, not only among Pentecostals but among multiple denominations.

### **Reaching out through gospel literature**

The Osborns got an idea of writing the messages they preached. Giant presses could reproduce them by the millions—by the tons—in other languages of the world. Doing this, they could reach hundreds of millions of souls who would never hear the sound of their voices.

For years, they averaged publishing over a ton of gospel tracts every working day—not counting the additional tons of their books and other publications that they poured out to the nations of the world.

This literature has been rolling off the world's presses in a hundred and thirty-two different languages.

With millions of people becoming literate every week and with their eager quest for reading materials, the printing of gospel literature opens doors for the Christian Church to reach every literate person with the gospel.

In addition to their crusades and literature ministries, they realized that they could still do more. What about the illiterate people of our world?

To reach the millions who can neither read nor write, we took advantage of audio and video cassette technology and of cinematography. What fantastic possibilities these technologies presented for personal evangelism and for television and radio outreaches.

### **Pioneering the DocuMiracle Film concept**

Our DocuMiracle film ministry was conceived to capture the messages and miracles of some of our historic evangelism crusades. Today thousands of those films and videos are circulated internationally, in about seventy major languages. Gospel workers in scores of nations use them, attracting large crowds of people to hear of Christ.

*at the beach, in the mountains, or on any  
campground, many  
will come and view  
a film just to pass*

*the time.*

Those films and videos have proven to be

among the most effective tools for evangelism yet produced for reaching the unreached, for national church growth, and for home front witnessing among the unconverted.

In emerging nations, large business companies utilize motion films and videos to propagate and to market their secular products among millions of people, realizing handsome financial profits.

Rather than to lament the demoralizing use of a potentially good technology, the prerogative of the Christian Church is to exploit this science for propagating the gospel of the living Christ.

Productions like the ones the Osborns made that combined missionary preaching with miracles among non-Christian nations had not existed before ours were produced. Public mass evangelism meetings in non-Christian lands, accompanied by signs, miracles and wonders, had not yet occurred in the age of cinematography.

During vacations, at the beach, in the mountains, or on any campground, many will come and view a film just to pass the time. Once people witness Christ's power, they will stay and listen to you talk because they will want to know Christ in a personal way.

“Our DocuMiracle films are a solution. Millions are being reached through them. Other millions are being reached with our recorded audio and video gospel messages, mobile evangelism units, and the tons of our literature that we are constantly producing and shipping abroad for free distribution. Our choice is to stay engaged in providing solutions, not in analyzing problems.”

While in Africa, a pastor there showed them a commercial company operating a fleet of fifteen beautiful four-wheel-drive vehicles equipped to show secular films. They constantly canvassed villages, gathered large crowds, showed their films, and advertised their products—beer, cigarettes, liquor, etc. which they marketed to the people. Missionaries had considered that those villages were not able to support a local church. But that secular company was having no problem reaping attractive financial profits.

Some church leaders in the area lamented: “What a reproach, that such products are being promoted in those villages. We must find a way to stop those marketers.” They were obsessed by the problem and were doing nothing to provide a solution.

“Daisy and I decided between ourselves: It will do no good to discuss with those church leaders this problem. We resolved to do something about it.”

One pastor alone showed one of their DocuMiracle films twenty times in one province. He reached over fifty thousand souls and witnessed more than eight thousand new decisions for Christ.

Another minister reported two thousand new decisions for Christ in only eight days of DocuMiracle film ministry.

### **The Mobile Evangelism program**

Their new trans-world, Mobile Evangelism Program was born. If business firms could prosper marketing secular products out in the villages of the world, the blessings of the gospel could be promulgated the same way. We began to provide completely equipped, four-wheel-drive mobile evangelism units for active soul winning missions among the unreached.

They equipped each unit with a film projector and stand, a super-large rubber screen, a generator, a million dynamic gospel tracts and a set of their DocuMiracle films in the local language.

“Since then, we have shipped overseas more than a hundred large four-wheel-drive mobile units, equipped with every soul winning tool that we produce in the language of the area.

The commercial world has been doing it. We are doing it too. The point is:

- We are not sitting and lamenting the spread of evil.
- We are doing something to spread the gospel.”

### **National Missionary Vision**

Jesus said, Preach the gospel to every creature. The Osborns pondered the millions of tribal people living beyond the fringes of civilization, out of the range of missionaries or national church leaders, without television or radio. These also must hear the gospel. Over two thousand tribes did not

comprehend the languages used by mass media and did not have, or perhaps had never heard of an electronic apparatus for receiving those signals. The Osborns were convinced that they must find ways to help reach them too.

In this soul quest, their National Missionary Evangelism program was born. The idea occurred to them that they could inspire Christians in prosperous nations to share a monetary gift each month to personally sponsor a national preacher as a bonafide missionary to unreached tribes in unevangelized areas. Today the same forms, principles, and accountability guidelines are applied as they were in 1954. LaDonna pointed out that some things about ministry should never change.

They communicated their vision to missionary organizations, offering to sponsor trained, qualified national preachers who would go into unevangelized areas to teach the gospel and to raise up new churches. As they recruited competent nationals, they recruited Christian sponsors.

*They sponsored more than 30,000 national preachers as full time*

*missionaries in thousands of unreached towns and villages of over a hundred nations.*

The balance between the demand and the supply has been a constant miracle since this dynamic program was inaugurated.

They sponsored more than 30,000 national preachers as full time missionaries in thousands of unreached towns and villages of over a hundred nations. This program made it possible for these neglected tribes and peoples to hear the gospel of Christ.

As a result of their sponsoring those thousands of national preachers as missionaries in unreached areas, for many years an average of over one new church per day was established and become self-supporting—almost four hundred new churches per year in previously unreached areas. Never in Church history has such a far-reaching evangelism program been undertaken that prioritizes reaching the unreached with the gospel.

In addition, more than 150,000 new, self-supporting churches have been established globally, with as many as 400 new churches being planted a

year.

T. L.'s effort to make the revival overseas into a truly native experience, instead of an American program, was an important contribution to the world Pentecostal revival, and its success was one of his proudest achievements. Many of today's national church leaders began in ministry as national preachers, encouraged and sponsored by T. L. and Daisy's ministry. **Tommy intergrated prosperity gospel with his teaching**

By the early 1970's, Tommy Osborn integrated aspects of the prosperity gospel into his teaching and his global missions programs. As early as the mid 50's, there was conversation in the broader Pentecostal community about prosperity gospel in relation to specifically African mission. Donald McGavran, a well-known missiologist, in his work *Understanding Church Growth*, wrote about the concept of redemption and lift.' He argues that the majority of church growth in relation to the prosperity gospel has been among poor people. A result of this phenomenon has been entire classes of poor people becoming relatively prosperous after their conversion experience. After becoming Christian, many changed their lifestyles and became more productive members of society. In general they became more hardworking, and had a higher emphasis on community and responsibility. Historian Vinson Synan comments on possible positive effects of this historical and current situation by saying "As materialistic as the prosperity message can sound, it is also challenging huge numbers of the world's poorest people to aspire to better things. It might well be called a theology of hope."

Africa's move to becoming the epicenter for the proclamation of the prosperity message came through teachers from the United States. Following the success of Oral Roberts TV ministries, many evangelists who taught the prosperity message followed suite. As television became the medium of communicating the prosperity message, it was preached to larger audiences than ever. The movement, though, also became immediately vulnerable to criticism and abuse. There were some radical evangelists who "made a mockery of prosperity teachings with their strident and shameless appeals for large donations and their outrageous lifestyles." This type of behavior was not a reflection of whole movement, or even the



majority, yet abuses brought critics to point out the high emphasis on money and materialism. This was coupled with a notable amount of 'denominational discrimination,' as demonstrated by the Assemblies of God's series of white paper publications aimed at condemning the Word of Faith throughout the seventies and early eighties. Tommy, however, did not receive much criticism due to his efforts to financially support and fund large numbers of overseas missions. Even in the face of his critics, Tommy was able to receive ample amounts of respect for acquiring financial gifts to be given to "impoverished mission programs." **The National Enquirer, The Globe, and The Star**

In 1978-79, Tommy was searching: "How do we help Americans?" He and Daisy knew what to do overseas, but they did not know how to reach the people in America who did not know Jesus as their Savior. In the early days of their ministry, if a minister was on radio or television, it was just radio or television, because Christian radio or television did not exist at that time. By the 1970's, however, Christian radio and television emerged. Tommy, as an evangelist, was trying to figure out how they could reach the most Americans through another means other than Christian radio or television. How could they do this? The secular stations were too expensive and they did not want to be on Christian radio, because most of the listeners were already saved.

As Tommy began looking around for ways to reach the unsaved people in America, he came up with a great idea. For one year, they took out a full-page, weekly ad in The National Enquirer, The Globe, and The Star tabloids. These were the kinds of publications that lent themselves to coverage of sensational, and sometimes even lurid, late-breaking news, including celebrity news and the latest gossip. Each of these ads was designed for the American market that was interested in, "How do you succeed?" and "How do you have the best of life?" So Tommy and Daisy offered seven secrets.

There was a big blown-up picture of Tommy and Daisy in each ad. There were also pictures of them from Florida with their blue swimming pool and lush palm trees. Even though these ads were not in color, there was an air of opulence about them. There was Tommy with his gold chain, and Daisy in

her Floridian attire, both with a champagne glass of orange juice, toasting each other, while offering seven secrets in response to the following questions, “How do you succeed?” and “How do you have the best of life?”

The subscribers had to request the seven secrets. In response, Tommy and Daisy created an 8 ½ X 11 magazine to send to them. It was like a comic book. It had a glossy-colored cover with different pictures of them on the pages inside. The camera personnel would follow Tommy and Daisy to the mall, while they went on a jog, or as they sat around the pool, and would take pictures of them. Tommy and Daisy would then come up with stories to go along with these pictures, just like in the comic books, where there were bubbles inserted in the pictures with the printed conversation that was taking place.

In these comics, Tommy and Daisy would talk about what they had seen in their crusades, like the demon-possessed man, lepers, or those who were crippled, blind, or deaf and dumb.

Throughout the magazine, Tommy and Daisy would talk to each other, about the wonderful things they had seen, subtly intertwining the gospel message in it. At other times, Tommy would say things like, “My dear, I don’t think it’s too much to say that they (the readers) can have all they want, including prosperity.” Daisy would say things like, “Honey, do you remember what David said in the Bible?”

They told their miracle stories and then showed a picture of each miracle, maybe even with a caption along the bottom. For example in one comic, Tommy and Daisy might be pictured in their jogging suits running, and the caption might read: “We’re going to run to help you get life’s best.” Then at the end of this comic-like book, the subscribers could request the actual book that contained the full seven secrets, *The Best of Life*. This book was the best synopsis of the different aspects of God’s plan for people, according to Osborn Ministries International. It was written for the unique audience of America. The overall principle of *The Best of Life* is self-value. God made you. You are valuable. Because God created you; you have self-value.

You are valuable because God’s plan involves you. Your heritage is to have God’s best, enjoy His companionship, and to use His wealth and power for

the good of yourself and others. You are created for life, love, power, prosperity, success, and dignity. The seeds of greatness are in you. God never created you as a nobody, but as a real somebody; therefore, recognize your self-value. Realize that He has planned His life's best for you as His child.

There are seven principles of success in this book: the principles of self-value, identity, desire, decision, wealth, vision, and action. At the end of each of the seven sections, there is a sixty-second secret. The idea is that there are seven secrets and you can learn these in sixty seconds for seven days. You believe these; you say these; you do these. These were the secrets of self-value that Tommy and Daisy promoted. "You can't read them and not get saved----- Seven secrets in sixty seconds a day...and in seven days your life will be transformed."

Tommy and Daisy pioneered this "self-help" idea and method that became so popular in the years ahead. Thousands upon thousands requested the 8 ½ by 11 magazine. The end result was tremendous. People realized how much God wanted to help them. There were testimonies of people who accepted Jesus, got delivered from alcohol, healed of cancer, and received a financial miracle.

Tommy was at John Osteen's church, Lakewood, in Houston, Texas, for a big convention involving Network World and its connections around the globe. Tommy had a copy of The National Enquirer that carried his and Daisy's first ad. He explained to the church how they had run this ad in The National Enquirer. "And it went dead quiet, dead quiet," according to the individual sharing this story.

Tommy said to the congregation, "We wanted to reach the people who didn't go to church." As the story goes, one fellow on the front row started clapping. It was like the audience was saying, What's he clapping for? But then the applause began to catch on...and grow; and it grew to a groundswell. "It was exciting," shared T. L.'s associate, "that God could give His people new ideas that have never been thought of before."

Tommy discovered that another way that the communists made their advances was by successfully using the printed page to spread their

propaganda. As a result, Tommy made further advances on the mission field for God, by way of the printed page—printing salvation tracts, books, and other materials in 132 languages. Tommy decided that they would fly over an area and rain literature on the villages. Books in new languages are still being added annually, through the partnership of Christians who have accepted Christ’s evangelism mandate. *Ask our friends not to hold me here any longer by their prayers*

Daisy Marie Washburn Osborn passed away on May 27, 1995. She had endured a very tough mission in Asia, suffering a leg injury in Malaysia where she was holding a conference.

Then she had to undergo a painful fourteen-hour flight to England, and traveled by car more than a hundred miles to join Tommy for a British camp meeting. She then made yet another agonizing journey— one that involved a ten-hour flight to Chicago, Illinois, and another to Tulsa, Oklahoma. After a three-month recovery, she conducted a historic Pan-American Women’s Conference and then another National Conference in Brasilia, Brazil. In each of these conferences, she ministered to thousands. Then she headed to Hawaii to conduct a Pacific *John Osteen, pastor at* Conference for Women—but Daisy’s lungs were in trouble.

She kept driving herself, despite two rather recent major bouts with pneumonia, one in India and another in Columbia, which took place before all of the forementioned ministry engagements. In India she had coped with stifling heat and excessive humidity, while being intermittently chilled by oscillating fans as she ministered. Then she was exposed to air conditioning that ran at its maximum in the hotel between her meetings. In Bogota, Columbia, during her Women’s Conference and their Mass Miracle Crusade, she had to cope with an untimely cold and rainy spell while ministering in an open, damp, and cold concrete coliseum at an altitude of 8,000 feet, where it was almost impossible for a non-acclimatized person to get warm. Although her lungs had filled again and she was running a high fever, she kept preaching and ministering to thousands of women, day after day.

*the time of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, stated, “When*

*you talk about Daisy, you talk about T. L.  
When you talk about T. L. you talk about Daisy.*

Daisy Osborn was a woman of tremendous faith who had seen miracle after miracle, healing after healing in her own meetings – even the raising of the dead. Once she almost died of malaria in Africa, but she was healed. Another time in Asia, a deadly infection invaded her throat and lungs, leaving her fevered and delirious, but she was healed. But this time her healing did not manifest on this side of heaven.

About four days before she transcended this life, she told Tommy, “Ask our friends not to hold me here any longer by their prayers. I have finished my earthly course. My seed will run with the message. Keep the television off. Turn off the telephones. I want the room quiet. I’m watching for my Jesus to come for me. He’s coming very soon. I am at peace.” Daisy went home four months shy of seventy-one years of age.

At the memorial service to commemorate Daisy’s life and ministry, John Osteen, pastor at the time of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, stated, “When you talk about Daisy, you talk about T. L. When you talk about T. L. you talk about Daisy. They are inseparable—always have been.” That is why Tommy’s Osborn’s legacy cannot be shared without much of Daisy’s own legacy woven intricately into its fabric. She has much to reflect, by her own life and ministry, of who he is.

Perhaps no woman ever lived who could match Dr. Daisy Osborn’s track-record in personal and public preaching and teaching ministry to so many millions of people, face to face, in so many nations, to so many tribes, cultures, races and religions. It is doubtful if any woman ever lived who has witnessed so many healing miracles.

Dr. Daisy Washburn Osborn was the Chairperson and a founding Pastor of OSFO International Gospel Center, a World Missionary Church Organization headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA dedicated to reaching the unreached of the world.

Daisy’s natural business acumen was proven throughout the many years of her multiple responsibilities, administering the vast worldwide soulwinning

outreaches of OSFO International and the coordination of all the Osborn Mass-Evangelism Crusades, follow-up Teaching Seminars and National Women's Conferences—besides her full share of preaching to the masses in their crusades.

Dr. Daisy was a Christian humanitarian and a truly international personality, a world citizen, able to speak both French and Spanish, a diplomate extraordinaire. Distinguished by unselfish, untiring love-service to people, her path through life was a journey of purposeful connections—with women and men, girls and boys, of all ages, from all lifestyles and philosophies.

Perhaps Daisy is best remembered for her unconditional dedication to and accomplishments for the betterment of needy people throughout the world community. She was skilled in diplomacy and a natural in public relations, she was distinguished in dealing with government leaders abroad concerning gospel enterprises.

### **T.L. acquainted with grief**

Tommy decided to journal this tragedy, trauma, and its culminating, ultimate triumph in his life so that he wouldn't forget what he thought and how he felt—so he could eventually write for people, because everybody eventually will lose someone. For the young “invincible” generation that, for the most part, is unacquainted with this kind of experience and has given little to no thought about its ramifications, there's some great insight here to be passed on.

Tommy Lee Osborn has lived long enough and endured enough of life's challenges to make a convincing contribution in how to survive life's tragedies. Of Tommy and Daisy's four children, three of them were surrendered back to God. Marie LaVonne, born in 1943, lived only a few days. The very next week, a pastor asked the couple to sing at the funeral of a baby. Though griefstricken by their own loss, Tommy and Daisy decided that they could do it; and so they did.

Their only son, Tommy Lee Osborn, Jr., born in 1945, died at the age of thirty-four. Four days after his homegoing, Daisy and T. L.—again sus-

taining deep grief, exceptionally deep grief—were packing suitcases to leave for ministry across France and then on to Africa, where they witnessed enormous crusades and again found healing as they were willing to go and bring healing to others. It happened again—when their third daughter, Mary Elizabeth, was born in 1950, and only lived a few moments. Within two weeks following that tragedy, T. L. and Daisy left for the historic crusades in Cuba.

### **Tommy ignored criticism**

The focus of his ministry was overseas and the hallmark of his ministry was miracles. Missions and mass evangelism to those in unreached parts of the world gave Tommy a special place within each movement and among his peers. It allowed him to stay above the fray, saving him from generalized criticisms that were expressed toward evangelists of his genre. In many ways, Tommy became a standout known for his work independent of others.

Tommy, at points, received criticisms due to independent ministry that was not under any particular denomination. Those who favored *In comparison to* denominationalism over independent ministries commonly attacked every evangelist who took the same approach. In comparison

*the amount of criticism his peers received, Tommy's*

*to the amount of criticism his peers received, critics were minimal.*

Tommy's critics were minimal. This, again, was because of his work in helping large groups of people overseas.

Throughout his ministry, Tommy slowly moved toward being identified as a neoPentecostal. Rather than joining an established Pentecostal denomination, neoPentecostals take an independent stance for the sake of being more ecumenical. Tommy's ecumenical approach to ministry and missions diversified his appeal and brought a large number of supporters from many different Christian backgrounds pouring into his ministry and missionary efforts.

A large part of Tommy's success in financing in missionary efforts was his relentless conviction to giving every dollar that was donated straight

towards helping and reaching those in need. Even as late as the 1970s, T. L. Osborn Ministries' financial needs were provided for exceptionally. It was Tommy's ability to be fiscally responsible with donations, coupled with his philosophy of transparency on how donations were affecting the mission fields around the world, that legitimized him as an evangelist of integrity. This, wedded with his passion for foreign missions and his ability to define relevant evangelism, put him in an early position to allocate Christian support to people in need.

As cultural and global challenges changed, so did Osborn's ability to adapt to them. Osborn, for a time, decided to focus his attention on youth in America. The 1960s was a decade defined by reinvention and exploration. Young people in particular were going through social and ideological changes, leading to youth revivals across the country. Tommy attempted to bridge the gap between youth in contemporary society and their parents who remained disturbed about the whole situation. He began to preach a gospel that was relevant and hip. T.L. started teaching his sermons in more appropriate vernacular that would be more relatable to young people. "He urged his old-time followers 'Think younger in your faith.'"

He continued to reach out by changing his style of dress and hair. He captured the attention of many young people in the United States by showing them a gospel that was relevant and approachable. With a new audience listening to T.L., foreign missions and the importance of it, was communicated to a new demographic of Christians, which would have long lasting effects on the culture of American missions.

Close to seventy of Tommy Osborn's eighty-some years have been spent touching millions in nearly one hundred nations in national crusades and seminars. For over sixty years, he preached to multitudes of 20,000 to over 300,000 daily in mass gospel crusades, covering seventy-four nations. Tommy And Daisy have probably reached and led more people to Christ in non-Christian nations, than any other ministry couple to date. The Osborn family has probably also witnessed more great healing miracles than any family that has lived—"not because of any special faith," Tommy would assert, "but simply because we began this global ministry so early in life



and have ministered to so many multitudes, in so many nations, for so many years.”

The ministry of Tommy and Daisy has made an unprecedented impact on the world. Their style of mass evangelism had not been witnessed since the epoch of the early Church. Tommy and Daisy were the first to go onto open fields in foreign nations, in what is today called crusades, and invite everyone to come. They addressed audiences of tens of thousands throughout the dangerous years of nationalism when foreign political domination was being repulsed by the awakening <sup>third-world nations</sup>. **He was in no pain and had no sickness**

Flags from 104 nations where Osborn ministered over a 60-year period lined the sidewalk as well-wishers arrived. Many of them were held by natives of those countries dressed in ethnic attire. Osborn was based in Tulsa, he was better known overseas, where he pioneered outdoor evangelistic and healing services in non-Christian nations that often drew in the hundreds of thousands.

Representatives of nations around the world filled Christ chapel at Oral Roberts University on Wednesday afternoon to honor the memory of Tulsa-based missionary-evangelist T.L. Osborn.

“My much-loved father, Dr. T.L. Osborn, the man know around the world as “The Father of the Gospel” entered his eternal rest on Thursday, Feb, 14. He was in no pain and had no sickness. The Lord simply took away his breath.

My father was wrapped in love, his family surrounding him as he stepped through the veil into eternity. He is now in the presence of Jesus, whom he had served faithfully for 77 years. We can only imagine the sweet reunion between him and his beloved Daisy, three of his children, a granddaughter and a celebrating host of believers who am among the redeemed because of my father’s ministry during more than 65 years to every corner of the earth. He was in his 90th year, having passed his 89th birthday on Dec. 23” said Dr. LaDonna Osborn.

Leaders of major ministries from Africa, Asia, South America and Europe spoke at the three-hour service, telling their personal stories about Osborn and how his ministry had affected their nations.

Pastor Robert Kayanja of Uganda said Osborn and his wife, Daisy Osborn, showed up there in the 1980s after a civil war that left people without hope. The crusade organized was the largest in the nation's history. "What we learnt from T.L. Osborn is that everyone is important.

M.E (Margaret) Benson Idahosa, Church of God Mission International in Nigeria, said: "The Gospel has changed Africa because of the lives of T.L. and Daisy Osborn...Whatever I am today, Daisy and T.L. made me so." **The Osborns' legacy**

In T.L.'s eighth decade of life, the Osborn ministry continues to expand. Following Daisy's demise, T.L. continued his global evangelism crusades, and his daughter, Dr. LaDonna, has expanded her ministries of evangelism and of church leadership to nearly every continent as she carries the torch of the gospel into this century's new frontiers. Her earliest memories as a child include being an eye witness to the awesome power of God's love toward people. In 1954, while riding in a betja with her parents in Java, Indonesia, she was glad they were helping people to know about Jesus. In 1947, the year she was born, her parents launched their global mass miracle ministry. they traveled as a family from nation to nation, erecting platforms on open fields, inviting multitudes to come and receive Biblical healing. "We believed that Jesus of the Bible is the same yesterday, today and forever."

"Nothing is too hard for Him. No person is too beyond the reach of His compassion and rescue. No sickness is greater than His healing life. No wound or injustice is beyond His power to redeem and restore. Miracles are normal for God, who created all things by His great power and outstretched arm."

When the Osborns arrived in a certain nation, Protestant missionaries from the United States, oblivious to God's miracle ministry abroad, began a campaign to influence national pastors against us. They contended: "This man Osborn will bring division and confusion. It would be better if he had never come to our area."

They went from pastor to pastor, in their concerted effort to prevent their great public campaign from taking place. Some pastors were influenced by their accusations, but most of the national churches enthusiastically

participated with them, and their churches overflowed with hundreds of new converts.

Many miracles, signs, and wonders were wrought which gave proof of the gospel that we preached. Thousands of people accepted Christ as their savior.

As a young adult she attended a Bible School. It was there that she heard for the first time that some Christians do not believe that miracles are experienced today as they were in Bible days. She was shocked. To her the arguments and debates concerning miracles were simply idle talk. She had seen thousands of miracles of healing, of changed lives, of restored dreams, of reconciled relationships, of material provision, of physical protection, and more.

Today she continues the miracle legacy of her parents through the various aspects of their global ministry. Nothing has changed, because the resurrected Jesus has not changed.

Her eldest son, Tommy O'Dell, along with his wife Elisabeth and their children represent the next two generations of this family. Tommy's own story of conversion is a miracle story. His supernatural encounter with Jesus is proof that when human effort reaches its limit, the miracle power of Christ continues and accomplishes God's beautiful plan of rescue.

Tommy and Elisabeth have carried the gospel of Christ's miracle life and power to over seventy nations of the world. Millions of souls have been saved in their crusades, and remarkable physical healings and other supernatural acts of our loving Lord have consistently confirmed their ministry.

“My father was a Gospel hero, loved the world over. But he was also a real father. He taught me what is important in life. He taught me to listen to the voice of God and to obey Him. He taught me that a woman is no less valuable than a man. He taught me to do my best and leave the rest with God. He taught me that one person can make a difference.” Dr. LaDonna Osborn



**From the left: Daisy, T.L.  
LaDonna, Tommy Lee Jr.**

**REINHARD BONNKE**

*Africa shall be saved*



*Africa shall be saved*

**“Father, Father, God spoke to me in church today and said I must preach the gospel in Africa!”**

**His father did not seem to understand. He dismounted from his bicycle and asked him to repeat it. Then he looked at him with a puzzled and somber expression. “Your brother Martin will be my heir, Reinhard. He will be the preacher of the gospel in this family.”  
“But Father, God has called me to preach in Africa.”**

**He scowled. “How do you know that God has called you?”  
Disappointment darkened Reinhard’s heart. His tone of voice spoke louder than his words.**

**Reinhard’s mind searched for a way to explain to him the reality of it. What evidence did he have? Jesus had not visited him personally. Nor had he selected a scripture from a box of promises like his mother when she received a word from God about their crossing from Danzig to Copenhagen. Nor did he hear an audible voice. All he had was the evidence of his heart, and he was not eloquent enough to put it into words to please his father.**

Reinhard Bonnke was born on 19th April 1940 in Königsberg, East

Prussia, Germany.

The influence of Martin Luther and the Reformation was still felt after four centuries. But the authority of the Bible had been severely challenged by the so-called Higher Criticism of German theologians which was rife in the pre-war period. For many, it was faith-destroying. Instead, it was felt that intellectualism would educate the ignorance out of mankind and lead the world into peace and the millennium.

By the end of the war in 1918, Hermann was thoroughly disillusioned. Like most German youth of the day he found defeat a bitter pill to swallow. All the sacrifices they had been called to make for the war effort had been in vain. Church attendance suffered.

Instead of getting better, things continued to get worse. The Bonnke family now found themselves facing new enemies of disease and

*Understandably, Hermann*

debt. Weakened by years of inadequate food supply many of their *had developed into a*

*bitter and tough teenager. Whatever his family said, now that he was seventeen, he was determined to join the army as a volunteer.*

friends fell easy prey to the worldwide flu epidemic which swept away more victims than the war itself. Then in 1923, when Germany could not pay the huge reparations imposed following the Treaty of Versailles, France occupied the Ruhr, and the German currency collapsed.

Understandably, Hermann had developed into a bitter and tough teenager. Whatever his family said, now that he was seventeen, he was determined to join the army as a volunteer. His parents still attended the local church, but that had long since lost its appeal to him. He had other ideas for his life.

So in 1923 he became a soldier in the Wehrmacht. But his joy was short-lived. One day to his horror, he began coughing up blood. He was shattered. Not only was TB incurable, but dared not tell anyone for it would mean the end of his military career when it had barely begun.

Meanwhile, although his hopes were being destroyed, something had happened to his family, giving them fresh hope. They had been invited to a local event to hear an American Pentecostal evangelist. Herr Bonnke and his wife, Herman's parents had instant misgivings. However, Herman's father suffered a great deal from rheumatism, and it was said that this American preacher prayed for the sick, and that people were getting healed, both he and his wife received Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

At the first opportunity they told Herman the wonderful news. He was not interested. But his disease was getting worse, and he wouldn't be able to conceal it much longer. Finally he too agreed to attend, telling God that if he healed him he would give his life to follow this Jesus. When the evangelist laid hands on him he was healed, and yielded his life to Christ. Reinhard's father served with the Wehrmacht during World War II. In 1945, Königsberg was a town of ruins as streams of German troops and vehicles

fell back from the Eastern Front forces advanced. Russian planes constantly flew overhead bombing the retreating forces and civilians alike.

Reinhard's comfortable childhood was shattered with the scream of artillery shells, explosions, and the drone of Russian planes. He ran to the window and looked out. The night sky flickered and glowed with the light of burning buildings. To his five year-old mind, they seemed no more sinister than embers in a fireplace. No more dangerous than candles in a stained-glass window. Searchlights swept the clouds, and tracer bullets flew at the cross-winged silhouettes in the sky.

All six of them Bonnke children were born to Hermann and Meta between 1934 and 1942. It was a prolific span of just eight years in their marriage. During this time our family lived comfortably in the small town of Stablack.

The first five Bonnke children to be born were boys. The oldest was Martin, and then Gerhard, after that, a set of twins, Peter and Jürgen. By now, Mother felt she was finished with bearing sons. She wanted a daughter. 13 months later, Bonnke was born, and his mother cried. "Please God, why not a girl?" After Reinhard, God was merciful, and Felicitas was born in 1942, the only Bonnke daughter.

Reinhard's father served with the Wehrmacht during World War II. In 1945, Königsberg was a town of ruins as streams of German troops and vehicles fell back from the Eastern Front as forces advanced. Russian planes constantly flew overhead bombing the retreating forces and civilians alike. Reinhard's comfortable childhood was shattered with the scream of artillery shells, explosions, and the drone of Russian planes. He ran to the window and looked out. The night sky flickered and glowed with the light of burning buildings. To his five year-old mind, they seemed no more sinister than embers in a fireplace. No more dangerous than candles in a stained-glass window. Searchlights swept the clouds, and tracer bullets flew at the cross-winged silhouettes in the sky.

***Run now***



Bonnke's mother, Meta, a dedicated Christian, had believed the family would be safe at home. Weeks earlier, quietly, out of earshot of the children, Hermann Bonnke had told his wife that the war was lost. "World War II will go down as horribly as World War I for Germany. The Allies are invading from the west. Here in the east, Stablack is surrounded. We will make a final stand, but Russia has built an over-whelming force, and they will prevail. We don't know when they will begin the attack but it could come at any moment."

He told her that he would have to stay with the troops. He might not be able to return home from the garrison to see her before the end. The army would make a final stand in an effort to allow refugees to flee. When all was lost he would be ordered to pull back to surrender to the British or French in the west, rather than fall into the hands of *You must take the* the hated Soviets.

*road toward Königsberg then turn south. The* He instructed her to sew backpacks for *road to Danzig is cut off.* all of the children. They would use them *You will have to cross the* to carry food and clothing. They would *Haff. It is the only way.* have to pack now and be prepared to flee at a moment's notice. It was early spring and we would have to endure temperatures below freezing, day and night.

"You must take the road toward Königsberg then turn south. The road to Danzig is cut off. You will have to cross the Haff. It is the only way."

Meta's parents, Ernst and Minna Scheffler, had moved to Danzig soon after the war began. It was a German stronghold in Poland, on the southwestern border of East Prussia. It had an ice-free port to the Baltic Sea.

Hermann knew that the German High Command had begun the rescue operation code-named Hannibal. Key military personnel and civilians were being evacuated from Danzig. The newly built German passenger ship, Wilhelm Gustloff, was currently in port loading for a voyage to the German city of Kiel.

"This will be your very best escape," he said. "If you can make it to Danzig then your father can book passage for you."

She gathered all six of his children around her and began to pray. Bonnke snuggled together with Martin, the oldest at eleven years of age, with Gerhard, who was nine, and the twins – Jürgen and Peter – who were six. Their Mother held little Felicitas on her lap. She was not yet three years old.

Suddenly the door burst open. A soldier stood there. He was a foot soldier who had been sent by their father, Hermann Bonnke, an officer in the German Wehrmacht.

“Why are you still here, Meta?!” he shouted. “It may be too late. Hermann says you must take the children and run! Run now! Run for it!”

Their mother sat on the stool of her beloved harmonium, her arms around us. She knew that she had waited too long. Day after day she had longed to see her husband again. She did not want to leave the secure nest they had made together in the military camp of Stablack. She simply did not want to accept that the end was so near for Germany. Hoping against hope, she had stayed in spite of the menace that grew each day. And now – this!

“Yes, tell Hermann we will go now.”  
Thank you for warning us,” she said nodding to the soldier and closed the door.

He turned and disappeared into the night, leaving the door ajar.

### **Refuge in Danzig**

What should we do? As always she prayed, and as she knew they must leave, and at once.

To the boys, packing was an adventure. That winter night Meta ran to a neighbour. All her complacency had left her. The ring of fire round the city was getting nearer, the gunfire louder, and she could see others hurriedly leaving. Her neighbour and her five children when all

*A voice yelled from ready to leave, and didn't need a second telling.  
the cab that there was only room for*

*three, but Meta ignored the voice and lifting children up into the back until*

*all were in then she squeezed in as well.*

The two women and their brood of eleven children made their way to the main road. Carrying her baby daughter, Meta shepherded the boys, urging them to keep close together.

Their journey in the midst of noise and confusion seemed like some exciting adventure. As the heavily laden army vehicles trundled past, Meta waved her arms, desperately trying to get to one of the trucks to stop and give them a ride. At last, as the little group huddled together for comfort, a truck did stop. A voice yelled from the cab that there was only room for three, but Meta ignored the voice and lifting children up into the back until all were in then she squeezed in as well.

The vehicle was old, creaky, and wood-fired. As the driver jerked through the gears, they moved off down the road. Reinhard saw the brightness of flares being dropped by enemy planes through darkness, but was so exhausted that he fell asleep in the arms of one of the German soldiers on whose lap he sat.

When they could ride no further on the army vehicle, the Bonnkes took to the road on foot. They trudged for several days before managing to get another ride. During this time, they survived on a few meagre slices of bread and, at night, sought shelter with others at deserted farmhouses. The escape route led across the Half Sea and, in the late winter, ice was beginning to melt. The crossing was particularly treacherous with vehicles often axle deep in melting ice, a comparatively thin cover over the deep, freezing waters surging beneath. Only days after the family made it across the sea, Russian planes bombed the ice, and thousands of soldiers and civilians lost their lives in the waters.

To their huge relief, the families managed to get a ride on a military truck which was fleeing across the ice. Once again the children were bundled in, and the two women prayed as the truck slithered precariously over the melting sea. The ice creaked and cracked.

Bedraggled and weary but still together, the mother and six children eventually reached the port of Danzig (Gdansk today), which was filled with refugees from the immediate battle zones. The only way to escape was

across the Baltic Sea. With thousands of others, they waited prayerfully for a ship on which to embark for Denmark and safety.

A ship called the Gustlov was in the harbour, but it was already overloaded with several thousand on board. It steamed slowly out into the Baltic to Denmark. It never made it. Two days later the news reached Danzig that it had been sunk by a torpedo from a Russian submarine. The situation in the city deteriorated rapidly. Russian planes were bombing the city. Then the families found a place on an old coal steamer. They needed no urging to pray.

The two women prayed and one took a promise from a Bible promise box. They opened the slip of paper and read out, "Thus saith the Lord which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters" (Isaiah 43:16 AV). It was as though God had spoken audibly to their trembling hearts. They knelt and committed themselves and their children into the hands of God.**Meta reunites with her parents Grandpa and Grandma**

### **Scheffler in Danzig**

In Danzig, they parted company with their neighbors. Soon Meta, with all six Bonnke children clustered around her, knocked at the door of Grandpa and Grandma Scheffler's second-story apartment. It was a tearful reunion. Meta's younger sister, Eva, was there, too. The first thing Meta wanted to know was if they had heard any news of Stablack, or any news of her husband. No one could tell her anything. Communications had broken down Danzig had been under bombardment for days. As soon as the weather lifted, the bombardment resumed. They saw buildings burst into flames as planes and artillery hammered the city indiscriminately. Dozens of plumes of smoke could be seen around the apartment every day.

It was then that we heard the awful report that when the fog had lifted from the Haff the Russian air force had completely bombed out the ice crossing. That way of escape was gone for all the remaining Germans caught between Königsberg and Danzig.*Grandpa Ernst*

"Oh, please God," Meta prayed, "show Her man a way of escape. Don't let him be

caught out there.”

*seemed especially troubled. He wanted to get them out of the city as fast as he could to escape its*

Grandpa Ernst seemed especially troubled. He wanted to get them out of the city as fast as he could to escape its fall into enemy hands. At the beginning of the war he had left his rural sheep farm near the Lithuanian border for a job with a woolen mill in Danzig. He was determined to stay until the end, but Danzig was no place for his wife, his daughters, or his grandchildren. Daily he would brave the bombardment and go to the harbor. There he would jostle through the crowds seeking passage for them on a ship. **On the ship for Denmark**

Air raids increased, and the Russian forces drawing nearer when the Bonnkes finally got a berth on an ancient coal steamer. Before they sailed, Meta and Grandma gathered them together and read Isaiah 43:16: Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. This Scripture gave them all great comfort.

The next morning they packed our bundles for the trip. They walked down the hill to the shipyards. When they got there, Grandpa was dismayed. Apparently others had seized upon the same idea. Thousands of people were packed onto the dock, ready to make the same trip. They were lost in the crowd. The ship could not possibly hold a fraction of those seeking passage. Their hearts sank.

Meta was determined she had heard from God. She took her children by the hand and pressed into the crowd. “Make way for children,” she said, again and again, as they pushed their way forward.

The gateway was a seething mass of human bodies, pressing and shoving to get aboard. Air raids shrieked warnings, and they wondered if they would ever actually get on board. Eventually, however, they arrived safely below deck, and the ship steamed sluggishly out into the Baltic on the start of

another ordeal and another example of the providence of God. They were attacked several times from the air as the ship plowed through the rough wind-ruffled waves.

On deck of this civilian ship anti-aircraft guns had been mounted and hidden under tarps. The covers were suddenly removed and the guns began blasting into the heavens at the approaching fighter. Aunt Eva screamed and dragged Reinhard toward the open hatch, but he broke free, fascinated by the drama in the sky. Before she could grab Reinhard again and drag him down the rope ladder he saw the fighter plane burst into flames.

For a moment both of them watched transfixed as the plane fell like a burning meteor, splashing into the dark and icy waters off to one side. The passengers on deck began to cheer. It had been a Russian fighter that plummeted from the sky.

As Eva hurried Reinhard down below decks she was thanking God that at least they had escaped the strafing that had targeted them on the docks in Danzig. Reinhard also recalled the terror of the bullets and bombs that had rocked the military truck as they sat helpless on the road. Incident by incident, the realities of this war were becoming real to my five-year-old mind.

Sometime after midnight, they were awakened by an impact against the hull. Staring into the darkness, all we could hear was the constant churning of the ship's engine room continuing on course. All of the passengers had heard of the fate of the Wilhelm Gustloff. After some minutes, passengers began to panic as the ship listed hard to one side.

The crew rushed to the lower decks with gasolinepowered pumps. Either the ship had struck a mine or had been hit by a torpedo. Water was rushing in from a gaping hole in the hull. Soon the sounds of the pump engines could be heard below decks, removing the incoming water.

Their mother called them to her side. Here was the supreme test of her promise from God. She began to pray, Minna and Eva joining her, reminding God that He was the God who had spoken, saying that He

*Some refugees were made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters.  
attacked by angry  
mobs who wanted to  
kill every German in  
sight. For their own safety they were removed to a military-patrolled  
detention center.*

After some hours the ship began to right itself. The crew explained that the pumps had begun to work faster than the incoming water, and they were staying afloat. When the coast of Denmark appeared and they entered the harbor at last, everyone wept <sup>and cheered</sup>. **Death in the prison camp**

In Denmark the Bonnkes lived as refugees. The horrors of the Nazi death camps and crematoriums became headline news around the world, and they felt the hatred of the Danish people exploding in their faces. Some refugees were attacked by angry mobs who wanted to kill every German in sight. For their own safety they were removed to a military-patrolled detention center. It was ringed in barbed wire and hastily constructed guard towers, resembling those they'd seen at the prisoner-of-war camp in Stablack. The difference was that now they were the prisoners on the inside. This would be their home for the next four years as the world sorted out the terrible aftermath of World War II.

They shared a small bungalow with two and sometimes three other family groups. No one had money. They had a system of vouchers for rationed necessities like toilet paper, soap, toothbrushes, and clothing. They were fed en masse at a central kitchen. The food provided was unappetizing and barely nutritious. Many suffered from dysentery. In time, weaker adults and children began to die of malnutrition and dehydration.

As the days and months passed, their mother nursed them through the normal fevers, colds, and bouts with flu, using home remedies and prayer. Doctors were not available. Only basic medicines and first aid could be found. During their first year in the camps, 13,000 died, <sup>mostly children under the age of five</sup>. **Hermann Bonnke and Grandpa Ernst**

**Scheffler still alive**

*The memories of those awful days never left Hermann Bonnke. He resolved that if he and*

*his family ever survived, he would instil in them the horrors of war.*

Hitler had insisted that Königsberg be a fortress city to stem the Russian advance, and Hermann had no choice but to stay. By the end of January 1945, the German troops were trapped with their backs to the Baltic sea. On the 30th March, news filtered through that Danzig, where Hermann had hoped his family might be, had

fallen to the Russians. He feared deeply for their safety. Within a few days the Russian assault on Königsberg began, and raged for three terrible days. The outcome was inevitable. The memories of those awful days never left Hermann Bonnke. He resolved that if he and his family ever survived, he would instil in them the horrors of war.

Hermann Bonnke lay in his prison bunk staring at the wooden slats of the bed a few inches above his nose. He had been excused from work detail, which allowed him to spend some precious time alone in the British prison barracks. He thought of how many millions of prisoners had lain awake in claustrophobic quarters like this throughout the hellish war years. Victims of the Nazi regime. How many of them— millions of them—had died in horrible ways he wished he could erase from his mind.

He had only recently learned of Hitler's Final Solution. He was still in shock over it. The extermination of Jews appalled him beyond words. As a Pentecostal believer, he had regarded the Jews as the chosen people through whom God had revealed the Messiah, the Savior of allmankind. Knowing that he had served a government that had planned to exterminate all of them left him permanently shaken. It haunted his thoughts and even his dreams at night.

He wondered how the Stalack prisoners of war were faring. Those his men had guarded at the prison camp in East Prussia. They had been mostly Belgian and French soldiers. Some had returned to Europe with stories of even worse confinement after being liberated by the Russians.



How were his fellow German soldiers faring? How many had survived the final onslaught? He thought especially of those who had stayed behind in Königsberg so he could escape by sea. He recalled how they had sacrificed themselves.

“You are a father of six children,” the officer in charge had said. “You must return to build a new Germany with them.”

He had been given passage on the last mine sweeper to leave the harbor at Königsberg before the end. His fellow soldiers had held back the Soviets until his ship had made it safely into the open waters of the Baltic Sea. Rumors now had come that the men who had stayed behind had been marched away on the point of bayonets into the vast Siberian Gulag in Russia. They would never be seen again.

He raised his right hand and turned it over and over before his face. In the depths of his heart he wished he had never been the young boy who had raised a wooden sword in the village of Trunz, dreaming of glory in battle. Little had he known that the Prussian Cross he had so longed to wear would be hijacked from its godly heritage and twisted into Hitler’s swastika. How the descendants of the Holy Roman Empire could be transformed into the Nazi regime, he still could not fathom. But he had seen it happen with his own eyes, day after day, with a helpless feeling in the pit of his stomach. It had taken only ten years for Hitler to seize absolute power over his beloved homeland. He would never live another day without regretting being German.

After nearly two years in the camp, Grandpa Ernst Scheffler contact - ed Minna and Eva through the Red Cross. He had survived the fall of Danzig and had escaped to Neu-Ulm, Germany. The old sheep farmer was working for a branch of the same woolen mill that had employed him in Danzig. He had secured a home and had found a way to free his wife and daughter from the camp.

They were sad, and at the same time so glad when they said their

*Through the Red Cross* goodbyes. They wanted Grandma and Aunt Eva to be free, but they did not understand why they were not given their freedom at the same time.

Through the Red Cross Hermann eventually heard to his great joy that Meta and the children had made it safely to a refugee camp in Denmark. He hurriedly wrote, but it would be years before they reunited.

*Hermann eventually*

*heard to his great joy that Meta and the children had made it safely to a refugee camp in Denmark.*

“I remember the day Father told us of his release from the prisoner-of-war camp. We shouted and celebrated and sang praise to God. He had been allowed to go to a city in northern Germany called Glückstadt. There he had found a room in a friend’s house, and he had been

offered a good paying job as a civil servant.”

### **Hermann resolves to become a preacher of the gospel**

In 1920s were troubled years for Europe. The idealism of the immediate post-war period was fading rapidly. Soaring inflation and unemployment were sowing seeds of discontent, and Hitler began to rise to power. Within two years of his conversion, Herman Bonnke wanted to leave the army and spend his whole life serving the Lord, but to his dismay he found he was locked firmly into the army for life. That being so, he determined to be the best he could as an officer and christian, and soon became known as the Preaching Officer. Like most of his countrymen, he was unaware of the looming crisis. Hermann was not ashamed of his Pentecostal convictions. In spite of the Berlin Declarations of 1909 by the Evangelicals denouncing Pentecostalism, he searched the Scriptures for himself and came to his own conclusions about the reality of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, including the controversial gift of tongues.

As a German and committed Christian Hermann Bonnke was deeply ashamed and broken in spirit when news came of the horror of the extermination camps. He pondered long and hard how such a great nation, of which he had always been so proud to be part, could have allowed such evil to take over its soul. He had always been a man of prayer with great

love for the Bible, and these revelations served to drive him closer to God and deepen his faith.

As he lay there, in his imagination, he saw a pair of scales weighed down to the floor with an impossible debt. A tank, a bomber, a field helmet, a bayonet, an Iron Cross adorned with swastikas. Then, placed on the opposite side of the scale, the old rugged cross. Under the weight of that cross the scales were balanced. This alone was the equation of divine justice. God placed on Him the iniquity of us all.

Tears ebbed from his eyes as his heart reached out to this infinite God in prayer. My heavenly Father, I am Yours for the remaining years of my life. No more military service for me. It is my heart's desire to preach Your gospel and to serve You alone, until the day I see You face to face.

Across the empty barracks he heard a door quietly open and close. Someone began walking softly across the floor. The flooring soft- woods creaked beneath every step. Hermann thought perhaps it was a British guard coming to check on him. Or a doctor coming to see why he had reported feeling sick.

He rolled from the bunk and stood up to face him, and to his utter shock it was a man in white, wearing a seamless robe and Middle Eastern sandals. He was smiling as He moved toward him, hands extended as if to embrace him. His hair was long and His beard full, and when Hermann reached out to take His hand he saw that it was torn completely through from the force of a Roman nail.

“Hermann, I am so glad you are coming,” the Master said, then vanished into thin air.

Hermann fell to his knees. He could do nothing but weep for the rest of the day and night. How could the Savior be made glad by one so guilty? Returning to his bunk, he lay down, his soul overflowing with the peace of God that passes understanding.

He wrote to Meta and asked if she would support him in a decision to turn his back on the secure income he would receive in a civilian job. He wanted

to become the pastor of a small group of Pentecostal refugees in the nearby village of Krempe. He explained that Krempe was only five miles from the house where he lived in Glückstadt. He could ride there on a bicycle and become their preacher. He had great compassion for these suffering people, he said, and it was the desire of his heart to serve the Lord by serving them, rather than receive another kind of paycheck.

Hermann reminded her of his promise to God in the prison camp and of the visitation from Jesus he had received there. These things had been communicated in earlier letters. He also reminded her of his dedication to God before the war, when he had gone to a soldier's retreat at Reinbeck Castle. From that day on, he had wanted to respond to the calling of the Lord to full-time ministry, but he had been unable to obtain a discharge from the Reichswehr. Now, after the war, all of that had changed.



**Photo of Meta and the children taken in the refugee camp in Denmark. It was later sent by the Red Cross to Hermann so that he could identify his family**



**The Bonnke family in  
Stablack, Germany**



**Reinhard Bonnke at 11 years old. It was taken by a free-lance  
photographer when Reinhard was  
on his way from Sunday school**

Meta prayed and sought God for her answer. This would not be easy. She was the struggling mother of six, living for years in a refugee camp hoping for a better future. It appeared that the Lord had provided that better tomorrow in Glückstadt with her husband. Meanwhile, millions of Germans were unemployed. To give up an income with post-war security was like letting go of a life preserver after the Wilhelm Gustloff had gone down.

“...our father was provided a bicycle by the pastor of the church in Glückstadt. He used it to ride the full five miles to and from church in Krempe each Sunday. Every letter from him from this time on was filled with stories of ministry. We learned of the extreme poverty- among the refugees and how the town of Krempe had generously provided a hall for

his meetings free of charge. Each letter contained information that made us feel a part of what he was doing.

Over time, Father's congregation grew to include 100 refugees. This growth forced them out of the free hall into a youth hostel that could accommodate the entire group. He told us of children in Krempe who would someday want to meet us when we came to join him in Glückstadt."



**Hermann and Meta**

**The Bonnkes reunite after three and one-half years**

Hermann had been a prisoner of war, a captured soldier. When his military service records had been produced and examined by the British, they saw that he had never joined the Nazi party and he had been released. The irony for them was that, as civilians running for their lives to Denmark, they had been incarcerated for almost three years longer than he had. Such are the iniquities of war.

Finally, they were being transferred from Denmark to British control at Pöppendorf. There they would have all of their release paperwork processed. The officials needed to confirm that they were indeed the family from Stablack who had been separated from Hermann during the fall of Ostpreussen and that they were registered properly with all of the new West German government agencies.

In Denmark they had been released from the camp, issued new papers, and shipped across the Baltic straights to the port of Kiel. There, they had boarded this train under British guard and now arrived at Pöppendorf. It was the most famous, or perhaps the most infamous, displaced persons camp run by the British army.

In Pöppendorf, before we arrived, the British had confined thousands of Jews who had survived the Bergen Belsen death camp. These desperate people had tried to immigrate illegally to Palestine aboard a ship they called The Exodus. The British navy had turned the ship around and forced the illegals to return to Germany, confining them in Pöppendorf.

This embarrassment had also accelerated something quite unanticipated. An event that would forever change the world – the formation of the Jewish state of Israel in Palestine.

A year after the formation of Israel, it the Bonnkes' turn to pass through the gates of Pöppendorf. Once there, their papers were duly stamped and noted, their belongings searched. They were led to the section of barracks where they told them Hermann Bonnke would be waiting for them.

As the final barbed-wire gates to his compound were unlocked, Reinhard knew his time had come. He broke free of the others and sprint *Hermann lay for a* ed across the common yard, searching among the other men who were waiting for their loved ones. Some of them were playing soccer and board games, others standing in groups taking in the sun.

*while among his children, laughing and crying all at the same*

*time. They each hugged an arm, a leg, his torso, whatever they could find for themselves.*

Hermann lay for a while among his children, laughing and crying all at the same time. They each hugged an arm, a leg, his torso, whatever they could find for themselves. They hugged and laughed and cried with him, unable to use real words to say just how they had missed him and how glad they

were to see him again and how they loved him and a dozen other things they had been saving up to say for almost four long years.

He had found a single room for all of them, in the small town in Glückstadt, in northern Germany, not far from Hamburg, and he was lucky to find that. Along with most of the inhabitants of that small town by the River Elbe, they experienced real poverty. The quarters were so cramped that eventually some of the children had to sleep elsewhere.

Their new life in Glückstadt held disappointments for Reinhard. First among them was his performance in school. As the Bonnke children entered the regular German school system, they discovered just how far behind they had fallen in the Denmark camps.

“Much of the energy I would rather have invested in playing childhood games now had to be focused on extra hours of study to make up for lost time.

Even so, I did not seem to overcome this setback as quickly and successfully as my older brothers did. They were energetic students. At the homework table they wrangled about the nuances of algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. They debated history and social sciences, biology and physics. And their improving grades reflected their efforts. Soon they won high praises from Mother and Father.”

The first three months at college were in agony. He took it for granted that he would have to write all his examinations in English, not realizing that he could have gotten permission to have written all or part them in German.

“Every thought in my head about school hurt. It weighed on me like a heavy yoke. I could not succeed and I could not escape. Now my sinful whitewash made the burden of it seem even heavier.

Adding to the load, I soon discovered the intense scorn that Lutheran school children had for Pentecostal children. On a typical Sunday, our father would be gone before sunup on his bicycle, traveling to minister in Krempe. We could not afford another bicycle, so none of us went *The solution became* with him. We attended the local *Pentecost clear to Reinhard.* costal congregation.” *Their mother had plenty*



The Pentecostal believers in Glückstadt *of money in her purse.* met in a small school room behind the *Money was now readily* Lutheran church. When they were seen *available to the family.* leaving their humble meetings in the shadow of the great Lutheran steeple, the news quickly spread that the Bonnkes were tongues talkers. The teasing began. And it was more than teasing. Pentecostals were seen as primitive people, religious Neanderthals, a knuckle dragging sect that only existed because of its ignorance. “This gave the Lutheran children license to call us every name in the book.”

***Do you believe you have been saved, Reinhard?***

Meta brought all the groceries home and cooked them for supper. Then for dessert, with a glow on her face, she carefully rationed a portion of chocolate candy to each of her six children. This was like getting Christmas in July! Such luxuries had simply never been afforded since they had left their home in Stablack.

As Reinhard bit into the chocolate he experienced a revelation. His taste buds had never been so turned on. The flavor went all over him with a sense of delicious well-being. Life seemed to consist of many things that were difficult and dull and tedious, like school and home- work and chores. But now there was chocolate. He simply needed to have money to have more of it.

The solution became quite clear to Reinhard. Their mother had plenty of money in her purse. Money was now readily available to the family.

And it was free. She had given away two deutschmarks to the postman, hadn't she? A portion of chocolate would cost even less. She would not miss such a small portion of money from her purse.

Though Reinhard was merely an average student, he immediately became motivated to achieve at math. Well, at least the kind of math necessary to calculate the proper amount of deutschmarks necessary to buy an individual portion of candy. Once Reinhard had this figured out, all he had to do was wait until their had abandoned her purse in the bedroom and retrieve the exact amount from her change wallet.

Once, twice, three times over the next several weeks Reinhard managed to find the right amount of change. Just a few pennies. It resulted in a trip downtown to obtain the pure joy of a very intense and personal chocolate experience. And finally, the day came when he took a full deutchmark from her purse.

“In my heart I knew I was wrong. At the store, as I finished my choc - olate pleasure, I began to feel a sense of guilt gnawing at my insides. I walked from that place, and I made a guilt-born vow: ‘One day I will repay Momma 100 deutschmarks to make up for the money I stole. That is what I will do.’

My hand was well into her purse when I heard her voice behind me in the gloom of the bedroom.”

“Reinhard, what are you doing?”

He withdrew his hand as if a mousetrap had just snapped on his fingers.  
“Nothing, Mother. Nothing.”

Meta turned the light on in the room. She stood there thoughtfully for a long moment deciding how she would handle my transgression. Then slowly and deliberately, she came to sit on the bed. Every moment of this process was pure torture.

Opening her purse she looked inside. The change wallet was open.

This was much worse than a hiding. Reinhard looked into the eyes of the woman he most loved and respected in the world and knew I had betrayed her. My pulse raced. It pounded in my temples, fueled by the foul vinegar of shame.

“Thou shalt not steal. It is one of the Ten Commandments. When we break God’s law, it is sin, Reinhard. You are a sinner, and I am worried about you because sinners go to hell for all eternity,” Reinhard’s mother warned.

She goes on further and asks, “Jesus died to save sinners, Reinhard. He died so you would not have to go to hell for your sins. Would you like to receive Jesus as your Savior and be forgiven?”

“Oh yes, Momma, I would.”

Reinhard repeated a prayer after her, acknowledging that he was a sinner and accepting Jesus as his Savior. When they finished, his mother hugged him. It was a birthday hug and more. It was his new birthday. Reinhard felt as if a thousand pounds had been lifted from his shoulders. It was the last time in his life that he ever stole anything.

“There is something else, Reinhard. The Bible says that if you believe in your heart and confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth you will be saved. Do you believe that you have been saved?”

“Yes, Mother, I do.”

“When I confessed the Lord Jesus, something further happened in me. I knew that I belonged to the Pentecostal Church. It was no longer just the

church of my father and mother. It was now my church, too. They had welcomed me into the family of God. They were now my brothers and sisters. I felt affection for them. I began to love those who loved them and despise those who despised them. Needless to say, I had even less regard for the Lutherans in Glückstadt thereafter.”

19

There was never a place for worldly distractions in Reinhard’s life.

*There was never a place*

His favorite “game” was to go to a nearby woods and preach to trees. “A friend and I would go off where nobody could see us or hear us, and we would preach out our hearts to the trees. My friend was a much better preacher than I was, and I used to wonder whether I would ever be enough a speaker to

*for worldly distractions*

*in Reinhard’s life. His favorite “game” was to go to a nearby woods and preach to trees.*

stand behind a pulpit.” ***Father, Father! It works!***

Soon after, Reinhard became a nuisance to his young friends at church. “We must preach the gospel,” I urged them. “Let’s go preach. We must preach to the lost.”

They did not quite share his level of enthusiasm. They still saw him as the boy who had barely outlived his dismal attempt to preach to trees.

One day Reinhard took his guitar and headed to a street corner in downtown Glückstadt. He began to sing until a small crowd gathered.

Then he put down his guitar, reached for his Bible, and preached the simple invitation to receive Jesus. To his amazement one man knelt and prayed the sinner’s prayer with him right there on the street!

He raced home as fast as his legs would carry him, bursting into the living room completely out of breath.

“Father, Father!” I cried. “It works! It works! A man came to hear me preach today, and he accepted Jesus!*How do you know that God has called you?*”

Not long after this conversation Reinhard attended a life-changing Sunday service. On this particular day, a husband and wife missionary team had been invited to speak. Reinhard does not remember much about them because as they were speaking the Spirit of God spoke to him in his heart, it was as if He said very clearly, “Reinhard, one day you will preach My gospel in Africa.”

This was something he simply had to share with his father. He could hardly wait until he pedaled in from Krempe that day. He waited for him on the street. As he sat there, he knew his father would understand the voice of God he had heard inside. He also had heard from God. Reinhard recalled that Jesus had even visited his father while in the prison camp when he had decided to become a minister. “Surely my father would become as excited as I was over my call to Africa, and he would confirm this great day in my life.” When he saw him, he raced to meet him.

“Father, Father, God spoke to me in church today and said I must preach the gospel in Africa!”

His father did not seem to understand. He dismounted from his bicycle and asked him to repeat it. Then he looked at him with a puzzled and somber expression. “Your brother Martin will be my heir, Reinhard. He will be the preacher of the gospel in this family.”

“But Father, God has called me to preach in Africa.”

He scowled. “How do you know that God has called you?”

Disappointment darkened Reinhard’s heart. His tone of voice spoke louder than his words.

Reinhard’s mind searched for a way to explain to him the reality of it. What evidence did he have? Jesus had not visited him personally. Nor had he selected a scripture from a box of promises like his mother when she received a word from God about their crossing from Danzig to Copenhagen. Nor did he hear an audible voice. All he had was the evidence

of his heart, and he was not eloquent enough to put it into words to please his father. ***Children go through stages you know***

Reinhard would be presented to family guests as an afterthought. As guests often did, they would ask, “Well, Reinhard, you seem like a fine young boy. What are you going to be when you grow up?” “I’m going to be a missionary to Africa,” he said without hesitation. No other Bonnke child claimed to be called to Africa.

*“Children go*

*through stages you know. They usually grow out of it.”*

Hermann would hear this and chuckle, winking at his guests.

“Children go through stages you know. They usually grow out of it.”

This hurt him. He wanted his calling to be taken seriously. He took it very seriously.

His older brothers took this signal from their father as permission to pile on with their own endless ridicule. They would snicker behind their hands and shake their heads at Reinhard as if he was an alien. Reinhard the

missionary. **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

Reinhard began to mention to his father how he needed the baptism of the Holy Spirit in order to have the power to preach the gospel in Africa.

Hermann did not deny that the Spirit baptism with speaking in tongues was for everyone. But he did not lead Reinhard to the experience. He considered him too young and immature.

“Just because you are a boy with a mind of his own does not mean that you are ready to receive the Spirit baptism.”

“Father,” I asked one day, “since you do not believe that I have a real call from God, how do you know when you have a real one? How does it feel?”

He thought for a while then he said, “Son, when you have a real call from God then you will know it. You will know it deep in your heart. You will know, and it cannot be shaken.”

“Father, I know that I know that I have a real call from God,” Reinhard said.

In 1951 it was announced that an outstanding Finnish Pentecostal preacher, Revd Kukula was coming to Glückstadt, and he had a special ministry of leading people into the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Hermann therefore decided to ask Reinhard whether he would like to accompany him to this special service.

Reinhard needed no second invitation—he desperately wanted this blessing. The memory of his mother, Meta, had been wonderfully filled with the Holy Spirit after many years of seeking, was still fresh in his memory. He had seen the difference it had made in his mother’s life and he was thirsting for the same experience. He was thrilled that his father had invited him to go with him.

When they arrived at the place where the service was to be held, Reinhard felt as though he was stepping into the New Jerusalem. Pastor Kukula stood to speak, and Reinhard hung on his every word. Kukula gave only a short message and then he asked the people who were

*While Reinhard was seeking to be filled with God’s Spirit to kneel and pray. still trying to puzzle it*

*all out, he heard the Holy Spirit telling him to go and lay his hands upon a certain woman who was sitting on the opposite*

No sooner had Reinhard got on his knees that the power of God came upon him. He did not need anyone to lay hands upon him and no one did. The Spirit urged within him and he

*side of the prayer meeting.*

burst forth in other tongues inspired by the joy in his eager young heart.

***What did Reinhard do to you?***

From the time he was fourteen years old, Reinhard started accompany his father every Sunday to the services at Krempe, travelling with him on the

train, and the bond between father and son deepened. They would leave in the morning, not returning home until late at night after a full day together. Services occupied much of the day but in between they would spend time with families in the church for meals.

During one prayer meeting led by his father, Reinhard suddenly felt as though his fingers had been pushed into an electric power socket. It seemed to him as though his hands were full of electricity and he wondered what was happening to him. While he was still trying to puzzle it all out, he heard the Holy Spirit telling him to go and lay his hands upon a certain woman who was sitting on the opposite side of the prayer meeting. Reinhard did not want to do it. His father was strict; he was still a mixture between a German officer and an old-style Pentecostal pastor. Although everyone was encouraged to pray, there was no room for anyone but the the pastor to minister and lead.

Upto this time Reinhard had done no ministering because ‘the pastor does it all’ was the accepted order of things. The very thought of of crossing over to pray for the woman on the opposite side of the prayer meeting left him petrified.

He stayed where he was. He could not do it. What would his father say if he suddenly got up and went to pray for this woman? What would his father do? What would the other people think and say? What would this woman say? He did not even know whether he was sick and in need of prayer. He was shy and he was still only a boy.

But as he stayed on his knees it seemed as though the Holy Spirit increased the power flow and he felt as if an even stronger current of electricity was surging through him. There was nothing else for it he had to do it whatever the consequences. Crouching, he crept across the floor behind the seats. He made it to the woman, unobserved by his father. He stood up and said to her, ‘I want to pray for you.’

‘All right,’ she said, ‘pray for me.’ And there and then the healing ministry of Reinhard Bonnke began.



As he put his hands upon this grown woman it was as if the current of power jolted out of him and into her. Pastor Hermann Bonnke could not help but see. ‘Reinhard, what are you doing?’

Seasoned soldiers had trembled at the voice of authority. All eyes in the prayer meeting were now focused on father and son. What had the boy done? Nothing like this had ever happened before in their prayer meeting. Pastor Bonnke, now at the scene, asked the woman, ‘What did Reinhard do to you?’ she started to shout, ‘I’ve just been healed, I’ve just been healed. Reinhard put his hand upon me and it was like an electric current that flowed through my body and I am well.’ Every- body rejoiced with her.

### **Vision of the map of Africa**

In 1957, when Reinhard was seventeen, the young people in the church of Krempe were enjoying something of a divine visitation of revival power. The blessing was not confined to the youth group but they were the ones at the centre of what was happening. They were praying night and day and the prayer meetings were alive with the presence of God. One or two outsiders were brought to Christ but the move was primarily a renewing of the Christian youth.

Pastor Hermann Bonnke was involved and this was undoubtedly fruit from his years of single-minded commitment to the church. His whole life was given over to prayer, preaching, studying the Bible, and seeking the lost. He had no other agenda. He had always encouraged the scriptural use of the gifts of the Spirit but this was something special. Many of the young people had remarkable, supernatural experiences.

It was an atmosphere of faith that Reinhard had a vision of a map of Africa. In the vision he saw a map. He recognized it as the continent of Africa. In the vision the name of the city of Johannesburg was illuminated as if God was indicating that his assignment to Africa would be there. Perhaps this was where he would break the bread of life and see it multiply, as seen in the vision by Grandma Bauszuss. In his mind this map vision of Johannesburg puzzled him because earlier he had seen an actual map of Africa and from memory had placed Johannesburg at another location. He kept the vision to himself and puzzled over it as he went home that night.

The next day in school Reinhard went to the library and looked up the Atlas of the World. Finding South Africa, he located the city of Johannesburg. It was not where his memory had recalled it. In fact, it was <sup>where the vision had</sup> shown it to him. ***You will never be a carpenter***

As Reinhard neared the age of 14, he would remain naïve for a while longer.

His father approached him not long afterward saying, “Reinhard, if you want to become a missionary to Africa you must learn a trade. Our Pentecostal denomination requires it. In poor countries, most of our missionaries have to support themselves with a local profession. The support of church offerings is seldom enough. I have found a carpentry school here in Krempe. Carpentry is a basic trade throughout the world. Wherever you go you can find work. I want you to attend this apprenticeship and begin the training that will support your calling.”

“I did not feel good about this idea. But I was an obedient son, and I went to the school. The master carpenter was a very rough man. He screamed at me for the smallest mistake. And I made many. So much about carpentry simply escaped my understanding. It was almost as bad as trying to learn English. I was totally intimidated.”

*His father returned to*

*the carpenter school and spoke with the headmaster.*

*He explained to him that Reinhard had to find a trade that he could practice as a missionary one day.*

Week after week, Reinhard attended the workshop, and the master tormented him with his angry outbursts. Finally, one day he just chased him off, screaming, “You will never be a carpenter. Get out! Get out!”

Reinhard remembers that it was an eight-kilometer ride to his home on his bicycle. All the way home he cried, thinking, he could not be a missionary because was not suited to be a carpenter. There could be no greater defeat for him.

At home he told his dad what had happened. He felt very sorry for him. His father returned to the carpenter school and spoke with the headmaster. He explained to him that Reinhard had to find a trade that he could practice as a missionary one day.

“Please try Reinhard one more time.”

The master carpenter did. After a few weeks he came to Reinhard again. He was not shouting anymore. In sympathy he said, “Reinhard, you had better look for another trade to support your African ministry. You will never be a carpenter.”

At age 15, Reinhard found an internship in Glückstadt. In this case it was a job that fit his abilities. It was at a local EDEKA Wholesale and Export with the goal that he would eventually become a professional merchant. It involved three days of the week in internship and two days in vocational school. At the end of each month, his boss would count into his hand the pay he had earned. Reinhard felt so good. He had accomplished something, and he had earned this money. At the end of each week, he took his money home and put it into a jar that he kept in his bedroom. It began to build in volume. 10, 20, 50 deutschmarks and more. He watched it grow and began to dream of ways to spend it. **Reinhard called to full-time ministry**

Reinhard’s ministry began on Friday May 1, 1959. He was in prayer because he had received an invitation to preach for the summer in Berlin. His father had not allowed him to preach in his pulpit but this invitation came from one of Reinhard’s former Sunday School teachers, Marion Franz. She and her husband Eduard had been led by the Spirit to work with East German refugees in Berlin. The Berlin wall had not yet been constructed and 2 million fellow Germans had fled the Soviet lifestyle, seeking a better life in the west. Their conditions were horrible.

When Eduard and Marion described their work with the Berlin Refugee Mission, all of the oppression of Reinhard’s years in the Danish prison camp came flooding back to him. These memories were transformed into a godly compassion for these lost refugees. At 19 years of age Reinhard went before the Lord in prayer and God spoke clearly to him, calling him then and there to full-time service.

Reinhard immediately began to raise support for the mission, which would last for the summer months. But for some reason my efforts seemed to stumble. The funds necessary for him to make this trip were simply not coming together. He presented himself to various Pentecostal groups in the region, requesting their help. The help he received was meager. It seemed he could more readily raise train fare to preach in Tostedt than to arouse compassion for lost refugees in

### West Berlin. **Meeting with George Jeffreys**

In 1961 Reinhard graduated from a Bible college in Swansea when he was 21 years old. As he neared the end of his time, he wrote his father, asking if he could perform a practicum under his leadership in Krempe. In the meantime their family had moved there. The church had built an apartment in the second story of the meeting house. His mother and father were both living there and the train commute was a thing of the past. Serving with his father would allow him to be exposed to the realities of actual church ministry before he assumed such duties for himself. It was a required period of testing before ordination and licensing within the German Pentecostal church, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Christengemeinden in Deutschland, or ACD, as they called it (in 1982 it became the Bund Freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden KdöR / BFP). His father was delighted by his son's request and immediately agreed to it.

*After finishing school in Swansea, Reinhard*

Furthermore, his father informed him that the VM, Velberter missions board, which was the mission works of the ACD, would require that he follow the practicum with two years of pastoring

*said his goodbyes. Lifelong relationships were begun there at the school in Wales.*

a church before they would consider a missions appointment to South Africa. He told him that he would welcome him to do this pastoring also at

his church. This sounded like his best opportunity to follow his calling, so the plan was set.

After finishing school in Swansea, Reinhard said his goodbyes. Life - long relationships were begun there at the school in Wales. The fellowship, the tests of faith, and the wonderful Bible classes – these had now become forever a part of him and would follow him wherever he went. Furthermore, his English had become passable.

The train from Swansea took Reinhard Bonnke to London where he had a few hours to spare before the next stage of his journey to the overnight ferry. He was told the time-honoured way of seeing London was by the world-famous, red London buses. Having enough money for a run-about ticket, he travelled the streets of the capital, changing buses at random. He was free, he was going home, and life and London looked wonderful from the top deck of a double-decker bus.

After an hour or two he needed exercise, so he alighted at the next stop and strolled down the road, with little idea where he was except that he was still within the bus routes of London. At length, he arrived at a place called Clapham Commons, a large park in a lovely residential section of the city. With no specific destination in mind, he decided to stretch his legs. He began walking through the surrounding neighborhood totally at random. All of a sudden he stopped because he saw a blue nameplate in front of a house. On that nameplate he read, “George Jeffreys.”

Only a few weeks earlier, he had been browsing through the books in the college library when he chanced upon *Healing Rays* by George Jeffreys. His interest was quickly aroused as he scanned through the contents. It was a balanced scriptural exposition on the subject of divine healing. The final chapter was full of testimonies of miracles in the ministry of George Jeffreys which were witnessed by huge congregations in the largest congregations throughout British Isles. The founder and leader of Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, he had clearly been a great anointed evangelist.

Reinhard had been absorbed, but he noted that the miracles mostly occurred in the 1920s. He presumed that this great evangelist must be dead, and

when he left college, George Jeffreys had been far from his thoughts.

“I thought to myself, could this be the great George Jeffreys who had founded the Elim Pentecostal Churches in Ireland and England? I had read much about him. He had been a great firebrand evangelist who had traveled across the world preaching to overflow crowds in some of the largest venues. Miraculous signs and wonders had accompanied his preaching. I recalled that 10,000 had been converted in his historic Birmingham crusade. 14,000 had responded during a crusade in Switzerland. He was known to many as the greatest evangelist Britain had produced after George Whitfield and John Wesley. My heart pounded with anticipation to think that of all the residences in London I might have stumbled upon, I had stumbled upon his.

I paused at the gate. Should I go in and introduce myself? I felt almost compelled to do it. But who was I to do such a thing? I felt a spiritual and natural link with this man. As with so many other British revival leaders, Jeffreys had been born in Wales to a miner’s family. He had been a teenager during the great Welsh Revival of 1904 and 1905, and for him, the fire had never gone out. What especially linked him to me was that he had also ridden the tide of the Pentecostal revival

*He told George that* that followed from Azusa Street and onward. He had embraced both *had a call of God on revivals.”*

*his life to be an evangelist and to preach the gospel*

*in Africa.*

Reinhard walked through the front garden gate and climbed the porch, pausing at the door. There he rang the bell. A lady opened the door.

“Pardon my intrusion, ma’am. Does the George Jeffreys live here who was that famous firebrand evangelist I have heard so much about?”

“Yes, he does.”

“May I please see him?”

“No. Under no circumstances.”

She had hardly said no when Reinhard heard a deep voice from within the house say, “Let the young man come in.”

Reinhard squeezed past that lady in a heartbeat and into the house. As his eyes adjusted to the dim light, he saw George coming slowly down a staircase, holding it unsteadily as he made his way toward him. As he reached the landing, Reinhard stepped forward, took his hand, and introduced himself. He told George that had a call of God on his life to be an evangelist and to preach the gospel in Africa. That he had been to college in Swansea and was now returning home to Germany.

He was led into one of the rooms, and invited to sit down. George Jeffreys sat down opposite him on a coach and began to ask Reinhard lots of questions about himself. The fact that Reinhard had been at college in Wales helped open the conversation with this Welsh preacher whose roots were in the Great Revival there in 1904, and the conversation ignited with the fire of a spiritual rapport which obliterated the generation gap. It was a meeting of two kindred souls with a mutual passion for evangelism. One who was reckoned by many to be the greatest British evangelist of this century, who knew he was coming to the end of his life. The other an eager young man who knew that God had given him the ministry of an evangelist, taking up the mantle of his ministry.

All of a sudden, George took Reinhard by the shoulders and fell to his knees, pulling him to the floor with him. He placed his hands on him head and began to bless him as a father blesses a son, as Abraham blessed Isaac, who blessed Jacob, and on and on. The room seemed to light up with the glory of God as he poured out his prayer over Reinhard.

“I was dazed by that glory. I do not remember the words with which he blessed me, but I do remember their effect. My body felt electrified, tingling with divine energy.”

After about a half hour George finished. Reinhard stood up and helped him to his feet. He seemed very frail. They said goodbye.

The lady came and escorted him away. He could hardly stand. Nor could Reinhard, for different reasons. Reinhard stumbled from his house and staggered back toward Clapham Commons like a drunken man. There, with his head spinning, he waited for a bus to carry him on his way to the railway station and travelled back via Belgium to <sup>his home in Germany.</sup> **George Jeffreys is dead**

Reinhard arrived at home and began the process of serving with his father in Krempe. He had been home for just a few months short of his 22nd birthday, when one day his father said to him, “Son, did you hear the sad news?”

“No, what news?”

“George Jeffreys died in London.”

“George Jeffreys! That’s impossible, Father. I just saw him. I met him.”

And then I told him the story of my meeting with him in London.

He died on January 26, 1962. **The tent evangelist**

After a few weeks of serving the practicum, Reinhard and his father climbed into the Volkswagen and traveled north to the town of Rendsburg for a regional pastor’s conference. It was near the Pöppendorf prison camp where they had first been reunited as a family after the war. Along the way they visited the old camp and recalled the difficulties of those times. His father did not want to spend much time there. The first thing Reinhard noticed was the absence of that ugly barbed wire. Vegetation grew where once fear and misery ruled.

Then, on to Rendsburg. During the pastor’s meeting, the host, Reverend Franz Wegner approached Reinhard with some startling news. “Every year in summer,” he said, “we have a tent revival here. I have been praying about it, and the Holy Spirit tells me that you, Reinhard, are to be our tent evangelist this year.”

Reinhard and his father were both amazed. Pastor Wegner was one of the senior clergymen in the ACD. He was well respected.

“I have just come from Bible College and don’t have any experience,” I said. “I am merely doing my practicum at this time.”

“I know that. I have also heard that you are called of God. In fact, it is known that your calling is the call to be an evangelist. This is what we need here in Rendsburg. An evangelist.”

“How long do the tent meetings last?”

“As long as you need to get the message out. We will not put a limit on your sermons.”



“No, I mean, how many days will the meetings continue?”

“Three weeks. Sunday morning services included.”

I hardly felt ready for this. It seemed impossible. “So, the Holy Spirit has spoken to you?” I asked.

“He has.”

“Well, I am confident that if He has spoken to you He will also speak to me. I will pray about it.”

“OK. You pray, Reinhard, and then call me,” he said cheerily.

Back in Krempe Reinhard knelt at his bedside. “Father, should I accept this invitation?” Expecting to hear nothing, I imagined that I would simply say to Pastor Wegner, “God has not spoken, therefore I cannot accept.”

The opposite happened. Suddenly, these words were burned into his heart. Go, and twelve baskets full shall remain!

Reinhard immediately knew this answer had not come from my own mind. It was not the answer he sought. Furthermore, it was a profound statement, the kind that had the familiar imprint of the Holy Spirit on it. God was stirring up the vision Grandma Bauszuss had seen when he was ten. She had seen him distributing a loaf of bread to a large crowd. The loaf continued to grow. This scene had been inspired by the gospel accounts of the feeding of the 5,000.

Without hesitation, Reinhard called Pastor Wegner. “The Lord has spoken to me,” I said. “I will come and preach in your tent meetings.”

He began to prepare in prayer and Bible study. He reviewed the dozen sermon outlines he had made in Bible school. That’s when he noticed that he did not have a dozen sermons. He really had just one. One sermon presented in a dozen disguises. Seeing this for the first time made him feel even more inadequate.

*He began to prepare in prayer and Bible study. He reviewed the dozen sermon outlines he had made in Bible school. That’s when he noticed that he did not have a dozen sermons.*

When the day of the meeting in Rendsburg arrived, Reinhard drove his Volkswagen northward from Krempe. It was a lovely spring day, and the trees were blossoming. The fragrance of apple and cherry blooms filled the air.

Reinhard arrived in Rendsburg early. The tent had been set up at the huge Viehmarkt Square, and a woman was seated in a chair at the main entrance. The flaps were open. He parked his Beetle and approached her, smiling, looking inside. Feeling a bit shy, he did not introduce himself. He looked at the rows of chairs set up beneath the canvas and felt a nervous knot in his stomach.

“If I may ask a question. How many seats are in the tent?”

“There are 250 chairs.”

“How many people do you think will show up?”

The woman sighed wearily and shook her head. Her attitude struck a familiar chord with Reinhard. For a moment Reinhard thought she might say, I ought to give you a good hiding right now, young man, and get it over with, as his mother had said to him so often in his younger years. But then, he quieted his thoughts, realizing that his mind was taunting him with old memories. He was not a naughty boy anymore. He was called to be the evangelist here in Rendsburg. There were 250 seats in that tent for the hearing of the gospel.

“Well,” the woman continued, lowering her voice in a confidential tone, “I’ll tell you the truth. Our pastor has put us on a limb. He went against the board of elders and invited some young evangelist who isn’t even dry behind the ears to be our preacher this year. I won’t be surprised if we don’t fold the tent and go home early.”

Reinhard returned quickly to his car, feeling suddenly anxious and unbalanced. That woman had no idea the power of her words to turn his confidence into mush.

“He drove out of town to a secluded spot on the Nord Ostsee Kanal, a man-made waterway that crossed the peninsula between the Baltic and North Seas. I stopped the car, fixing the hand brake. “Oh, Lord,” I prayed. “Help

me, help me, help me. How can I possibly go on if You do not rescue me now?"

As Reinhard prayed and talked to God about it, he began to feel peace. *In the front row of the audience Reinhard's*

It is the kind of peace that only comes from Him. His thoughts returned to the truth. He had not come to Rendsburg because he was barely out of Bible college and hardly dry behind the ears. He was here because the Holy Spirit had spoken to Pastor Wegner. He had also spoken clearly to him.

*eyes met the eyes of Mrs.*

*Meyer who had spoken to me earlier outside the tent. She gasped and her hands flew to her cheeks.*

He stayed in this place of faith and peace and prayed until the time for the start of the first service. When Reinhard arrived at the tent it was full. Perhaps the people had come out of curiosity to see how the young preacher would fail. Maybe they thought it would be entertaining.

Pastor Wegner met him outside. He was very excited and led him to the platform. The music was beginning. He sat down and looked out over the crowd. Pastor Wegner stood and announced that evangelist Reinhard Bonnke had arrived and would be our crusade evangelist tonight.

In the front row of the audience Reinhard's eyes met the eyes of Mrs. Meyer who had spoken to me earlier outside the tent. She gasped and her hands flew to her cheeks. Her face turned red and she bowed her head low in shame and embarrassment. But it was totally unnecessary. He was already seeing the humor in it. Later, this became a good story for both of us to repeat.

"When I stood to preach, I opened my Bible to a redemption scripture. As I read, I saw in my mind what I might describe as the shape of the gospel.

My preaching did not depend upon notes. My brain visualized the path for my words to follow. God put an outline there, and I simply filled in the outline with words and ideas and scriptures as they flowed into my mind. It was the ABCs of the gospel that came out of my mouth. It was the gift of the evangelist at work. In the hearts of the people, the Holy Spirit did His work. Many raised their hands for salvation in that service and in every service that followed.”

### ***I would never leave Germany***

As the meetings continued Reinhard began to notice a pretty girl in the audience. She seemed very engaged in the meetings, and he sensed she was a godly person. The call to Africa was still uppermost in his heart and he knew that if ever he did find a wife she must be willing to go to Africa.

This drew him to her even more and his interest became strong. He found himself making excuses to be near her and to have conversation with her after the meetings. Others were attracted to her as well because she had a very pleasant personality. He could not help but wonder if such an attractive girl might be a lifelong match for him.

One day they were speaking of spiritual things. Reinhard asked her the question that was most on his mind. “If God called you to Africa, would you go?”

“No,” she replied immediately. “Never. I would never leave Germany.”

His interest in her died on the spot. No longer did he seek to be near her or to have conversation with her. This incident revealed to him that he was seriously seeking a wife who would share his calling. He had no interest in dating as a pastime. His heart was set on Africa, and he had no time for anything that would distract from that purpose.

### ***Might such a girl be God’s choice for me?***

Reinhard began to receive offers to serve his two-year vicariate beyond Krempe, some of which came from some of the largest churches in the denomination. For a young man his age, this was unheard of. His father was

again taken aback at this early success. It placed more strain on their relationship, and forced him to think more deeply about how and where he would pastor for the required two years. The more he thought about it, the more he began to consider that he should accept none of these fine offers. Nor would he serve in Krempe. Not only did he not want his father to feel slighted, but he did not want his brothers to think that he was trying to take Martin's place as

their father's successor.

*Reinhard did not want this complication to continue when he began his work as a pastor. Being married to a woman who shared his calling would be a great blessing and a great relief of mind.*

Instead of a choice between Krempe and one of the larger churches, Reinhard began to see a third way. He felt he should make a completely new mark. Since evangelism was his calling, he could go where no church existed. He could see people converted and after two years leave a brandnew church behind when he left for

Africa. He began to make a mental checklist of possible cities where he could accomplish this kind of plan.

Also, as he thought about being a pastor for two years, he thought about the extra challenge it would create being unmarried. When preaching in other churches, he found himself receiving too much attention from women who wanted to introduce him to their eligible daughters. This could distract him from a full focus on evangelism. He did not want this complication to continue when he began his work as a pastor. Being married to a woman who shared his calling would be a great blessing and a great relief of mind.

At that time, him and his father escorted some of our young people to a musical youth rally held in Neumünster. All of the church youth from the region sent musical groups to represent them at this rally in a kind of talent contest.

While there, a beautiful mandolin player caught his eye. She never once looked his way, but he had a feeling she saw his every move. "How could I

know that? Well, actually, I didn't know that. I just wanted it to be true so badly that I imagined it was so. I certainly saw her every move, even though I pretended not to. I watched her all evening from the corner of my eye, not wanting to be obvious. If I was so smitten by her, oh how I wanted her to be smitten by me, too! But as the night wore on, I began to doubt that she knew I existed. Not once did I have the satisfaction of receiving even a sideways glance. The challenge of gaining her attention grew to the sky."

During the service she occasionally shared secrets with another girl from Marne. Boys never did things like that. She cupped her hand and whispered into her friend's ear. Suddenly, Reinhard wanted to be the subject of that secret she shared. He wanted to be special to her in that way. Every move this beautiful young musician made ignited his imagination with a greater desire to know her.

At last, it was announced that the musical group from Marne would perform. She stood with her friend and walked to the platform. Now, Reinhard knew where to find her. The city of Marne was some 50 miles to the north of Krempe on the North Sea coast. Already the scheming began.

From the platform she plucked the mandolin strings and they began to vibrate, creating a lovely melody. The girls began to harmonize. Soon I saw a look of consternation cross their features. Something was wrong. As in most musical performances, the musicians should never betray that anything is wrong. Part of the challenge of performing is to make sure the audience is at ease. But the problem they faced was insurmountable. The limits of their vocal range would not allow them to reach the song's climax. They stopped.

"I am sorry," the mandolin player said. "I set the key too high. We will have to start again."

She began to strum the introduction again, playing in the adjusted key, and the song was performed beautifully. Any hope of placing in the contest, however, was lost.

Reinhard was so impressed with her grace. She had spoken with great poise and dignity in an embarrassing situation. The entire contest was at stake,

but she had handled it as if nothing was lost. It made her natural beauty twice as appealing to him. He began a conversation with God.

“Might such a girl be His choice for me? Certainly, to follow His calling to Africa I would need a wife and mother with her kind of character.”

Afterward, Reinhard was too shy to approach her. He asked others, “Who is that girl from Marne who sang and played the mandolin?”

“That is Anni Sülzle,” He was told. *Lord, how can I connect with that girl?*

He loved her name from the moment he heard it. He forgot the names of others but never that one.

“I prayed, Lord, how can I connect with that girl? I so much want to talk to her.”

Reinhard had didn't even wait for God to answer his prayer but rather decided to take matters into his own hands that night and did something totally manipulative. Perhaps later, he suffered uncertainty because of it. He went to Anni's pastor from Marne with a suggestion. He told him he was doing a practicum at his father's church in Krempe, and he offered to swap pulpits with him. He liked the idea, and that is how he got to Marne and finally met Anni.

When Reinhard preached there, he was introduced to her, and they had a good conversation after the meeting. He learned that she had been born in Romania into a family of eight children. Her family had moved to Marne after suffering terribly during the war. They lived a farm life and always had plenty of food on the table. Friends and guests were made welcome.

She had become a Christian at the local Sunday School, and from an early age wanted to train as a nurse so that she could go to the mission field. Meanwhile, determined to acquire skills, she taught herself shorthand and typing, and learned the mandolin. She always dreamed of marrying a missionary, and her friendship with Reinhard quickly blossomed!

*Reinhard wrote to Reinhard told her that he would like to see her again. She said she Anni and suggested that they put their relationship on ice for a time. She graciously understood and agreed. She was busy with school and with preparation for a life in missions work.*

might be able to come visit him in Krempe on her way to the ACD Bible College. He was very pleased to learn that she was planning to attend the German Pentecostal School.

He was relieved. He did not want to marry another preacher. What he sought was a wife, a helper, and a mother for his children. But of course, a mother with a missionary's heart

would be essential to his calling. Africa lay ahead. He placed it before the Lord again, reminding Him that the wrong wife could put all of it at risk. Reinhard asked Him to make it clear to him if Anni was the one He would choose for him to marry. *Anni is My choice for you*

Meanwhile, his father campaigned against it. He said that Anni was no match for his son. She was not well educated enough. In this, perhaps he thought too highly of the education Reinhard had received in Wales. But his objections did not really impact his thinking about her. He had to deal with his own doubts. Perhaps he had been presumptuous to act on his feelings in their first meeting, not waiting for a clear signal from God.

Reinhard wrote to Anni and suggested that they put their relationship on ice for a time. She graciously understood and agreed. She was busy with school and with preparation for a life in missions work.

After that, he began to look seriously for another candidate. As he traveled around in preaching engagements, there were lovely girls everywhere. But to connect meaningfully with just one proper candidate was not so easy. Along the way he met another young preacher who told him about his beautiful sister. He said that his family lived in southern Germany and would welcome a visit from him if he would like to get to know her.

The visit was arranged. His sister was indeed beautiful. "We were all at dinner with the family at their house. I hoped that I was making a good impression. I thought she would make a prize for any man. Suddenly she turned to me and said, "I understand that you are the son of a poor preacher."



Nothing more needed to be said. “I thought, she should marry one of my brothers. They are of the same mind. My attraction for this lovely girl vanished. My interest could not have been resurrected with a deep channel dredge. I would have departed immediately except I had to stay and endure the rest of the planned visit. In the end, I said my polite thank-you for the hospitality and said goodbye. I could not wait to return home and renew my correspondence with Anni.”

As Reinhard continued to pray about it, he felt the Lord saying to him, “Anni is My choice for you.” **Pastor Reinhard Bonnke**

After the Rendsburg campaign Reinhard was kept very busy conducting evangelistic campaigns and preaching. Within two years the BFP, the German Pentecostal Fellowship of Churches, told him that they were now ready to ordain him as one of their ministers. Reinhard felt that this was the time for him to launch out and establish his own ministry in preparation for the day when he would leave for Africa. He learned that there was a small city called Flemsburg in the north of Germany, situated on the border with Denmark, which had no Pentecostal church. He organised a team of young people, borrowed a tent, and planned a pioneer campaign with a view to planting a church there.

The campaign was planned to last for six weeks. A friend would preach the first three weeks, and he the last three. He did not know a single person in that place before the campaign. With Hermann’s and Meta’s blessing he knew that this was the time for him to leave home, and in 1964 he moved to Flemsburg before the campaign commenced. The campaign was a success; people were saved and healed and a lot of interest was aroused. They finished with a nucleus of fifty people (many of them new believers) who were definitely interested in becoming part of a new church. In the context of the 1960s in Germany it was an excellent start.



**Anni and Bonnke**

The new problem was to find suitable premises for the fledgling church, but although he searched, he could find nothing. Finally, in despair, he prayed, 'Lord you must show me where,' and then drove his Volkswagen around Flemsburg, praying as he went. Among other things the city had been famous as a centre of the rum-making trade. He passed an old five-storey building which was shuttered up and empty, but it was a good site in the centre and he felt he should investigate. Reinhard found an open door and climbed the stairs to a flat on the top floor occupied by someone who could answer his questions. The premises, which used to be the headquarters of a rum factory, had been vacated prior to demolition to make way for a new shopping centre. This, however, was probably not going to happen for a year or so, and the agent handling it was located for some thirty miles away. With a sense of expectation he drove off to find the agent who turned out to be a man in a wheelchair. The course of the

*Reinhard could envision* conversation quickly switched to the most important subject in the *75 people fitting easily*

*into the large empty main room. He also saw two small anterooms along one wall.*

world-Jesus and salvation. Afterwards the agent told him he could use the building during the interim period before the demolition and then asked, 'How much rent can you pay?'

“I will rent it to you.” “I don’t have much money. We are a new congregation and still small. How much would you need?”

“Oh, about 1,200 deutschmarks per month.”

This was a price far too high for my little congregation to pay. “What can you pay?” he continued.

“250,” I said, somewhat sheepishly, realizing that we were worlds apart on price.

“It’s yours,” he said smiling. He leaned forward in his wheelchair, his hand extended.

“There is something else,” Reinhard said.

“It is very cold here in the winter, and I will need to heat the place. How much will that cost?”

“Oh, don’t worry about that. We have to heat the building anyway. I will just say that it’s included in the rent.”

It had a large, empty main room. Reinhard could envision 75 people fitting easily into the large empty main room. He also saw two small anterooms along one wall. One was empty; the other contained a small, workers’ kitchen. Anni and him could use this for an apartment.

The contract was signed with lots of willing help in cleaning and painting they were able to move in after the end of the tent campaign.

### ***Anni, will you marry me?***

Reinhard arranged to come see her at the Bible College. However, they had a rule that no boy could meet a girl on campus. They met outside the campus near a grove of trees. Taking a picnic lunch, they walked together. As they walked, Reinhard took her hand. He began to know in his heart that Anni was the one for him. They were bonding, and I could sense that my passion for her could be lifelong.

He told her that he was almost finished with his practicum. The ACD president, Pastor Erwin Lorenz, was coming soon to conduct *Before his ordination*, Reinhard’s ordination ceremony. Immediately afterward, Reinhard *he visited her again and*

*again. In the meantime,  
he found an engagement  
ring and bought it.*

explained, he would be required to serve as a pastor for two years in order to receive a missionary appointment. Furthermore, he told her that he would not serve as a pastor in Krempe, nor in another church within the ACD. Rather,

he would seek a new city that had no Pentecostal church, and establish a congregation there for the required two years.

She did not show a trace of fear or uncertainty about how this would be done. She had no questions about the difficulties of such a pioneering effort. Her eyes sparkled as she talked with him about it, and he could see that she loved the very idea.

Before his ordination, he visited her again and again. In the meantime, he found an engagement ring and bought it.

“Anni, will you marry me?”

“Yes.”

Immediately, Reinhard felt the controlling bonds to Hermann and Meta Bonnke slip from his shoulders. In their place, a new bond with his life partner took hold. He and Anni were together now, as one before the Lord. He could hardly wait to marry her and make a place to call our own. His father had not agreed with him on many things through the

years. He had not agreed on his calling to Africa. Nor on his timing. Nor on his choice to marry Anni. On the day of their wedding, he had changed his mind. He was more than agreeing with him. He was as much as admitting that his judgment of his son’s choice of Anni, and of many other of his opinions, had been wrong. And it was not just that they had a difference of opinion. Nor was it that Reinhard simply had a mind of his own. In this sermon text taken from John 2:5, he explained that he had heard from God, and this had made all the difference. His father in his wedding sermon wanted to bow to that higher voice in Reinhard’s life. Whatsoever he saith

unto you, do it. This was a most priceless gift from him to Reinhard and Anni.

The place they began their married life was Flensburg. The name of this city came to Reinhard as a strong impression during a time of <sup>prayer</sup>. ***God called me to South Africa***

Reinhard and Anni huddled together after the birth of their son, KaiUwe. A half dozen members of the Velberter Missions Board looked at them from across a long table. They were the official missions arm of the ACD in Germany. They worked under the auspices of the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa. The AFM provided training and guidance and the ACD provided the financial support to German workers who worked there. That was the arrangement. As they waited in the room bare light fixtures dangled from electrical cords high above them providing illumination.

“I suppose the white light in the white room was a fitting atmosphere for an interrogation. To us, it seemed a bit like an inquisition.”

“You say you were called to Africa when you were just ten years old?”

“That is correct.”

“Africa is a huge continent with many nations.” Reinhard nodded.

“So why do you insist that you cannot go to Zambia?” one of the members asked. “The AFM can provide a position for you in Zambia.”

“It is very simple,” Reinhard answered, “A few years after God called me to Africa He called me to South Africa, very specifically. In a prayer meeting I received a vision of the city of Johannesburg on a map. I did



**Reinhard and Anni Bonnke on the wedding in 1964**

not know where the city actually belonged on the map. When I later checked a world atlas, I found that the vision had been correct. God knows His geography. He called me to the country of South Africa.”

“But the AFM has no openings in South Africa.”

“I do not need an opening. I will gladly pioneer a new work from the converts God gives me, as I did in Flensburg.”

“That would be wonderful, but we have no way to provide oversight if you do not go to Zambia.”

“Then, what am I to do with my calling?”

“We can offer you Zambia. It is south of the equator, as close to South Africa as we can get. Besides, it is a beautiful country. The great Victoria Falls are there on the Zambezi River. You could start there and later move to South Africa, if that is still your heart’s desire.”

“Oh, no, South Africa is not my heart’s desire,” I said. “It is the place God has called me. That is an important difference.”



**Leaving for Durban, South Africa. This was to be their mission transport and whilst on outreach, their accomodation too.**

### **Finally in Africa**

For such a long interview Reinhard stuck to his guns about his call to South Africa. Eventually, they agreed to what he was telling them. He would serve a South African apprenticeship for a year under an AFM minister named Reverend Stephanus Spies. His work was anchored in Ermelo in the Eastern Transvaal. His sphere of ministry covered the Transvaal region, and extended into Swaziland. When the ACD, the AFM, and Reverend Spies all agreed to the plan, he felt that God had given him great favor. Most of all, he was so very pleased that they had honored His call given to him in the childhood vision. They

*Reinhard had* would be working on the edge of Johannesburg.  
*received scant instructions from Reverend Spies that*

*they would be met in Durban by a man named du Toit, a French name.*

In 1967 Reinhard and Anni prepared to leave. “Saying goodbye to our friends, family, and church in Germany had not been difficult. Our eyes had been set on this day since we first met, and we had been saying goodbye, in effect, to everyone for years.”

They were so excited to finally be going.

For several days they continued down the eastern coast of Africa, sailing through the Mozambique Channel between the African mainland and Madagascar. The voyage grew long, and Reinhard had brought along an accordion. He began to sit in a deck chair and teach himself to play it as Anni lay in the infirmary and the hours wore on. By the time they arrived at their destination he had become quite accomplished.

They emerged again into the waters of the Indian Ocean near the southern tip of Africa and cruised toward their berth in the harbor of Durban. At last, Anni was able to get out of bed and walk. Perhaps she was inspired by anticipation of soon being able to place her feet on solid ground. The worst of her ordeal was over.

Reinhard had received scant instructions from Reverend Spies that they would be met in Durban by a man named du Toit, a French name. That is all he knew – du Toit. As they approached the docks he could see more than a thousand people waiting to greet passengers. Out of that great crowd, how would he ever find du Toit?

Coming down the gangway Reinhard had an inspiration. His eyes swept the crowd, and he shouted to the top of his lungs, “Hallelujah!” Sure enough, out of the crowd one voice shouted back, “Hallelujah!” He was a white man, which disappointed him. He had come expecting to be met by an African. Very few black people were in the crowd waiting to greet their ship.

Reinhard held Anni’s arm as they left the gangway and felt the dock beneath their feet. She held little Kai-Uwe in her arms and began to gain new strength with each step on solid footing.

When they approached the man who had returned his “Hallelujah,” He extended his hand. “du Toit, I presume?”

He laughed heartily, recognizing the famous line from the meeting in Africa between Stanley and Livingstone. He took his hand. They took up an extended temporary residence with Reverend Stephanus Spies and his wife Cecilia in Ermelo. They were very kind and provided well for them until



they were able to move out on their own, where their second child Gabriele was born.

They lived in the designated white part of the city. Ermelo also had a town for blacks. The Apostolic Faith Mission had church buildings in both the white and black areas. The congregations worshipped separately.

Reverend Spies also told him that he conducted preaching missions to the blacks in outlying areas. *Do not shake hands with the black people*

The year soon turned out to be the toughest and most frustrating of Reinhard's life. He was required to submit to the standard missionary constitution which meant he had to study under a local pastor to learn about the country and customs before being sent out. The restrictions placed upon him were trivial. He was not even allowed to preach and the AFM also wanted him to be ordained again as one of their ministers.

But even this was nothing compared with finding himself confronted with the apartheid system at first hand. Reinhard and Anni had heard about apartheid, but seeing it in operation shocked them deeply.

*'Brother Spies, if this*  
Reverend Spies told Reinhard, 'When you preach to the black people you do not call them brothers and sisters.'

Reinhard could not believe his ears. 'Then what am I supposed to call them?' he asked. 'Call them men and women,' Spies replied.

'Brother Spies, if this gospel does not make them and us brothers and sisters in Christ, I do not wish to preach the gospel any more,' was Reinhard's reply. He was further appalled when Reverend Spies instructed him, 'Do not shake hands with the black people.'

*gospel does not make*

*them and us brothers and sisters in Christ, I do not wish to preach*

*the gospel any more,'*

Reinhard said, ‘How can you win a soul then? What would have happened to us if Jesus had come into this world with that attitude?’

Reinhard found himself in almost ceaseless conflict with his ‘tutor’ who was constantly demanding an explanation for various things he had done. This so-called year of probation was one in which he died

a thousand deaths. Reinhard was not a political person at all, but he could respect political systems. When it came to the gospel, however, he refused to compromise. **Reinhard ministers in Lesotho**

In the meantime, Reinhard and Anni found a house they could afford to rent at 8 Ennis Street, and they moved into it. Their first challenge was to find furniture. They looked at beds and found the prices far too high. Off to one side in the store, they saw some metal bed frames that were well within their budget. They would work just fine.

When at last he fulfilled his year of probation, what a relief it was to be able to exercise his God-given ministry. He was to continue working with the AFM, while receiving his financial support from the BFP in Germany. As he prayerfully considered the future, his attention was turned to Lesotho which used to be the old British Protectorate of Basutoland. Reinhard was certain this was where the Lord was leading him, and events confirmed the rightness of this decision. He and his family therefore moved temporarily to Ladybrand in the Orange Free State just over the border, being unable to find housing in Lesotho itself.

Here they found themselves in an area with a large population of Africans, the people they loved. This was closer to their hearts and Reinhard started to hold evangelistic meetings. This was why he had come to Africa! Reinhard loved the black people and they responded. *Often Reinhard would drive as far*

In 1968, Reinhard moved his family to Ladybrand, a small settlement on the very border of the kingdom. Shortly after moving there,

*as his van would go and be forced to walk or ride a*

*horse or mule to Anni delivered their third child, their second daughter, Susanne Herta Bonnke. With another resounding Hallelujah Chorus, their family* *reach a particular* *village.* looked forward to serving in Lesotho as a true missionary family.

“I began to travel in my Volkswagen to see the country for myself. It is no bigger than the state of Maryland, but because of its natural beauty, it is called the Switzerland of South Africa.”

Nearly all of Lesotho’s 1,200 miles of road were unpaved. The high country had rocky, narrow trails that ate missionary vehicles for breakfast. Reinhard traveled almost half a day. When he arrived at the church in Lesotho, the walls were made of mud roof of straw and the walls were also made of mud. Having traveled half a day, he found there 5 people to preach to and none of them wanted to get saved. It broke his heart and he started to cry out to God. “Lord, this is not the gospel of the glory of God that I expected to see. It breaks my heart to preach to people who don’t respond after such an effort.”

Often Reinhard would drive as far as his van would go and be forced to walk or ride a horse or mule to reach a particular village. An average Basuto village sheltered no more than 250 souls.

Reinhard was another missionary toiling away under the scorching African sun. People got saved, people got baptized, but ministry was one long continuous struggle. People kept saying Lesotho was a difficult place for the gospel.

“I agreed with them heartily, so I kept repeating that. Little did I realize that I was snaring myself with those words. I prayed earnestly for a major breakthrough but became even more convinced that this place is too difficult. When fifty people were at a service, I thought the Great Outpouring had begun!”

Deep inside, however, he longed for something bigger and greater, something to bring resounding praise to God, something that would shake people out of their lethargy and demonstrate that Jesus is alive; something that would cause men and women to come to the Savior in large numbers. With this in mind, he invited a well-known evangelist with an anointed healing ministry to preach at two services.

It was not long before his outstanding ability in the pulpit was realised, resulting in a flow of invitations to minister in many of the white

churches in South Africa. In fact the pastor of one of the biggest churches was about to retire and he invited Reinhard to take over. To many this would be a tempting offer indeed.

He replied, 'Brother, if I wanted to preach to white people there are plenty home in Germany. I did not come to Africa for the white people. I came for the black people. God sent me to the black people and

I want to go where nobody else wants to go.'

### **Printing and distribution of Gospel literature**

Although he was constantly preaching the gospel in the surrounding townships and villages, it was still not enough for Reinhard and next he designed and wrote a Bible correspondence course. In five basic lessons, he had it translated into Sesotho and later into other languages. It was an immediate success and thousands were soon enrolled. He recruited people to mark the papers and those who completed the course received a certificate with a red seal upon it.

*At its peak some 50,000 people were taking the course. Having got his printer from Germany he was soon making full use of it. He started producing a high quality, evangelistic magazine called the Apostolic Message.*

Its success led to the purchase of a small offset printing press from a friend in the Orange Free State. The course continued to prosper and soon a bigger press was needed to cope with the printing involved. Before long he was asking his friends in Germany to send him a printer to handle the press, and a volunteer was dispatched. All of this ultimately resulted in the purchase of a big press which was put in the garage. At its peak some 50,000 people were taking the course. Having

got his printer from Germany he was soon making full use of it. He started producing a high quality, evangelistic magazine called the Apostolic Message.

His next inspiration was bicycle evangelism. Many of the men in his church were unemployed with no prospect of a job and he saw how he could help them at the same time as harnessing their potential to spread the gospel.

He gathered them together and told them of his venture. Those who were willing would have the use of a bicycle which would be fitted with a strong, lockable box. They would be sent around the whole region systematically from house to house, handing out the magazine free and selling low cost hymn books and Bibles, for Reinhard had discovered that one of the hymn books was a ready seller and he would train those who were out of work to be both soul-winners and salesmen-and pay commission on all their sales.

They jumped at the opportunity. At first there were five of them, then ten, then as many as thirty. He found people to give money to purchase the bicycles and off went this little army of mobile colporteurs for Christ. They were backed up by prayer and they returned with joy to share wonderful stories of selling books and winning souls. They were soon earning twice the normal wage. As a result of that experience some of them became soul-winners and ultimately pastors.

The African ministry of Reinhard Bonnke was beginning to take shape, but more opposition awaited him. Not everyone was happy with his success.



**Part of the 100-strong Bible Bicycle force that distributed literature to thousands of homes throughout Soweto, South Africa**

All these activities: the colporteurs on their bicycle (and one or two on horseback for some of the mountainous areas); the printing press and the new gospel magazine; the Bible correspondence course; the Bible School; the new church; all dovetailed together to form a constant programme of aggressive evangelism and training. It was a seedbed for the future and provided Reinhard with invaluable experience. It worked like clockwork. The colporteurs returned every few weeks to replenish their stocks of literature, pay in their takings and receive their commission. Many people were won for Christ in two years virtually the whole country of Lesotho was covered.

### **Dolphine's story**

In 1970, still a struggling young missionary in Lesotho, Reinhard. Sometimes only five people would show up to hear him preach.

Rather than labor in an empty room, he went where the people were. In the capital city of Maseru, where he lived, he would preach four times a day in the markets, at bus stops, and in schools. This story took place during that early time of Reinhard's ministry.

Dolphin Monese was a bright young student in Maseru. He had a big, happy smile and flashing brown eyes. But when he argued, his brows would knit and his jaw would clench. He looked like he took his arguments very seriously.

Dolphin studied the teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses. He liked the way they attacked the Christian Church. The Church in the Kingdom of Lesotho had become weak and ineffective. Rather than follow a dead Christian religion, Dolphin attacked it. That was his way. In Maseru, he had become a Jehovah's Witness champion. *Dolphin wanted to*

*take a closer look*, He walked to school each day with a *especially since the blind* group of friends. They would discuss *beggar was a white man*. the great issues of life, and he would

impress them with his knowledge.  
One day, as they walked along, they

saw a blind man at a bus stop playing a piano-accordion for money. Dolphin

*But as he came close, Dolphin could see that the man was not blind and was not a beggar.*

wanted to take a closer look, especially since the blind beggar was a white man. But as he came close, Dolphin could see that the man was not blind and was not a beggar. He was singing happy songs of praise to Jesus in the local Sesotho dialect. "The man is a simpleton," he thought.

Suddenly, the man put down his piano-accordion, picked up his Bible and began to preach. One of the men in the crowd began to interpret for him. It was a trick. The man had used his music to attract people out of sympathy. "The simpleton was clever, at least," Dolphin thought. He knew that it was not easy to gather a crowd in Maseru to hear preaching.

No problem. Dolphin had read many books about the Bible. He knew that Christians considered Jesus to be equal with God, a part of what they called the Trinity. Since he could easily defeat these silly doctrines, he would listen to the preacher's message, then argue to set him straight. It would provide amusement, and another way to impress his friends.

Reinhard had disguised himself as the blind beggar on the street corner that day, preaching his heart out. His work in Maseru had been fruitful only on occasion. Foreexample, at the end of his very first sermon at a bus stop in Maseru, a tall, thoughtful young man, Michael Kolisang stepped forward. Michael wore a colorful blanket wrapped around his shoulders. It was the popular fashion for Basuto tribesmen. He spoke to Bonnke through his interpreter.

"I want this Jesus you have just preached. I want him." Reinhard thought, maybe it will be this way everyday in Maseru! After that day, he preached many sermons and saw no response.

He took Michael into the front seat of his Volkswagen minibus. With the interpreter helping from the backseat, Reinhard led him through the

salvation scriptures. Then he prayed with him to accept Jesus as his Savior. Today Micahel is a Bishop in Lesotho, pastoring a thriving congregation.

But responses like that were few. Dolphin Monese was more typical. As soon as Reinhard finished his sermon that day, he stepped forward, not to accept Jesus, but to argue with him. Since he spoke English, he was able to argue without an interpreter.

Bonnke's interpreter was happy for the break. He said that he had never worked so hard for a preacher in his life. With four sermons per day, he wanted a raise in pay.

Dolphin jumped into his Jehovah's Witness arguments headlong. Reinhard just smiled and listened. He knew that he could not change the young man's mind by meeting him on some battlefield of the mind. He invited him to sit down with him on the curb.

Reinhard knew that deep inside, Dolphin was worn out by the de

*deep inside, Dolphin was worn out by the demands of his own arguments. But he didn't know if he was tired enough to let go of them.*

mands of his own arguments. But he didn't know if he was tired enough to let go of them. He seemed to like arguing so much. He went on and on with his attack on Christianity until all of the crowd

*Reinhard knew that that had gathered that day had gone away. Even his friends had departed. It was the two of us sitting on that street curb, and only one was talking.*

"May I say something?" Reinhard asked.

Dolphin was in the middle of a thought and had to finish it before he could stop him- self. At last he paused. "Yes. What is it?"



“I want to say how God loves you. You and me and everyone in the world were born in sin. We were bound for eternal Hell, yet He loved us enough to...”

“There is no Hell,” Dolphin interrupted. “Punishment in Hell is an idea the Popes made up. They did it to make people afraid so that they could control them. I’m not falling for any of that.”

“You will have to argue with the Scripture, Dolphin. Eternal torment is clearly in the Bible. The Popes did not make it up. But that’s not the Good News. The Good News is that God loved the world, even in its sin, and gave His only Son as a sacrifice for us. Salvation is a free gift, paid for by someone else. We cannot earn it by being smart, or by learning all the right things, or by doing all the right things. When

we accept God’s great gift, He fills us with love and peace, and we are promised eternal life with Him in Heaven. Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior?”

Dolphin went away promising he would come back to complete the correction of Reinhard’s bad theology. Though he welcomed him to return, Reinhard inwardly hesitated. He knew he would take advantage of his open door.

And Dolphin did. He returned every day after that. His school breaks were timed so that he could come hear me at the bus stop. Then his after-school walk brought him by my market location for another sermon. He would start more arguments. This pattern continued day after day.

In time, Reinhard found the opportunity to counter most of his arguments from Scripture. But still, this was not enough to convert him. He came again and again to argue, and perhaps for other reasons he would not admit to me. He was a tough nut to crack.

One day as Bonnke preached he sensed a powerful anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit. After his sermon that day, Dolphin stepped forward.

“I am ready to accept Jesus Christ as my Savior,” he said.

Amazement, almost disbelief, leapt up in his heart. This was an incredible moment. Suddenly, this young man who had come to argue had no arguments.

In that moment, the Holy Spirit whispered inside of Reinhard, telling him what to do. He sensed in his inner conversation with the Lord that Dolphin must not just make a decision for Christ; he must make a clean break with the Jehovah's Witnesses at the same time. This was a source of bondage that still remained for him.

"Get in my car," Reinhard said.

He did. When they were inside he said to him, "We will drive to your house and burn all your Jehovah's Witness books. Are you ready to do that?"

Immediately, Dolphin had an inner struggle. So much of his knowledge was bound up in those books. They had given him pride and a place in the world. They had made him feel superior. He thought that if Reinhard did not place a clear choice before him, he would go into a time of struggle that would last for a long time before he would finally be free. Years of unfruitfulness could follow.

"Choose Jesus or Jehovah's Witnesses," Reinhard said. "This is the choice you make. Not two ways, just one."

At last Dolphin nodded. "Yes, you are right. Let's get the books."

Reinhard drove to his house. Dolphin went inside and brought out an armful of books, depositing them in the Volkswagen minibus.

"Are these all of them?"

"I have another shelf of books at my grandma's house in the village."

"We will go there and get them. Get in, I'll drive."

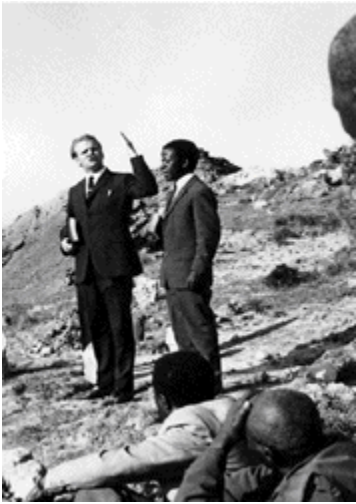
"But I don't own those books. They're borrowed."

"I will pay for the books you borrowed. But we will burn them all today, borrowed or not."

Dolphin agreed. He gathered all the books from the village together and put them in the car. Reinhard purchased a gallon container of gasoline. They drove to his brother's house where he knew he could find a barrel for

burning. Bonnke had him place the books inside. They doused them with the fuel.

When Dolphin lit it and dropped it into the barrel an explosion of flame leapt into the air. Reinhard felt a great sense of relief. As the books burned, he could see a new Dolphin Monese emerge. The burden of carrying a heavy religious yoke was exchanged for the easy yoke and the light burden of life in Jesus Christ. Joy, peace, gentleness, meekness – all the fruit of the Spirit came pouring forth.



**Reinhard with his translator Dolphin**



**Preaching in Malawi, 1970. Sometimes**

**he  
found himself preaching to five people**

***I beg you, sir, give me five minutes***

In 1973, news of their ministry's success was being talked about in the region as they had just started getting breakthrough in Lesotho.

Harold Horn rang him. Reinhard had known him since his apprenticeship in South Africa. "Reinhard, come to Kimberley and preach to us.

I said, "I will come."

Kimberley was a town of about 100,000 residents, located 150 miles to the west. Like Maseru, where I lived, Kimberley was an isolated mountain community. For a century it had been famous for its diamond mines. The world's largest diamonds had come from there. The entire area was steeped in the lore of fortunes mined from the earth. Mining continued to be the backbone of the economy.

The Kimberley mines were owned and operated by the descendants of white settlers. However, the backbreaking toil in the mines was performed by black men, many of them from Reinhard's own country of Lesotho. The church that he would visit in Kimberley, however, was a "whites only" congregation.

When he arrived, he remember it was a cold evening. The skies were patchy with clouds, and a chilly wind gusted from the peaks around us. Harold drove me to the church where I was to preach. We had agreed to a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday series of meetings.

That first Friday night as he sat on the platform he looked across a gathering of 200 people. "Not one young person did I see in the room. Not one. 37

When the meeting was over, I leaned over to Harold, who was near to me, and asked, 'Where are the young people?'

He nodded sadly, acknowledging that I had correctly seen the problem. Every head in the room was gray.

I preached. The service was closed, and the people filtered out to their cars to go home. When they had gone, Harold came to me."'

"Reinhard, would you like to see the answer to your question? Would you like to know where all the young people in Kimberley are?"

"Yes, I would," Reinhard replied.

"I will show you. Get into my car and I will take you there."

"Where are you taking me?" "It's a surprise," Harold said. He remained mysterious about it.

He drove through the streets turning this way and that until he came to a large building at the edge of a warehouse district. The building was ablaze with gaudy neon signs. One large sign blinked out the word, disco, disco, disco.

The parking lot was jam-packed to overflowing with vehicles. They parked on the street a block away. As Harold turned off the key, Reinhard could hear the boom, boom, boom, of the heavy base beat coming through the walls of that building. The so-called music seemed to

*Reinhard felt a shiver shake the very ground beneath us with an ungodly spirit. go down his spine. The disco was so large, so*

*energetic, so loud, and so overwhelming compared to the little church building they had just come from.*

“This is a den of iniquity,” Reinhard said sadly. “How awful. This is where the young people have gone?”

Harold nodded. “This is the latest thing, Reinhard. It is called a discotheque, a dance club. It is a craze that is sweeping the whole world right now, and young

people everywhere are very attracted to it.”

Reinhard felt a shiver go down his spine. The disco was so large, so energetic, so loud, and so overwhelming compared to the little church building they had just come from.

Again, Reinhard could see the faces of the old people he had preached to just an hour ago. They had all come to hear Reinhard Bonnke preach to a room with no young people in it. Now they were, no doubt, sitting at home in houses with no young people in them. The young people were here, indulging in all sorts of sensual pleasures. At least they could feel confident that their parents and grandparents would not disturb them here. The older generation would not dare to enter this jarring and frightening atmosphere.

Harold got out and stood for a while leaning against the hood of his car, listening. Reinhard got out too, and stood next to him.

They could hear the music now, above the booming bass, although he couldn't really call it music. He thought of how gently he played his piano accordion, singing happy songs about Jesus to attract crowds on the streets of Lesotho. The sound of his little accordion here would have been totally drowned out. No one could have taken any notice at all. He began to feel small and insignificant.

“What do the young people see in this disco, Harold?” Reinhard asked. Harold shook his head, mystified. “I don't know. I truly don't know.” After a while, he said, “Let's go inside.” “Oh, no,” Reinhard said.

“Let's go home. I have never gone to such a place. It would be an abomination to me. I would not know how to act. And what would people think of me as a preacher? It's unthinkable.”

To this moment, he had gone along with Harold simply out of curiosity. “Where were the young people?” he had asked. Now he knew. It was a sad reality of modern life, but he could do nothing to fix the gulf between young and old in Kimberley.

Reinhard thought to himself that he would go back and preach his heart out to the old people again on Saturday and Sunday. Perhaps God would move on their hearts, and they would begin to make a difference in the lives of their own young people. That seemed the best he could hope to achieve.

But as he turned to get into the car he felt bad inside. He stopped in his tracks. This is when the Holy Spirit began to speak to him. Since he had come this far, something seemed wrong if he now turned away. But he had no idea what the Spirit wanted him to do. “Let's take a look inside,” Harold suggested.

Suddenly, this seemed exactly right. Everything in his spirit said yes. He nodded. “OK, let's just take a look at this disco.”

They began to walk toward the building. They came to the door and stood there. Reinhard felt the Spirit say to him very clearly, “Look inside. I will show you something you do not know.”

“I took a deep breath, then opened the door. The blast of music must have knocked the hair back from my forehead. I have never heard such volume in my life. It was deafening. But it was in that instant that I received a spiritual vision of the reality of the disco. In the flash of the strobe lights, I did not see young people dancing with joy. I saw *These young people* frozen images of boredom, fear, loneliness, and insecurity, one after the other, captured on the faces of those young people. The split-second flashes of light revealed these images, over and over and over again, like stop-action. Each of those haunted faces spoke to me of emptiness. Pure emptiness.

Now I knew what the Spirit had wanted me to know. It was not what I had expected to see.”

*were coming to the disco seeking something they did not find. No matter how they threw*

*themselves into the beat of the music, it always came out the same – empty.*

These young people were coming to the disco seeking something they did not find. No matter how they threw themselves into the beat of the music, it always came out the same – empty.

Reinhard understood in that moment that he had what they were looking for.

Curiosity was gone. In its place, he felt the undeniable compassion of Jesus surging within him. He wanted to weep for the precious searching young people of Kimberley.

Suddenly, he could not care less what anyone thought of him. He knew that he would preach in this disco. Nothing could deny the love of Jesus that he felt.

He shut the door and looked at Harold. Reinhard heard the Holy Spirit say in his heart, "Find the owner of this place." And so, he said to Harold, "Help me to find the owner of this disco."

"What good will that do?"

"I must talk to him. Let's find him now."

"But what will you say to him?"

"I will ask him to let me preach in his disco."

Harold laughed. "You won't do that, Reinhard."

"I will. I absolutely will."

Harold followed him now. Reinhard inquired inside the disco and they were led to an office at the rear of the building. The owner was a middle-aged businessman who looked to be very much a part of the rock-and-roll culture. He had long hair, gold chains around his neck,

an open collared shirt, and blue jeans.

Reinhard said to him, "Sir, I've come all the way from Germany. I am asking you for permission to allow me to address the young people in your disco for just five minutes."

The owner looked at Reinhard from top to toe. "You're a preacher," he said. Reinhard was still dressed in his suit and tie. He looked like he had just come from church. He nodded.

He said, "If you want to preach you should preach in a church." "There are no young people in the church," Reinhard said. "They don't come to the church so the preacher comes to the young people. Now give me five minutes, only five minutes, I ask of you."

"You've got to be kidding." He shook his head in disbelief, then turned around and walked away. "There is no way, man." He had no sympathy for Reinhard's plea at all.

As he was walking, suddenly the Holy Spirit touched Reinhard. He said to him, "Tell him what you saw when you looked into his dance hall." He



went after the man and took him by the arm. He turned to face Reinhard again.

“One question, sir,” Reinhard said, looking deep into his eyes. “Do you think the young people find what they need for life in your dis- co?”

Slowly the face of that man changed. He looked down thoughtfully. When he looked up again he said, “It is very strange that you should say that. I have children of my own. I’ve thought many times that the disco will not give the young people what they need for life.”

“I beg you, sir, give me five minutes.”

The owner was thoughtful for a moment. “OK, but not tonight. Saturday night, tomorrow night at midnight, I will give you the microphone for five minutes.”

Reinhard grabbed his hand and shook it. “It’s a deal, and thank you, sir. I will be here.”

As Harold drove him to his room, Reinhard began to beat himself up a little bit.

“I had only asked for five minutes. How could I be so stupid?”

I started to pray. I said, “Lord, I foolishly asked for only five minutes. Now I am stuck with five minutes because I put that number in his head. Why did I say that?” After riding some more in silence, I prayed again, a bit better this time. “Lord,” I said, “nothing is too hard for You. You created the world in six days; You can save the disco in five minutes. Please do not let my foolishness be a problem. Amen.” All that night I tossed and turned, and prayed. I prayed and prayed.”

The next night Reinhard preached to the old people at the church. He remember nothing. He thought he must have preached badly because his heart was pounding with anticipation for preaching to the lost in the disco that night. When the congregation had gone home to their houses, he asked Harold to drive him back to his room. He undressed from his suit and dressed in casual clothes. He did not want to look like a preacher just

coming from church. Harold went home and quickly changed his clothes, too.

As they got in his car Harold paused to look at him. "Reinhard Bonnke, what do you think the people of the church would think if they knew where you were going tonight?"

"I think they would never come to hear me again," Reinhard said. "You won't tell them, will you?"

He smiled and shook his head. "No, of course not."

"Nor will I."

They drove to the disco, arriving at 11:30 pm. Reinhard had a half hour to wait. The parking lot was even more crowded on Saturday than it had been on Friday.

"I guess in Kimberley they had what you call "Saturday night fever."

I took my Bible under my arm and my piano accordion. I don't know why I took the piano accordion, but there it was. I took it with me into that disco like a security blanket."

Inside, it was insanely crowded. Shoulder to shoulder, they had to push their way between the people to get past them to find a place to sit. Finally they came to a bar with a stool. Reinhard sat on the

*When at last the clock struck twelve, the music stopped. He jumped up and onto the stage where the records were being spun.*

stool and waited for midnight.

When at last the clock struck twelve, the music stopped. He jumped up and onto the stage where the records were being spun. He took the microphone from the disk jockey and shouted, "Sit down, sit down, sit down. I've come all the way from Germany,

and I've got something very important to tell you."

Suddenly, the young people began sitting down everywhere. It was then that he realized he was not in church but in a dance hall. There were no pews. Only a few bar stools at the perimeter. Most of the young people plopped right down on the dance floor. There they sat, smoking cigarettes and chewing gum, waiting for me to begin.

I started to preach one minute, two minutes, suddenly the wind of God begun to blow in that disco. He started to hear sobbing. He saw young people getting out their handkerchiefs and starting to wipe their eyes, crying everywhere. And he knew one thing – when people started shedding tears, it's was time for the altar call.

He said, “How many of you want to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior? How many want to find forgiveness for your sins and enter God's plan for your life, as of tonight?”

Every hand that he could see in that place went straight up. He said, “Alright, repeat after me.”

They prayed the prayer of salvation together. His five minutes were up. His work was done. He left walking on cloud number nine, rejoicing, absolutely rejoicing that he had been privileged to help these young people find what they would never find in their disco.

***After you left town, the disco went bankrupt***

A year later Reinhard returned to Kimberley. Harold met him at the airport. He said, “Get in my car. I have a surprise for you.”

He got in Harold's car. He did not say anything about it; he just drove through the winding streets until he came to the warehouse district. The car stopped. Reinhard looked out of the window. He couldn't believe his eyes. He wiped them and looked again. Instead of seeing the big disco sign, there was a huge white cross on the front of that building.

“This is not the surprise,” Harold said. “Come with me.”

They walked up to that door where they had stood one year ago, the door that the Holy Spirit had told him to open. He remembered the pounding

beat of the music that had assaulted his ears as they stood there that Saturday night. Now he heard another sound coming from inside. It was a kind of chant, growing in volume.

“Are you ready for this, Reinhard?” Harold swung the door open, and Reinhard looked into a packed house full of young people. They were chanting, “Bonnke, Bonnke, Bonnke.”

He cried out with joy. They rushed to him, hugging me and shaking my hands, bringing me inside.

One young man said, “Remember me? I was the disk jockey that night that you came.”

Another grabbed my hand. “I was operating the light show.”

Another said, “We were dancing the night away. Now we are serving Jesus.”

“After you left town, the disco went bankrupt,” Harold shouted to Reinhard. “This disco is a church!” He was beaming from ear to ear.

A fine looking gentleman came up to him. “We heard about what happened to the young people here. My church has sponsored me to be a pastor to these kids.”

Reinhard stood again on that disco stage looking at those faces, so different from the ones he had seen in the strobe lights a year ago. The lights were up full now. Even more, the light of the Lord’s favor was shining on every face.



**African Messenger in**

**print**

**Opposition from fellow missionaries**

After many months, Reinhard's main congregation in Maseru grew to 50 members. Word began to circulate that he was an effective preacher. Many white South African churches began to extend invitations to him as a guest speaker. At first, he turned these invitations down.

“I continued my street evangelism efforts, but the daily schedule of preaching was physically exhausting, and the results were pitifully few. My original interpreter had quit. Worn out. Dolphin Monese had taken over and now served with the true heart of an evangelist. But the hardened religious soil of Maseru was taking its toll.”

After much hard labor in Maseru Reinhard saw that if he didn't change his ways he would never reach the far-flung villages of Lesotho. He had started a Bible school in his church to provide training for Dolphin, Michael, and three other young converts. Five students in all were taking so much of his time and energy that there was little left over for expansion. Then it came to him that he could design a Bible correspondence course that would go far beyond him. It could be distributed to the many literate Basuto tribesmen by regular mail. Using the pattern of teaching he had used with his five students in the Bible school, Reinhard wrote a course of five basic lessons in following Christ. He was able to raise enough money to buy a small offset-press and learn to print himself. This developed into huge dimensions. At that very time, a missionary from the Velberter Mission, Bernd Wenzel, a professional printer from Germany felt called of the Lord to join their team.

Soon hundreds and then thousands were enrolled. With the increasing printing press costs, he suddenly realized that he should take the speaking invitations that were coming to him from white South African churches. He would go to them and challenge them to support these efforts.

That is what he did, and soon the funds were available to continue growing the enrollment. He also expanded the printing operation to include an evangelistic magazine. The magazine followed the correspondence course and began to find wider and wider distribution. He traveled and told the story of what God was doing, and the white churches very graciously responded, sending more money.

It was at this time that Reinhard began to hear of resentment from other missionaries. Perhaps they were not experiencing the same breakthroughs. Or maybe they were unable to raise the funds he was raising in the prosperous South African churches. Then again, it might have purely been jealousy. Whatever the cause, some of his fellow missionaries began to talk about him in negative ways.

Some suggested that his ego was leading the way, that he thought he was special. His new methods and ideas were described as somehow arrogant. “When I heard of it I vigorously defended myself. I wanted to make sure everyone knew that I was led by a burning desire to see souls saved. But no matter how I wanted to make that clear, people continued to say and believe what they wanted to say and believe. It hurt me deeply and truly distracted me.”

At AFM conferences Reinhard found times in which he would confront his accusers, argue with them, and defend his actions. But this, too, was a mistake. Nothing seemed harder to ignore than the critical words of his brothers in Christ. Some made no effort to hide their criticisms. He was forced to learn to bless those who cursed him. Anni alone knew how hard his struggle was.

One day Reinhard emerged from his office to be confronted by a horde of cursing Communists. They cursed God and blasphemed the name of Jesus to his face.

Suddenly he felt the power of the Spirit surge within him. He said, “In the name of the One whom you are cursing, I say to you that within a year your feet will no more walk the streets of Maseru!” He knew as he spoke that he prophesied. The Spirit had spoken through him with these words. They were not from his own mind. Neither did he know that a few months later, Lesotho’s prime minister, Leabua Jonathan, would declare a state of emergency, and all Communists would be rounded up and sent to jail.

It happened exactly that way, and the story of his prophecy raced around Maseru like lightning. Some people began to fear him. Rumors ran about that God talked to Reinhard Bonnke and that He would even tell Reinhard what people were thinking.

In this situation, however, his brethren worked to discredit him. It was even suggested that he had lied or exaggerated what had really happened. Some thought he was motivated by ambition, not by the Spirit of God, and that he was trying to make a great name for himself. In desperate prayer and in counsel with his wife, he began to let go of these things. Until Reinhard let go of them they would not let go of him.

### **Africa shall be saved**

*In his dream the map began to be splashed and covered with blood.*

Reinhard had a dream that changed everything. He saw a map of Africa. Not South Africa, not Lesotho, not Johannesburg, but the entire continent including the big islands.

In his dream the map began to be splashed and covered with blood. He became alarmed. He thought surely this meant some kind of apocalyptic violence was coming – perhaps a bloody Communist revolution. But the Spirit whispered to him that this was the blood of Jesus that he saw. The terrible violence that spilled His blood happened 2,000 years ago on a cross. Then he heard the words, Africa shall be saved.

When he woke up he had a problem. His mind filled with new thoughts that made him uncomfortable. Before going to sleep he had been happy to see 50,000 people enrolled in their correspondence course in Lesotho and further afield.

“After this dream he could not be happy with that number. I am a German who had struggled with math as a boy. But even I could do these calculations. I had learned that the continent was home to 478,000,000 souls. If it had taken me five years to reach 50 people in Maseru, plus another 50,000 beyond the walls of my church through correspondence, that pace would average 10,010 souls per year. There is nothing wrong with that number but I would have to live to be at least 47,752 years old to see a blood-washed Africa! I thought I had done well. In light of this dream I could see that I was far behind God’s agenda.”

In his mind he began to discount the dream. The next night the same dream returned. And the next night. And the next. After this fourth night he said to

his wife: “Anni, I think that God is trying to tell me something”. He now had my full attention. Would I take seriously what He was saying to me? Or would I deny Him? Would I choose to believe God’s math? Or would I believe my own?

He knew one thing that would keep him silent. It was the fear of what others would say or think. He could hear his critics: “Who are you to say, Africa shall be saved?” they would say. This is the cutting question Satan throws at God’s servants in order to silence them – “Who

*Bonnke wanted  
do you think you are?”  
peace after years  
of arguing. He was so tired of this.*

“I wondered, will some people say again that I am egodriven if I speak this dream? Yes, they will. Will my words make some people uncomfortable? Absolutely. I sensed that these words

would mark me as surely as Joseph’s coat of many colors marked him in the eyes of his jealous brothers. It would be like painting a target on my chest. But then I asked myself, is that a reason to be quiet when God has spoken? No. A thousand times no.

I decided that I would begin to say, Africa shall be saved, at every opportunity”. It became their motto “Africa shall be saved”.

### **Resigning from AFN**

The expanding vision thrilled some, but the German Mission Board were increasingly anxious about the financial implications of these growing ventures.

His director from his church in Germany came to visit him in Lesotho and he saw his activities there. He saw that had established a printing press and other projects to evangelistically penetrate Lesotho, they became scared. They told him that thats all commendable but “If you go bankrupt, your lenders will not get after you but after us because you are one of us. We want you to stop, stop, stop. Be like all our other missionaries. Don’t do what you do because you will pull us into the blackhole of the universe.”



Bonnke wanted peace after years of arguing. He was so tired of this. He said, "Lord doesn't your word say we should live in peace. Why can't I submit to my brothers? Why can't I and then just live in peace?"

I said to Anni am booking into a hotel. I will fast and pray until I've heard from God. I went to the Riverside lodge and booked myself in. The moment I came into that room I fell flat on my knees and cried out: "O Lord you have showed me a blood washed Africa and here am told to stop. What now?"

What must I do?  
Shall I submit? Shall I be in peace with them?"

That moment the Holy Spirit spoke to me:  
"He said to me, "If you drop the vision of the blood-washed Africa. I have to drop you and look for somebody else."

I said Lord, "Let anyone, everyone drop me. I don't care. But you don't drop me.  
I want to be in your hands, only in your hands no matter what."

He decided he had to hurry. He jumped up from his knees. His fasting hadn't lasted an hour. He paid his bill, jumped into the car and got home. "I said Anni, where is my typewriter? I want to type. I want to resign. She said, "Oh, Can't you sleep one night over it?  
I said, "No sleeping is necessary. I don't want God to drop me."

He wrote that letter, rushed to the post office and he dropped it there."

His next task was to phone Dr. F.P. Möller, President of the AFM Board. He told him that he had resigned from the German Mission and therefore he must say goodbye to the AFM as well. Dr. Möller had become a good friend to Reinhard and held him in high regard and he was very upset at the news. 'You have done what? You have resigned and you did not speak to me first?' Dr. Möller begged him, 'Please withdraw your letter of resignation at least to give me a chance to talk to our friends in Germany.' Dr. Möller went so far as to say that the AFM would pay the expenses to

bring out to South Africa the German leader, Reinhold Ulonska, to discuss the whole matter.

Reinhard agreed, and wrote a second letter withdrawing his resignation in the hope that an acceptable solution could be found. He was anxious to do all in his power to maintain fellowship with all concerned. At short notice, Reinhold Ulonska flew out to South Africa and conferred with Dr. Möller and Reinhard. Dr. Möller emphasised that the AFM did not want to lose Reinhard if that could be avoided.

Revd Ulonska, however, made it clear that the German Board felt that they could not treat Reinhard any differently from their other missionaries.

‘But he is different from the other missionaries,’ replied Dr. Möller. ‘We wish we had many more like him.’ And of course that was the *No matter what he* problem. The ‘system’ could not cope. *tried, or how he*

*prayed and fasted*, Ultimately they agreed to give Reinhard *the situation did not* freedom-to let him go. Reinhard said, ‘I only *improve. As time went* want to leave with your blessing, if you will

tell the German Fellowship that you have asked me to launch out on my own.’

*by, in my heart, he began to blame the people for their lack*

*of faith.* They readily agreed, although the an

nouncement of the fact that they had asked him to step up his own organisation ran into delays. However, it was the only acceptable solution. It was clear that Reinhard’s many outreaches could not be curtailed.

### ***Reinhard, the Holy Spirit told me I must go***

However, Reinhard was distressed because he was not seeing miracles in Maseru.

“I often confessed to Anni in those days, “My church is a miracle-free zone. What is wrong?”

No matter what he tried, or how he prayed and fasted, the situation did not improve. As time went by, in my heart, he began to blame the people for their lack of faith. If only they had faith, he thought, they would experience wonderful miracles like those seen in the Book of Acts.

First, God used Richard Ngidi to open his eyes. Richard was a Zulu evangelist well known in AFM churches throughout South Africa. After preaching he would minister to the people in individual prayer and the miraculous power of God would always manifest. The lame walked, the blind saw, cancers disappeared.

Reinhard had come to know him from attending AFM conferences in South Africa. One day he invited him to minister at his church in Maseru. He accepted and Reinhard secretly felt sorry for him. "I imagined that the faithless people of my "miracle-free" congregation would ruin his reputation.

When he ministered in Maseru Reinhard saw the power of God as never before. The blind saw, the lame walked, and diseases disappeared. "Richard Ngidi trusted the Lord no matter what he faced. He was bold in the face of great problems and he had what I called a reckless faith. In his very loud, deep voice and confident manner he commanded disease and sickness to go from God's people. It was as if blindfolds dropped from my eyes watching him. I was almost in a state of shock. "

Reinhard said to Anni, "When God speaks it is not for us to ask questions but to obey the prompting of His voice. His word is above all else. I can see it now! I can see it now! Anni, God's word is not a question mark, it is an exclamation point! I have been too timid."

After seeing a breakthrough in Maseru with Richard Ngidi Reinhard was still timid. Perhaps, he thought, he did not have a gift of faith, or a gift of the working of miracles as described in the writings of the Apostle Paul. He decided to invite another notable evangelist who had that reputation. He invited a man named John Bosman to come. He was a remarkable Dutch Reformed minister from Pretoria and he was seeing miracles everywhere he preached. Perhaps having another exposure to the miraculous power of God would push him into the place of believing.

The evangelist was stirring the nation of South Africa, making the headlines in the daily papers with stories of healings and of great crowds. Through the worldwide wave of Holy Spirit renewal which was affecting many of the historic churches, he had been greatly blessed and his ministry had become charismatic.

So desperate was Reinhard to get him to come to Maseru that he went to the evangelist's home in Pretoria to deliver the invitation in person. To his joy, the great evangelist agreed to come to Lesotho for two services over one weekend, Saturday evening and Sunday morning. When Reinhard returned, his news that the evangelist was going to come to Maseru was greeted with terrific enthusiasm. The preparations were put in hand and everything possible was done to ensure that the visit received maximum publicity. Their printing press rolled off thousands and thousands of handbills and posters. With such a well-known name they even managed to get time on the local radio station.

Expectations were running high when the weekend finally arrived. Above all they had prayed and Reinhard was confident that this could produce the breakthrough he had been longing for ever since he had set foot in Maseru. It needed a great demonstration of God's power in healing and deliverance to break the hold of generations of witchcraft, superstition and occult practices.

44

On the Saturday evening their church building was packed out. People were crowded around the outside of the building. Many sick, lame, and blind had been brought because of John's reputation for healing miracles. They had never seen this level of excitement for the work of the Lord in Maseru.

With great pride and pleasure, Reinhard introduced John to the crowd. He came to the pulpit and preached. He was not especially impressed with his preaching. Like most of the people there Reinhard had come expecting to see him demonstrate his gift of healing. But then something happened that shook him to his toes. After preaching only a modest sermon he turned to him and said, "Close the service."

Reinhard gasped. “But not now. All these people have come expecting you to pray for the sick. I cannot possibly close the service.”  
“Close it.”

Reinhard was absolutely flattened. “John, how can we do this? I will dismiss the people, but you must promise to return tomorrow and pray for them. Will you let me make that promise?”

*With a great deal of confusion he did as he was asked to do.*

*He closed the service, announcing that John would return in the morning to pray for the sick.*

“Tell them the sick will be prayed for tomorrow.”

With a great deal of confusion he did as he was asked to do. He closed the service, announcing that John would return in the morning to pray for the sick. When Reinhard turned, he had already gone to his hotel room.

He slept hardly a wink that night, praying and seeking God in confusion about what John had done. The next morning he got up early and went to pick him up for the meeting. Passing by the church he could not believe his eyes. The house was packed to capacity. Even more people were lined up outside, hoping to get in. The word had gone out that John would pray for the sick. Many more sick had been brought to the meeting site.

Reinhard Bonnke went to the hotel. When he arrived, John was loading his suitcases into a waiting car.

“What is going on?” I asked in total confusion. “Where are you going?”  
“Home,” he said.

Reinhard could hardly breathe. “What do you mean you are going home? I just went by the church. It is already packed with people who have come. You promised to pray for the sick. That is why they have come.”

“I promised that the sick would be prayed for. You promised that I would do the praying.”

“Stay, John. I’ll do the preaching. That’s what I do best. You pray for *Without tolerating* the sick. That is what you do best. We’ll do this together.”

*another doubt he began to take charge of that meeting with my words.*

*“I will preach,” Reinhard*

“Reinhard, the Holy Spirit told me I must go.” *said to his men, “and God*

“With that he got into the car. The driv<sup>will do miracles today.</sup>er put it in motion and drove away down the street and then out of my sight. I stood there hoping that this was some kind of joke. I felt like my best friend had just deserted me. I had so looked forward to sharing ministry with him. But when he said the Holy Spirit had told him to go, I had no comeback. That was the entire point of everything. We were to do what the Holy Spirit commanded no matter how it went against our natural senses. I got into my car and drove toward that packed out church of people who had come expecting miracles.”

### **Healing miracles happen**

Suddenly faith rose up inside of Reinhard, along with what he would call a “holy wrath.” Behind that steering wheel he cried out to the God, “Lord, I am not a big-time evangelist, but I am Your servant also. Now I will go and do the preaching and praying for the sick and You will do the miracles.”

Peace filled his heart immediately. As he drove on, he remembered the time when he was only ten years old and he had laid his hands on the woman in Father’s church in Krempe. In very dramatic fashion she had been healed.

Reinhard walked into the church and told all his pastors that John had gone home. The Holy Spirit had ordered him to leave.

Without tolerating another doubt he began to take charge of that meeting with my words. “I will preach,” Reinhard said to his men, “and God will do

miracles today.”

With that, he went to the pulpit. “The evangelist John Bosman has gone home,” he announced. “But I have great news for you today. Jesus showed up. I will preach, and I will pray for everyone who has come for healing, and we will see miracles.”

As soon as he said it a man and woman seated on the front row got up shaking their heads and headed for the exit.

He stood to preach. He spoke with an authority he had never known before. Suddenly, the room became charged. About midway through his sermon, Dolphin Monese, who was interpreting for him was overcome by the power of the Spirit and fell to the floor.

“Everything stopped, except the listening crowd. They waited breathlessly for the next word. I waited for Dolphin to recover. As I waited I was taken away from that place in my mind. It was as if all sounds and sights became muted, and I heard words of the kind that I could never conceive – My word in your mouth is as powerful as My word in My mouth.”

Call those who are totally blind, and speak the word of authority, the Spirit said to me. This rang a bell of memory in Bonnke’s heart. Luis Graf had treated the healing of the sick and the saving of souls as two sides of the same calling when he came to the Bonnke household with the flame of the Spirit in 1922.

“There are blind people here this morning,” I said. “I ask all of you who are totally blind to stand to your feet. Stand at once. I will pray for you.” Around the room several people rose. They stood swaying slightly, straining their other four senses to compensate for their loss of sight.

“I am going to speak in the authority God has given me, and when I do, you blind will see a white man standing before you. Do you hear me? Your eyes will be opened!” With that I took a deep breath and shouted. “In the name of Jesus, blind eyes open!”

A woman began screaming. She rushed from the back of the crowd grabbing people as she went, looking at them, crying, "I see! I see! I see!"  
**Christ for all Nation is birthed**

Not only was Reinhard forced to redefine his role with his church, he also heard the voice of the Lord leading him to leave Lesotho.

As he pondered the future, Reinhard remembered his boyhood vision from the Lord. The city of Johannesburg glowed like a beacon on the spiritual map. It was calling him now. He saw that he must go

there, and he founded his own ministry organization to accommodate the vision for a bloodwashed Africa. He called it Christ for all Nations, or CfaN, using the name they had given the little printing press in Maseru.

The Lord led him to locate the headquarters near the international airport, because in evangelism he would be traveling heavily. He spoke to Anni about this. She knew that she would not always be able to travel with him. It was a sacrifice she had to be willing to make if the blood-washed Africa vision was to be realized. Her heart for the lost overruled her homebound instincts. She agreed.

On December 6, 1974, Reinhard moved his family to a place called Witfield, near the Johannesburg airport.

At their new home when the furniture arrived, Reinhard was to sit on the suitcases. Anni was worried now; Reinhard seemed physically and spiritually drained.

With his head in his hands he sat there and prayed, 'Lord, I feel hopeless. You spoke to me two years ago those thrilling words, "Africa shall be saved!" over and over again, night after night, until the vision of an Africa cleansed from its sin and sadness and suffering, blazed in my heart and I believed it would happen. But Lord, here I sit on my suitcases, ready to win the world for you, but I don't know how.'

**Launch of the Gospel campaigns**



Anni hoped that a good night's sleep would improve matters but there was no improvement. For four weeks it seemed to Reinhard as if God did not speak to him at all. In the end he was experiencing such pain in his stomach that he went to see the medical doctor friend who pronounced, 'Reinhard, you have got stomach ulcers.'

He immediately responded, 'I don't know what ulcers are. I cannot believe it. I have never had problems with my stomach.'

'Well,' said his friend, 'that is what you have got.'

That very night God spoke to Reinhard clearly at last: 'Fly to Gaborone in Botswana.' In the morning he found that his stomach was healed. Before long he was on his way.

Botswana, a desolate landlocked neighbour of South Africa, was the kind of place that needed a word from God for anyone to consider going there. Not having enough money for taxi, he walked into the city, and God met with him right there on the street and spoke into his heart, 'Turn to the right.' He obeyed and found himself outside Botswana's National Sports Stadium, and again the Lord spoke into his heart: 'You will preach my name there.' The four weeks of silence was over.

His initial thought had been to use Botswana's radio station. Now he knew God wanted him to hold a campaign, so he sought out a local minister, Pastor Scheffers, and told him the news. The pastor was thrilled until Reinhard asked him to book the National Sports Stadium.

'That holds 10,000,' he told Reinhard, 'and I only get forty people in my church on a Sunday morning; wouldn't it be better to book a hall?'

'Book the biggest hall in the city and also make arrangements for us

*The campaign to book the National Sports Stadium, and I will be in touch.' was fixed for*

*April, 1975 but the churches in Gaborone were*

*not proving very enthusiastic.*

The campaign was fixed for April, 1975 but the churches in Gaborone were not proving very enthusiastic. Nonetheless in faith, the biggest hall in the city seating 800 was booked for the opening days of the campaign and the stadium for the closing part.

One man Reinhard wanted on his team was Richard Ngidi, a gifted Zulu preacher with a proven healing ministry. Pastor Scheffers had covered the city with posters, but when Reinhard stepped onto the platform he looked about and immediately realized all of their advance publicity had failed. When he counted heads there were exactly 100 present, himself included. The room was designed for 800. He counted from right to left and left to right. Recounting did not make it better. 100 is 100 from every angle. He was quite disappointed. He assured them all that God was going to fill the hall before the campaign was through.

Reinhard sensed that Richard was also uncomfortable. Not even his name had helped build the crowd in Gaborone. Pastor Scheffers then leaned over to him and told him proudly that all 40 members of his flock were in attendance. That deflated Reinhard even more. It mean't that they had drawn no more than 60 souls beyond the members of his congregation. Pastor Scheffers had every right to say, "I told you so." Reinhard remembered the day a few weeks ago when he had arrived at his house with the wild idea of filling the National Sports Stadium. Now, this! **Nearly half of the population of Gaborone**

### **packs into the stadium**

After preliminaries, Reinhard stood and opened his Bible to preach the ABCs of the gospel. He had preached perhaps 10 to 20 minutes when a woman on the left side of the group of 100 stood up and shouted, "I've just been healed."

*Each person he* Reinhard stopped speaking to hear her. Soon another and another *laid his hands on*

*collapsed to the floor,  
and there they lay,*

*row after row of  
unconscious people.*

stood and did the same. Four or five people in all stood and made this claim of being spontaneously healed. He thought, "This is strange, I am preaching the gospel of salvation, yet people are being healed. We have not even laid hands on them according to Scripture."

At the conclusion of his sermon Reinhard called for anyone else who was sick to come forward. He told them that he would lay hands on them and pray. Something very strange began to happen. Each person he laid his hands on collapsed to the floor, and there they lay, row after row of unconscious people. He looked at Richard since he was not familiar with this manifestation.

A man came running from the back of the room to him. "I demand an explanation!" he said. "What have you done to make these people faint and fall to the floor?"

"I can't explain it. I need an explanation myself. Are you a doctor? Do you know what has happened to them?"

"No, I don't know."

"All I can tell you is I didn't ask these people to do this. What I have done is to lay hands on them according to the words of Jesus in Mark 16:18. So I suppose what has happened to them, Jesus is responsible for."

At that moment one woman got up from the floor. "I can see! I can see! I can see!" She had fallen down blind, but she got up seeing. This woman was well known to all the people. Another prostrate man who Reinhard had prayed for went down with a pair of crutches. He got up walking and running without any need for them.

Immediately, the man who had been demanding an explanation no longer seemed angry. He was amazed and began to praise God. All 100 people began shouting and dancing and screaming. They filled that nearly empty hall with a tremendous volume of sound that was heard in the surrounding neighborhoods. Some people came running to see what had happened.

The news of what was happening spread across the city. Sinners were finding Christ as Saviour, the sick were getting healed of all kinds of afflictions, and people were collapsing to the floor, apparently overwhelmed by the presence of the Almighty God. Within two nights that hall was packed to capacity. God performed His own publicity. People sat on other people's laps. Others sat in windowsills. By the end of the first week there were 2,000 people crowding outside, wanting to get in. They placed a loudspeaker outside for them. For the first time in Reinhard's life he saw crowds of people running to the front to receive Jesus at his invitation. They were crying tears of repentance as they came. He thought heaven had come down to earth. "Africa shall be saved," He repeated it again and again.

Each night Reinhard asked Richard to pray for the sick after he had given the invitation for salvation. Richard's great healing gift was evident, as well as his deep compassion for those he ministered to. Many other healings manifested as "signs following" the believing of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When they moved to the 10,000-seat stadium it was soon thronged. The reality of the conversions was demonstrated with 500 people sealing their decision to receive Christ by being publicly baptised in water.

One night near the end of the campaign, nearly half of the population of Gaborone had packed into the stadium. The entire soccer field, as well as the stands were both filled. God spoke again into Reinhard's heart, 'Pray for the people to be baptised with the Holy Spirit and power.' Reinhard had never thought of doing such a thing in a campaign.

About 1,000 people had moved forward when the invitation was given to those wanting to be baptised with the Holy Spirit. Reinhard led them in a simple prayer he instructed them to lift their hands to heaven and close their eyes. He did not close his eyes. He wanted to see what God would do. When they lifted their hands he saw a transparent wave coming from the right to the left, sweeping over that stadium. As it hit those people it was as if a mighty rushing wind blew them to the ground en masse. All of them were speaking in tongues and prophesying as the Spirit gave utterance. He had not said one word about speaking in tongues. "This confirmed to that I

had indeed heard the voice of the Spirit in my heart. I had heard Him true. It also demonstrated the reality of speaking in tongues without

any hint of suggestion or manipulation.”

***You will plunder hell and populate heaven for Calvary’s sake***

They acquired a secondhand tent and began to set it up at various locations and hold meetings. Soon a storm ripped the tent to shreds.

Its rotten canvas was no match for the winds. They began to seek another.

Some of the new expenses had depleted their cash on hand. Rent was due, and Reinhard didn’t have it. He had walked to the office, which was not far from their home. While walking back home he began to talk to the Heavenly Father. “Lord, we need 30 rand today, where will I find it to pay rent on time?”

Suddenly the voice of the Lord spoke in his heart. You’ve asked for 30 rand. Why don’t you ask Me for a million?

Suddenly all the fantasies stopped and he became choked with tears. He realized that once again he was thinking too small. With people passing him as they walked along the road he stopped and cried out from the very depths of his soul, “No, Lord! I am not asking for one million rand. I am asking for a million souls! One million souls less in hell and more in heaven, that shall be the purpose of my life and ministry.”

The Holy Spirit replied, “You will plunder hell and populate heaven for Calvary’s sake.”

“It became the motto of my life.”

***Evangelism is my calling***

The campaigns of ‘76 proved that the available rental tents in South Africa were too small. They tried several different sizes seating crowds from 800 to 3,000. Still, their crowds were greater outside the tents than inside. Reinhard continued to seek support for purchasing a super tent that would seat 5,000 but nothing seemed to come of it. It was one of those visions that wouldn’t fly. It seemed rooted in cement like Reinhard’s early attempts to raise support for the Berlin ministry to refugees.

Their reputation for miracles began to grow throughout South Africa. Reinhard was not comfortable with that. Michael and he wrote a pamphlet addressing the issue, and he recorded it as a tape for distribution. Despite that, his conviction remained that his God-given ministry was that of an evangelist. “In our ministry I do not speak of “healing campaigns” but gospel campaigns” ... evangelism is my calling. God told me Africa shall be saved, not Africa shall be healed. Sickness is not the ultimate evil; therefore healing is not the ultimate good. Sin is the ultimate evil, and salvation is the ultimate good. I have seen evangelists who come and set up a tent and do not open their Bibles. They begin to perform healings. That is not evangelism; that is a signs-and-sensations show. I do not want to be on such a platform. We conduct evangelistic campaigns, not healing campaigns. The healings are signs that follow the preaching of the gospel. They open the door for salvation on a large scale.” Then he related several notable miracles they had seen.

**The Money trap**

Anni and Reinhard were invited to the home of an heiress. When they arrived they knew that they had crossed the threshold to a level of society that they could hardly comprehend.

“I have wanted to meet you,” she greeted me cordially, “because I have watched you for some time.”

She soon came to the point, and it was so wildly beyond Reinhard’s imagination that he could only stare in wide-eyed amazement. She said, “I want to finance your gospel crusades in Africa.”

“Now,” she explained, On the table where she pushed Re *“I want to form a trust* inhard was a file which contained *and give half of my assets* documents setting out her financial *to the work of God. Would* assets. This woman had inherited *you like to join the trustees?* the untold wealth of one of South Africa’s legendary diamond mines, and she had many other holdings in natural resources that could produce more wealth.

“Now,” she explained, “I want to form a trust and give half of my assets to the work of God. Would you like to join the trustees? All this money is to be used in the service of the Lord. Will you accept it?”

She indicated that Reinhard would never have to rely on other donations. He told her that he would seek the Lord to know what to do.

When Reinhard and Anni got back home they had the same reaction. There was no excitement, only a feeling more like anxiety. We knew we must get down before the Lord about this and ask for His guidance.

“Lord, if this is a trap of the devil, we’ll have nothing to do with it,” we prayed.

Occupied with their gospel campaigns, weeks passed. They could not bring themselves to say either yes or no to the seemingly fantastic offer. Meanwhile, one night Reinhard had a dreamed that he stood on a riverbank at dusk. The water was low, leaving only puddles and mud. A small man passed him and walked down the embankment. He beckoned him, and he followed. When he was in the middle, suddenly, with an awful roar, a huge hippopotamus rose in front of Renhard. There were two species, and this was the biggest one! He backed away from its engulfing jaws, but there was another of the monsters looming behind him. Still others arose from the mud, and he was surrounded on all sides by harrying hippos! In peril and despair, he cried out, “Jesus, help me!” In his dream, He did help, and Reinhard woke up, but the impression stayed with him.

While that nightmare was still fresh in his mind, the lady contacted him again, and pressed him to meet her, as she wanted his decision. They agreed to another visit, and she welcomed them again with a smile. She said, “Before we go into the house, let me show you around here.” So, they strolled around her property with her. After a while, they came to where her grounds ended at a river, and stood looking across it.

Suddenly, a shock went through Reinhard, as if he had been struck by lightning. That river! There it was—the same as in his nightmare. The river was identical, and now he was not dreaming. There was peril lurking here—that was what the dream meant. God had shown him.

He felt the Lord near him, and he was sure his answer was coming. He asked if they could go into the house and have prayer together.

As soon as they knelt, Reinhard heard the voice of the Lord not once, but three times. "My son, have nothing to do with this." When they arose, he said to the wealthy lady, "Please allow me to decline your great generosity. Give your millions to someone else. God does not want me to have this money." At that moment, a weight lifted from his spirit. Why? It seemed so strange. God also did something else at that moment. By His Spirit, He showed me my true assets, the promises in His Word. "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory" (Phil. 4:19).

I realized that I could exhaust the millions that the lady was offering, and when they were finished, my ministry could be finished, because I had not relied upon the Lord. ***Lord, where is the 5,000-seat tent?***

The various campaigns throughout 1975 and 1976 had made it apparent to Reinhard that they needed a bigger tent. On this occasion all they had was a small 800-seat tent. Most of the crowd stood outside. In the middle of the Mbabane campaign there was a cloudburst

*At their final campaign*

*in Swaziland, something* which in moments turned the field into a quagmire. The tent was

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and reconsider her offer.*

pitched on a slight slope and Reinhard watched, horrified but helpless, as torrents of water poured down the slope and through the tent. The sick and crippled were caught in the middle of the flood as they struggled to get onto the higher ground, but for most of them the

effort was too much and all they could do was lie there in the water and mud.

At their final campaign in Swaziland, something happened that made Reinhard wish to return to the diamond heiress and reconsider her offer. They set up a rented small tent in Mbabane, and as usual, found it much too small. They pitched it in a kind of land depression that gave the crowd



amphitheatre seating on three sides outside of the tent. The crowds spilled out on all sides, and they were forced to mount extra loudspeakers to reach them all with the message. It was the best we could do.

By this time he had gained enough experience to know that he must never be without a flashlight. Each of his co-workers was instructed to do the same. They powered their speakers and lights with a Briggs and Stratton gasoline generator. During the meetings the generator would develop problems and quit on the average of twice during each of his sermons. The lights and sound would suddenly vanish, and he would rush from the platform in the dark, using his flashlight to troubleshoot the generator and get it started again. In Africa, this was taken as a matter of course.

Suddenly, during the meeting it began to rain. Then the generator went out. Reinhard rushed from the platform too quickly and slipped head over heels into the mud. He got up, prepared to preach the rest of the sermon with his backside plastered in thick goo. But he never got the chance. The heavens opened and the rain came down in such torrents that the three-sided amphitheatre became a funnel of rushing floodwaters. They poured right through the tent. In the regenerated lights he saw that everyone was running for high ground. Everyone, that is, but the cripples and sick who had come for prayer. They were being swept away in the mucky water. Some were crawling for safety. Others were being helped to higher ground. The sight of it struck him like a hammer blow.

The sad scene broke his heart and he cried out to God, ‘O God, when will we have a roof over our heads in these campaigns?’ Immediately he felt God respond and say to him, ‘Trust me for a tent for 10,000 people.’

‘But Lord,’ he said, ‘my pockets are empty.’ Again he heard God speak into his heart, clearly and decisively, ‘Do not plan with what is in your pockets, plan with what is in mine.’ Soaked himself, in the still driving rain, he replied, ‘Then, Lord, I will plan like a millionaire!’

“If this was the true heritage of my calling, I was to not worry about the supply. Dinnie had seen \$650,000,000 given to this work. I became angry at myself for my persistent small thinking. These people had come to the

meeting with high expectations only to be swept away on a senseless flood. “Lord,” I said, “from now on I’m going to plan like a millionaire!”

Reinhard ended their second season back at headquarters searching for anyone in South Africa who had a tent that would seat 10,000. No one did. Not only that, such a tent could not be manufactured in all of South Africa. He had no idea how improbable a 10,000-seat tent would be. Finally, he located a company in Milan, Italy, that could manufacture one that large. This was the only way to go. He flew there and sketched the huge tent with their designers. They put their pencils to the finished design and told him it would cost 100,000 rand to construct. For me, this was a staggering sum. “I told You I was going to plan like a millionaire, I reminded the Lord. You said for me to plan with what was in Your pockets, not mine.”

It would be a year before the tent and the new equipment would be ready for use. In that year of 1977 Reinhard had scheduled seven campaigns in the rural and tribal areas of South Africa. When possible they would hire stadiums or larger halls to house the crowds. Between campaigns he would travel to white churches in South Africa, Germany, and the United States presenting his vision for using the 10,000-seat tent. The Lord would move on those He chose to support it.



**Reinhard Bonnke with Richard**

**Ngidi**

*Where is Richard Ngidi?*

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Their first campaign was to be held in Bushbuckridge, South Africa, on the border of the great Kruger National Park. Reinhard was so excited. This was the primitive tribal region. Bushbuckridge was in the Northern Transvaal region. The people would come from their mud-and-thatch huts, most of them walking for many miles, to attend their crusade. He could hardly wait to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to them. And Richard had agreed to pray for the sick. They had sent out his picture with Reinhard on all the advance posters.

*Reinhard thought*

*Richard must have surely missed his train.*

*So he waited for the next train. And the next. When he did not step off the final train the Lord spoke to him, "Ngidi will not come. You must go on without him."*

Reinhard went personally to pick Richard up in his car. He would meet him at the train station in Springs. When the scheduled train arrived he was waiting. All of the passengers walked past him on the landing, but no Richard. He had the same feeling that had come over him when John Bosman told him to close the Maseru meeting. And when, the next day, he had packed his bags and left.

But then, Reinhard thought Richard must have surely missed his train. So he waited for the next train. And the next. When he did not step off the final train the Lord spoke to him, "Ngidi will not come. You must go on without him."

“I recalled that Richard had first committed to two years of ministry. Only the period of one year had just passed. But he had not resigned. He had not mentioned that this was the end. Rather, he had specifically promised to meet me at this train station. However, he had broken his promise. ‘Lord,’ I asked, ‘how will the crusade be without him?’

I am with you.

These words burned into my heart and mind, and I left at once for the meetings. In one sense, I traveled with a lonely sensation, a feeling of pain in my heart. I had so wanted to share the podium with Richard. Richard never came back. Now I was alone, but hardly alone. As a human being I wished it could be otherwise, but if God had said He was with me, what else really mattered?”

### ***Richard Ngidi was wrong***

The first meeting was well attended; the event Israel Malele, a young student from the University of the North had organized. Many had come expecting Richard to be there. Reinhard announced, as he had done in Maseru, that Pastor Ngidi had failed to turn up but that Jesus did turn up. Some left.

After preaching the gospel Reinhard felt urged of the Lord to pray for the sick in a particular manner. He first called all of the total-ly blind people to come forward. When they had assembled he told them to keep their eyes closed until they heard his command. Then he laid his hands on each of them, praying for their dead eyes to be opened. Finally, he stood on the platform and commanded, “Blind eyes, open!”

The next crusade at Giyani astonished Reinhard beyond words. It began in the 400-seat auditorium of a Christian school. The local postmaster came forward in the first meeting to receive Jesus.

“Miracles of healing also happened. Within three nights the seating capacity of the auditorium was overwhelmed. The school principal suggested we move to a fairground some five miles away. It was a difficult decision but necessary. Nearly all of our people were walking to the school site. It meant

that they would have to walk five miles farther to reach our new place of meeting. But they did.

As I prayed for the sick many people who had arrived walking on crutches left their crutches behind like litter on the ground. They walked home without them. There were so many crutches that I instructed our team to pick them up and assemble them in a pile. As the pile grew to the final night, we posed for a picture beside it. I sent it to all the people who were supporting our campaigns.”

Reinhard brought the crutches back to their ministry headquarters. There was a tree on the property, and he thought they could decorate it like a Christmas tree, using the crutches as ornaments. As they stood back to admire their work, Michael Kolisang stood beside Reinhard. He turned and said, “Richard Ngidi was wrong.” “Wrong to leave? Yes, I think he was.” “No. I mean, he was wrong about you.”

“About me?”

“He said, ‘When I leave, Bonnke is finished.’”

I could not believe my ears. “He said what? What do you suppose he meant by that?”<sup>52</sup>

“I think he meant that you could not go on without him.”

### **Hermann Bonnke speaks at the largest crowd of his life**

They began the 1978 season with a campaign in Seshego near Pieterburg in the north, a city renamed Polokwane in the new South Africa. This was their first outing for the Yellow tent. At delivery time they had paid not 100,000 rand for the tent, but 200,000. Costs had ballooned in the construction process. In addition, they had hired a full time tent master and had purchased a fleet of trucks for transporting their equipment. They also had cars that hauled trailer homes for living quarters for Reinhard and all of their team. A new large speaker system had been purchased to hang inside the tent, plus we had booster speaker systems for the outside.

After drawing the crowd in Sibasa, they knew that in many crusades

the tent would not hold the crowd. They made quite a show on the road with their caravan rolling northward, advertising their presence in South

Africa. It was an even greater show when that big yellow tent went up on the meeting site.

In 1979 their team had been traveling to Zimbabwe to organize an extensive five-month campaign, scheduled for 1980. As the time arrived, they set up the 10,000-seat tent in the capital city of Harare. Reinhard's father traveled with him to these meetings and sat beside him on the platform.

On the opening night the tent was almost full. Reinhard gave his father the microphone and allowed him to greet the largest crowd he had ever addressed in his life. He told the story of how he had not taken his son's call to Africa seriously when he was a ten-year-old

*When Reinhard gave the invitation that night he saw the greatest response to the gospel of his entire ministry by then. 3,000 souls crowded the front.*

boy. Then he told of Grandma Gerda Bauszuss' vision of Reinhard as a boy sharing bread with a large crowd in Africa. When Reinhard gave the invitation that night he saw the greatest response to the gospel of his entire ministry by then. 3,000 souls crowded the front. He turned and saw his father's eyes full of tears. So were his.

On the final night the crowd tripled. Reinhard handed his father the microphone again. He told his story again, this time choking back emotion as he spoke. 5,000 new converts pressed forward to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A wave of power prostrated many of them as they raised their hands to receive. They were speaking in tongues by the thousands. His father had never seen such a thing in the hardened spiritual soil of Germany.

Within a few days, however, a huge wind and torrential rain transported the site into a quagmire. One service was abandoned as the safety of the crowd was threatened. Part of the roof tore, and the masts were in danger of collapsing. That night one mast did collapse, and the tent filled with water, having to be slit to prevent the whole structure being destroyed. It was a catastrophe, and although Reinhard was not surrendering, neither was he winning. God supplied the necessary spark of faith through a local Elijah.

Elijah Mulawudzi had been saved in the previous campaign in Vendaland, and he came and sought Reinhard out. With all the enthusiasm of the new believer he said, ‘Pastor, didn’t you preach that all things are possible to them that believe?’

‘Yes, you are right,’ he said. ‘I did preach it, and I do believe it.’ As he spoke, his faith lifted, and he took up the challenge. He called together his bedraggled army and told them, ‘In the name of Jesus we are going to stay and preach the gospel.’

Within a short time the rain ceased, the sun came out, and the whole scene changed. People came until the tent overflowed. Back from a preaching tour in Germany, Reinhard pressed on with campaigns in South Africa at Namakgale, Phalaborwa; Mabopabe, Pretoria and Acornhoek in Greenvalley. Here the tentmaster had phoned him to say that the site was poor. If it rained, the tent would collapse. Reinhard told him, ‘I tell you in the name of Jesus, it is not going to rain.’

Then in the middle of the seventeen-day campaign disaster threatened as a great storm could be seen brewing over the mountains. The wind was rising and it was all too clear they were right in its path. The black clouds rolled towards them and as the wind tugged at Reinhard’s hair, the Holy Spirit spoke: ‘Rebuke the devil.’

Reinhard shouted, ‘Devil, if you destroy this tent, I am going to trust God for one three times as big.’ Before his eyes the storm clouds parted and passed widely on either side of the tent, without touching the tent area. Later, Reinhard realised he had made a mistake, and full of faith declared, ‘Devil, I do not make any deals with you. The big tent comes anyway.’ Thus was birthed the vision of the tent which was to catch the eyes of the world. **A spiritual desert where witchcraft ruled**

Spiritual warfare continued with especially heavy attacks by satanists and efforts by demons to disrupt the services.

In July and August, the caravan of trucks and vehicles rolled Gazankulu. Their equipment could hang in the air. It had rained in many months, but

what they found among the people was even worse: The place was a spiritual desert where fear and witchcraft ruled.

Night after night, the services were interrupted when people suddenly let out the most chilling shrieks.

Even during the day, people would be wandering around the big tent moaning and groaning. At night, Reinhard and the team got very little sleep because of the sinister atmosphere and the ear-piercing screams that occasionally rent the air. It was like being awake in the middle of an awful nightmare.

Reinhard recognized that a tremendous battle was going on in the supernatural as the Holy Spirit moved to set people free. The demonic forces were being provoked and manifested themselves with awful cries. He was furious, however, why so much demon power was being concentrated around the tent. One day, he visited a nearby village, a series of lopsided mud huts with grass roofs. In addition to the regular dwelling places, he found it filled with witchcraft fetishes and strange writings. The tiny huts were, in fact, shrines built especially for demons. Now that they were hearing the gospel, they wanted to be free, but the demons were reluctant to leave the victims they tormented and held captive.

The case of one young girl is typical of what happened during this crusade. She came eagerly to hear the gospel, but as soon as she entered the tent, she went into a frenzy. They prayed for her, but it seemed she could not get released from the evil powers that possessed her, Pastor Kolisang went to her hut and found, as he suspected, a large cache of fetishes and other witchcraft items. The moment those things were removed and burned, the girl became completely free.

Reinhard also learned more about the deliverance ministry. In his early encounters with demonic forces, he used to run from one place to another, trying to pray and cast out the demons.

“I used to jump everywhere, and I would fall into bed exhausted at night. I realized that if I continued like that, I would not make it to forty years of age. I then learned to have faith in the Holy Spirit and to let Him move in.”



One time several satanists came into the meeting accompanied by a witch highly rated for her ability to cast spells. As she tried to cast a spell, she began to shake from head to foot and shouted to her companions. "Get me out, get me out." One of the satanists seeing this, reasoned that Jesus is more powerful than Lucifer or any witch and decided to renounce the devil and become a child of God. He later

54

told Reinhard of the plan to disrupt the service. **Bonnke in Uganda**

They secured a piece of land in KwaThema near their headquarters where the team could do a test run of the great tent apparatus. A full erection involved twelve masts. Their test run would use only six. They positioned it near the freeway where passing traffic could not miss it. Peter van den Berg scheduled the erection of the masts as Reinhard left on a preaching trip to Uganda in 1983.

The notorious regime of Idi Amin had been deposed three years before. Milton Obote had come to power in Uganda and was involved in a long civil war that would eventually lead to his ouster in 1985. But in '83 the scene in the city of Kampala was calm, and local pastors were calling Reinhard to hold a public crusade there. "The Lord seemed to smile upon the timing."

Under Amin more than a million had been slaughtered. Pentecostals and Evangelicals had often been the targets of his evil paranoia and rage. Their homes had been raided and lives lost.

"In the emerging climate of tolerance I believed we could see souls saved. As a bonus, we could give visibility to the idea of religious freedom in this troubled country. But in the back of my mind, something nagged at me.

As his plane made its approach to Entebbe, where the famous Israeli raid had first broken the grip of Amin on this nation, he was reminded of a prophetic warning. It had come recently during a prayer session between some of their team: "... a time will come when some of us will lay down our lives ... The path we are treading is red with the blood of martyrs who have gone before us ... but the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the

church ... no matter the cost, this prophecy will find fulfillment.” Reinhard prayed that the increasing dangers they faced would be met by an even greater force of divine protection and preservation. “I do not want to see one life lost, Father, in Jesus’ name.”

As they drove from Entebbe to Kampala, Reinhard commented on *Their meeting site* the absence of posters in the markets and public transportation ter

*was located on the*

*city square, just a stone’s throw from the Supreme Court building. Reinhard*

*was happy to see that a good crowd of several thousand show up the first day.*

minals where he normally saw them. He was told that the locals had not seen such posters in many years. As a result, people were stealing them and using them to decorate their homes.

“I sincerely hoped that these well-intentioned thieves would come to the meetings and repent. Perhaps they would come with their households, and perhaps even their neighborhoods. Otherwise, we were in trouble.”

Their meeting site was located on the city square, just a stone’s throw from the Supreme Court building. Reinhard was happy to see that a good crowd of several thousand show up the first day. Many responded to the invitation. God’s power was displayed. Healings were manifested. In fact, that first day they made so much noise praising God that the court had to adjourn. They were asked to cancel the afternoon meeting scheduled for the next day so the Supreme Court could conduct important business.



**World's largest tent. It could seat 34,000 people. The yellow tent besides turned into a counseling centre for new believers**

Crowds grew, and the final meeting of the campaign was held on a Sunday afternoon. As they gathered Reinhard could see giant storm clouds building to the south over Lake Victoria.

They were headed our way. He preached a hurried sermon. No sooner had he concluded than large raindrops began to fall. Then the sky opened up as only it can on the equator.

He quickly got into a car that had been parked for him nearby. As he watched, he expected the crowd to leave. The opposite happened. He saw a spiritual hunger so real that a full tropical downpour would not dampen it.

“That really touched my heart. I got out of that car and grabbed the microphone again. If they would endure the rain, so would I. Someone tried to follow me with an umbrella, but I got drenched anyway. I ministered and prayed for the sick until we had finished our course.”

**Kenneth Copeland prophesies to Reinhard Bonnke**

After landing in South Africa, Anni met him and drove them toward Witfield. She asked a dozen questions about the Uganda meetings as they traveled. Reinhard gave her his stories, one after another. Then he noticed a new construction project against the skyline. Six large cranes were installing a huge steel superstructure beside the freeway. Suddenly, he

realized what he was seeing. He looked at Anni, and she was smiling to herself.

Anni pulled off the highway and into the field so he could savor the sight. This was the test installation of the big tent. It was so big he had not recognized it at first. After so many setbacks, seeing those six masts rising so high was almost more than he could absorb.

Once installation was complete, they held a series of meetings right there on the test site. In the half-tent, they registered 8,000 decisions for Christ. “I left for America bursting with a new excitement. And I had a story to share.”

On Saturday, February 18, 1984, they prepared for the dedication service for the world’s largest tent. As Reinhard waited with Anni and his father in a nearby trailer a knock came at his door. His friend Ray McCauley stood there with Kenneth and Gloria Copeland from Ft. Worth, Texas. He asked them to come in. They had been drawn to the reports of Reinhard’s work and had come to see it for themselves.

“I want to support CfaN,” Kenneth said. “I preach to the saved, you preach to the unsaved. We should be partners.”

“I am being instructed in the Spirit to prophesy to you,” he continued. “I declare that you have seen nothing yet. You will see a day in which one million souls will respond to the gospel in a single meeting. Thus saith the Lord.”

“God is saying more to me,” Kenneth went on. “You have come from Germany, and the Pentecostal experience in Germany has been difficult and dark. But I tell you by the power of the Holy Spirit that change is coming to your homeland. Doors will be thrown open, minds will be renewed, and the wall that divides Berlin, and divides Germany into east and west will come down and be ground to powder. I declare this in the name of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, before whom every knee will bow. Consider it done.”

**The world’s largest tent is destroyed**

Later, Reinhard and Anni flew on to Calcutta. His sister, Felicitas, worked there as a surgical nurse in Mark Buntain's hospital. She and her husband, Dr. Ron Shaw had set up a hall for a series of meetings. Upon Reinhard and Anni's arrival his sister warned him that Calcutta is known as the graveyard for great evangelists. He replied, "No worry, Sis. It doesn't apply to me, I'm not a great evangelist."

She laughed and told him that mass evangelism simply did not work here the way it did in Africa. All of that may have been true, but the Holy Spirit works the same in every culture. They were delighted to see nearly 4,000 decisions for Christ in those meetings. Reinhard encouraged the new believers to depend upon the Holy Spirit and to rid themselves of idolatry. They responded by cutting off occultist bracelets and charms from their necklaces, arms, legs, and waist<sup>As Reinhard</sup> bands. They made a great bonfire and burned them.

"We were told that no other evangelist in Calcutta had challenged the people to do such a thing. We saw miraculous healings of the blind and lame."

*ministered on May 5, the Lord spoke to him: The tent is destroyed.*

As Reinhard ministered on May 5, the Lord spoke to him: The tent is destroyed. It was stated as a matter of fact. Pure and simple. That night he told Anni what the Lord had said.

"What do you think has happened?"

"I do not know, but I am worried."

"Of course you are worried."

"No, I am not worried about the tent. That's what worries me. I should be worried about it, but I'm not. I feel nothing but peace."

Two days later the news arrived from Cape Town. On Saturday, May 5, the tent erection was complete. That afternoon a storm of wind and rain descended. A few rips appeared in the fabric. They had been quickly repaired.

As evening fell the wind increased. Gerhard Ganske, who was in char

ge of the tent's anchor system, circled the tent checking the security of the cement reinforced anchors. Everything held securely.

Milton Kasselmann, the chief electrician, went inside the tent. It held the wind at bay. Overhead the twelve masts swayed slightly, as they should. He checked the mounted flood lamps and the speaker towers. All was well.

Tent master, Kobus de Lange, and his assistant, Horst Kosanke, checked the miles of cables that counterbalanced all the forces of wind and gravity. They were doing their job. He ordered the crew back to their quarters to sleep and wait out the storm.

Suddenly, at 4 am, they were awakened by the sound of ripping fabric. As they rushed outside, winds were ripping the tent to shreds. It was not a hurricane. It was not even a wind strong enough to cause normal alarm. The damage they were seeing seemed supernatural, as if evil demonic forces in the wind were violently attacking the structure. They watched helplessly as pieces came loose and flew across the surrounding city of Cape Town. By 9:30 a.m. only a few strands of fabric remained. All of the steel and cable structure remained unhurt. It looked like a huge skeleton with no skin or meat remaining on the bones.

Some of the crew were reduced to uncontrolled weeping. Five years of focused labor was destroyed in five hours. The atmosphere became like being at a funeral. That Sunday morning churches across Cape Town mourned the loss. Their hopes had been raised so high only to be dashed to pieces by the demonic wind. Shreds of the world's largest tent became collectors items for the residents of Cape Town. They were found scattered for miles downwind of the tent site.

Curiosity seekers came to the sports field to see the destruction. Some laughed at the calamity. They stood in the high-rise balconies and on bridges and other vantage points from which to view it. Christians gathered on the grounds, weeping, falling to their knees beneath the steel structure, praying. News media made the story front page all that day and the next. **Thousands accept Christ in Cape Town**

However, the crusade committee from Cape Town had already decided that they should go ahead with the meetings. While meeting in emergency session immediately after the event, they had received a prophecy from one of their members, the wife of Pastor Dave Onions. “My glory shall be the canopy that covers the people, and the praises of My people shall be the pillars.”

“Bolstered by the words of this prophecy the committee immediately voted to proceed with the campaign. This decision would require a weather miracle. May weather in Cape Town is notoriously wet. The churches banded together in a vast network of prayer for good weather. We would seat people under the stars, using the floodlights and speakers as designed for the tent.

As Reinhard returned to his office he found telephone calls, tele - grams, cards, and letters from around the world waiting for him. The news of the disaster had gone as far as the news of the big tent. Most of the response was overwhelmingly encouraging. But a large minority of naysayers had their day.

With this disaster, people had much more to say. “This is God’s judgment on you.” “You’re out of the will of God.” “You’ve moved out from under the umbrella of divine protection.” “There is sin in your camp.” The one that hit the lowest came from a dear Pentecostal sister back in Germany. This lady had supported their work faithfully and substantially over the years. She wrote to tell him that she had seen pictures of the tent dedication in Soweto. The pictures showed that Anni had cut her hair. This sin, she said, had led to this disaster. She pledged that she would no longer send money to CfaN. She would only pray for their repentance.

“Even some of my co-workers lost heart. They felt that we’d been overcome by the Enemy. This was one of our darkest days. a rumor circulated that Muslims from Valhalla had marched around our tent site and had called down a curse on it. No one could offer me proof, and I gave no credence to this report.”

However, God held the weather at bay for a full three weeks. Local weathercasters described it as an “Indian summer.” Furthermore, the

destruction of their canopy had made them a household word in Cape Town. The media had trumpeted their story to everyone. Incredible stories of believers taking pieces of their canopy and laying it on sick people and seeing them healed were told.

Their first meeting drew a crowd of 25,000. By the third night the crowd reached 40,000. By the second Sunday they saw 60,000 in attendance. On the final night, 75,000 filled the field. At this point everyone began to see that the tent had never been big enough to hold the crowd God intended to attract in Cape Town.

During this crusade the notorious district of Valhalla did not record *By the final night* a single crime. The police came to see what *we had counted* had hit their city. They saw criminals tossing *29,000 conversions* guns and knives onto the platform in repentance.

“We turned truckloads of stolen material over to them for restitution. Miracles happened every day. At times the platform was littered with empty wheelchairs, discarded

*to Christ. Several churches were pioneered during the campaign follow-up.*

crutches, and canes. White citizens of Cape Town, who had never set foot in Valhalla out of fear, came to see it transformed by the gospel.”

By the final night they had counted 29,000 conversions to Christ. Several churches were pioneered during the campaign follow-up. In other local congregations, pastors were kept busy for weeks baptizing new believers. **Kenneth Copeland gives funds for buying of the next tent**

Peter told Reinhard he had located another company that would manufacture a tent top for them that would not blow apart in a storm. It was a deal he could broker through a company in England. However, their insurance settlement was becoming locked up in court. He told Reinhard



with a worried look in his eye that it appeared it could take many years to settle.

At this time Reinhard found that their team was in a general state of unbelief. He wanted to encourage them.

“I don’t know what to do,” I said. “I simply know that I’m not worried about the tent.”

“As I said goodbye to my weary team, I said, “If you can’t trust God today, trust me, and I will trust Him.”

With that, Reinhard caught a flight to America. On the long trip he had a new surge of excitement in his soul.

He had no sooner landed at the Dallas-Ft. Worth Airport than he was whisked away to a pastors’ conference hosted by Kenneth Copeland, already in progress. They seated him on the front row, and Kenneth greeted him.

After the meeting Kenneth and Gloria invited him to join them at a nice restaurant for dinner. He was too far gone to say no due to jetlag. Somehow he managed to keep moving and not fall prostrate. At dinner Kenneth told him he had heard about the tent. He asked him to tell him what happened. Reinhard told him how the fabric had failed in the wind. They had discovered that it had a design flaw. An insurance settlement was tied up in court. It would be years before they saw the verdict. In the meantime, Peter van den Berg had found a new fabric through a company in England that would hold in a hurricane.

“How much will it cost?”

“\$800,000.”

“The Lord has told me to give you what you need. I am giving you \$800,000. Go buy a new top for the tent.”

Reinhard was too stunned and too jet lagged to reply at first. “When God tells me to give, I get excited. He’s telling me to plant a seed in good soil with CfaN. My faith puts the seed in the ground where God directs. The harvest belongs to the Lord. And let me tell you, His harvest will sweep my little financial troubles away like so

much chaff on the wind. Hallelujah! Praise God.”

### **Richard Ngidi regrets leaving Reinhard Bonnke**

Reinhard began speaking in churches and conferences across South Africa, telling about the coming Fire Conference. People began applying to come to the conference. Others began recommending those who should attend. And partners began to sponsor the 1,000 evangelists they had targeted for this wonderful service.

In the town of Pietermaritzburg in Natal Province, Reinhard preached one Sunday. As he was speaking, a man entered the building late and sat on the back row. He recognized him immediately. It was Richard Ngidi.

Reinhard’s heart leapt at the thought that he might want to come *“Is it true that* to the Fire Conference. Reinhard would, of course, sponsor him. *you spoke to*

*80,000 in Cape  
Town in one  
service?”*

But that is not why he had come. After the service closed he approached Reinhard hesitantly. “I could see that he was uneasy. We had unfinished business from the time he had failed to show up for the Bushbuckridge meetings. In the eight years that followed, he had offered neither explanation nor apology. No matter. I was ready to forgive him and see our relationship restored.”

Reinhard hugged him and they greeted each other as old friends. Then Reinhard said to him, “Is it true that you spoke to 80,000 in Cape Town in one service?”

“No,” I replied, “I’m sure it was only 75,000.”

“Oh,” he said, nodding. “Now I know what a mistake I have made.”

“What mistake, Richard?”

“Oh, no,” he said, looking away. “This is between God and me.”

He bowed his head and walked away.

Reinhard knew what he meant. He had told Michael Kolisang, “When I leave, Bonnke is finished.” From the evidence of the crowd in Cape Town, obviously God was not finished with me. Therefore, Bonnke was not finished.

“I watched him move slowly toward the door, unsteady on his feet. I felt such sadness. I wanted to find some way to go back to the purity of our first meeting, our first embrace, and our early meetings when we had ministered together. I remembered the power of his example to me at the beginning. I had so looked up to him in the healing ministry. But something had entered his mind that had driven us apart. He had seen me as dependant on him, when in truth, I was dependent on God.

Weeks later, I stood at Richard’s casket, looking down at the quiet flesh that had once glowed with a reckless faith. He had died at age 66 of complications from diabetes, refusing to see a doctor to the very end. He was a giant in the kingdom of God. Yet there were mysteries about him that I will not understand this side of heaven. I greatly mourned my Zulu friend and fellow servant, and comforted myself knowing that his pain was over, and he was now with the Lord.”

## **Spreading the Fire**

All this time the burden to organise massive ‘Fire Conference’ for evangelists from every part of Africa was never far from Reinhard’s mind. The death in May 1985 of his good friend and colleague, evangelist Richard Ngidi, only served to fuel his determination to hold this conference. In his tribute to this great Zulu Christian leader, Reinhard said, ‘He was a giant in the kingdom of God and a man of faith. It was his faith in the early days of Christ for all Nations that really got me rolling.’ The purpose of the Fire Conference was to help as many African evangelists as possible.

The strategy behind this conference was a directive of the Holy Spirit to Reinhard, ‘Multiply your ministry.’ How? ‘Through a conference.’

But this was to be a conference with a difference. The objective was to set evangelists on fire and inspire them with faith to fulfil Christ’s Great Commission.

While the vision of a blood-washed Africa gripped his heart, the overwhelming enormity of the task made it clear that every hand was needed on deck.

With this in mind, Reinhard also decided that this would be more than a conference. He wanted to demonstrate 'fire' evangelism. There would therefore be a gospel campaign at the same time as the conference, so that during the day the evangelists could be taught, and in the evenings they could see the power of God in action. It was proved to be a divinely inspired concept which would be built upon in later years.

It was settled that this great conference would be held in Harare, Zimbabwe, but twice the provisional dates had to be changed. Originally conceived for the end of 1984, it was moved to 1985, and then postponed further to 1986.

The new roof of the big gospel tent was finally completed in time for the Fire Conference at Harare which took place 21st to 27th April 1986 under the direction of Chris Lodewyk. The name, For Inter-African Revival Evangelists (FIRE) was not much of a hit but the conference was.

*For Inter-African*

*Revival Evangelists (FIRE) was not much of a hit but the conference was.*

It was a gigantic venture of faith to bring together so many evangelists from every part of Africa, as well as many other parts of the world. Reinhard undertook to sponsor 1,000 evangelists from Africa for the conference.

There were 4,100 delegates, and forty-one out of forty-four African countries were represented, as well as delegates from twenty non-African nations. **Ministering to his brothers**

During those years of building the ministry, Reinhard would sometimes travel home to Germany for a visit. His mother and father watched from afar the beginnings of Christ for all Nations. But for many years, his brothers continued to ridicule the work.

His heart would hurt as he saw millions of decisions for Christ around the world, and would come home to find that his own brothers were still completely hardened to the gospel of Jesus.

Jürgen's house had become the place he least enjoyed to visit. He had married a woman who was a secretary. She thought of herself as highly intelligent. Christian faith was something to be ridiculed and attacked. She remained completely hostile to the gospel. When Reinhard visited, she would become aggressive, constantly challenging him to answer questions about the failure of the Christian faith. She attacked him with so much vigor that Jürgen was put to shame. Reinhard could tell that he loved him as a brother, even if he looked down on his life of ministry. He could gently oppose him, but did not want the conflict to become so mean.

When visiting Jürgen's house, and all of his brothers' houses, he took the "soft answer turns away wrath" approach. He stopped talking of things that he knew would rile their emotions. Instead, he spoke in more general terms, and he spent more time and effort listening. Since they all shared the same gospel-filled childhood, he believed that he should win them with sugar, not with confrontation. This approach had borne some fruit. **CfaN headquarters moved to Germany, Jürgen accepts Jesus**

The year was 1985. At this time in Reinhard's ministry, he had begun planning to move Christ for all Nations from Johannesburg to Frankfurt. It was a huge move. They would lose most of the prayer partners and supporters they had won in South Africa over a full decade of ministry there. God had widened the Christ for all Nations river thro

ugh these people so that they could have maneuverability. But this maneuver seemed like it would narrow their channel again, just when they needed to step out and do greater things for God. Reinhard was trusting that he had heard Him correctly. Many confirmations had already come.

For one thing, the Apartheid policy of South Africa had become a liability to their work. Some countries were working against them because of it. They were being painted with the racist brush simply because of their address. The Lord showed him that a German passport would allow his

team to move freely in countries that were diplomatically opposed to them at the time.

Reinhard got up from bed to start his day. He continued the intense planning for this major move to Germany. In the middle of his work, he heard the voice of the Holy Spirit, clearly in his heart. “You didn’t write the letter. I will require his blood at your hands.”

He stopped everything. He wrote that letter, telling Jürgen what He had seen in the dream. He sent it. Jürgen did not hear a reply. He went on with life and forgot about it.

They moved to Germany. Reinhard and Anni made ready their new residence to receive their children home on visit from the university. They arrived, and they had prepared dinner. Just as they were sitting down to eat, Reinhard was handed a letter addressed to me from Jürgen. Reinhard opened it and read:

Dear Reinhard,

My wife left me. My best friend died of cancer. I was so frustrated I thought life was not worth living. I wanted to kill myself. But in the night I had a dream. I was walking on a bridge. It had no handrails and I fell down and screamed as I fell. I woke up, sweating with fear. I jumped out of bed and said, “Almighty God, You know that I don’t even believe in You, but I have a brother who serves You. If You have spoken to me through this dream, speak to me through Reinhard.” Sometime later, your letter came. Your dream was my dream. I have given my life to Jesus. He has forgiven me of my sins.

Even in front of his children, Reinhard broke down and cried like a baby. He could not help himself, and no one could eat for some time after that.

The divine timing of this move prevented the stain of apartheid from affecting the work of their ministry. For the next eight years, South Africa struggled to transition to its new form of democracy. Meanwhile, Christ for All Nations was catapulted into favor and prominence all over Africa. **Riot in Kano, Nigeria**

In 1991 Reinhard flew to Kano, Nigeria. The evangelistic meetings would begin in two days. Peter van den Berg, his ministry director, and evangelist Brent Urbanowicz, one of his future sons-in-law, flew with him. At the airport, they came down the stairway and were met by the local sponsoring board of pastors.

John Darku, the crusade director, looked worried. He took him to one side. “Reinhard,” he said, “you cannot go into the terminal. There are snipers who have sworn to kill you.”

He looked at the terminal and could see armed soldiers standing by the windows.

“You are sure of this?”

“We are sure.”

Reinhard thought John might have been overreacting. Perhaps there had been death threats and he was going the extra mile. Still, he appreciated his caution. His main concern, in this case, was the responsibility he had for the partners who would be arriving in a matter of hours from the United States and Europe. He wasn't concerned about himself because he had preached under death threats before. His guests were coming to witness the largest crowds in the history of Christ for all Nations Crusades.

“The snipers will have to get past the soldiers,” Reinhard suggested.

“It can be done,” John replied. “Some of the soldiers are Muslim. They might have radical sympathies.”

“Okay, John. What are we to do?”

A line of cars and drivers pulled up next to them. Obviously, a plan was underway.

“The government has arranged to process your passport through back channels,” he explained. “Airport authorities want you to leave through a secret entrance.”

Reinhard nodded.

*The three of them were put quickly into separate vehicles. Reinhard was placed*

*in the lead car, and his driver quickly sped across the tarmac. The others followed close behind.*

The three of them were put quickly into separate vehicles. Reinhard was placed in the lead car, and his driver quickly sped across the tarmac. The others followed close behind. The cars went behind a hangar, and suddenly they stopped. The drivers leaped out. They took him from his seat and exchanged him quickly with Brent, who had been in a trailing car. Then they were off again.

“Why have you done this?” Reinhard asked.

“The snipers may not know what you look like. We thought we would at least confuse them.”

As they sped on, Reinhard wondered if Brent understood that he had just been made a decoy for snipers who were looking for him.

They left the airport property and began driving an erratic route through the back streets. It was nearly dark when they arrived at their rented house. They unpacked and settled in. By telephone and two-way radio, Reinhard’s team monitored the arrivals of all their American and European guests. Group by group, they found their way to their accommodations in Kano without incident.

He listened to local radio news of Muslim unrest concerning their visit. He thought that underneath all the arguments, they were really upset that many Muslims would turn to Christ in those crusades, as they had done a year earlier in Kaduna. They prayed about it, committing themselves and everyone associated with the crusade into the hands of God.

Reinhard laid down in the darkness, but sleep would not come. From the distance, he heard the haunting wail of a muezzin calling the Muslim faithful to prayer.

“Had I really heard it? Or was my imagination now running wild? I silently prayed, Lord, has my zeal for reaching Nigeria blinded me? Have I been unwise? I’ve brought these innocent people into danger. Protect them, Lord.”



The next morning after devotions, Reinhard told the men that he would like to drive through the city, as he normally does. He wanted to see the people of Kano for himself.

Peter and Brent went with him in the car. As they drove, he noticed many more mosques than churches in Kano. During their tour they drove past the local Emir's palace. The Emir is not a religious leader. He is the Muslim political leader for a region. Outside of his palace they saw a crowd of thousands of young men dressed in white robes. They had blocked the road. They drove slowly up to them, and they parted like the Red Sea to let them pass through. Many of them bent down and looked intently into the car as the three moved through the crowd. Reinhard noticed that all of the young men seemed to be very angry, but we passed through without incident.

At noon they arrived back at their house. Their host met them, wringing his hands. "Kano is burning," he said. "A Muslim mob has gone on a rampage."

They looked back toward the city and could see columns of smoke rising. Reports came to them that the young men they had seen at the Emir's palace had just come from a mosque where a mullah had told them, "Bonnke must not be allowed to preach in the holy city of Kano."

"How had they missed us? We had driven straight through their midst. Had the Holy Spirit simply blinded their eyes? If one of those young men had recognized my face, we would have been dragged from the car and killed on the spot. The city was covered with our crusade posters. My picture was prominently displayed everywhere. How had we escaped? Unable to find me, the mob had begun targeting Christian churches, homes, businesses, and pedestrians."

The next morning, John Darku arrived at their house with a senior Air Force officer. The officer said, "The Governor has declared a state of emergency. You must pack your things and leave now."  
"Where will we go?"

"I have arranged to take you to another place," John said. "The airport is teeming with rioters. They are trying to cut off your escape route. We can't

go back there. They are getting too close to this house, and *“John,” Reinhard said, you have been seen in this neighborhood. “we cannot stay here. It won’t be safe to stay.” They are going to*

*search house to house “How much time do we have?” Reinhard for me. I cannot bear asked. to bring this woman*

*and her children into “Five minutes,” the Air Force officer said. such danger.” He looked genuinely scared. “Get your things. We must go, now!”*

John drove them to another house. It belonged to a precious Christian woman. When they arrived there, her children were keeping watch. They came and told them that they had seen Muslim rioters only a few blocks away.

“John,” Reinhard said, “we cannot stay here. They are going to search house to house for me. I cannot bear to bring this woman and her children into such danger.”

John nodded. He took them on another high-speed trip through the back streets. They arrived at the home of a local businessman. He must have been a very brave fellow to allow them to stay in his home that night.

From the roof of the house, they could see the reflection of fires flickering across the night sky. Explosions could be heard as petrol stations were set on fire, billowing huge clouds of black smoke into the air. Occasional gunfire rattled through the darkness. They were out of sight, but hardly removed from the danger zone. The entire city was being ransacked in a mad search for Bonnke. That night on the news they heard that the government had closed the airspace over Kano. He ordered that the crusade planned for the next day would not go on.

The next morning he sent word to his team to gather at his location for prayer. They would decide what to do next. Their people came, but they told of seeing dead bodies and burned-out wreckage strewn through the streets as they drove to the meeting. Hundreds were dying. The mob was

totally out of control. The local police were not able to contain them. As Christians were encountered, they were being killed. **Flying out of Nigeria**

The officer from the Air Force base came to the compound. He told them that the Army was clearing the airport, trying to secure it so that they could leave. They would provide for an emergency air evacuation. He urged them to get out as fast as they could. “They are like ants,” he said. “They are swarming wherever they go. If they find this location they will soon come pouring over the property.”

Reinhard asked that all of their guests from America and Europe be allowed to leave first. The military officer disagreed. He persuaded Reinhard that since he was the target of this violence, he should leave first. If it became known that he had gone, the mob might calm down and disperse. Others would be in less danger as they were being airlifted out.

“The longer you stay, the longer this violence will go on,” he said.

He agreed to cooperate. Once the airport was secure, they would escort him to an airplane and announce in the news media that he had gone. He asked all of his team members to stay in the compound and join him in this evacuation. It seemed the only thing to do.

As they waited for word from the airport, he took a walk around the grounds. A feeling of grief came over him. All of the events in Kano became glaringly real. Christians were dying because he had come to town. Yet, no – it was much more than that. Kano was burning

*Bonnke looked at the street, imagining the mob swarming in their direction. “What will I do, Lord, if suddenly they appear, demanding Reinhard Bonnke?”*

because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. “If the world hates you,” Jesus said in John 15:18, “you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.”

Bonnke looked at the street, imagining the mob swarming in their direction. “What will I do, Lord, if suddenly they

appear, demanding Reinhard Bonnke?”

In only a moment, Reinhard knew the answer, and he felt His peace settle over him.

Peter van den Berg walked up to join him.

“Peter,” Reinhard said, “if that mob shows up before they get the airport secure, I will give myself up to them. I want you to know that.”

“I won’t let you give yourself up.”

“You must. I will identify myself, Reinhard Bonnke, an evangelist for the Lord Jesus Christ, and go out to them. That might save the others. My life is His.”

“If they show up,” Peter said, “I’ll grab you and drag you up to the roof there. We’ll both take up roof tiles and battle them to the last man, that’s what we’ll do!”

Both of them had been through many adventures together on the road to a blood-washed Africa. Reinhard knew Peter well enough to know that he meant what he said. And he knew him well enough to

know that he too meant what he said – immovable force and unstoppable object. They said no more but went back inside.

At this time, Winfried Wentland, the foreman of Reinhard’s crusade facilities crew, approached him. His wife, Gabrielle stood beside him. Winfried is a focused and intense man, a former German soldier of wiry build. Gabrielle, called “Gaby,” is his match. If ever two people could see through the smoke of Kano to the real fire – the mission of saving souls – it was this pair. They had been with him for 12 years in Africa.

“Gaby and I believe we are supposed to stay here and bring the equipment home,” Winfried said.

His words hit him like bullets. Given the way events had spiraled out of control, it was out of the question. Reinhard looked at Gaby, in her ninth month of pregnancy. He simply could not believe his ears.

“Equipment can be replaced, Winfried,” Reinhard said. “You and your family cannot be replaced. I won’t think of it.”

“Reinhard, I have 50 men at the compound. It is my officer’s training to leave no one behind. Besides, they have already risked their lives. I need to finish what we started together.”

He appreciated his argument, but it didn’t convince him. The 50 men were local volunteers he had recruited, and now supervised, in the setting up of the crusade grounds. He shook his head. “You can send word to the men that you will return when hostilities have ended. This only makes sense. They will surely understand. I want you and Gaby to stay with us and evacuate.”

“Reinhard,” he continued, “Gaby and I and the children have prayed together about this. We have heard from God and He has given us perfect peace. Look at us; we are in peace. Whether we live or die, God is going to see us through. Please do not order us to disobey the Lord.”

For this, he had no argument. “I will have to think about it,” Reinhard said, and walked away, too disturbed to continue.

“Winfried and I both knew what my answer would be. I did not want to contemplate it.”

Despite the questions he had for God, Reinhard began to pray. “Lord, they say that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Right now, I don’t want to believe that. In Scripture I read that your Word is the seed. Jesus was the Word made flesh. He was the seed who fell into the ground and died, and you raised Him up again, victorious over death. Let us bring forth the fruit of His resurrection in Kano, Lord. Let Your gospel prevail, and protect Winfried and Gaby, and everyone who has come to serve You in this crusade.”

He knew that a week ago, Winfried had driven their crusade eighteen-wheeler from his home in Lagos, Nigeria to Kano. That is like driving 700 miles from Denver to Dallas on an unpaved alleyway. African roads are not for the faint of heart. The truck is equipped with six-wheel-drive for good reason. Gaby had accompanied him, as she usually did, driving their Land

Rover in convoy. Their two children, Simon and Angelina, ages nine and five, had come along.

Suddenly, Reinhard could picture them on the road. The trailer he pulled was a rolling advertisement for a blood-washed Africa. It was blood red, with massive white lettering on the side, spelling out, J-ES-U-S. Surely it had created a stir in Muslim neighborhoods as it had been en route. He began to wish that he had painted it solid white, with no emblem on it whatsoever.

Looking at these events from the outside, Winfried and Gaby seemed unduly adventuresome. To some, they would, no doubt, appear irresponsible. But this was not so. They are ordinary believers who are responding to the challenge of following Jesus.

As Winfried explains it, they considered the Kano assignment routine. The family had shared equally in his calling from the very start. By the time of this story, they knew Africa and its hazards well. They had seen violent clashes in other cities where they had served. Some crusades had been held in active war zones. They knew how to take precautions, but they also had few illusions, knowing that many safety factors remained beyond control. Those had to be left in God's hands.

On the first day of the rioting, Winfried had seen the smoke from his hotel room. He had taken a motorbike and hurried to the Catholic compound where the crusade platform had been set up. Inside, he found the crew of 50 Christian men he had recruited from local churches. They were worried but were taking action to protect the

*The Christian* crusade equipment. They had closed and locked the perimeter gates *volunteers persuaded Winfried to spend*

*the night back at his hotel. Since the mob was seeking Bonnke,*

*any white man seen at the compound might draw the mob inside.*

and had posted men on lookout all around to warn them should the mob approach.

Indeed, soon the mob appeared. Within sight of the crusade platform stood a large petrol station with ten pumps. The mob attacked it. A huge fireball had shot into the sky. The entire station began exploding and burning. Black smoke engulfed the area.

The Christian volunteers persuaded Winfried to spend the night back at his hotel. Since the mob was seeking Bonnke, any white man seen at the compound might draw the mob inside. They assured him that they would stand guard all night. This had been Winfried's experience of the Kano situation so far.

At this time, at the home where Reinhard's team waited, the Air Force officer arrived to tell them that buses were approaching to take them to the airport. He had known from the start that he would not ask Winfried to disobey anything he had heard from God. He called the two of them to join him for a time of prayer. He laid his hands on them and prayed for God's protection to surround them. He especially prayed for Gaby and the child in her womb. He asked God to assign His angels to guide and protect them until they arrived again at their home in Lagos.

As he finished the prayer, he felt saddened again. He truly feared that he had seen them for the last time. Christians were being hunted down and killed in the streets of Kano. Winfried would now travel those streets pulling a large blood-red trailer with J-E-S-U-S spelled out in block letters on the side. It would be like walking through a war zone wrapped in the enemy's flag. "To me, it seemed to be a call to martyrdom."

That day, in order to begin to control the city again, the local police and military announced a "shoot on site" curfew from 6 pm until 6 a.m. When the curfew was in place that evening, their evacuation began. They entered a convoy of military buses with soldiers stationed at every window. The muzzles of machine guns bristled in all directions. As they entered the vehicles, they were relieved to see that all of their American and European guests were also on board. Their scattered crusade team had been collected, with the exception of Winfried and Gaby. They sped to the airport. Soon they were flying away, breathing easier aboard those rescue jets.

Reinhard thought of Winfried and his family left behind. “How would they face the outcome of their decision to obey the Lord? I knew them well enough to know the answer to that question. The answer was simple. Although they were on the ministry payroll, they had never been working strictly for me. No one but God could have directed them to take this action. They were obeying. People in obedience to the Lord do not worry, do not fret, do not need to know all of the outcomes before they are willing to commit themselves. They would face Kano the way any of us would have done it – one moment at a time. Borrowing no anxiety from the future, they would simply put one foot in front of the other until they arrived – either at their earthly or their heavenly home.”

Before Bonnke left, plans had been made for a contingent of soldiers to guard the Catholic compound while Winfried directed his men in the dismantling and packing of their crusade equipment. He returned with his family to the hotel that night.

At six o’clock the next morning, the curfew was lifted, and the worst violence of all erupted. Apparently Bonnke’s leaving the city had not appeased anyone. It only threw more fuel on the fire of a raging mob. They had been looking for an opportunity to attack infidels anyway. Their blood lust was not yet satisfied. **Winfried, Gaby and the equipment safe**

From the hotel balcony, Winfried and Gaby watched as more fires sprang up. They listened to even more explosions and gunfire around the city. Later in the morning, Winfried took a car and drove to the compound. His men had been able to keep the equipment secure.

During the night, however, their equipment had been discovered by a number of suspicious individuals. The men guarding the truck had taken these people into custody. They held them under lock and key in an inner building within the compound. This had been done to *On Friday morning, five* keep them from informing the mob *soldiers came to the* of where to find Bonnke’s equipment *hotel to escort Winfried and crew. through the streets. At*

*the compound, they* Winfried thanked his men for their *found 100 local Christian* faithfulness and bravery. He said he *men assembled, as* would return the next morning with



*promised. They were* some soldiers to guard them while the *waiting for Winfried's* equipment was being taken down and *orders.*packed for the return trip. His crew pledged another 50 Christian men, 100 in all, in order to speed the effort.

On Friday morning, five soldiers came to the hotel to escort Winfried through the streets. At the compound, they found 100 local Christian men assembled, as promised. They were waiting for Winfried's orders. As Winfried gave them their assignments, they began the process of dismantling the platform and sound stations and packing them into the trailer.

Suddenly, a huge explosion rocked the area. The soldiers were watching the skies. Nothing appeared. Still, they had become frightened. They forced Winfried into his car and ordered him to take them to their barracks to get more soldiers.

At the barracks it soon became apparent that the men had no intentions of getting reinforcements. They went to their superior officer and insisted that the compound was about to be overrun. The mob would have its way, they said. They convinced the officer not to send them back. Winfried thought that perhaps it was just as well that these men did not return with him. These soldiers might have been Muslims who did not wish to risk their lives under the circumstances.

At the barracks, he was approached by one soldier who told him that he was a Christian. The man volunteered to go along and provide whatever protection he could. With his commander's leave, Winfried returned with this Good Samaritan soldier to the compound. The volunteers had continued, in the meantime, to dismantle the equipment and pack it to the best of their ability. Winfried guided them in the completion of the task. All of the containers were packed and loaded onto the truck by day's end. In spite of the soldiers' claims, the compound had not been overrun. It had not even come under attack.

Some of the local crew arranged to stay and guard the truck again through the night. Winfried and Gaby would return in the pre-dawn hours to drive the truck out of the city. The accompanying soldier promised that he would

be able to provide other soldiers to escort them, as long as they traveled in the hours before the curfew was lifted.

Winfried arrived back at his hotel. He returned to his room, expecting to find his wife and children. Instead, he opened the door to a darkened and silent room. Suddenly, his worst fears leaped to life. He turned on the lights. All of their belongings had vanished along with Gaby and the children. He raced down the stairs to the lobby and was met by the manager.

“The soldiers took your wife and children,” he said. “They will be safer at the barracks.”

“Did the mob come here?”

“No, but they found out that this was where you stayed. I needed to assure them that you had gone, and I called the soldiers for help. Otherwise, my hotel might be a pile of ashes right now, and your family killed.”

Winfried thanked him for the information and raced across town to the soldiers’ barracks. There, to his great relief, he found Gaby and the children, just as he had been told.

The next morning, they drove to the compound at 4:30. A military vehicle with a few soldiers inside led the way. The gates were unlocked, and Winfried silently embraced his local crew leaders. Then he climbed into the cab of the big eighteen-wheeler, and the engine roared to life. He followed the military vehicle into the streets, as Gaby followed him driving the Land Rover.

The blood red trailer bearing Jesus’ name began its journey through the smoke and debris of Kano. To their right and left as they passed, the Wentlands saw dead bodies in the streets. Three hundred had been killed. They were forced to maneuver among burned police and military vehicles along the way. The smoking remains of churches, businesses, and petrol stations obscured every turn.

In spite of the “shoot on site” curfew, crowds of zealots could be seen roaming the streets looking for them. Apparently the curfew had been overwhelmed by the sheer number of people willing to violate it. The

soldiers were too afraid to try to enforce it. But to Winfried, it was as if the crowds had been made blind. No one cried out with recognition at the big truck bearing Jesus' name in giant letters. Or, if they did recognize it, like the lions in the den with Daniel, their mouths had been miraculously shut.

They came to a military roadblock. After a few words, the barriers were lifted. They came to another and another with the same results. Every few blocks they found a barricade. They traveled on and on like people for whom the rough way had been made smooth.

In the outer areas of the city they passed through civilian roadblocks. No police or military presence could be detected here. They wondered as they passed, who was in charge. Some of the roadblocks had been erected in Muslim neighborhoods, others in Christian neighborhoods. In all cases, the roadblocks came down and they were allowed to move on. This seemed beyond the range of normal reality.

Winfried and Gaby praised the Lord as they passed safely and easily through block after block of riot-torn neighborhoods. To them it seemed as if the waters of the Red Sea were parting so they could pass through on dry ground.

At the city limits, the military escort vanished, leaving them to travel the 700-mile road ahead on their own. Soon the big truck and its Jesus trailer was on the open road. Many Muslim cities lay ahead, with news of the Kano riots on everyone's lips. But Winfried and Gaby had gained a confidence to go with their supernatural peace. They believed the trip would continue as it had begun. They were traveling in Jesus' name. They passed through Zaria, Kaduna, Ilorin, and dozens of smaller Muslim dominated communities without a single challenge.

When they arrived back home in Lagos, on the Gulf of Guinea, they were received by an emotional staff that had assumed they were dead. Seeing them arrive, with the children and all of the equipment rescued, a huge celebration erupted. **Hermann Bonnke is dead**

The smell of burning candles and fresh cut flowers filled the air. The funeral parlor was cold and quiet. Once again, it was up to Reinhard to find

words of comfort in a time of grief. After returning to Germany from Malawi, his father, Hermann Bonnke, at last lay down his earthly temple to be with the Lord. Reinhard looked down at his body in the casket and suddenly felt his absence.

“I began to realize more than ever that life is a relay race. The baton of the gospel, now in my hand, I had taken from him. I smiled to myself remembering that I had indeed, taken it. It had not

*did not keep an official record of conversions in his meetings. All of the statistics had been*

*informally collected and were based on estimates, and whatever hard data they might have been able to gather.*

been in his mind to give it to me. In his mind, it had always belonged to Martin. But in the end, all was forgiven. My father and I *Until 1987 Reinhard* had shared these recent years of ministry together, and his heart had overflowed to see blessings on a scale he had never imagined. Time after time I had assured him that everything he saw had arisen from a chain of events put in motion by the Holy Spirit. First, sending Luis Graf to heal August Bonnke in 1922. The chain had continued through Dad’s healing and conversion and his shepherding that little flock in Krempe. Surely Dad had run his leg of the relay well. Now, he had finished. And what a race it had been.

Father had carried the flame of the Spirit through quite an obstacle course. Struggling as an idealistic young officer in the Wehrmacht, he had watched the terrible rise of Hitler and the unleashed horror of World War II. In prison camp, he had committed the remainder of his life to preaching the glorious gospel of salvation. Then Jesus had

appeared to him, confirming that calling.”

**750,000 registered decisions for Christ in 1988**

Until 1987 Reinhard did not keep an official record of conversions in his meetings. All of the statistics had been informally collected and were based

on estimates, and whatever hard data they might have been able to gather. In the meantime he had met Dr. Vinson Synan, the leading historian and statistician of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Starting with the Fire Conference in Harare, they had become friends, and that friendship began to influence Reinhard's thinking about a system for keeping meticulous records.

Sitting down with Peter van den Berg, Reinhard instructed him to begin a process of crowd counting as well as an official registration of decisions for Christ. They studied Billy Graham's organization and others to guide them in this process. In most cases, their numbers were rounded to the nearest thousand. This new method began with their first crusade that year in Tamale, Ghana. 80,000 decisions for Christ were officially registered. The crowds grew to 55,000, with 240,000 attending over six days.

They scheduled nine more campaigns in Africa that year. Four in Ghana, one in Nigeria, one in Cameroon, one in Malawi, and two in Tanzania. In Tanzania they ran into difficulties. Their campaign scheduled for Arusha was cancelled by the government, and the campaign in Dar es Salaam was shut down after only four days. Even so, they registered 510,000 decisions that year, with a total attendance of 1,425,000.

In 1988 there were 750,000 registered decisions for Christ through CfaN. We held seven campaigns in Africa and one in Manila, Philippines, with a total attendance for the year of 3,935,000. The largest single crowd was 200,000 people. They gathered in Uhuru Park that year, in Nairobi, Kenya. **The world's largest tent is given to Peter**

As they went forward with their Nairobi plans under the protection of Dr. Mutiso's organization, it soon became apparent that the big tent was a dinosaur. The anticipated crowds were so large that they never even installed the ground anchors for the structure. As Reinhard had promised, He called Peter Pretorius in South Africa and offered him the tent as a gift.

“Peter, I have a gift for you. The world's largest tent. I give it to you with all the technical gear and the fleet of trucks to transport it.”

He said that he would not travel with the tent but would make it a permanent installation for a medical clinic.

At this time, Reinhard had a visit from some of my German Pentecostal overseers, among them Pastor Reinhold Ulonska. As many men in his position might do, he found it entertaining to needle me in one way or another. After all, the denomination had never found a way to “What a shame.”

“No, why would you say that?”

“Well, it was a huge investment for nothing.”

“Oh, no, not really. I am not in business to demonstrate the latest tent technology. I am in the business of saving souls. The tent helped us do that.”

“Well, the world’s largest tent had to be the most expensive billboard in the history of evangelism, don’t you think?”

### **Tens of thousands accept Christ**

equal CfaN’s success. *As Reinhard left the city, an editorial writer submitted an open* “So, the big tent was used once, eh?”

*challenge to CfaN in the newspaper. He accused them of conducting their meetings on the comfortable side of town.*

When Reinhard arrived for the Nairobi meeting he was put up in the Serena Hotel near Uhuru Park. From his room he could see where the platform had been erected. The opening meeting saw a crowd of more than 100,000. The preaching of the gospel was accompanied by signs following, and the crowds began to grow nearer to the 200,000 mark.

Their campaign in Nairobi saw a total of 850,000 people attend over a period of eight days. The miracles and size of the crowd made headlines every day in the news media. They attracted both admirers and enemies. As Reinhard left the city, an editorial writer submitted an open challenge to CfaN in the newspaper. He accused them of conducting their meetings on the comfortable side of town. Real Christianity, he said, would not avoid the real poverty and violence of Nairobi’s notorious slums.

“I took this challenge and told my team to prepare a return campaign in Nairobi. We would set up our equipment in the heart of the very worst part

of the city. I had seen it during our visit, a slum built around the city's garbage pit. It was a place called Mathare Valley, a dense collection of 180,000 souls living in mud houses, beneath corrugated metal roofs. Their dwellings were built on stilts over a seeping river of raw sewage. This mission field would represent the worst conditions in which we ever attempted to hold meetings. The schedule was set for three years later.

200,000 gathered in Uhuru Park that day. The president and members of his cabinet sat on the platform behind me. I preached, and we saw thousands come to the Lord. Healings manifested among the people. I was thrilled with another day of obeying the Lord and seeing His power to save sinners.”

In 1989 they registered 770,000 decisions for Christ, 20,000 more than the year before. This was true even though their overall attendance dropped slightly to 3,390,000. They held nine campaigns inside Africa and two others beyond, in the Soviet Union and Malaysia. The largest single crowd they saw that year was 165,000 in Jos, Nigeria.

In 1990 they prepared to enter the last decade of the millennium. CfaN put together twelve campaigns in seven nations of Africa, plus a Euro-Fire Conference in Portugal. Once again they broke all attendance records. Reinhard preached the ABCs of the gospel to 5,395,000 people face to face. Almost a million registered decisions <sup>for Christ!</sup> ***Tell the people to leave***

In late September they returned to Uganda for their second crusade following the rise of President Yoweri Museveni. After decades of intolerance under Amin and Obote, religious freedom had been declared in this troubled land.

Their meetings were to be held on a sports field in the city of Jinja, some 50 miles east of the capital of Kampala. Jinja had a population of around 70,000. During the troubles it had become something of a city of refuge for many, with the result that many churches in the area were new and young. In preparation for the meetings, their team, under the leadership of Steve Mutua, worked feverishly with the Museveni government in Kampala to establish legitimacy. They had obtained a total of 16 permits from the

national and city governments. As had become their custom, they erected a tent beside the crusade grounds for counseling and prayer.

Arriving a few days before the meetings, their plane landed at the Entebbe airport, south of Kampala. They were met by thousands of Christians who formed a parade route to welcome them to Uganda.

“As we continued through Kampala and on to Jinja, the route was decorated with our familiar red and black CfaN posters announcing the meeting. This was in contrast to my first meeting in Kampala when our posters had disappeared into the homes of people who had not seen such artwork for decades.

The meetings in Jinja began and they saw about a thousand people accept Jesus as Savior. A number of blind and lame were healed and, as usual, the crowds began to grow. “On the third night, however, one of the most disturbing scenes of my entire life took place. A local military police squad burst into the sports facility with AK-47 rifles at ready. They moved across the arena as if we were a dangerous and seditious gathering. They surrounded the preaching platform, and the police commander climbed onto it. He approached me, his face a mask of fierce rage.”

“Tell the people to leave!” he said, waving his rifle menacingly.

“I will not tell them to leave,” Reinhard said. “They have come to hear the gospel preached, and we have a legitimate right to be here.”

“Tell them to leave!” he repeated.

“I will not tell them. You tell them.” Reinhard thrust the microphone into his hand.

Suddenly, with the microphone in his hand, his demeanor changed. He must have realized that his words could cause a riot. He cleared his throat and spoke to the people calmly. “I have received orders from above that this crowd must disperse. This meeting is to end.”

“These are not my orders, but the orders came from above. It is my job to carry them out. I must see that you leave here at once. Now, you must leave this place.”



The people did not move. He shouted his orders again. Still they refused to budge. Reinhard saw a fierce look return to his face, and he knew that the scene would become violent.

“He walked to my still photographer and ordered him to stop taking pictures. He saw the video cameras *refused to leave*. The recording the event. He shouted that *soldiers charged among the video cameras were to be shut off at them using rifle butts* <sup>once</sup> *to smash people into*

Reinhard knew what was happening. He <sup>submission. Others used</sup> was making sure that there would be no pictures of what would happen next. I had to intervene to prevent terrible bloodshed. I took the microphone and told the people that as Christians we had no choice but to submit to those who represented the authority of Uganda. We must disperse. I told the people that I would obey and leave the platform immediately. And I did.”

*clubs, forcing the main crowd to leave the stadium.*

Some of the crowd still refused to leave. The soldiers charged among them using rifle butts to smash people into submission. Others used clubs, forcing the main crowd to leave the stadium. Next, they charged into the tent and began beating the lame and blind and sick people who had gathered there for prayer. All of this happened in spite of Uganda’s law establishing religious freedom, and in spite of all the necessary permits that had been obtained to hold the meetings.

Back in his hotel room Reinhard fell to his knees in prayer, seeking answers. As he cried out to God, he entered into what some have called “the offense of the gospel” and “the fellowship of suffering.” He groaned in agony. The words of Isaiah came to his ears, He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him.

The next day, before leaving, Reinhard met with the pastors who had sponsored the meeting. They told him that the local district manager of Jinja had decided to defy the government in Kampala. It was reported that he said, “If Kampala wants to rule here, let them come and rule. But as long as I am in control, this meeting will not continue.”

He shook the dust from his feet and flew to Nairobi. He said he would have been willing to return to continue the event but, 'The Holy Spirit told me not to trust the permit paper.' Events confirmed that he had been led accurately. **1,670,000 attend Reinhard Bonnke's**

### **Crusade in Kaduna, Nigeria**

Flying to Kaduna, Nigeria, they looked out on a crowd of 500,000! Reinhard was absolutely stunned to silence. He turned to the ministers on the platform and they were weeping. Not understanding their tears, he walked up to them. "Why are you weeping?" He asked. "This is a day of great rejoicing. Look at the size of this crowd." "You don't understand, Pastor Bonnke," a pastor replied. "These people are nearly all Muslims. This area is totally dominated by the Muslim religion."

The pastors were weeping because the Muslims, who had shunned their churches, had been willing to gather on an open field to hear the gospel preached.

"I turned back to the crowd and began to see the shape of the gospel for Kaduna. I preached with fire and fervor, with love and compassion, and passion, and everything all mixed together. The gospel message is the same for Muslims as for pagans of any stripe. When I made the altar call, a huge sea of hands was raised to the sky. I was so moved to see it!

Our meetings concluded in Kaduna with a total attendance of 1,670,000! In one meeting in Muslim Nigeria, we had preached to more people than we had preached to during the entire year of 1987, just three short years ago!"

The fire conferences continued to burn in Reinhard's heart, as they had since the first event in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1986. Next to his passion for preaching the good news, he was passionate about training and inspiring others to do the work of soul winning. In the beginning, they had considered the Fire Conferences to be continental, even worldwide in scope. They held the first in Africa, the second in Germany, the third in England, hopping from one continent to another. In the 90s they realized that they were limiting God's plan for these powerful sessions. They began to pair a Fire Conference with every crusade. These became a great benefit

for the local believers, not to mention the follow-up workers who ministered and registered decisions for Christ each night. It also streamlined the work of the CfaN staff as they combined their efforts for crusades with those of staging Fire Conferences. **Bonnke imprisoned**

In one instance, Reinhard had been blacklisted from a particular Muslim country. Years before, he had held a meeting there in an evangelical church and they had seen the building overflow for several nights with hundreds receiving the Lord. There was strong Muslim pressure against proselytizing in this nation. As a result, his name had been blacklisted by the government.

When Sani Abacha lifted their ban to evangelise in Nigeria, two years earlier, it had affected the thinking of other Muslim leaders as well. Bonnke had been told by inside sources that he had been removed from the blacklist of this particular Muslim country. Sometime later, he decided to test the truth of that report. He traveled there on a tourist visa for a two-day visit. As soon as his passport was examined at the immigration desk, he was pushed unceremoniously into a holding cell in the basement of the airport. Obviously, the blacklist was still in place, or else word of the change had not reached the authorities who worked at the airport. In either case, the result was the same.

“I broke into a cold sweat hearing those bars clang shut behind me.

This airport prison was the worst possible nightmare for a tourist. The place stunk, had no sanitation, no individual cells, no beds, no food. Reinhard was locked in a “tank” with every sort of malcontent. *Reinhard immediately* Who knew their backgrounds? Murderers, rapists, smugglers, terrorists, extortionists – they looked the part. “Believe me, I preferred the palace treatment to the prison treatment without question.”

*sent a text message to his booking secretary, Ilka, asking her to trigger their ministry prayer teams*

*to intercede.* Ironically, the arresting authorities left me with an unfair advantage.

My cell phone remained in my pocket. To this day I wonder if it was a deliberate oversight by an arresting official who was a covert believer. Or perhaps God had placed an angel on the security staff to deliver me, as the angel had delivered the apostles from the Jerusalem prison in the book of Acts.”

Reinhard immediately sent a text message to his booking secretary, Ilka, asking her to trigger their ministry prayer teams to intercede. He also had her book a flight home for him as soon as possible. Then he asked her to call the German embassy and other African leaders who might be able to put pressure on the government for his release.

As he continued to use the device, he looked up to see all eyes staring at him. No one else had a cell phone. No one else in that room could contact an embassy or seek release through such powerful resources. This was not the time to inspire jealousy in his cellmates. He realized that any of these bad guys might decide that he needed to be turned in to the authorities in exchange for leniency. In which case, his one link to the outside world would be lost. Or, one of them might decide he wanted to use his device for his own purposes, and his purposes might prove more valuable to him than his life. Reinhard needed these men as allies, not enemies.

In the holding cell, hours passed in endless tedium – 10, 12, 24 hours. Reinhard was shuffled between guards to and from the air- port restroom facility. Eventually, the guards took him from the cell to a comfortable office where immigration officials interrogated him. It was not the interrogation room of his imagination with the single light bulb hanging from a cord, thank God. He explained to them that he was merely visiting their country as a tourist and had been detained without reason. He promised them that the German embassy would be following up on this incident. He suggested that if they treated tourists in this fashion they had much to lose in tourism income. He reached for every straw he could think of to secure his release.

Every effort failed. Reinhard’s name remained on their blacklist, and no higher government official had provided an eraser.

Reinhard waited for a reply on the cell phone, praying that my batteries would hold their charge. In the meantime, he looked around at his first truly captive audience. He tried to tell his cellmates about how he preached the ABCs of the gospel, however they understood hardly any English. It was no use.

All he could do was wait. All night, he waited. He tried to sleep on the floor but sleep simply would not come. Mid-morning the next day his cell phone vibrated. It was Ilka sending a text message to say I had been booked for a return flight on German carrier Lufthansa at such and such an hour that afternoon. He saved the message with the reservation number in his cell phone device. Then Reinhard went to the door and demanded to see a guard who spoke English. When at last one came to the door he explained to him that he was to be taken to the Lufthansa desk immediately. He had a return flight with a reservation number. As might be expected, it did not work. The guards wrote down the reservation number, as he recited it, and told him they would check with Lufthansa to see if he was indeed booked for that flight.

Later they returned with triumphant smirks. Lufthansa had no record of his reservation.

*He plunged through*

*an "Employees Only" door and approached a ticket agent at a desk*

*in the back office. He told her that he was a German citizen who had been detained without cause.*

would speak to the airline employees and prove that my reservation was valid for a return flight that day.”

“Raising my voice in anger, I told them that I absolutely had the reservation number recorded in my phone and had received it that very morning in a text message from Frankfurt. I told them I had contacted the German embassy, and I demanded to be taken to the Lufthansa desk at once. As a German citizen I

They unlocked the door. Reinhard pushed himself through the door as if he was in charge of the entire scene.

“I am going to the Lufthansa desk!” I shouted. “And you are coming with me! I will show you that my reservation number is valid!”

Reinhard was already walking briskly up the stairwell. They followed him all the way to the Lufthansa desk. When he reached it he saw a line of passengers waiting to be served. That line was death to him. He literally walked past them all, right across the baggage scale and behind the desk. The guards scrambled to catch him. He plunged through an “Employees Only” door and approached a ticket agent at a desk in the back office. He told her that he was a German citizen who had been detained without cause. He had executive status with Lufthansa and needed to confirm his ticket home in order to regain his freedom.

The booking clerk looked at him and shrugged helplessly. “Our computers are down,” she said. “What can we do?”

We are waiting for a repairman.”

Under the circumstances, this was not an acceptable response.

“I am not leaving this office until you turn that computer back on,” Reinhard said. “Turn it on and see if it is working right now. My free dom is at stake here.”

“The agent turned the computer on, and to her surprise the screen came up properly. She typed in Reinhard’s reservation number and hit the return arrow. The screen showed no booking in his name under that number.

One of the guards looked at him with that now familiar smirk on his face. He prepared to haul him back to the cell.

“No!” Reinhard shouted. “You did it wrong! You entered the booking numbering in lowercase. You must use uppercase characters!” In his heart he prayed that he was right. He was grasping for anything.

The clerk quickly retyped his number and hit the return key. Immediately his full booking information came on the screen. He nearly fainted with relief, breathing his thanks to the Lord.

The airport officials said that they would take this information to their superiors. In the meantime, Reinhard would be returned to the holding cell. It was the best he could hope for. They escorted him back, and once again he heard the sound of those bars clanging shut behind him.

The final hours of waiting after confirming his flight were sheer torture. The guards did not come to get him until the very last minute. Just as the flight was about to leave, they escorted him to the airplane, holding his arms between the two of them as if he was a criminal. His passport was given to the purser on the flight, and he was led to his assigned seat. As soon as they left him there, he pushed his chair back and fell into an exhausted and thankful sleep.

***If you come to Khartoum we will shoot you***

Their next meeting was the second Easter Celebration in Khartoum.

*Reinhard Bonnke had* Reinhard and his team were in a state of near euphoria. It seemed

that nothing would stand in the way of

*been put on Al-Qaeda's*

*hit list because he had* the vision of a blood-washed Africa. Not *dared to lead Muslims* even the barriers of Islam. They anticipated *faith in Jesus Christ* pated a huge response, with an audience

many times larger than the 210,000 *at an Easter crusade* they had seen on their visit last year. *Rein Khartoum, Sudan,* ports were coming in that the tapes and *earlier that year.* DVDs of their meetings had been passed from hand to hand across the greatest land mass on the African continent. Throngs were surging toward their meeting site from Juba in the south, Darfur in the west, and as far as Ethiopia in the east, carrying the sick and lame. They were camping along the roads and the caravan routes, headed for Green Square, filled with an expectation of miracles.

60

Six months before the September 11 attacks and eight days before the meeting Reinhard had received a threatening personal message from Osama bin Laden. The same message was sent to all of CfaN offices around the world. Reinhard Bonnke had been put on Al-Qae- da's hit list because he had dared to lead Muslims to faith in Jesus Christ at an Easter crusade in

Khartoum, Sudan, earlier that year. Moreover, he was mindful of the fact that several of the Al-Qaeda terrorists who had piloted planes into the buildings on September 11, 2001, had trained just miles from his would-be home in Florida. A move to America would hardly keep him out of the crosshairs. To put it mildly, this was no ordinary day of decision in his life and ministry.

“Reinhard Bonnke, if you come to Khartoum we will shoot you.” It was signed by someone named, “Osama Bin Laden.”

“I took the letter in my hands and fell to my knees. I feared nothing for my own safety. But my life was not my own.

‘Lord, shall I go or not go?’ I prayed.

I dared not move from my knees until I heard the answer. And then it came. You are Satan’s prime target for destruction, but you are My prime target for protection. Go.”

Stephen Mutua and the technical staff arrived first, setting up the stage and the great speaker columns to accommodate the expected great crowd. As they set up the equipment the field was visited by many pilgrims. Some seemed merely curious. Others seemed furtive

and conspiratorial. Still others were seeking places to place the blind, the lame, the deaf and dumb. Most of them were Muslim.

“Bonnke is a holy man,” they said to our team. “He heals the sick.” “Yes,” our co-workers replied, “He heals in Jesus’ name. But it is Jesus who saves, and Jesus who heals.”

After checking in into his hotel room in Khartoum, Stephen Mutua came breathlessly to his door.

“Reinhard, you cannot stay here. We must move you.”

“Why?”

“As I was checking in yesterday I saw a group of young men from Saudi Arabia. Many of Bin Laden’s recruits come from there. You already have his threat against you. We should change floors and move you to the far end of the hotel.”



“We cannot simply suspect that every young Saudi Arabian works for Bin Laden. They may have come to hear the gospel, or to receive healing.”

“I’m afraid not, Reinhard. You are checked into this room under Christ for all Nations. These young men checked into their rooms under Islam for all Nations. They are here to attend the crusade alright, but they are not here to receive Christ.”

“Jesus can change their minds. I am not moving from this room, Stephen. If they are up to no good, do you think that we would fool them for one minute? They have ways of finding me. I stay right here.”

The crusade was to begin in twelve hours. At Green Square Reinhard saw the people who were gathering early. Reinhard also saw a large crowd that was being kept away by a group of soldiers. He did

*As they headed to the* not learn the nature of their activity before he returned to his room *airport under military* to pray and sleep. Then he received a

knock at the door. It was Stephen Mutua with the national security chief. They looked worried.

*escort, news reports began to come in. The people were rioting in*

*the streets. Muslims and Arabs who had brought the sick to be healed were attacking the police and soldiers for keeping them from Green Square.*

“The government must withdraw its invitation,” the official said. “We are shutting down the Easter Celebration. You must go home at once.”

“What about the people who have come so far?” Reinhard asked.

“How can you deny them?”

“We deny them to save their lives. Our men found 13 land mines planted in the crowd area. There are too many threats for us to contain. This meeting is cancelled.”

As they headed to the airport under military escort, news reports began to come in. The people were rioting in the streets. Muslims and Arabs who had brought the sick to be healed were attacking the police and soldiers for keeping them from Green Square. Some had come from hundreds and even thousands of miles to have the man of God pray for them. Now they were shut out and sent home disappointed. The army would not even let their technicians return to the square to dismantle our expensive equipment until they had restored order on the streets of Khartoum.

### **God's reply to Reinhard**

The vision of evangelising became more persistent and vivid for Bonnke. An all-consuming desire drove him to make my first ventures toward mass evangelism. However, he was still hesitant. The members of his mission board disapproved. They were good and spiritual men, but they lacked vision. Karl Barth noted that faith is never identical with piety. Normal missionary work was the fruitful approach to the salvation of Africa, they believed, not mass evangelism.

“While missionaries were content with the mission tradition—I was in turmoil. Were they wrong and was I right?

I felt isolated. Instead of lessening, the divine pressure on my spirit grew stronger. Then I met with a group of evangelists for fellowship. They all had a story to tell that was similar to mine. They shared a

common experience of official discouragement. They had the burn - ing fire of the Spirit within, the challenge of vast possibilities around, but criticism from without. During these birth pangs, many times in agony of mind, I had to spend hours in prayer to keep my poise and peace. How long would it take to bring about a blood-washed Africa without aggressive evangelistic campaigns? We have only one generation to save a generation. Every generation needs regeneration.”

The pressure reached a crisis point. One day He locked himself in a hotel room in Lesotho to pray. Reinhard was determined that he would not let God go until he had a clear word from Him. He told Him that he was sick and tired of the strain, constrained to evangelize, but restrained by men.

Other workers did not seem to believe that mass evangelism was a good course of action. Reinhard was desperate for a clear answer.

That day God made matters absolutely clear to him. As frankly as he had spoken to the Lord, He spoke in reply. He said, "If you drop the vision that I have given you, I shall have to look for another man who will accept it and do what I want."

Reinhard repented of his hesitations immediately. He made his decision, forever.

### **Martyrdom of Sunday Aranziola**

On Saturday, December 1, 2001, as Reinhard pondered the question of whether to move to America, they were still riding the crest of the Millennium Crusade. He had recently traveled the one hundred miles from Ibadan to Lagos, in order to rest and prepare for the final meetings of the year in the smaller city of Oshogbo, Nigeria. In Ibadan, their crowds had swelled to 1.3 million people by the final night. A total of 3.9 million people had attended the event, with more than 2.6 million accepting Christ.

Adding to the pressure, the upcoming meetings in Oshogbo were heavy on his mind. He had recently received a phone call telling him that Sunday Aranziola, the young bass guitarist scheduled to play in

their crusade band, had been martyred in Oshogbo by Muslim extremists only a few days prior. This killing had occurred only two months after the September 11 attacks in America. The whole world was reeling with fear and uncertainty. How many worshippers of Allah would be stirred to strike a blow for the cause of jihad? Nobody knew. This young man named Sunday had been targeted while putting up Reinhard Bonnke crusade posters throughout the city. The radicals had followed him to his home, waited for the cover of darkness, and then had broken down the door and, in front of his father and mother, dragged him from his bed, beating him with clubs. "Jesus, what shall I do?" his father had heard him call as he was driven from the house into the darkened street. "What shall I do?" "Say 'Allahu akbar'!" the young men demanded. "Say it! 'Allahu akbar'!" This is an Islamic phrase, meaning "God is greatest."

"Jesus is Lord!" Sunday replied.

Those were his last words before they beat him to death.

Christians in Oshogbo were enraged. They threatened to retaliate with violence against the Muslim population. Oshogbo was home to the Grand Mosque, located at the center of the city. The situation was as dangerous as a candle burning in a pool of gasoline. Bonnke's team had cleared a large field on the edge of the city, far from the mosque. Oshogbo had a soccer stadium near the city center that seated ten thousand people, but they had rejected it. Even if they had filled the playing field and the stands to standing room only, it would have accommodated only a fraction of the crowds of people who had been attending their crusades in Nigeria. Such a crowd, if aroused to violence, would have jeopardized all the momentum of the supernatural harvest they had just experienced in Nigeria. This very thing had happened before.

Ever in his memory was the crusade of October 1991, in Kano, Nigeria. Their coming to the city had sparked violence from the Muslims living there, as well. Their team had been forced to flee the city, seeing dead bodies and wreckage in the streets as they fled. Muslim mobs ruled the day, and Christians were being killed on sight. Hundreds died.

The rumor mill blamed them for that mayhem. For most people, alas, perception is reality. They believed what they read in the newspapers, and the word-of-mouth gossip spread. "Bonnke brought violence to Kano; how can he claim to serve the Prince of Peace?" They supposed culpability became their reputation, even though an extensive investigation was conducted, after which the local governor issued a report exonerating us of all blame. Nevertheless, Christ for All Nations was banned from Nigeria for nearly a decade.

### **Passing on the mantle**

November 8th – 12th November, 2017 was when 77-year old Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, preached at his last crusade in Lagos, Nigeria. Evangelist Reinhard said that his choice of Nigeria for Africa farewell crusade was due to its population strength, "Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and I am after people because the more the better. I can smell a ripe harvest as the Lord of harvest directed us."

The crusade was attended by 1.7 million people among whom 845,875 people accepted Christ.

Many things had changed since Bonnke's last outreach in Lagos 17 years ago. In 2000, some 3.5 million people responded to Christ. However, that same hunger for the Gospel doesn't seem to be fading in Nigeria.

At the same crusade, he passed on his mantle to Evangelist Daniel Kolendo, who is now the President of CfaN. Daniel Kolendo had joined the ministry in 2007 and started preaching before Reinhard at some of the campaigns. Reinhard commented: "I was watching this young man as he was preaching and I knew he had the heart of an evangelist." The young man, Daniel Kolendo, continued preaching at the campaigns and, over the following years, started taking a forefront role. Reinhard would preach at one or two meetings and Daniel would preach at the remainder, until Reinhard eventually decided to leave a few of the campaigns to Daniel entirely. The same crowds turned for Daniel as for Reinhard. The harvest and salvations continued.

By the time Evangelist Bonnke retired from being the President of CfaN, he had seen 77 million souls come to Christ. Evangelist Daniel Kolendo has seen over 20 million souls come to Christ through the Gospel campaigns held.



**Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke praying**

**for Evangelist Daniel Kolendo**

**Photo:** [n.guardian.ng/news/nigeria-to-experience-new-dawn-says-bonnke/](http://n.guardian.ng/news/nigeria-to-experience-new-dawn-says-bonnke/)

On November 12th 2019 Reinhard took to facebook page and asked for prayers. At that time he had undergone a right femur bone surgery. All had gone well, but he had to add a few weeks of learning to walk again.

Weeks after, on December 7th sad news came through his facebook page, “Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, It is with sorrow that the Bonnke family would like to announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. He passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family, on December 7, 2019. For the past 60 years he has preached the glorious Gospel of Jesus throughout the entire world. We want to thank you on behalf of him and our family, for your support, which enabled him to **Anni Bonnke and Family**.preach the matchless message of salvation to countless people. He preached Jesus...”

Over 79 million souls were won to Christ by Reinhard Bonnke through his ministry.

Earth’s loss, Heaven’s gain.



**ENOCH ADEJARE**

**ADEBOYE**

*God's messenger to the world*

*the world*

*God's messenger to*

**After the service, Josiah told his wife that his successor had come, even though he had not talked to him. The following Sunday, he told his pastors. When he told them, after service that day, he followed Enoch home, as part of normal visitation to new comers. Enoch was surprised. They soon became very close as the lecturer became his interpreter travelling far and wide with him. He interpreted his messages from Yoruba to English.**

he initial name of Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi at childhood was Ogun (the Yoruba god of Iron) has seen a place of abide. He grew up serving idols

even though he had no faith in the dead practices and fetishes. The date of his birth is still being contested. Some would claim 1905 while others would cite 1909. The confusion on his actual date of birth was a result of lack of regular registration of birth in the country and effect of illiteracy of his parents.

The home address of Josiah was no. 12, Oda Alafia Street, Oda Jomu in Ondo town of Ondo state. His parents were peasant farmers and worshippers of Ogun divinity. At baptism, he adopted the name Josiah Akindayomi.

He soon became a native doctor. Ironically, at that time, he was already a member of the Anglican church and had been baptised by the name, Josiah.

Josiah was opportuned to attend the elementary education provided by the church which could be equated to kindergarten education. The education he received was not enough to be called a formal education.

From early childhood Josiah's parents noticed unusual things about him. When he was sick, allegedly his sickness, that usually defied traditional medicine – the most common treatment for sickness in those days – would abate and subsequently disappear once he was bathed with ordinary water. Josiah himself also had an inkling that he was different, for although he grew up in an environment where the worship of Ogun (the Yoruba divinity of iron and war) was prevalent, he was aware of the existence of a greater power and yearned to know the true God who created the earth and everyone in it.

### ***Lord I will go wherever you want me to go***

As a young man, Josiah used to gather children of his age and playact like a prophet. He was to people in his hometown in Ondo State, another Baba Aladura (those were days of the famous C&S Movement, Moses Orimolade). In fact, he was nicknamed “prophet”.

It was not long until some owed him money and would not pay. The day agreed day came and Josiah decided he must have his money. There was an argument between him and the person he demanded. A prophetess of the



C&S movement who was passing by tried to calm Josiah “My son, try to be patient. You’ll be paid!” The young man was so mad at this sympathizer whom he felt took sides against him that he promised to revenge on her. When he got home, he did incantations supernaturally invoking a snake to go after the elderly prophetess. But to his surprise, the snake could not harm her. Josiah next, went to apologise to the woman and was eager to know her secret. She assured him that charms could not harm her as she was a Christian. In 1931, Josiah left the Anglican church and became a member of the Cherubim and Seraphin Movement which had just started in Ondo as a visionary and prophetic church in Yoruba land by Prophet Moses Orimolade in Lagos in 1925. For the first time, Josiah began to find real satisfaction of his longing heart.

A few years later, he began to hear a voice inside him saying, “You will be My servant!” He was not at ease with this voice, which he identified as God’s call to full time ministry. He complained to his prophet and the elderly prophetess who he regarded as his spiritual mother at the time. Both assured him that God wanted him to be His prophet. For seven years he ignored it, since he had never intended to be a pastor. During this period, virtually everything went wrong with him. All his business ventures failed; heavily in debt and without peace of mind, he found himself totally dependent on the grace of God.

The turning point for Josiah came when, in 1940, he dreamed of an old man scratching his leg. He woke up the next morning with a sore on his leg that deteriorated significantly within a short period of time. Then he heard the voice inside him telling him to submit to God’s will and to serve Him.

Without the use of medication, the Lord healed the sore on his leg. This marked the beginning of a definite relationship with God. Totally broken, he yielded to God, saying, “Lord I will go wherever you want me to go.”

He asked for signs to confirm that this was indeed God’s call. This confirmation came through the Bible passages of Jeremiah 1:4-10, Isaiah 41:10-13 and Romans 8:29-31.

The Lord assured him that he would provide for all his needs as he would henceforth receive no salary from anyone. This promise from the Lord was a comforting reminder to him during his trials in subsequent months.

Josiah also had the experience of the Mission church before he went to the Aladura and finally moved to the Pentecostal Church. The circumstances that led to his conversion from the Anglican to Cherubim and Seraphim was not clear. It is said that an incident in Ondo made him join the Cherubim and Seraphim. “Ogunribido particularly loved the Cherubim and Seraphim sect because it was given to the practice of fasting, dynamic prayers, visions and trances”. These are some of the characteristics of the Aladura Churches. These characteristics were later adopted by the RCCG. Josiah left Ondo for Ile-Ife in the present Osun state in July 1940. He joined a branch of the Cherubim and Seraphim church at Igbo-Itapa. It was at this location that he had a religious transformation. An illiterate man started to read and write in Yoruba language!

### **Leaving the Cherubim and Seraphim Church**

His experience at Ile-Ife was a turning point in his life. Josiah met his first wife named Esther Egbedire at Ile-Ife in 1941.

Ayeku (2008) referred to the woman as Esther Awofisan. The couple left Ile-Ife and became members of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Oke Sioni, Ebute-Metta, Lagos where they got married.

Josiah was a leader of a prayer group known as “Egbe Ogo Oluwa” (the Glory God Society). The members of the group were twelve in number. Some informants believed that the number was in conformity with the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ.

He was a devoted and a prominent member of the church, however he parted way because of doctrinal issues. Josiah also complained that it was unbiblical for the leadership of the church to venerate and consult the late Moses Orimolade in his grave before certain decisions were taken in church. It was also claimed that some church members of the leadership of the church became uncomfortable with his popularity; hence there was envy and persecution.

According to Olaleru (2007) “He was accused (among other things) of “anti-church” activities such as Bible Study outside the Cherubim and Seraphim Church ambience, with the motive of sheep stealing”. In 1947, he

started to become concerned that the church was departing from the true Word of God in some of its practices.

### **Ministry renamed Redeemed Christian Church of God**

By 1952, Josiah felt totally persuaded to leave the church. He started at Willoughby Street, Ebute-Metta, Lagos a house-fellowship called, the Glory of God Fellowship.

The fellowship was later renamed “The Apostolic Faith Church” for which Josiah was accused of taking another ministry’s name. He wrote a tract under the name of The Apostolic Church, and The Apostolic Faith Church opposed it, and had to burn the tracts. It was a bitter fight that the first time he died, God had to send him back to life. He said God showed him his house in heaven, and told him that though he had done almost everything required of him, he still had to come back to settle his old score. So he quickly went to reconcile with The Apostolic Faith Church.

As Josiah slept, the name appeared to him on a blackboard. In the same dream, the name Redeemed Christian Church of God came to him. When he woke up, he wrote down the words. He even pronounced it when he was telling his pastors, though it was in English. He added that the Lord said he would provide all the needs of the church, and He would meet the church when He came back.

Initially there were nine members but before long the fellowship rapidly grew as the news of the miracles that occurred in their midst spread.

They later relocated to 1-5 Redemption Way (formerly 1a Cement<sup>ery</sup> Street).

### **The choice of one wife**

An important event in the history of the young fellowship was taken by Pastor Josiah on the issue of restitution. In other words, as a polygamist (with three wives), he decided to send away the last two of his wives because of his new understanding and interpretation of the Bible. The names of his three wives were Esther, Deborah and Sisi Mi (a nickname given to the third wife).

The idea of one man one wife was introduced by the Christian missionaries in the 19th century. The European missionaries could not make a difference

between Christianity and their cultural practice. Hence, monogamy was made a condition in accepting the new religion. Josiah accepted the European marriage custom of one man one wife.

It is necessary to correct some earlier studies that the marriage ceremony was conducted by Moses Tunolase Orimolade, the founder of Cherubim and Seraphim church. Omoyajowo, an eminent church historian observed that Moses Orimolade died on 19th October 1933, therefore he could not have been responsible for the conduct of the marriage in 1941. His successor, Prophet Abraham William Onanuga was the one who solemnized the marriage at Mount Zion branch of the Church, Ebutte-Metta.

One of the women divorced expressed her feelings thus:

“When Woli (Prophet) without any quarrel asked me to go because of what he said his God was telling him, and all my pleading did not change his mind, yet I really loved him, I decided to take him to court. He did not contest it, so the court asked me to return the #12:6s he had paid as my dowry back to him. Woli said I should keep it to take care of our little son with me at the time of this separation but I tell you I can never forget Akindayomi. He was a very handsome man, a faithful lover and a very impeccable man. He’s a good man. I know

we shall meet again.” (Olaleru, 2007)

### **The coming of Enoch Adeboye to RCCG prophesied**

Even at the beginning of the church, Rev. Josiah would make utterances that his successor had not yet come. He said that his successor would be tall like him, and would even be able to wear the same size of his clothes.

He had prophesied the coming of Adeboye, a man under his leadership the church would experience marvelous growth and expansion to the rest of the world. Although he had no formal education, he had told the congregation inside the church that he would be succeeded by a man who is highly educated and that the successor was yet to join the church. This was in line with the vision revealed to him on Mount Camel in Israel.

Enoch Adeboye made two attempts to secure his masters and PhD abroad but each attempt failed. After he had passed the tests and interviews, he

would soon find out that his frustrations in this regard had divine endorsement. The soft-spoken teacher finally settled for his university degree programme at the University of Lagos and a PhD in hydro dynamics in the same school at the age of 30. Now his ambition would be to become the youngest vice Chancellor in the whole of Africa. Given his brilliant academic records, it seemed like he would achieve his dream soon. But, his ambition would be shortlived for this is the school where he encountered God and his life changed.

With a lecturing job in the same university, an inclusion for his family there on the campus and a modest house in his village, the sky appeared to be the only limit for his young lecturer and doctorate degree holder whose zeal and energy for solving mathematics <sup>seemed unparalleled.</sup> **Enoch's journey begins**

*The baby which came out of this supposed reconciliation and which cleared the tears of the Adeboyes and brought joy to Esther in particular is the one named Enoch Adejare Adeboye.*

March 2nd 1942, inside the forest village of Ifewara, south western part of Nigeria, a child was born to a peasant family of Moses and Esther Adeboye. Esther came from Elefia Lafia while Moses was of the original stock of settlers who migrated from the ancient city of Ile-Ife to establish Ifewara. Moses however left Ifewara for Illesia where he settled to the business of farming and drumming as a local musician. Here he met and married Esther, a trader. Their marriage suffered heavy child mortality compelling Esther to refuse having any more children. However, through pressure and persuasion from the family, she bowed to her husband's wishes. The baby which came out of this supposed reconciliation and which cleared the tears of the Adeboyes and brought joy to Esther in particular is the one named Enoch Adejare Adeboye. He was the fifth of the children but with one more dead, Enoch became the fourth last and the only son. Enoch's mother spoke prophetic words upon his life - A particular one was if he called one person, 200 would answer.

Enoch was however very particular about receiving a formal education and when his requests to be sent to school were dismissed by his father, he went on a hunger-strike in a bid to persuade him. Moses did not think that giving

his children education was important. Besides, he was not able to pay the school fees anyway. But pleasure from his son and conviction about his sense of purpose and tenacious spirit, Moses and Esther sold some of their most possessions and among these was their goat to raise some money in order to pay for their son's school fees. Enoch was then enrolled at the only missionary school in their village.

Even though he started school quite late, he soon realized that he loved to read. As a pupil in St. Stephen's Anglican Primary School, Ifewara, he was brilliant and gentle like his father. He was described as a perfect gentleman. Enoch would come from school to join his friends at the farm and he would go with them during weekends. But what would have been a tragedy in the Adeboye's family turned out to be a divine insight into the future of young Enoch. He had left home alone to join his friends at the farm but he got lost in the forest. Just as he cried hopelessly, a white dog appeared before him and with a friendly wag of his tail, Enoch had no choice but to follow the dog. It would lead young Enoch to the farmhouse. His creator had come to his rescue.

He was admitted into the Ilesha Grammar School, Ilesha, Osun State, Western Nigeria in 1956 to pursue his secondary education. It was here that he discovered his passion for science and mathematics.

Unfortunately, tragedy struck when Enoch was in the third year of his secondary school, in the middle of his examination, his father Moses passed away. His principal let him home to attend his father's funeral and had to return to school the same day. It was devastating for young Enoch who had seen his father's life of toil and had prayed that the old man stayed alive to taste the fruit of his labour for his son.

It was Enoch's Principal, Rev. Akiyemi who secured a loan for Enoch to pay for his examination fees. Young Enoch was to pay back the loan as soon as he gained employment as a teacher.

He grew up following his parents to the Anglican church which they attended on Sundays. He was an ardent lover of music. Both on his father's and mother's, he came from a family of musicians. His love for music and Jesus led him to join the choir of the Anglican church quite early in life.

Enoch finished his secondary school career, winning one of the best student prizes. On this special-prize giving day, he needed to be dressed in trousers and shoes, which he did not have at the age of 18. He had to borrow from a friend and relative at least to be able to go and collect his prize. Sadly, both the shoes and the trousers were wrong sizes. Even though he might have looked comic, Enoch knew he had to collect his prize and that he did with pride and confidence in his ultimate destiny.

He taught briefly at Okeigbo Grammar School before continuing for further education. At the University of Nigeria in the eastern part of Nigeria. He enrolled for a Bachelor's degree in mathematics. He had to join the volleyball team, not so much, because he loved the sport but because it would guarantee him some occasional free meals and little financial benefits which he needed badly.

The outbreak of the Nigeria civil war jeopardised this career in this institution which was located in the then eastern region of Nigeria. He escaped through the linking boat across the river. Enoch finally obtained his bachelors degree from the University of Ife now Obafemi Awolowo University in the western part of the country where he comes from. He returned to Okeigbo Grammar School once again to continue with his teaching career.

### ***I have nothing to offer you except myself***

As a handsome undergraduate, a photographer and a sportsman in an athletic frame and full hair, he had no problems getting women, but there is always the special woman, who could be taken home to meet a man's mother.

Enoch's birthday celebration attracted many girls and cards with poetic love lines. Among all these, there was only one girl called Foluke Adenike who sent him a white Bible. She is the eldest daughter in the family of ten, a trained teacher and worked as a Sunday school superintendant at the United Missionaries College, Ibadan which was then like a women's university. Her father was said to be a strict disciplinarian. She stood out among her rivals.

They used to attend different churches. Enoch was an Anglican and Foluke was a Methodist. These two had met through Foluke's cousin who was Enoch's friend.

Unfortunately, unlike Foluke's, Enoch's family home was the poorest in the neighbourhood, where he dared not take her.

But the secret could not be kept for too long if Enoch had to live his dreams with Foluke. He knew from Intel (intelligence gathering) that three men, one, a lawyer who had a car, desperately wanted to

*"I have nothing, no*

*money, no house, no influence, nothing! If I have anything at all, it is the little brain God gave to me."*

marry her. He was the fourth and the poorest.

To his great shock, Foluke talked about seeing someone like him near a storey building during a drive-by and wanted to know if that was home.

Enoch looked her in the eyes, and asked, "How could I possibly live in a storey building? Please listen; I have nothing, no money, no house, no influence, nothing! If I have any- thing at all, it is the little brain God gave to me."

Because Foluke was trained to be understanding and humble, she was surprised, but not disappointed. She started to think, but he wouldn't allow her.

Enoch continued: "I have nothing to offer you except myself. If you will marry me, you will have me to yourself completely."

But again, Foluke had been trained at home and at college to know that some human values are worth more than gold. She is the eldest daughter in the family of ten, a trained teacher and worked as a Sunday school superintendant at the United Missionaries College, Ibadan which was then like a women's university. Her father was said to be a strict disciplinarian.



Additionally, she had the benefit of spiritual discernment. She had known Enoch for a while, but could she trust his promise?

Another voice in her suggested a careful consideration of his honesty. A rash of thoughts! Finally she decided, “Because you are honest, I will marry you.”

They married in 1967, the year Enoch graduated from the University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University, with a degree in Mathematics.



**Enoch and Foluke Adeboye**

### **Stepping into divine destiny**

Despite Enoch’s success in the academic arena, there seemed something missing in his life, matters of personal security, safety of his family, protection from accidents and powers of darkness bothered him so much. Although he had been baptised in the Anglican church and confirmed a communicant, he had not encountered God. His own knowledge of the supernatural were from tales of witches and wizards in his native home of Ifewara. To secure his much cherished life and car from accidents he had to go to the witchdoctor for a preventive charm. But one week after obtaining this charm, he was involved in a car crash. It was shattering for Enoch.

His problems became compounded as one of his daughters became ill and medication proved ineffectual. Enoch’s relative, Rev. Chris Fajemirokun then told him and his wife about the Redeemed Christian

Church of God which he was part of and assured them that their daughter would be healed once she is brought to the church. What a mathematics teacher and his wife did not know and could not have imagined as they stepped out of the house that evening was that they had began a walk into

God's plan for their lives. Indeed the year 1973 marked a turning point in his life and his family's. *Barely two years in*

*the RCCG, Enoch while* It was also here that he learnt that his way of life would lead him directly and unwaveringly in only one direction – Hell fire! He also learnt of the importance of looking up to Jesus as “the Author and Finisher of our faith” and the need to cast all our cares upon Him.”

*on his way to a bush to move his bowls in his village Ifewara, had the voice of God clearly that he would succeed the founder and superintendent of his church.*

When on 29th of July, 1973, the altar call was made in the church for those who wanted to surrender their lives to Jesus, forsake their sinful ways, and become born again, the young man gave his life unto Jesus. “Something overwhelmed me that mighty: that I was close to hell and I didn't know it. I suddenly realized that it is impossible to have all the PhD's in the world and still be on the losing side. I know all the formula but I did not know the one eternal life”. **Finally ordained Pastor in RCCG**

After the service, Josiah told his wife that his successor had come, even though he had not talked to him. The following Sunday, he told his pastors. When he told them, after service that day, he followed Enoch home, as part of normal visitation to new comers. Enoch was surprised. They soon became very close as the lecturer became his interpreter travelling far and wide with him. He interpreted his messages from Yoruba to English.

Barely two years in the RCCG, Enoch while on his way to a bush to move his bowls in his village Ifewara, had the voice of God that he would succeed the founder and superintendent of his church. The young converts, Enoch and his wife were not prepared for such leadership. He was not prepared to leave his comfortable job at the university to lead a church with membership of a few hundred people and so together with his wife prayed fervently for this cup to pass. Adeboye's prayers could not change his

divine destiny. He was ordained a pastor of the church by the founder in 1975 and the stage was set for a change.

But when Josiah finally told Enoch that he would succeed him, Enoch ran away to University of Ilorin. Each time Josiah told him about succession, Enoch would think he was joking.



**Enoch interpreting for Josiah**

***The Holy Spirit told me***

In 1979, Josiah took Enoch to Kenneth E. Hagin's camp meeting in USA. There were 17,000 who gathered in each service where Kenneth Hagin preached in the said Tulsan camp meeting. Enoch had been reading some of Kenneth's books. Now he was having the rare opportunity to hear the man speak. He wondered "Are those great miracles he writes about real?" He needn't ask. Tulsa would provide ample answers.

Enoch Adeboye witnessed as cripples got up from wheelchairs. In fact many fell to the floor when Kenneth prayed for them. This was new to Adeboye. In his heart he cried "Lord! I want this!" But he was dutifully interpreting all being said to Akindayomi and he admitted he had a difficult time understanding the American's Southern drawl. Like all good things, the meetings ended on a Saturday and the African attendants from Nigeria were to leave in few days. Josiah

*He called his pastors insisted that they must be in a church service that Sunday and since and assured them he was going to die and that God had*

*showed him clearly*

*that Adeboye was his successor. So he laid hands on Enoch Adeboye and prayed.*

Rhema held no Sunday services in those days, Josiah insisted on the group attending the church near the hotel where they were lodging. Once again Enoch had to interpret for him. The white preacher got off the platform and walked to Josiah to give a prophecy, nodding his head “Thus saith the Lord, ‘The church you have started in Africa shall spread over the world like I promised you in the beginning!’” The pastor returned to the pulpit and continued preaching from

where he left Adeboye shocked. Josiah was eager to hear what was said but Enoch promised he’d tell him when they returned to the hotel.

With respect, Enoch entered Josiah’s hotel room. He was now ready to tell him what the white pastor had prophesied but Josiah waved him off “The Holy Spirit told me.” He told Adeboye exactly what the preacher had prophesied. God was confirming that Akindayomi had played his part of the covenant and He would now fulfill His own part. God would make the church spread all over the earth.

Josiah Akindayomi had one more burning desire. God had told him more than 10 years before Adeboye came to RCCG that his successor was not yet in their midst.

He was sure that he was about to die. At 70 years, Josiah was still strong and full of energy but he knew he must transfer his mantle to Enoch Adeboye. He called his pastors and assured them he was going to die and that God had showed him clearly that Adeboye was his successor. So he laid hands on Enoch Adeboye and prayed. It was such a prayer that a tremor hit the entire hotel. Cutleries were jumping off the tables and the windows rattled. The hotel staff were in shock.

After tracing the source of the tremor to Josiah’s room, they knocked and asked to see the heavy machinery the Nigerians had that was shaking that building. No machinery was discovered from their thorough search. What they missed was that their guests had a prayer machinery. A whole building

shook its foundation in Tulsa because a 70 year old man was prayed. ***I want what makes you Hagin***

Josiah, then told the pastors optimistically “Kenneth Hagin will lay hands on me.” Enoch managed to move out of a meeting with the office manager of Kenneth Hagin. She insisted that Hagin took visitors after a camp meeting but she finally gave in “Okay! I will just ask him.” She returned with a message that Hagin wanted to meet the Nigerians the day to follow.

Kenneth asked the Nigerians what they wanted. One wanted his books autographed by him. Then it was Adeboye’s turn. “I want what makes you Hagin. Same unction!”

“Young men, see my secretary, she would attend to your requests but you kneel here,” Kenneth responded. Enoch dropped to his knees and Kenneth spoke in tongues as he laid hands on him. He hit the carpet slain by the anointing. **The new General Overseer appointed**

As Josiah was preparing to meet his Creator, he sent for Adeboye and spent several hours sharing with him details of the covenant and the plans of the Lord for the church. He gave Enoch one rod which he brought from Jerusalem, and he prayed for him. It was still too difficult for him to fully contemplate such an awesome responsibility.

When Josiah was about to die, he knew it, so he sent for Enoch Adeboye, who could not come due to some reasons. But (Mummy GO, Mrs. Folu Adeboye) came, and was there when Rev. Josiah died. He handed the paper and everything over to her.

Josiah Akindayomi was 71 years old when he died. Amidst controversy, Pastor Adeboye’s appointment was formalized by the reading of Rev. Akindayomi’s sealed pronouncement after his burial.

Some people left the church because the new General Overseer was favoured by their late leader. They claimed that they had been around church longer than Enoch.

The resources at church were hardly enough to pay the fulltime pastors. This meant that he had no chance of earning any salary. He also resigned

his job at the university. He left his mansion with two boys quarters at the University of Ilorin and moved to a one room apartment.

As a university teacher, a young believer with only four years of experience, Enoch organised a retreat aimed at spiritual revival, evangelism and prayer for the nation. The success of this outreach program made the young pastor to add in the Redeemed Church of God mission statement the vision of planting a church in within five minutes walking distance in every village and town and within 15 minutes driving distance in metropolitan cities.

Before long the membership of the church began to increase rapidly that even those who doubted the hand of God in his appointment marveled at this. Three fundamental vision of the new General Overseer have been pointed to as a pivot for the revolution that have made the Redeemed Church of God one of the fastest growing churches in the world;

1. The Holy Ghost service which takes place every first Friday of the month. It is a time of intense worship and rare manifestation of God's miracles. In one of his retreats close to his birthday, God had asked this humble pastor what he would like to have as his birthday present. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Pastor Adeboye asked for a miracle for the members of his church. God then asked him to bring them together.

The result was a gathering of about 2,000 people for 7 days at the mission headquarters in Lagos. The incredible miracles witnessed in this gathering in spite the general Overseer to make it a yearly event with the explosion with a number of participants, the headquarters became very small for this event. It was consequently moved to the Redemption camp of the church at the Lagos Ibadan Expressway. With increasing divine ecstasy and amazing explosion of a number of attendants, the Holy Ghost service became a monthly affair happening every first Friday of the month.



**Archbishop Benson Idahosa  
and Pastor Enoch Adeboye  
at the Holy Ghost Convention  
in Ibadan**

On December 18, 1998, he hosted the first open air Holy Ghost Congress in Lekki, Lagos. CNN and BBC reported that 1998 Holy Ghost Congress was attended by over 7 million people which was the largest gathering of people in one spot on earth.

The Holy Ghost Congress has grown to 12 million attendance and Holy Ghost Congress moved to Redemption camp in 1999.

2. The vision of the noble parishes is another landmark in Pastor Enoch Adeboye's christian walk and a major factor in the increasing of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. He had a vision of modern parishes where professionals, technocrats and the elite of the society would meet and fellowship with a mode of worship adopted to their tastes without altering the word in spirit and truth.

3. Contrary to the church tradition of singing, the message of holiness and fervent praying, Pastor Adeboye introduced music, clapping and dancing in his parishes. This was something Rev. Josiah would never allow in church.

Despite criticisms and oppositions from the traditionists, the parish soon exploded transforming the Redeemed Christian Church of God from a local

community church to one with a staggering International reach. From a church with 39 parishes and about 1,000 members started scattering over the south-western states of Nigeria in 1981. The vision of the Redemption camp and the Holy Ghost festival could be said to complete Pastor Adeboye's spiritual race to the explosion <sup>his church has witnessed.</sup> **The Redemption city**

While still staying in his one room apart, Pastor Adeboye had prayed to God to build him a house. God replied that He would not only build him a house but a city. After a long search for land, his wife, Folu finally told her husband that God had whispered to her that the camp should be located at Lagos, Ibadan express way.

Having acquired the land, the ex-university lecturer instructed the builders to make the church auditorium big enough to seat 5,000 people. Precisely 150 ft by 300 ft. In 1983 when the membership of the church was less than 1,000, this didn't make any sense. By 1996, this same auditorium could only serve as the children's church and by the year 2000, the Redemption camp had become the Redemption city – first of its kind in Nigeria. It occupied 5 sqkm with a possibility of expanding to 50 sqkm

The formative years of RCCG started as an Aladura church and ended as a Pentecostal church in 1952. Ojo (2010:19) observed that the Redeemed Christian Church of God is a “Church with an Aladura background which had undergone remarkable transformation under an educated charismatic leader to become a Pentecostal Church”.

As the General overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), he was instrumental in its vast expansion. The church, which was practically unknown when he took over, now has its branches in about 196 countries (as at March 2017) all over the world including more than 14,000 in Nigeria. **The Adeboye family**





**From left to right Dare Adeboye, Leke Adeboye, Bolu Adubi, Adeolu Adeboye, Pastor Adeboye and his wife Foluke**



**ANGUS BUCHAN**

*The farmer evangelist*

*evangelist*

*The farmer*

**One day in late November there was a tremendous thunderstorm. Lightning flashed across the sky, and rain was drumming on their roof so loudly that they could hardly hear ourselves speak. Suddenly Angus heard the sound of women screaming outside.**

**“Khosani, Khosani, please come! Something terrible has happened!”**

**Angus went to the window. He could see a group of black women huddled against the fence with blankets wrapped around them. Angus asked them what the problem was but he couldn't get their reply. They were all shouting and talking at once, but eventually he understood that lightning had stuck the hut where these women slept. Fifty of them had been stuck to the ground, and they had all recovered except one. They had left this woman lying in the hut covered by a blanket.**

**“She is dead,” they said. “You must come now.”**

**Angus jumped into the bakkie with some of the women and drove over to the hut, about 500 metres away. It was a traditional Zulu building, very big but with a small entrance, so low that you have to get down on your hands and knees to go in. He asked them to bring her outside but they refused. They wouldn’t even touch her.**

**“You told us your God was powerful,” they said. “You pray and ask Him to touch this woman. Then we’ll see if this Jesus you talk about is real.”**

Angus Buchan was born on 5th August 1947 in Bulawayo, South Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe). His brother too was born in the same place. Later their parents decided to move to Ndola in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), where his sister was born and Awhere they all grew up. That was where he first encountered Jesus.

Angus’ dad had had a hard life: born in Scotland in 1917 in an area called Buchan, north of Aberdeen, he was the eldest of seven children. When he was twelve he won a scholarship to the Academy, but he wasn’t able to take up his place. He had to go to work to help feed the family. He served an apprenticeship at the local smithy, where he fell in love with the blacksmith’s daughter, Agnes.

George immigrated to South Africa when he was 18 and planned to go back to Scotland to marry, but the war intervened. When war broke out he joined the Transvaal Scottish Regiment, was captured in North Africa and spent the next three years in a German prisoner-of-war camp. He and Agnes had to wait six years before he was *Angus’ new faith made* free to go home and marry her. *a real difference to his*

They came back to Africa after the war, and George worked hard all his life to raise a family. He was a big man, and a hard one.

*life, as young as he was.*

*He started going to church - alone, because none of the family was*

*at all interested in*

When Angus was either six or seven years old, he and a friend one day decided to go the local cinema. There was no television in Zambia, so Saturday afternoon at the local bioscope, as they called

*religion, and no one wanted to come with him.*

it, was the social highlight of the week. They watched a film, and in the interval as kids they would meet up, swap comics and make friends.

There was a Billy Graham Crusade going on that day in a nearby town, and one of the workers had come to the cinema to preach. "He must have presented his message well, because my young heart was gripped; when he asked us if we wanted to ask Jesus into our lives, I was one of the first to respond. I don't know how much I understood about it, but I knew I wanted to have that new life that he was talking about."

Angus' new faith made a real difference to his life, as young as he was. He started going to church - alone, because none of the family was at all interested in religion, and no one wanted to come with him. He used to cycle there every Sunday evening, and it became his job to tidy the church and lock up. There weren't many kids his age at the church, but he stayed on there because the people made him feel loved and welcomed. By the age of fifteen Angus was a Sunday School teacher, and at the age of 16 he preached his first sermon! It was a about six and a half minutes long.

Angus' dad teased him unmercifully whenever he went to church or if he saw him reading the Bible his mum had given him. He tried to get him to come to church with him, but he wouldn't budge. Nevertheless, Angus spent most of his teenage years trying to serve the Lord, but never quite going to church. The seed had been planted, but it would be many years before it began to germinate.

## **School in Scotland**

Angus grew up in a mining town, but he always knew that he wanted to be a farmer. He hadn't done too well at school, and he didn't get his matriculation certificate, only a school-leaving certificate for Standard Eight. Since he wanted to go to an agricultural college, his parents suggested that he might like to study in Scotland. It would be an opportunity to learn all the skills he needed, and at the same time to visit his grandparents and the rest of the family and get in touch with his Scottish roots.

He loved being in Scotland and spent two great years at Craibstone Agricultural College, where I learned a lot about farming. "We were outside in all weathers - sleet, snow and rain - doing hard manual work, and it really toughened me up. The farmers of northeast Scotland are excellent stockmen, and I learned my livestock farming on the Aberdeen Angus cattle of the area. The dairy and arable farming I learned there has stood me in good stead to this day."

### **From Australia to Zambia**

When Angus graduated in 1968 he came home to Zambia and got a job as an assistant manager on a farm in the copper belt. He made a couple of visits to his parents, but he was enjoying his independence as a "wild colonial boy" - there were lots of parties, lots of girlfriends and plenty of opportunities for drinking with the boys. His social life was great, but he was a long way from God.

Angus gave up his job and flew to Australia, making a beeline for Bon - di Beach though he couldn't afford to stay there for long. He needed a job, and there was plenty of farm work available for a fit young man who wasn't afraid of hard work. He worked on a dairy farm in Picton, New South Wales, milking cows; then he had a job on one of the top Hereford beef stud farms, where he rode horses and learned to break in the bulls for showing. He spent a term at Hawkesbury Agricultural College: they wanted him to stay because he was so good at rugby, but he wasn't cut out for academic life and he moved on again, this time to Queensland, where he harvested pineapples. Even there he made a success of it "three of us set a record by picking 17 tonnes of fruit in one day, though it was incredibly tough work, and at night we had to pick the thorns out of our hands by candlelight."

He had made some good money, and he was used to living life at a fast pace: he was rich, independent and proud, but he still felt restless, and he didn't feel he had a future in Australia. His younger brother Fergus wrote to him saying that there were good opportunities in Zambia, so Angus sold his car and flew home to his beloved Africa.

### **It started as love at first sight**

Once there, Angus immediately found a good job as manager of a big farm in a place called Broken Hill: 4,000 hectares, 1,500 head of cattle and 130 workers. He increased in maturity and developed his leadership and farming skills, but he carried on with his usual lifestyle, drinking with the boys (and the girls), taking up competitive power-lifting, and glorying in his own success. Angus was an arrogant, successful, self-made man. However, God had his hand on his life, and sent him a great blessing: his wife Jill.

Angus and Jill met at a party, and it was love at first sight; two years later we married in the local magistrate court. Jill was born in Kasama, northern Zambia, where her English parents ran a centre for the treatment of leprosy. She supported him when he decided to leave his secure job and buy a farm in partnership with a friend, Jan "John Bull" Coetzee. It was a great opportunity, and when John Bull decided to move on Angus was able to buy him out and became the proud owner of a beautiful 1,500-hectare farm with a herd of 250 beef cattle and other stock. Angus was working long hours clearing the bush, planting corn and building the herd of beef cattle. Jill was kept busy running the home and looking after the babies: their first son Andrew and their daughters Lindi and Robyn were born there.

It looked as though Angus was settling down at last, but God had other plans. Conditions in Zambia were deteriorating: the value of the currency was going down, medical care was hard to find and the educational system was poor. Andrew and Lindi were ready for school, but there was nowhere suitable nearby, and they were determined not to put their toddlers on a plane to England or South Africa, as so many other parents did. Jill had grown up in a boarding school and felt that she hardly knew her parents. She wanted them to be there for their children. *Give them six months and they'll be gone!*

They agreed that they would have to move, but it was a bad time to sell up, and they handed over the farm for a fraction of its value. They lost money, and they would have to start all over again. In December 1976 they started packing up to leave for Swaziland.

They had a Mercedes Benz truck and trailer, and they filled it to capacity: a tractor, a lathe, welding machines, tools, furniture. Angus drove the truck and Jill followed in the car with the children.

Eventually they arrived in Swaziland, where Angus took a job on a farm. Neither of them was happy there. He found it hard to make the change from being self-employed to conforming to company regulations, working set hours and being told what jobs to do. Jill was also hankering for the independence and the wide open spaces we were used to. Every six weeks they had a long weekend, and they would drive into South Africa to look for a farm to buy. The prices were astronomical, and Angus thought they would never be able to afford what they wanted. "We lowered our sights - maybe just a plot of land and a couple of cows."

Then one day as they were driving back past Greytown, KwaZulu-Natal, they came across a farm that had fallen on hard times. The owner was dividing up the land and was willing to sell us a portion of it. It wasn't much of a bargain: the land had been neglected, it was overgrown with scrub wattle and there was no water in sight, but Angus put down his deposit anyway. On 9 August 1977 they drove onto the farm for the first time. They had no idea that this was to be the birth- place of a ministry that would touch thousands by God's grace.

*Angus employed the first couple  
of Zulu men who  
walked past, and  
they helped him build a traditional Zulu house.*

Meanwhile, they needed a roof over their heads, so Angus hired a caravan for R200 and parked it among the bushes. Jill never complained, even though she had three children to look after and was six months pregnant. Every day she took a plastic bucket in the car and drove to a neighbouring

farm for water, then came back and washed the children, cooked their breakfast and got them ready for school.

Eventually the farmer took pity on them, and lent them his 2,000-litre water-cart, which they parked next to the caravan. Jill said it felt like luxury!

Angus employed the first couple of Zulu men who walked past, and they helped him build a traditional Zulu house. They cut down trees and cleared the ground, dug holes and put in corner posts. Then they cut saplings and nailed them to the uprights. The Zulu women made their bricks, trampling the mud to make it sticky and cutting it into blocks. Angus and Jill stacked the bricks inside the saplings, and when they were dry they coated the outside in another layer of mud, covered it in cement and painted it with whitewash. Angus wanted a thatched roof but that takes time - and money - so they put on a tin roof. They finished it in three weeks and moved in. It wasn't much bigger than the caravan, but it felt like a palace to them. Later they knocked a hole in the wall and built more rooms, but they never replaced it.

Angus was starting from square one - he didn't speak Zulu, he didn't know the land, he didn't even know when the rains would come in this new country. All he had was his physical strength, his farming skills, and his determination to build a new life for their little family. At that time they were regarded with some disdain by the local farmers, as if they were gypsies or tinkers: they had come from nowhere; they were camping in primitive conditions with no telephone, no water, no lights, no radio, nothing. Even the local Zulu people laughed at them.

“These white people are living harder than us,” they said. “Give them <sup>six</sup> months and they'll be gone!” **Working hard on the farm**

One of their first needs was water. Angus had turned down the offer of a water diviner, but managed to find a damp spot by himself. They dug down with a spade and found a spring, so they could pump water for the house and give back the water-cart. He was determined to be self-sufficient. By the time Fergus was born in November they were settled in their new home.



The farm is about fifteen kilometres from Greytown in KwaZulu-Natal, close to the border with Lesotho and the beautiful Drakensberg Mountains. The climate is temperate, and it's four seasons like the UK: in the winter the frost is so thick it looks like snow, their farm being around 1,000 metres above sea level and they could grow potatoes, beans, mealies (maize) and fruit - apples, plums and pears.

In those early days, though, there was a huge amount of work to do. The land had been neglected and was overgrown with wattle, a vicious invader plant that quickly populates good arable land and has to be pulled out by the roots. It was a tremendously hard job, and the main reason why we were able to buy the land so cheaply.

Angus worked seven days a week from morning to night, carving that little farm out of the bush with one tractor. It was a lonely time. He was a stranger in a strange land. Their nearest neighbours were two or three kilometres away, mostly white farmers who spoke English or Afrikaans. The local population was Zulu, and although in those days he couldn't speak the language, he managed to hire half a dozen men to help him build the house, shed and workshop, and help clear the land. He installed a lighting plant, put in the telephone, piped the water. He was working an 18-hour day and some of the *ZuDeep down Angus* lus left without collecting their wages because they couldn't keep up with the pace he set.

"This malungu (white man) is hlanya (crazy)," they said.

Angus Buchan managed to secure a contract to grow seed mealies and the first year they got a bumper crop. It was a tremendous achievement. That year he employed between 80 and 100 workers on the farm: some of them worked for cash, and others in exchange for food, building materials or fuel. ***Shalom is a good name***

*knew he needed God in his life, but just then he didn't have time to stop and think about what was*

*happening to him.*

“I’ll pay off the balance on the farm in one year,” Angus promised the farmer who sold it to him. That was quite a statement. Some farmers take a couple of generations to pay off the mortgage on their farm, but he wanted to prove himself. He kept telling himself that once the farm was secured, he would find the peace and contentment he longed for, but the harder he worked, the more he wondered what he was doing it all for.

Deep down Angus knew he needed God in his life, but just then he didn’t have time to stop and think about what was happening to him. There was one small sign that God had them in his hand. One day they had a telephone call from Pretoria, the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture. The land surveyor told him he had officially sub- divided the farm, and their section of it had to be registered with its own name.

Angus asked him to hang on for a moment and called to Jill. “The man wants us to name the farm,” He told her. “Can you think what to call it?” Jill thought for a moment. “Shalom is a good name,” she said. “It means ‘Peace’.” So Shalom became its name.

Of course, peace was just what Angus didn’t have. The unremitting stress and hard work were taking their toll and he was on a very short fuse.

He wasn’t satisfied. His biggest dream had been to own his own farm, and now he had succeeded, but at what cost? Having the title deeds in his name had made no difference to him at all. The emptiness inside him increased. He’d go off to the country club every Friday evening and down a couple of beers, thinking that perhaps they would fill the gap. Sometimes he had more than a couple, but the emptiness remained. **Big problem!**

One day Angus had to drive some Zulu labourers back to their homeland in the truck, so he left his induna (foreman), Simeon Bengu, in charge of the farm.

“Simeon,” Angus told him, “I’ll be back about sunset. Look after the farm and take care of the tractor.”

That evening as he drove in at the gate he saw two men standing under a tree. One was Simeon and the other Isaiah Mthwethwa, the tractor driver. He knew at once that something was wrong. All right, Angus said. Now

what?

“Big problem!”

“What problem? A puncture? Have you run out of diesel?” The induna shifted uncomfortably from foot to foot. “Big accident.” “Show me.”

They walked up a bush track to a field they were busy ploughing, and as they turned the corner his knees nearly buckled. There, lying on its back, with its front axle completely ripped off, was his large green tractor “my pride and joy, and my only means of creating a farm in this dense bushveldt.”

Isaiah had allowed Simeon to drive the tractor “something I had expressly forbidden” and he had taken a corner too fast and hit a tree stump. Angus looked at the tractor in despair. The exhaust pipe and manifold were completely crushed, the battery was hanging upside down, and oil and diesel were everywhere. He stood in silence for a moment and then turned on them. The men took one look at my face

*Angus was  
and fled into the mealies.  
shattered and*

*knew he needed help because things were getting out of hand.*

When Angus’ temper had cooled, he looked for the two men and asked them to help him with fixing the tractor because he didn’t have money to employ a mechanic.

It took hours of hard work into the early hours of the morning before they could get the tractor running again. Without it, Angus couldn’t plough or disc his fields, and planting time was running short.

That night he couldn’t sleep because thoughts of anger kept running round inside his mind. He felt as if he was driving a car down the highway with his foot jammed on the accelerator the engine was screaming, but he couldn’t switch it off. He felt totally out of control and he was horrified. He thought he was having a heart attack.

Angus was shattered and knew he needed help because things were getting out of hand. So he went to Paddy Reynolds who was their family doctor. He explained to him how hard he had been working and how he lost his temper and about his uncontrollable outbursts of anger. Paddy gave him tranquillisers to take.

Reluctantly he took one when he got home, but it didn't have any effect. He lay awake all night. He felt keyed up and exhausted at the same time, and he didn't know where else to turn. Things went on in this way for a while.

### ***Why don't you come along to church tomorrow morning?***

One day Angus was walking in the fields with Robyn. She was only about three years old, and she held on to his little finger as they checked the corn. He looked down at her happy little face and thought, "I don't know how I'm going to cope. I don't know how I'm going to take care of this little girl. I don't know what's to happen to this child if I crack up."

No one but Paddy and Jill knew how bad he was feeling; Jill was torn to see the state Angus was in, but she was powerless to help him. Fortunately, God intervened before he had a complete breakdown.

The local Methodist church was running a lay witness mission, and someone invited them along. At that time Angus hadn't been near a church for a long time: He used to say that the local country club was his church, because he went there every week. They didn't particularly want to go to this mission meeting, but it was difficult to refuse, so they went along on the Saturday night. It was a strange experience. When they arrived people were singing along with a music group; some were clapping, and others had their hands raised in the air. It was all very different from the stolid Presbyterian services of his youth. He looked longingly at the door, but the way out was blocked by an elderly couple who had come in and were sitting next to them. This couple introduced themselves as Frank and Myra Hambidge.

"Why don't you come along to church tomorrow morning?" asked Frank.  
"This group will be taking the service."

Angus didn't really want to spend Sunday morning in church, but he was touched by the invitation. These people seemed to be genuinely interested and caring, and they looked so happy. He could do with some of that. He agreed to attend.

They got up early the next morning to get ready for church, but they had four children to deal with. By the time they had the whole family ready they were running late, and when they arrived the church was full. They trooped in and had to walk right up to the front to find seats. Everyone in the congregation knew that Angus Buchan and his family were in church that morning.

"Morning, farmer!" smiled Frank Hambidge, and Angus smiled back. "At least I knew somebody." *Did you mean it?*

There was an air of expectancy in the church. The lay people were sharing their testimonies, and Angus sat there with his mouth open as he listened to them. For the first time in his life he saw strong men cry as they told how the Lord had taken care of their needs, restored their businesses and done wonderful things in their lives.

### *Jill and Angus*

One guy was a building contractor. He started weeping as he told how his business had gone down and he had contemplated suicide. Then he found Jesus, and now he had a reason to live. Another man told how his marriage had been breaking up, when the Lord had brought him and his wife together again. Their stories pierced Angus' heart. He wanted *before the Lord*. to be part of this kind of life; he wanted to know more.

*walked to the*

*front of the church with many others,*

*and knelt*

"What about you? Would you like to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour today?" He looked at the speaker and realised that was exactly

what he wanted to do. Jill and Angus walked to the front of the church with many others, and knelt before the Lord. They prayed the sinner's prayer together, saying sorry for their sins and asking Jesus to rule their hearts, and a miracle happened. "Jesus came into our lives." That was in 1979.

That afternoon Eustace and Trish van Rooyen from the church came to visit them and they had something special to say.

"We saw you respond to the altar call in church. Did you mean it?" I did, with all my heart, and so did Jill. The Buchans told them so. "Then I have a challenge for you," said Eustace. "If you mean business with Jesus, then tell the first three people you meet tomorrow morning what has happened to you." **The farmer turned into an evangelist**

It was some challenge. On Friday night Angus had been in the pub with the boys, and on Sunday morning he had given his life to Christ. His friends were mostly rough characters like him, and they would be pretty surprised by all this. He wondered if he could do it.

The first person Angus met the next morning was Ian, a local dairy farmer who was a really tough character "the regimental sergeant major of the local army camp for reservists. They were on their way to buy cattle at a neighbouring farm, and as Angus drove he felt the Holy Spirit prompting him to speak. He was praying in his head for what to say. Suddenly, Angus heard the answer clearly: "Just tell him."

He started: "I've become a Christian. I've accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour."

There was a pause, but Ian didn't laugh. He just looked at Angus and said, "I'm pleased for you, Angus."

That gave him courage to ask Ian whether he had ever thought of giving his life to Christ. Even though Angus' friend didn't accept Christ that day, a seed had already been planted in him. Two years later he gave his life to Christ.

At the time, however, Angus was just relieved that he'd told someone. The next person he witnessed to was the fertiliser rep who had come to the farm. After that, Angus told everybody he saw "I couldn't keep quiet!" His

friends were convinced because they could see the change in him. For one thing, He used to have the filthiest mouth in town, but when he became a Christian the habit of swearing left him completely.

### **The new church members**

Angus and Jill lives were transformed, and it was an extra blessing that they had come to Jesus together. They shared everything they learned, reading Christian books, listening to tapes and music and reading the Bible.

In the morning Angus and Jill would have tea together before An<sup>Three months</sup> gus went into his little office to have a quiet time with the Lord. *after giving*

*their life to the  
Lord Angus  
began preaching.*

This time with Jesus became the most important part of his day, as Him spoke to him through prayer, the scriptures and devotional readings. It was a discipline the Lord was building into his life that became a lifeline to him. Sometimes Angus would go out into the fields to pray.

They worshipped every week at the little Methodist church in Greytown, and they soon got involved in every Christian activity there. “The minister, Errol Hind, was a wonderful encouragement to us, and a great teacher through his example and God’s word.”

Three months after giving their life to the Lord Angus began preaching. He would study the Bible and pray, and miraculously find that he had the words to say. He wanted to tell everyone what Jesus had done for me. The local church council wanted him to take an exam to become a local preacher, but somehow there was never time, so they called him an exhorter and let him go on preaching anyway.

Angus and Jill wanted everything God had for them, so when they read about some special services in town, they went along. There they began to experience God in a new way, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit;

shortly afterwards they were both baptised with water. “It was the start of a whole new dimension of our walk <sup>with Christ.</sup>” **Angus’ mum accepts Jesus**

Angus’ mum was another person who saw the change in Angus and Jill. She and his dad had moved to Greytown to be near the family, and Jill and Angus regularly called in for a cup of tea. One day they were sitting in her kitchen round the big wood stove when she started to cry.

“It isn’t the same any more,” she said. “You and Jill are different. You’ve grown away from me and I can’t stand it.”

She was afraid that she had lost them, though Angus told her they loved her more than ever before. He told her that they were different because they had accepted Jesus and asked her if she too would.

She accepted and she prayed the sinner’s prayer with them in her soft Scottish accent. They all cried tears of joy that day, except their dad. He still wasn’t having any of it. His mum read her Bible eagerly, and when Angus called in to see her she would amaze him with her insight into the scriptures. **Angus prays for rain**

“My aim was first and foremost to live my life for Christ, and to do his will. I was just beginning to discover what a privilege and pleasure it is to serve the living God. I was so thankful that he had saved me, and that He was now in control of all the details of my redeemed life. I was about to discover what that meant.

Every year we burn firebreaks on the farm: after the first frosts the grass becomestinder-dry, and it’s easy for fire to break out. So once the rains have stopped, but before everything gets too dry, we go round the farm and burn off wide strips of land in a controlled way, with a water-cart following the burn to put out the fire. That way, if a fire should start in a field later, it can’t spread because it will die out at the edge where there is nothing left to burn.”

That autumn they set out to burn the firebreaks as usual on a bright windy day in April. Simeon Bengu, Angus’ induna, was waiting in the yard with a gang of farm workers, and he agreed that it would be a good day for the burn: the grass was still fairly green, so there was no risk of the fire getting



out of control.

They started burning at around 9 a.m., and at first everything went as planned. Then, quite suddenly, the wind changed: all at once it was blowing a gale, and a loose clump of burning grass was lifted high in the air and blown across the road into a forest that hadn't been touched for years. The dry undergrowth caught fire immediately.

They watched in horror as the flames spread rapidly, fanned by the strong wind.

There was a note of panic in Angus' voice as he wanted the fire to be put out. Their farm is bordered by two big timber companies, H. L. & L. and the Lion Match Company. Both have hundreds of acres of timber, and Angus shuddered to think of what might happen if the fire spread from their farm into their forests. *He rushed back*

Angus ran to his bakkie "a small open-backed *to the fire and* farm truck" and took off down the road, driving *saw that it had* so fast that the tailgate flew off. He screeched *already spread to* to a halt outside the house. *the pine trees and*

"Jill!" Angus yelled. We've got a fire! Get on the phone to the other farmers and ask them to help us, right now. It's bad."

Small farmers have limited fire-fighting equip - ment, and turn out to help each other in these emergencies. Angus knew they couldn't handle that fire by them- selves: the situation was desperate.

*become a raging inferno: the pine resin began to explode.*

He rushed back to the fire and saw that it had already spread to the pine trees and become a raging inferno: the pine resin began to explode. He had taken off his shirt earlier that morning as he worked in the heat; as he ran past, one of the trees exploded and all the hair on the back of his neck and down his back was burned off. He didn't even notice in the frantic rush to try to beat out the flames in the undergrowth.

Within half an hour all their neighbours had arrived with their fire-fighting equipment: water-tankers, tractors with high-pres- sure hoses and water-

carts. They were going to need everything they could get to help them as they tried to contain the fire.

Their neighbours couldn't stay to help them for long: the next day was Good Friday and they had to return to their farms to pay their labourers before the holiday. As Angus watched them leave, he realised with a hollow feeling in the pit of his stomach that he couldn't do this alone. The fire was going to jump the fence.

Just then a scripture flashed into his mind: "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours (Mark 11:24). I turned to the Zulu driver beside me, who was busy directing a hose onto the fire.

I'm going to pray and ask the Lord Jesus Christ to please send rain."

He looked at Angus in surprise and began to laugh. "There will be no rain! The rainy season is over! "Can't you see that there are no clouds in the sky?"

It was true: the sky was clear, the wind was blowing and there wasn't the slightest sign of rain. All the same, Angus closed his eyes and said a simple prayer.

Less than five minutes later they heard a mighty clap of thunder! The driver and Angus turned round in astonishment. He was trembling all over, and the Zulu's mouth was open and his eyes were like saucers. The impossible had happened. The wind had changed direction and dark clouds were rolling in from the south. A few minutes later a gentle drizzle began to fall over Shalom, and Angus watched in awe as the rain doused the raging fire.

### ***We'll see if this Jesus you talk about is real***

One day in late November there was a tremendous thunderstorm.

Lightning flashed across the sky, and rain was drumming on their roof so loudly that they could hardly hear themselves speak. Suddenly Angus heard the sound of women screaming outside.

"Khosani, Khosani, please come! Something terrible has happened!"

He went to the window. He could see a group of black women huddled against the fence with blankets wrapped around them. Angus asked them what the problem was but he couldn't get their reply. They were all shouting and talking at once, but eventually he understood that lightning had struck the hut where these women slept. Fifty of them had been stuck to the ground, and they had all recovered except one. They had left this woman lying in the hut covered by a blanket.

*Outside, the women began wailing and lamenting. One of the women still inside the hut pointed to the body, lying by the wall.*

“She is dead,” they said. “You must come now.” He jumped into the bakkie with some of the women and drove over to the hut, about 500 metres away. It was a traditional Zulu building, very big but with a small entrance, so low that you have to get down on your hands and knees to go in. He asked them to bring her outside but they refused. They wouldn’t even touch her.

“You told us your God was powerful,” they said. “You pray and ask Him to touch this woman. Then we’ll see if this Jesus you talk about is real.”

Angus needed God to prove that He is alive. He cried out to the Lord: “You have to help me now. I don’t know what to do.”

He crawled inside. A fire was burning in the middle of the hut and the interior was dark and smoky, so at first he couldn’t see much. Outside, the women began wailing and lamenting. One of the women still inside the hut pointed to the body, lying by the wall. He went over. He had no idea whether the woman was dead or unconscious, but he acted in raw faith, in fear and trembling. He laid his hands on her, closed his eyes and prayed. “Lord, please bring healing to this woman’s body.” He felt a strong impression from the Holy Spirit that he should lift the woman up, so he bent over her, lifted her to her feet and let her go. She remained standing. The wailing outside had stopped, and there was deathly silence.

“Can you hear me?” Angus asked.

She nodded.

Lift up your hands to God.”

She lifted her arms into the air and pandemonium broke out: the women inside the hut were screaming and shouting, dancing and singing, and the women outside heard their cries and joined in, singing praises to God. It was a wonderful, awesome moment.

The farm labourers spoke of nothing else for weeks. God had performed a miracle before their eyes, and they told everyone they knew. **Cow healed after prayer**

Another problem hit their beautiful Jersey cow, Hester. They were having breakfast in the kitchen one morning when Angus happened to glance outside and saw that the cow was lying on her side.

He ran out to look at her, and saw at once that she was very sick. He hurried back to the phone and called the vet in Greytown. “Rob, come quick,” Angus said. “Our cow’s dying. We only have one, and we need her.” “What are the symptoms?” he said.

Angus was busy telling him about her shallow breathing and her glazed eyes when he noticed that Jill and the children had left the table. He looked out of the window and there they were “Jill in her dressing gown, Andrew, Lindi and Robyn, and even little Fergus who was just a toddler” marching across the paddock. They knelt around the sick cow, laid their hands on her and bowed their heads. Angus knew they were praying. Then they all stood up and so did the cow. Hester began grazing as if nothing had happened.

When he saw this he stop the vet from coming because their cow had been healed after Jill and the children prayed for her.

***Dad, do you know you’re dying?***

Shortly after Angus’ mother found the Lord they agreed that it would be a lot easier if “mum and dad came to live at Shalom”. His dad spent most of his time helping on the farm in any case, and mum was lonely in the town because she couldn’t drive any more.

A few years later Angus’ mum was called home to heaven, and dad was devastated. He seemed to give up on life. Every evening Angus would go up to the little house and sit with him while his dad sipped a cold beer. They chatted about farming and sport, and Angus would try to get around to speaking about Jesus, but that made him really angry. He didn’t think he would ever let him reach him with the gospel, but the family kept praying.

One day his dad was taken ill, and they took him to the hospital in Pietermaritzburg, a large town about 45 kilometres from the farm. That night Angus spoke to the family.

“Dad doesn’t have long, Angus said.

“Can we all fast and pray for him this evening, that he will open his heart to the Lord?”

The next day he drove in to see his dad at the hospital. He had made up his mind to have one more try to talk to him about Jesus, but the devil was telling him to give it up.

The Lord Jesus had made a promise to Angus. "I will give you your heart's desire." He decided to trust in the promise of God, not the lies of the devil. As he parked in the hospital car park he bowed his head. "Master, I only ask one favour," he said. "When I get to the ward, don't let anyone else be there. Only Dad and me." Angus thought that might make it easier for his dad to respond to what he had to say. When Angus got to the ward, it was full of people: every other patient had a crowd of visitors.

His dad was propped up in bed, watching for him. Angus' heart was filled with compassion for him as he saw his big strong father lying there. "His curly hair was silver now, but his blue eyes were the same as ever. He'd brought me up to be a real South African man

*Angus' heart* reserved, strong, unemotional but the words came to my lips:  
'Dad, *was filled with* I really love you. I'd never been able to say that before.  
Angus put

*compassion for*  
*him as he saw*  
*his big strong*

*father lying there.*

his arms round him and gave him a hug." "Dad, do you know you're dying?" "I know that, Angus," he said. "You need to make your peace with God." There was a pause, then his dad said the words I'd been hoping for. "Not before time, son."

He led him in the sinner's prayer. In front of all the people in the ward, in his strong Scottish accent, he prayed after Angus.

It was only then Angus became conscious of the silence that had fallen on the ward. People were wiping their eyes; one visitor came over and welcomed Angus' dad into the family of the Lord; the nurses congratulated him. Suddenly celebration filled the room.

***What do you want me to do, Lord?***

Throughout November and December Angus continued to pray that God would use him. He felt ever more strongly that God was calling him to evangelise, but he found it hard to believe. He was only a farmer, not a trained preacher.

That Christmas Angus bought Jill a beautiful Bible, with the words of the Lord printed in red. On Christmas Eve he was admiring it when one verse seemed to leap out at him. “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.” (Acts 18:9). It was the only verse in red on that entire page. He was sure that the Lord Jesus was calling him to preach.

They had already prayed together on the farm before work every morning, and Angus shared the word of God with his labourers, but now he sensed that God was calling him to a wider ministry. He asked God; “What do you want me to do, Lord?” “I want you to preach the gospel. Trust me and you will see signs and wonders following the preaching of my word.”

Angus would approach the pastor and ask him to let him preach in the church. He couldn't believe what the Lord said next. “No, Angus, I don't want you to preach to churchgoers. Hire a hall in Ladysmith. I want you to go to people who don't know me and share my word with them.”

Hire a hall? Angus had never done that before. Preach at a gospel campaign? That would be a complete change for this farmer. But there was only one possible answer.

“Right, Lord. I'll do it if you say so.” **Angus hires a hall for an evangelistic campaign**

*of self-doubt, unworthiness and plain fear*

*began to fill his heart.*

Early one morning in January 1990, Angus set off for Ladysmith. He went in the farm pickup truck, wearing his usual khaki work clothes. He wasn't pretending to be anything other than he was an ordinary

farmer. It was a two-hour drive to Ladysmith, and as he went he began to hear a familiar voice.

“Who do you think you are, planning an evangelistic campaign? You’re not even a preacher, just an illiterate farmer. Who do you think will want to come and listen to you?”

The old feelings of self-doubt, unworthiness and plain fear began to fill his heart. Should I turn back? Was I deceiving myself? “Drive on,” said the Lord. His peace came into Angus’ heart. He parked in the centre of Ladysmith, wondering how he would set about hiring a hall.

“Wait a minute,” said the Lord. “I have three questions for you, Angus, before you carry on.”

“Are you prepared to be a fool for me?”

That was easy to answer. It wouldn’t be a new experience for Angus. “Yes, Lord.”

“Are you prepared for people to say all manner of evil about you for my sake?”

“Yes, I’m prepared for that.”

“Are you prepared to see less of your family?”

Angus was silent. As a farmer he was used to coming home at night to be with the family. This was a decision he couldn’t take lightly: God knew it would be a real sacrifice for him, but He would only send Angus if he was willing to go all the way with Him.

“Yes, Lord. I’ll drink this cup of sacrifice, but I can only do it by your grace.”

Angus looked around him. He was standing right outside the town hall, so he went inside and asked the lady at the counter if she could help him. He was afraid she might laugh when he told her he wanted to book a hall for an evangelistic campaign, but she opened up the big desk diary.

“We have only one week available during April,” she said, “except for the Saturday night - that’s already been booked.”

“I’ll take it.”

“I felt on top of the world. I’d done it!” Angus Buchan, a farmer called by God, would be running a week’s evangelistic campaign in Ladysmith. He



set off for home, filled with the excitement of doing something for God. **Angus permitted to preach to 500 troops**

“What about the Saturday, Lord?” Angus asked as he drove. Just then the large army barracks came into view: “5th South African Infantry” said the sign outside. The Holy Spirit prompted him to turn into the entrance. He was stopped by the guards on the gate. He asked to see the general and one of them corrected him that it was the kommandant.

He filled in some papers and they let him in. Within a few minutes, with no appointment or recommendation, Angus found himself facing the kommandant.

“How can I help you?” he asked.

In those days South Africa had a policy of conscription: every white South African male over the age of 18 had to serve for two years in the army. Angus’ own eldest son, Andy, had recently been called up and was away from home for the first time.

“Sir, I have a son of my own in the army, and I know what these boys are going through. I want to come and encourage them about Jesus.”

“Fine,” said the kommandant. “We’ll have 500 troops at the Elands Hall on the Saturday night.

Angus’ heart seemed to skip a beat. He had never preached to more than about 80 people in church. Now he had let himself in for preaching to 500! He thanked him profusely and went home in a daze. ***I felt totally humiliated and disillusioned***

With only three months to prepare for the campaign, Jill and Angus talked about what they needed to do.

“We must share the vision with the local churches and submit to their leadership,” Angus said. However, his visits to the church leaders in Ladysmith were a disappointment. The first minister I met was unenthusiastic.

“The people of Ladysmith are just like the rocks and thorn trees of the area, hard and dry,” he said. “You’ll get nowhere with them.” At least he promised to tell his people about the campaign.

At the next church the young pastor listened to what Angus said. “Well, you can come if you want to, but in my opinion this town has been over-evangelised.” Angus could hardly believe his ears. Surely if there was one soul left unsaved, there was room for the gospel? His next call was to a church with a reputation for liveliness. Surely here he would find support. “Three months ago,” said the pastor, “two of South Africa’s top evangelists held a campaign here. The first night only 39 people came to *maybe the Lord*

*“ has sent you  
here ... to bend  
you a little.”*

the meeting, and 18 of those were from my own church. Tell me, who are your main speakers?” Angus hesitated. “Well, I am. In fact, I’m the only speaker!

“Well, brother, maybe the Lord has sent you here ... to bend you a little.”

Angus felt totally humiliated and disillusioned. When he called on the last minister it was quite a relief to find that he wasn’t at home.

He drove out of town with a heavy heart. He had planned to book accommodation for the team in a local motel, but he could hardly bear to carry on. He parked the pickup truck under a tree outside the motel and cried out to God.

“Lord, why do you want me to do this?” It seemed to him that there was a church on every corner in Ladysmith, and not one of their ministers wanted him to come. Still, he had promised the Lord, so he would go through with it. He went in and booked the rooms in <sup>blind faith</sup>. **An encouraging call from Brian**

That evening, just as they were about to sit down to dinner, the phone rang. It was Brian Jubber, the minister who had been out. His voice was full of excitement.

“I have to come and see you urgently. We’ve been praying for six months for revival and asking the Lord to send us an evangelist! We’ll be with you first thing in the morning!

Brian and his church worked hard; they organised a Men's Breakfast, they put up banners and posters around the town, and they upheld them in prayer.

Gradually the team began to come together. They were a small, inexperienced group of ordinary people, nervous about what they had taken on, but determined to do God's will. They loved the Lord Jesus and were prepared to fulfil his Great Commission, to go into the world and preach the gospel to everyone. **All set for the evangelistic campaign**

Steyn du Preez, a young man and prayer warrior from Zimbabwe who was managing a farm in the Greytown area turned out to be Angus' prayer partner. These two would meet every week to pray for the campaign. Those times of prayer became very important to Angus, strengthening them all for the tests that lay ahead.

They knew that they needed to advertise their campaign, with handbills, posters and newspaper adverts, and the Lord sent them some assistance in the form of Angus' brother-in-law, John Collier, an advertising man. His sister Morag had given her life to the Lord, but John was still a man of the world. All the same, he was willing to help them and offered to come and video the whole campaign. Morag was delighted.

Ian Corbridge, Jill's brother, flew up from Port Elizabeth to lead their music. Since the age of fifteen, Angus had always admired Ian for his uncompromising stand for the Lord. Back in the days when Angus was a wild young rugby player the team would always go into the bar after a game and have a few beers, but Ian was happy to sit on the veranda and drink Coca-Cola. His consistent testimony made a great impression on Angus. Now he was married and qualified as a maths and physical education teacher, but he made time to come and help them at Ladysmith; in the years that followed, his music was to have a profound effect on their work at Shalom.

Their pastor Gavin was to play the piano, and his wife Jean would sing and help another young woman, Karen, with the ministry. Buddy was their drummer and sound man.

None of them had ever done anything like this before; all they knew

*The first meeting was scheduled to begin at 7 pm, and at 6:50 the hall was empty except for the music team on the platform, singing for all they were worth.*

was that Jesus Christ is faithful, and that was enough for them. They set off for Ladysmith.

The first meeting was scheduled to begin at 7 pm, and at 6:50 the hall was empty except for the music team on the platform, singing for all they were worth. Angus went down to the basement to pray. "Lord, we have a covenant," he said.

"We've done all we can. The rest is up to you."  
He went upstairs again and peeped into the hall - it was half full.

That night set the pattern for the whole campaign. They opened with the music team, who led them in praise and worship. Then Angus got up and preached. Angus' message was short, punchy, fiery and challenging, about their need to get back to God and a life of holiness.

Then they sang a meditative hymn, "Just as I", and Angus called forward all the people who wanted to serve Jesus Christ with all their hearts. That first night six people came forward.

By the end of the week, 50 or 60 people were coming forward each night. When the campaign ended the team gathered in the motel for the last time.  
***If you don't mean it, please sit down***

There was only one final event to organise: Saturday night at the army camp. The kommandant had promised us 500 young men, and as they turned in at the gate Angus wondered if they would all be there.

The meeting was due to begin at 7 pm, and at 6:30 he looked into the hall. The 500 soldiers were already seated, and as they watched, company after company was being marched across the parade ground and in at the doors. There wasn't going to be room for them all: an officer told them to take out the chairs and sit on the floor. In the end about 1,300 young soldiers were squashed in the hall. It was the biggest crowd he had ever spoken to.

The plan was that the format should follow the Ladysmith meetings, but it didn't work out like that. It was Saturday night - their night off - and instead of being out on the town and getting stuck into the beer, these young lads had been commanded by their officers to go and listen to a preacher! They were hunched or sprawled on the floor, some glaring at him with daggers in their eyes. Conscripted into the army against their will, now they'd been conscripted into Angus' meeting!

Angus' son Andy was stationed at Tempe, a huge military base near Blomfontein, about a day and a half's drive away; he had managed to get a weekend pass and had hitch-hiked down to hear him speak. He

could see him sitting at the back of the hall. The music team tried to sing one or two songs but they were making no headway; no one was joining in. These lads weren't interested.

Angus looked out at those young men and his heart was filled with compassion for them. Like Andy, they were homesick, a long way from home, and trying to make the best of the new life they'd been thrust into. Like a word from the Holy Spirit the thoughts came into his head. These youngsters had all been uprooted from everything that was familiar to them, and they came from every kind of background - town and country, rich and poor, Christians and unbelievers.

He stepped forward and started to speak to them on a personal level, like a father to a son. "Without Jesus you will never make it on your own. There are so many dangers out there. Without him you will end up on the side of the road, all washed up." As Angus spoke he could see a change in their body language. They unfolded their arms, they stopped looking angry and defensive, and they began to listen. The Holy Spirit had already started to work in their hearts.

He had seen the Spirit working in Ladysmith, night after night, and he knew he could do the same here.

*Suddenly, a big strong soldier right at the back got up. stand up and make a public confession of He stood at ease, your faith before everyone here," Angus told shoulders back and them. "If you mean business with God, with head held high, as if everyone watching, get to your feet." defying the world.*

Suddenly, a big strong soldier right at the back got up. He stood at ease, shoulders back and head held high, as if defying the world. There was silence. Then another soldier stood, and another and another. A thousand young men were standing before him.

“Wait a minute. This is no time to play games. You have to count the cost of following Jesus. If you don’t mean it, please sit down.” No one moved.

“Listen,” Angus scolded them. It’s a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. You are giving him control of your life. Only stand if you really want to give your life to Jesus Christ.” Still no one sat down. The Holy Spirit spoke in Angus’ heart. “I am doing this work, not you. Just be the obedient vessel I called you to be.”

“Men,” I said softly, let’s pray.” **Over a thousand people give their lives to Christ**

In October 1992 they hired the New Farmers’ Hall in Newcastle, northern KwaZulu-Natal, about three hours’ drive north-east of Greytown. The hall could seat around 3,000 people, and it was filled to capacity every night.

They had been to farmers’ meetings in the area, and they had agreed to arrange transport for them. They hired buses and used their own vehicles to bring people in from their farms and from the townships. There was a festive feeling as the convoys of trucks and buses rolled into town, with the dust rising from the wheels and the people sitting in the back singing.

*Then Angus told* There was a spirit of great expectation in the *them about the air*. The people were hungry for God. *death of his nephew* Inside the hall they had a big band, with piano, guitars, trumpets and drums, so they made a joyful noise to the Lord. Then Angus told them about the death of his nephew Alistair and the incredible grace of God that had upheld him in the darkest time of his life. Alistair had been knocked down accidentally

*Alistair and the incredible grace of God that had*

*upheld him in the darkest time of his life.*

by a tractor which Angus was driving and he died. There was utter silence. “The death of a child is a universal thing - everyone can feel your pain.” It touched people’s hearts that God could get him through that experience, and it made them realise what He could do for them.

One night Angus talked about Jesus being on trial before Pontius Pilate.

As he made the altar call over a thousand people stood up. Many were weeping as they repented and made a decision to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. They had counsellors waiting to receive them, and after that they went on for another two hours, praying for the sick, the demon-possessed, the lost, the lonely and the unemployed. They prayed the prayer of faith for everyone who asked whether it’s healing for illness or the touch of love and hope for a life that is in despair. *Who will take care of the farm?*

Invitations for evangelism were becoming more and more frequent, and they involved a lot more work than Angus had realised at first. They needed to visit the local churches, book venues, organise accommodation for team members, take care of advertising and prepare the talks and sermons for the meetings. They were finding it increasingly impossible to meet the demands of the farm at the same time. At home they were running a herd of beef cattle, growing our crops of seed maize and caring for the pine plantation. He was struggling to balance his two callings, and he couldn’t be in two places at once. “How can I leave the farm? Who will take care of it? Please send someone, Lord.”

As Angus prayed, a young couple came into his mind. Steyn and Carol du Preez were good friends. He had become very close to Steyn when they prayed together for the Ladysmith campaign, and he knew he was a man of God. He was employed as a farm manager by the Pioneer Seed Company, and he had won the Champion Farmer title twice in the previous few years. He was ideally suited to manage Shalom and become a working partner. Angus asked Steyn to pray about it.

A couple of days later he called to see Angus and told him how he was prepared to give him a hand. He marvelled at the grace of God and the

young man's willingness to put aside his farming career to release Angus for his work as an evangelist.

They handed over the running of the farm to Steyn at the end of<sup>autumn</sup>.

### **Thousands give their lives to Christ**

By December 1996 they had conducted 22 major campaigns across the eastern part of South Africa, and Angus was waiting for the Lord to tell him where they should go next. He had never become confident of doing anything in his own strength.

The Spirit of God impressed on Angus' heart that the future of KwaZulu-Natal - and indeed the whole country - lies in the hands of its people. "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

As he waited for the Lord to guide him. His vision was to see the farmers of KwaZulu-Natal meeting again, but this time as a witness for peace in the area. He knew he would need a huge venue for such an event, and the ideal place came into his head. The King's Park Stadium in Durban was at that time the biggest rugby stadium in the world. Angus didn't know how he was going to fill it, and he didn't know how he was going to finance it, but that was the place they had to be.

As they continued on believing, God worked many miracles for them in the preparation for the King's Park Peace Gathering, miracles of financial provision and Christian support, and in time everything came together as God had shown Angus. The farmers of the area caught his vision and promised that they would be there. They would camp around the stadium with their workers, a sign of our unity in Christ. They were out to do battle against sin, violence and Christian lethargy, not with guns and ammunition but with the weapons of spiritual warfare.

Everywhere they went, in churches and town halls and villages, they asked people to join them.

The event took place one weekend in September 1997, and they were amazed at the numbers of people who came. Farmers and their workers from right across the province made their way to the stadium and set up



their caravans and tents. They had all their workers from Shalom farm sleeping with them in one big tent; “we killed two sheep and made a huge stew which we shared. Youth groups arrived en masse; churches of all denominations were there. Around 15,000 people braved the cold, wet weather to hear from God.”

“Without Jesus, the Prince of Peace,” Angus told the people, “there will be no peace in our land. We’ve come together to ask God to give us one more chance. We’ve come to say, “Lord, we are prepared to repent so that we can save our province and our nation.” “Someone once said that it was not the violence of the few that scared him, so much as the silence of the many. How dare we sit in front of our televisions and criticise the government and the laws of the land, while we are doing nothing ourselves? “It’s time for Christians to get moving. Revival is going to come, but it’s going to come through ordinary people like you and me. It’s time to stop complaining and get involved.”

When Angus gave the altar call that night, literally thousands and thousands of people stood up - men, women and children, black and white, rich and poor - and called on the name of the Lord in a spirit of deep repentance.

They had been asked not to let people come onto the rugby field, *When Angus gave the altar call that night, literally thousands and thousands of people*

*stood up - men, women and children, black and*

as a big game was scheduled the following weekend, so they had to bring them in groups to a small area cordoned off in front of the platform. Hundreds of people were standing before him, with needs ranging from *white, rich and poor - and* depression to cancer. One young girl *called on the name of the Lord in a spirit of deep* got out of her wheelchair and started walking for the first time in her *repentance*. Others were healed of back pain.

One testified that his eyes had been healed and he could

see better without his glasses than with them! They ministered to the sick until 11:30 that night.

The next day they were back, and the amazing scenes were repeated, and even more people came. They had many dignitaries - mayors and provincial leaders - all sharing the same vision. Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Inkatha Freedom Party leader, arrived by helicopter; Jacob Zuma, the ANC (African National Congress) leader was sitting in the stands with his Bible open on his lap. Once again they preached the Lordship of Christ and his message of peace, and once again hundreds came forward for prayer.

### **Planning an evangelistic campaign in a dangerous place**

A year later the Lord directed Angus' thoughts to another needy place: Richmond, a very small town nestled in the beautiful green hills of the Natal Midlands.

On the edge of Richmond there is a township, set up in the days of apartheid when black people were not allowed to live in the "whites-only" areas of town. The black people would travel into the town each day to work, often in the smart, well-equipped homes of white people, and then go home at night to their own houses without heating, power running water. The township was a place of poverty, and the new South African democracy had not performed any overnight miracles for its people. Many of them were poor, unemployed and angry, and there was a lot of violence. People were dying every day, and Angus' heart went out to them. He longed to take the gospel *In the eyes of many* there. As his concern for the Zulu settlement grew, Angus extended his quiet time with God: "I needed his guidance. I waited on the Lord in prayer, and He began to instruct me about Richmond."

*Angus was already a dead man. He had taken only a very small team with him: it was*

*a dangerous mission and he only wanted people who knew they had been called by God.*

The township is divided into two parts, Indaleni and Magoda. There had been a terrible bloodbath in the area over the years as two rival political parties fought each other for supremacy. In the old days Zulu fighting was restricted to the men, but now women and children were being killed as the traditional knobkierry (a wooden club) gave way to the AK47 (a Russian-made automatic rifle).

God's instruction was clear. "Put a huge tent right in the middle of the township. Place it in the no-man's-land between the two factions and watch what I will do."

This was such a bad trouble spot that there were more army and police personnel than residents: police patrolled the area with horses, motor bikes, armoured cars and helicopters. It was costing the country millions of Rand. "Over 500 people have already lost their lives there, Lord," Angus said. It's the exact place where the tent should go."

On 4th November 1998 they erected a massive 5,000-seat tent on the marshland separating the two communities. A crowd of people watched silently as they worked, and they could feel their suspicion. Who was this white man? How long would he stay? In the eyes of many Angus was already a dead man. He had taken only a very small team with him: it was a dangerous mission and he only wanted people who knew they had been called by God.

They were not afraid, though they often felt the spirit of evil that covered the area, especially at night. There was just a piece of canvas between them and the chaos outside. Hungry dogs scavenged around the camp, foraging in the rubbish bins and fighting over scraps. In the streets nearby they could hear screams and gunshots. They prayed for the Lord's protection, and received it. No one was harmed in the whole three weeks; not even one of their banners was torn down.

When Angus went outside that first morning he was amazed: he had never seen such a military presence in his life. Soldiers and police were everywhere, helicopters buzzed overhead, and armoured cars were in position on every hilltop. This was definitely a war zone.

“We can’t come out after dark,” people told them.

“It’s much too dangerous. You’ll have to preach in the afternoon.”

*Please don’t go*

So they started the meeting at four o’clock that afternoon. At first just a trickle of people arrived, mainly women and children, but they were followed by the men, and eventually there were hundreds of people there. Angus concentrated on preaching the word of God straight out of the Bible. Then he prayed for the sick and God did some amazing miracles of healing. When they made the altar call, many people gave their lives to the Lord.

As the sun went down Angus spoke to the crowd in the tent. “It’s getting dark. You’d better go home.”

To his surprise no one moved.

“We don’t care,” someone called out.

“Carry on!”

All fear had left these people. Night after night, as they heard the word of God, faith rose within them. Eventually they would leave the tent in pitch darkness, singing hymns and choruses and praising God at the tops of their voices. Once again God showed Angus that it is signs and wonders that draw people to the Lord, especially when they are living in such desperate conditions. That is how Jesus worked, by showing the power of God in the miracles he performed.

Every evening the off-duty soldiers came to hear the gospel, and many of them found Jesus. The people of Magoda and Indaleni sat side by side, some visibly armed with revolvers. As we watched these men weeping before the Lord, we realised afresh that he was keeping us safe. Without permission from God, no one can touch his children.

The three weeks flew by.

“Please don’t go,” the people begged.

“There has been such peace here, and we have felt the presence of God. Please don’t leave us.”

One young man testified to the effect of their campaign. “This is the first time in months that I have been able to sleep peacefully,” he said.

“The peace of God has come here. I have been in the tent every night and seen people from both sides worshipping peacefully together, praying to one God.”

As they prayed the final benediction, the heavens opened and a mighty thunderstorm broke loose. There was so much rain that the water ran in rivers through the tent. There was no doubt that it was time for us to go! It felt like a sign from the Lord, sealing his blessing. These are rural people and they were jumping for joy: they had been planting their potatoes and maize in the dust for weeks. Now their crops would grow, and they were chanting,

They took the tent down on 20th November and it was a solemn occasion. Not one person had been murdered in the township during their time there, and they rejoiced at the goodness of God. Newspaper articles in the following weeks reported on the miracle of peace that had come to Richmond.



**Angus and Jill Buchan**

### **The Zambia gospel campaign**

They had some wonderful meetings in Zambia. In Mbala around a thousand people surrendered their lives to the Lord; the personal representative of President Frederick Chiluba and his adviser for the Northern Province were there, and they both made a public commitment to Jesus. Three meetings in Kasama brought 750 responses. In Mpulungu, northern Zambia, at the foot of Lake Tanganyika, they saw 2,000 people accept the Lord. Fraser had his heart set on being baptised in Central Africa and Angus had the privilege of baptising him there in the clear waters of Lake Tanganyika.

They crossed Malawi and entered southern Tanzania, heading for the town of Mtwara, close to the coast and the northern border of Mozambique. The road was very rough, and the trip took them four days. They passed six broken-down trucks on the way, but the Seed Sower rolled safely on, without even a puncture.

Mtwara was a town of 40,000 people, and they had never had a gos pel crusade before. It is in a rural area, and was steeped in witchcraft.

A powerful spirit called a geni is invoked on all babies when they are born, and children are sometimes offered to the gods as human sacrifices. When girls reach puberty they may be offered on an auction block to the highest bidder. At the time of the Ngoma ceremony, held every year, men will sell everything they have in order to buy alcohol

*They decided they for the celebrations that last for several weeks. wouldn't be put off: they had travelled 8,000 kilometres to get there, and they were going ahead, even if it meant going to prison.*

Angus and his team arrived late, so there was only time for two of the three meetings they had planned. The local clergy informed them that they would not be able to preach until the next day, when they could obtain formal permission from the authorities. They would be risking jail if they preached without permission.

They decided they wouldn't be put off: they had travelled 8,000 kilometres to get there, and they were going ahead, even if it meant going to prison. The team put up the platform, switched on the lights and began the service. In this coastal area Islam is very strong, and they could see a group of Muslim men at the side of the crowd, watching closely to see who made a decision for Christ. The people were silent and there seemed to be an atmosphere of great fear and oppression.

Angus asked the praise and worship to begin. As they began to praise God, an amazing change came over the people. They started singing and dancing in a circle, and the dust rose in thick clouds from the beating of their feet.

The loudspeakers were at full volume and the atmosphere changed to one of joy.

Angus stood up to preach, but there seemed to be little response. Then he recalled something Jill had said to him. On the way to Mtwara he had telephoned her from a local missionary's home.

"Angus," she told me, "the intercessors have had a word from the Lord. God says, "Don't restrict the children."

As he looked down at the crowd in front of him, Angus could see hundreds of little street children struggling to get to the front. Some of the organisers were hitting their legs with sticks to keep them back.

"Leave them alone!" he called.

"Let them come."

An absolute wave of children came surging forward, and behind them came the grown-ups. The resistance to the ministry melted away, and from that moment he could feel the Holy Spirit being freed to move among the people.

The next day they had another wonderful meeting. Many people responded to the altar call, but Angus could see several of the local pastors hanging back in the crowd, unwilling to come forward. He became very angry.

He challenged them to raise their hands so everyone could see them. One by one they raised their hands, and once again the whole atmosphere lifted.

The pastors broke branches from the trees and waved them enthusiastically as they sang and danced in praise of the Lord.

Then a Muslim man walked up to the Seed Sower in front of everyone. He took the taqiyah, his white Islamic cap, from his head and threw it onto the platform.

"Burn it," he said. "From today I am going to follow Jesus." Angus and Fraser packed up the truck that evening with joy in their hearts, and when they said their goodbyes the next day they felt they were leaving friends behind them.

They promised them to be back. **Mighty men conference**

In 2003, Angus was having a bit of rest at the Mkhuze Game Reserve, when God spoke to him. He said: “You’re getting so busy preaching you’re forgetting about me. I want you to cancel your preaching,” God continued, “I want you to mentor the young men.” He thought maybe 5 or 10 men.

No emails were sent out, just a couple of emails. The first year, 240 men arrived on the farm. The next year the numbers swelled to 600, 1,060 by the third year, 7,400 the fourth, 60,000 in 2008, 300,000 by 2010.

To put this in perspective, Greytown, the nearest town to his farm, by that time had 10,000 people altogether.

He had no budget but went ahead to hire a nine-storey marquee tent. It took three weeks to put up and three weeks to take down.

Men flocked across the country, 40 farmers came from Australia.

One woman told Buchan that it was impossible to gather 60,000 men in one place for an entire weekend without a drop of booze. There were roadblocks getting to the farm, it was taking people four hours to get there through the crush, but there was not one incident of fighting.

But Buchan has come under fire for ministering only to men and for calling the gathering the Mighty Men.

“I’m not saying we are mighty, he says.

“We are humble but mighty in God. We’re not saying men are superior to women; on the contrary my wife, Jill is my best friend.”

“The problem is the confusion in the First World, particularly over the role of men and the effect this is having on the nuclear family. Our message is simple: get back to basics, honour your women, re-instil family values and lead by example. Kids will not do what you say, but do what you do.”

He thought maybe 5 or 10 men. These conferences have been organised in Yorkshire, England, Brazil, Nashville, Tennessee, Australia and in other countries around the world.





**DAVID OLANIYAN**

**OYEDEPO**

*The Apostle of faith*

*The Apostle of faith*

**At the age of 23, David was on a mountain in a solitary place, searching and researching on the book of Ezekiel; and on the third day he heard the Lord say: “I have touched your tongue with a coal of fire and from today as you say it, you will see it”. Still, as he was meditating on the book of Jeremiah, his eyes suddenly got glued to Jeremiah 29:11 which reads: “For I know the plan that I have towards you, the plan of welfare and not of evil to give you a hope and a future” (RSV). From that time he knew that his glorious future was guaranteed. To prove this, according to him, he bought 400 postcards to share his new discovery with his friends. He wrote on each postcard this short message: “Your future is not in your plan, it is in His plan.” Then he**

**posted them to 400 people, his friends. He always look at for whom to share every new revelation with.**

avid Olaniyan Oyedepo, was born September 27, 1954 in Osogbo, Nigeria, but is a native of Omu-Aran, Kwara State. He was raised in a mixed religious family. His father, Ibrahim, was a Muslim healer. His mother, Dorcas, was a member of the Holy Order of the DCherubim and Seraphim Movement church (C&S), a branch of the Aladura movement in Nigeria. David was raised by his grandmother in Osogbo, who introduced him to the virtues of Christian life via early morning prayers which she attended with him. She also taught him the importance of tithing.

Oyedepo gave his life to Christ and was born again in 1969 at the age of 15. He was led to Christ by a missionary schoolteacher, Betty Lasher and preached his first sermon the following year at 16.

David Oyedepo's exercise of spiritual supremacy over the devil began right from his father's house, when as a boy he called for a family meeting. Every member of the family gathered, thinking it was David's father that had called the meeting; only to realize that it was David who had masterminded it. Then David, virtually the shortest amongst them, stood and confidently released his bombshell: "I have been told of all the things you have been doing in this family in the name of witchcraft," he opened up as every eye focused on him, wondering what sort of effrontery he had. Then he gave them the shocker, "From today," he raised his voice the best he could. "If I hear of such again, then know that someone more than you is here! His name is Jesus Christ!" the meeting closed, no comment, no question! Everybody left the meeting wondering what would become of this audacious boy in future.

He spent 26 months making demands for the Spirit of Wisdom before his ministry started. His only prayer request was for wisdom. David, by revelation through the Bible and books written by seasoned and anointed men of God, knew that he was never at the same level as the devil and all his agents and agencies. The illumination David caught from the account of Smith Wigglesworth when he was 25 years old, from a book authored by Stanley Frodsham triggered his spiritual superiority mentality over the

devil. He confessed; “By the light of heaven I took a flight above all devils... I was looking for any devil to kill”.

When David Oyedepo was preparing to enter into ministry, he consulted some established ministers of the gospel for counseling. He knew that the time is always right to do what is right. He was sincerely counseled never to be so much in a hurry to go into full-time ministry. But he should start on a part-time level, so he could work and earn some money before going into full time. Indeed, it was logical counsel, but in all the counseling he chose not to succumb to that eternal thief of time and destiny, otherwise called procrastination.

In those days, there was nothing to attract anyone to the work of Ministry during the time he entered into Ministry. One could quickly see the point his counselors were making. In those days it didn't make sense for a graduate to go into full-time ministry. The first question was how would he feed or get support without a secular job?

“The concerned people in the community would visit any man whose son decided to enter into Ministry, consoling: ‘We learnt your son said he’s becoming a preacher,’ then with mournful countenance, they would sympathize with such a man by saying, ‘Sorry, we pray God will let him reverse the decision.’”

David Oyedepo said, “I decided to go full time so I can go full length in the things God has for me in the assignment He has given me.” Then, according to him, he vowed a vow, saying, “Lord, I will see to it that no one doing it on a part-time basis will beat me to it!” That vow is the secret behind his aggressive approach in his pursuance of his calling. To buttress his lifestyle of focus, David said it from the inception of his ministry that he will consider it an insult if invited to leave what he is doing and be the President of the Nation. He considers it as sheer demotion, in comparison to the high calling of the ministry.

David Oyedepo held his first office as a Christian in 1970 as Prayer Secretary of his Fellowship. In 1971, he became the Bible Secretary. He once said, ‘There are major title holders that God did not call,’ while celebrating what God has done in his life and ministry. He has ever been zealous in his dealings with God, just like Jehu in 2Kings: ‘...and he said,

come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord...’ [10:16]. Once, David as a youngster was running to catch up with a fellowship program, and he ran past his father’s house. His younger folks saw him and they reported to his father: ‘saw our brother run past the house.’ His father’s response was: “se o ya were ni? (Is he mad?)”. David recalled the event recently and humorously commented, “I thank God for that madness.” It truly pays one to be MaD (Making a Difference) for Jesus.

In the early days of his Christian adventure, as a Christian leader, there was no available service opportunity he would not joyfully accept. At times he would be the bus driver to drive his group from one location to another. On getting there, he would be the drummer boy during praise and worship session and afterwards the preacher when it was time to preach. One day at home as a young zealous Christian, David arrived and his father, then a devoted Muslim (but he got converted to Christianity much later) asked him, “Where are you coming from?” David answered, “From fellowship sir.” His father threatened, “Well, that’s what you will eat.” David’s inaudible answer was “Amen.”

As a schoolboy who was also preparing for his examination like any other student, he went on a kingdom assignment about 10 kilometres away to oversee the fellowships around. This boy, David, began to trek back home on the dusty path with excitement. Then a soldier riding in his truck saw him and halted. “Small boy,” he called David, “where are you going to?” David looked at him with much audacity, “Anywhere I like,” he answered as he trekked on, “come on, hop in and let’s go boy,” the soldier invited him with an expression of humour on his face as they drove off. But for that intervention, David was willing and ready to trek the dusty path back home with joy in his heart; all in genuine service unto God. **David plants his first church**

*Immediately an unusual passion grew within him and David told God,  
“Lord, may I*

*never leave this village the same way I met it.”*

In 1973, at the age of 19, he traveled to a village called Dumagi, Shonga Local Government in Kwara State, Nigeria for a 71 days assignment. He

had relieved a woman who went on her maternity leave as a young schoolteacher. Then on Sunday morning after his arrival, he

asked his friend and colleague how and where to locate the nearest Church in the village. To his surprise, his friend told him there was none. Then out of curiosity he asked again, “Not even a Catholic Church?” The young man answered, “None.” Immediately an unusual passion grew within him and David told God, “Lord, may I never leave this village the same way I met it.”

Together with a friend, who interpreted for him, they began a one-on-one evangelism and in 40 days, they built a grass church, David swung into action in a village dominated by Muslims. He formulated a strategy for evangelism, using the pupils as his interface; “Tell your parents,” he instructed the pupils, “the teacher is coming tomorrow morning for a visit.” The parents would wait for the teacher with much eagerness and sense of honour and privilege to have the teacher in their homes. Then David would speak to them about God and then pray with them. Then he would add, “On Sunday, join me at so and so place, there we will continue our prayer.” David did this in many homes until he gathered people together for a prayer meeting. Then one day, he called his colleague and some pupils to join him cut trees and palm leaves to build the first Church tent in that village. The church was built within 41 days with all the financial resources practically coming from his little allowance. At the end of his 71 days was built within 41 days. At the end of his 71 days member congregation.

Brother David, as at this time did not have a call to ministry. He was only consumed with passion and zeal for the kingdom. He gave all he had to promote the kingdom of God. His departure from the village was not without a ceremony of appreciation.

At the end of his stay in the community, during his send forth, the church gave him a gift of a lantern. During the presentation, the oldest man in the village said, “May the light you brought to our village shine round the world.”

At 22, after reading the book, *The Man God Uses* by Oswald J. Smith, an awesome affection for God and His kingdom grew in his heart and since that time he had been sold out to God in his dedication and commitment.

Through the book, the Lord expanded his understanding of the scripture in the book of Matthew 6:33 and from the pages of the scripture the Lord spoke to him: “Seek ye first my kingdom, and all those things that others are dying to get shall be added unto you.”

At the age of 23, David was on a mountain in a solitary place, searching and researching on the book of Ezekiel; and on the third day he heard the Lord say: “I have touched your tongue with a coal of fire and from today as you say it, you will see it”. Still, as he was meditating on the book of Jeremiah, his eyes suddenly got glued to Jeremiah 29:11 which reads: “For I know the plan that I have towards you, the plan of welfare and not of evil to give you a hope and a future” (RSV).

From that time he knew that his glorious future was guaranteed. To prove this, according to him, he bought 400 postcards to share his new discovery with his friends. He wrote on each postcard this short message: “Your future is not in your plan, it is in His plan.” Then he posted them to 400 people, his friends. He always look at for whom to share every new revelation with.

In 1979, he experienced a transference of the Spirit of boldness when listening to an audio message of A.A. Allen titled “God is a killer.” As he listened to the audio tape with rapt attention, according to him, he heard the man of God quote from 1 Samuel 2:6, “The Lord killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up”. For the first time the reality dawned on David that God also kills. He was stirred up by that exposition and according to him, his chicken heart changed to a lion’s heart. From that day, he became overwhelmed with unusual boldness and confidence in the Lord, knowing his safety was heavily guaranteed.

### **David marries Faith**

According to David Oyedepo, he never prayed about his marital life neither did he place petition before God for a future partner. One day one of his friends told him and said, “Brother David, it’s time we begin to pray for our future partner”. Hear what David answered, “Yes, we may pray for you, but such prayer point is not in my list.” How audacious. Interestingly, David was first to be answered and settled martially ahead of his friend. His response to his friend’s request was founded on the light that was shed

abroad in his heart from the scripture as written in Matt 6:33. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you.” David believed that marital settlement was one of those things that would naturally be added to him as he remained connected and addicted to his covenant obligations.

The magnetic field of his faith was strong enough to command such a meek and submissive lady like Faith. He made it known to her from the beginning what she was about to sign-on to. David has always been an unusually restless fellow from his youthful days. The point at which his peers were tired in kingdom assignment was the point it would be like he was just starting. He once posited: “You can’t be a fool being a full time follower with God.” While in higher institution, his teacher who was so uncomfortable with his Christian activities on campus once threatened him: “David, if you want to be a student, be a student; and if you want to be a Christian, be a Christian!” David responded to his teacher: “I am a part time student and a full time Christian.” How audacious! That is just David. Therefore, it would require abundant meekness and patience with wisdom for a woman to get along with such a die-hard kingdom addict.

It wasn’t long that he met with Faith Abiola Akano at a Motor Park. Faith was a University student-Great IFE while David was only a Polytechnic student in Kwarapoly. Their courtship was not less than six

*During the process* years. As earlier stated, it will serve as a reminder here that before his *of their wedding, their marriage counselor*

*asked him: “Brother David, what do you think of marriage? What do you really*

*expect from it?”*

marriage, the devil told him: “Now that it is obvious and everybody is aware that you will get married to this lady, I will make sure you fall by fornication!” David responded to the thought with a vow, “Lord if I ever do such, strike me with leprosy!” Through determination and self-discipline,

David and Faith conquered the temptation of fornication before their wedding night.

During the process of their wedding, their marriage counselor asked him: “Brother David, what do you think of marriage? What do you really expect from it?” Then he answered, “Hitch-free marriage.” His counselor quickly corrected him by reminding him that from experience, marriage is not all the bed of roses and he concluded by saying “you see David, you cannot avoid stepping on each other’s toes.” David quickly cut in and he asked his counselor with due respect but unapologetic: “sir, as I sit by you now, do I step on your toes?” The man grinned and said: ‘no,’ but curious to know what David was really up to. Then David concluded by saying: “sir I can give you two reasons. One, I am not blind and two I am not mad.”

Faith Oyedepo vowed never to be found wanting in her responsibility towards her children. After every Sunday service, she would return home, sit her children down and break into smaller pieces the message preached to their level of understanding, Faith made it part of her daily scheduling to teach her children the valuable principles of God’s word.

While many ladies dread the challenges and responsibilities of marrying a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Faith Oyedepo faithfully faced it headlong. She has always stood by her husband in adversity and prosperity. She never doubted the futuristic reality of her husband’s vision. Before they got married, in October 1981, David wrote a letter to her, and it reads in part: “I speak in my office as a Prophet. We matter to this generation by divine election. We are the era of saviors the world is waiting for...”





**David and Faith Oyedepo**

Faith was not in the dark, neither in doubt regarding the man she was to marry. Truth well told, outside of David Oyedepo, Faith could have perhaps gotten married to her second best (if such exists). She seemed to have been configured for such an addicted kingdom promoter like David. She saw it coming, and she was well equipped to meet up with the demand. At 22 while still in courtship with Faith, David made a discovery from the pages of the Bible, and from that discovery he wrote a note of committal in form of an Oath unto God, to serve Him forever, come rain, come shine. Then he told his fiancée (Faith) to co-sign the oath as a sign of her commitment to a

life sold out to God - She did. She did it because she knew that the man or woman who has common sense and good sense of judgment to know right from wrong is happier than the man who is immensely rich but lacks good sense of direction!

***It cannot happen***

She knew her husband's temperament so much, having studied him keenly during their years of courtship, and she was willing to bend and to blend.

David, a restless hard working extraordinaire go-getter, is always battle ready to deal ruthlessly with any resistance on his way to accomplish his set goals. Faith Oyedepo had built up her faith to withstand whatever comes her way in the home God has ordained her to keep and care for.

It did not take so long a time before Faith's first major test came. Her husband arrived from a trip one fateful day. With a broken heart she greeted her husband with a written medical report. The doctor had told her she had a miscarriage. To her disappointment, David was unmoved. He wasn't, because he knew the trickster behind the report was the devil, and he was not willing to accept it as the final say. But without any expression of empathy he reacted to the report with a strong spiritual counter-verdict: "It cannot happen," and to trivialize the situation, he immediately demanded, "Can I have my food please?" Definitely his violent reaction was against the situation, not against his darling wife. Ordinarily such situation should engender much emotional display of piety, pity and abstinence from food or pleasure. But David knew better, he would not subscribe to a pity party, as it may mean accepting a defeat. The phrase "it cannot happen" was the faith-seasoned spiritual counter-verdict to reverse the medical verdict.

True to his word, it never happened. The pregnancy was sustained, and at the due time, a bouncing baby boy joined the Oyedepo family.

### **The Liberation Mandate**

By a definite and divine encounter on May 1, 1981, David stepped into God's plan for his life. He was in the presence of God for eighteen hours where he saw an army of suffering humanity, battered, beaten, tattered, shattered, deformed, defaced, down and out, sobbing, weeping, wailing, and agonizing for rescue. It was a gruesome vision where he saw all the blind, the lame, people in rags, men in pains, weeping and wailing. The vision was so real and powerful that David joined them in crying! He couldn't bear the level of agony they were going through!

He then began to ask the Lord, "But why, Lord?" And He responded, "But from the beginning, it was not so." He was not satisfied with this answer, so he asked again, "But why, Lord?" Then God said to him, "From the beginning it was not so. Now the hour has come to liberate the world from all oppressions of the devil, through the preaching of the Word of faith. And

I am sending you to undertake this task.” “I will set men free by your hand. As you go in obedience to my commandment, no captive will escape this commission.”

A week after, on 8th May 1981, he shared his vision with the few Christian friends around him. That same day, the prayer platform called Power House kicked off. On the 24th of May 1981, implementation began alongside with the weekly Faith Clinic called Faith Liberation Hour, and it continued until David’s Official Commissioning and Ordination into Ministry on the 17th of September, 1983; there was no down time.

The liberation mandate is built upon a three-fold platform – the Word of faith, prosperity and signs and wonders.

***Send for My servant Adeboye***

Before starting the Living Faith Church, he read 39 biographies of outstanding ministries, discovering how great ministries are run, acquiring sound knowledge and thinking for running a great ministry.

Pastor E.A. Adeboye is the only Nigerian preacher that David Oyedepo proudly and fondly referred to as his [spiritual] father, and indeed “Daddy G.O”, as he is fondly called by his followers and admirers, has become the institutionalized spiritual grandfather of every Winners Chapel worshipper. David Oyedepo’s steps were divinely ordered towards Pastor Adeboye when he was about to go into full time ministry in September 1983. Before then both of them had neither met nor spoken to each other. The Lord had told him in July 1983, saying: I will not have you go as others, I would have hands laid on you after the order of Joshua in Deuteronomy 34:10 ... send for My servant Adeboye and you shall be imparted with the Spirit of wisdom”.

Even when it did not look feasible that the man of God was coming because of his schedules, David never considered a second option because God reassured him the man of God was coming and all he needed to do was to keep his fingers crossed. Indeed the man of God came and performed the commissioning and ordination. They met for the first time at the ordination venue. There was no prior verbal discussion, especially as telephones were

farfetched as at the time. All correspondence was delivered by human messengers.

*They met for the first time at the ordination venue. There was no prior verbal discussion,*

*especially as telephones were farfetched as at the time. All correspondence was delivered by human*

*messengers.*

Then the day came, on 17th September 1983, David Oyedepo, 29 and his wife Faith Oyedepo were anointed and ordained into pastoral ministry by Pastor E.A. Adeboye. ***Why is this church not growing?***

In 1984, when the membership of his church was still under forty, David saw in Deuteronomy 28:1 that if “I will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord and do what He tells me, God would set me on high above all nations of the earth. Not above my nation, but above all nations.”

Immediately he discovered this, he knew he was not programmed for ‘local championship.’ He saw that he was an international personality who was not going to die as a person, but as an institution! Even when there was no comeliness nor form that anybody should desire him.

David Oyedepo refused to take it casually despite the fact that the church had kicked off barely five months earlier. He inquired of the Lord in a 3-day prayer and fasting “Why is this church not growing?” Then the Lord opened his eyes and revealed to him a thick layer of darkness upon the church. And the Lord told him: “That is the blindfolding weapon of the devil that misrepresents what I am doing in this church.” Immediately, he challenged the satanic manipulation in the name of Jesus! And off the layer of darkness rolled away as when one ‘folds a mat’ off the church.

In March, barely less than 5 months after his Church took off in Kaduna, Nigeria, he began his curious search with concentrated sensitivity through prayer and fasting on what to do for sustainable and consistent Church growth. He was all out, trying not to become a man of success for all its

worth but striving to become a man of value. Then the exposition that came via the voice of the Lord saying to him: keep sowing the seed and the sheep will come. And keep the grass green and the sheep will lie down, for he makes me to lie down in green pasture. Immediately after that exposition, he began a 16-week seminar. Then he continued to fortify himself with the spiritual seed of prayer and fasting alongside the word exploration with all sense of focus. According to him, almost the entire 1985 was dedicated to sowing the seed of prayer with fasting.

He shared his experience of January 1986 how he just felt like coughing, and as he did, it was blood that came out from his mouth as a result of long period of fasting.

Then came 1987, like a volcanic eruption that cannot be hindered, the explosive Church growth began in David Oyedepo's Ministry.

***My son David, the baton is passed on to you***

David Oyedepo maximized available resources to acquire knowledge in his days of youth. Through books, he encountered great men in the faith. Just like the case of Oswald J. Smith and A.A. Allen, David never met Smith Wigglesworth in person. They had all died before he knew of them. Yet, he never stops celebrating Smith Wigglesworth, the man referred to as the Apostle of faith. His contact with T.L. Osborn was through his book titled *The Purpose of Pentecost* in 1976. That was

*as his eyes got transfixed on the man of God, he prayed: "Lord, whatever made Kenneth*

*Hagin, (the calmness, the noiselessness, the supernatural command) I need it."*

where the Holy Spirit revealed to him as a Personality and not just as *According to him*, mere experience. According to David, he read the book in one sitting, cover to cover as he began to experience a change of orientation about the Personality of the Holy Spirit. That was long before he eventually had physical contact with him and a mentee/mentor relationship was established between them.

In his quest for more and definite di - vine encounter, David became endeared to Kenneth Hagin and got engrossed in his titles to the extent that he became a self-appointed vendor of the man's works. In 1986, David attended Kenneth Hagin's camp meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma. According to him, as his eyes got transfixed on the man of God, he prayed: "Lord, whatever made Kenneth Hagin, (the calmness, the noiselessness, the supernatural command) I need it." It was a simple and short prayer. Then from the eyes of faith he saw Hagin's face shine and transformed to that of a baby, and suddenly he experienced a transference of the anointing (the spirit of faith shot in his direction) from the man of God. While sobbing uncontrollably from that experience, David heard an audible voice of confirmation from the Lord saying: "My son David, the baton is passed on to you". From that day, Kenneth Hagin became his foremost spiritual father, and he treated him as such till Kenneth Hagin went to be with the Lord. He became a practical promoter of Kenneth E. Hagin in Nigeria and indeed, the African sub-region. He pointed many people to Kenneth Hagin's books.

When Hagin was about to die, the Lord spoke to David, "someone as close to you as your cloth is about to go". Then David enquired, "Lord could it be my biological father?" The Lord said "No". David became more curious, as he enquired again, "Hagin?" The Lord said "Yes". Immediately David and his wife took a flight to Tulsa, Oklahoma to visit him. Two weeks later, Kenneth Hagin passed on.

### **The Prosperity Mandate**

In the summer of 1987, David was away in the United States of America on a series of speaking engagements when he had a unique encounter with God in my hotel room. The encounter culminated in the delivery of another mandate – the prosperity mandate.

In May 1987, when the church by divine prompting was set to spread out, and the first five set of churches were already mapped strategically across Nigeria, David was thanking God for what God had done and was about to do; then God spoke to him: "My son David, what did you bring for me?" In response, he said, "Lord, everything I have is yours." Then the Lord asked him again, "Give me your car (a Mercedes Benz)." And straight away David submitted the key and document to the appropriate officer as a sign

of submission to God in total obedience. Obviously it wasn't what he planned to do, but what God had just said. Then the baritone voice of the Lord re-echoed in his hearing: "My son David, even if you don't want to be rich, it is too late."

When David had travelled for a Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the early hours of August 26, 1987, while getting out of bed to begin his morning devotion, the Spirit of the Lord spoke clearly to him, saying: "Arise, get back home and make My people rich." He looked at himself and wondered, "Who am I to make others rich, and what do I have?" The words sounded strange to him. However, by the help of the Holy Spirit, he discovered what Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church: "...As poor, yet making many rich..." (2 Cor. 6:10).

It was then he breathed a sigh of relief. He saw home as not just Nigeria, but as Africa; where most people live below the poverty line.

He immediately arose, and like Paul the Apostle said, "I conferred not with flesh and blood." He abandoned all his speaking engagements and rushed back home in obedience to this mandate. That same year, he started a regular programme in Maiduguri (Nigeria), tagged: "Breakthrough in Business Seminar". Today, to the glory of God, multitudes have been made rich through the anointed teachings and diverse ministrations.

This is the root of the prosperity emphasis of their ministry, and undeniable proofs abound everywhere.

**Strategy to reach out through literature**

**and electronically**

David, in 1983 was reading a Christian magazine called "The New Wine". As he was engrossed and fascinated by the content of the magazine, another instruction was issued to him from the Lord, saying: The word I put into your mouth, commit it into writing and I will put the same unction on the spoken word to rest on the written word. That was the divine directive that gave birth to Dominion Publishing House (DPH). The first two books: The Law of Faith and Miracle Seed were published in 1985. Now DPH has published over 60 titles till date on an industrial scale, with state of the art equipment and with updated technology. DPH stands out as a Ministry that runs independently within the Ministry, a most flourishing production line

of best-seller titles that have continued to enrich dreams, transform lives, educate minds and inspire souls, setting new gold standards on how millions can achieve their manifest destiny long denied them through ignorance, satanic manipulations, household enemies or all of the above acting in harmony.

Many times David Oyedepo had needed to retrace his steps for a repositioning. Through his books and electronic messages he has used such experiences as analogy to help others to take the right step in <sup>the right</sup> direction. ***From today, I impart on you gifts upon time!***

Benson Idahosa was the father of contemporary pentecostalism in Nigeria. David Oyedepo, acting on divine instruction, left his base and took off to Benin City, Nigeria to establish spiritual connectivity with Benson Idahosa. The moment Idahosa met David Oyedepo, he knew the spiritual heir, and the proper eligible candidate for his mantle had come. David Oyedepo also knew that the carrier of the raw faith he required to face every gang of opposition in the region of persecution had been found. Benson Idahosa had zero tolerance for witches and wizards. He ruthlessly molested them wherever he

*“I put it back in* found them. From him, David Oyedepo was imparted with spiritual *your hand, but*

*from today, your hands will not know dryness.”*

fearlessness. The bond of their relationship became so strong and obvious that the charismatic movement in Nigeria was forced to come to terms with the father-son tie of Benson Idahosa and David Oyedepo.

One day, David just arrived from a trip to the United States and the Lord told him: All you came with (cash gift), go now and sow it into the life of my servant (Benson Idahosa) in Benin. Without hesitation, David travelled to Benin City and handed all over to him. The man of God looked at him passionately and responded with a terrific utter-ance: “I put it back in your



hand, but from today, your hands will not know dryness.” David went back to his base with bundles of prophetic blessings from the man of God. Benson Idahosa was never found to be fond of any other preacher in Nigeria the way he was fond of David Oyedepo. Matter of fact, Benson Idahosa consciously nurtured him as the one fit to operate in the apostolic office the way he did. Indeed he prophesied that David would be greater.

In March 1990, Benson Idahosa called him on phone and asked: “What are you doing tomorrow; can you meet me in Makurdi (in the Northern region of Nigeria) tomorrow?” David knew that whatever plan he had for the next day was already cancelled by that invitation from his father. He did not see it as a question to be considered, but an instruction. The next day, he took off on a six-hour journey to Mak

urdi. On his arrival he visited Benson Idahosa in his hotel room. The man looked at him and told him to get in his bathroom for a shower. David was a little reluctant, because he knew he could do that at his convenience in his own hotel room. Again Benson told him, “get in there boy!” As he emerged from the bathroom, the man of God looked at him with deep sense of appreciation for his loyalty. Then he asked a rhetorical question: “You mean you came...so you came?” He commanded him: “Go on your knees!” David did so hastily. Then he pronounced a short but potent and indelible blessing on David thus: “From today, I impart on you gifts upon time! Before the need arises, the supply shall be made available.”

David has not stopped referring to that encounter ever since to show how much he treasured the impartation, particularly when he realized that there was no particular task given him by the man of God after over six hours of driving under the scorching sun that characterizes that axis of Nigeria. Benson only called him to bless him. Till date, David’s absolute loyalty to Benson Idahosa has not declined one bit though the lion has been translated to the great beyond. He is still loyal to his family and remains connected to his Ministry.

Five years after his commission to start a church, Oyedepo was ordained as Bishop.



Posing for a photo with

### **Archbishop Benson Idahosa The Signs and Wonders Mandate**

In the early morning of June 29, 1992, as David was in his bedroom worshipping in God's presence, the Spirit of God came calling, and yet another mandate was delivered. God said to him on that day:

“It's time for change! Prepare yourself for the imminent change of phase I have talked about over the years. It is the era of signs and wonders! It's a new dimension of a higher order!

Begin to declare total war against the kingdom of darkness: proclaim liberty, emphasize power, and step into the realm of anointing. Usher in this new era with me!

It's time for the restitution (replacement/restoration) of all things which the mouth of the Lord has spoken (Acts 3:20-21). It is time to *Their ministry took* administer the forces of the Spirit, that will *a quantum leap* enable the saints take up their inheritance in *into higher realms* Christ. *of supernatural*

*manifestations from* I am launching you into the apostolic phase *that time on.* of your ministry for pace setting. Therefore, walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I will perform every word of mine in your direction. I open up the gates of nations to you today!”

Their ministry took a quantum leap into higher realms of supernatural manifestations from that time on. This happened not just during their church services, but also through the hands of members of the congregation everywhere. The dead have been raised back to life in their numbers, lepers are cleansed, the blind receive their sight and the lame leap, walk and jump for joy. They have also seen supernatural restoration of broken homes, breakthroughs in businesses and careers and many more signs. **Receiving Impartation from Kenneth Copeland**

Another man of God that has impacted David Oyedepo is Kenneth Copeland, the man from whom David was imparted with the prosperity anointing. Long before David had physical contact with him, he had celebrated him in several forums. One day, he traveled to the United States of America for a programme and he was assigned to the very hotel room where Kenneth Copeland was said to have been lodged the previous time he had visited the hotel. David took the information more spiritual than casual. According to him, he rolled on the bed praying: “Lord, when a dead body was dumped in the sepulchre of Elisha, the body jerked back to life, Copeland is not dead, he is alive, Lord, whatever grace Kenneth Copeland carries, I desire the same (via this contact)”. Then in a night vision he saw a man with an amputated arm which defied healing. Out of deep compassion, David commanded the man to be healed in Jesus’ name. Immediately, a brand new arm came forth and the man got restored. From this experience, according to David, he heard the voice of the Lord saying: From today, I have taken you into the creative realm of your Ministry. Presently, especially now that Kenneth Hagin has gone to be with the Lord, Kenneth Copeland is another international preacher he refers to as a father in the faith. In 2007, Kenneth and his wife, Gloria Copeland were at Faith Tabernacle and ordained the two sons of David Oyedepo, David Jr. and Isaac into Ministry as pastors. Before his departure, Kenneth Copeland looked David Oyedepo in the eyes and gave his departing verdict, which signified transference of unction; “from now,” he declared, David’s eyes were curiously fixed on him in his usual way of preparedness for fresh fire. “My sword is your sword and my breastplate is your breastplate!”

That was purely another spiritual elevation for a faithful mentee to a mentor. Since that day, the connection between the Oyedepos and the

Copelands has continued to wax stronger. The latest encounter David had with Kenneth Copeland will forever remain a memorable one. It will remain indelible not only in the slate of David's heart, but generations to come will know of it, because history has decided to make it so. In November 2012, he had honoured an invitation to visit the Copelands in the United States. The short visit suddenly turned out to be that of another moment of dramatic impartation for David Oyedepo. Kenneth Copeland, in a Holy Ghost-initiated solemn meeting, literally cast the mantle of the grace at work in his life on him. He looked him in the eyes and released some heavy utterances: "Every gift of the Spirit," he began, "every anointing at work in me, every endowment given me is transferred to you!" Then the man of God, Copeland burst into a typical Holy Ghost-motivated laughter to seal the impartation. It was a day David will forever remember and cherish.

### **A university in Africa similar to Oral Roberts University**

David Oyedepo also got connected to Oral Roberts via his books. One major inspiration he drew from Oral Roberts was the wisdom behind Oral Roberts University (ORU). One day, David travelled to the United States and walked the length and breadth of the campus, appreciating its beauty and the wisdom behind its establishment. He saw an example of a decent and serene Christian university. David simply concluded with all sense of modesty and determination: "This can happen anywhere!" What David meant was that such a model university can be duplicated anywhere including his country, Nigeria. That was the day the seed of Covenant University was sown in his heart, consciously or unconsciously.

The process of founding Covenant University (CU) started in October 1999, one month after the dedication of Faith Tabernacle in Ota. Prior to starting the Covenant University, he read the biographies of top Universities in the world, like Oxford, Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Cambridge, etc. He practically could tell how these great schools were run without being there. His studies led him to declare that Covenant University would be a new generation Harvard. Today, CU is rated among the top ten Universities in Africa, in just about 10 years plus.

By November 27, 1999, an in-house Consortium on the take-off of the University was inaugurated and by December 1999 the application form for a private university operating license was issued by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

David eventually became a family friend, and indeed, family member of the Roberts. Richard Roberts once flew to Nigeria to worship at

Faith Tabernacle as well as to behold the magnificent work of God in Canaan Land. Roberts' facial expression when he mounted the altar of Faith Tabernacle showed how greatly he appreciated the splendour and ambience of the great auditorium. That was the same way David felt when he landed in Oral Roberts University (ORU) many years earlier.

As the activities of the Consortium wound up early in 2001, an Advisory Council was inaugurated on February 17, 2001 to develop appropriate structures for the take-off of the University. By July 15, 2001, the verification team of the NUC came for final inspection of facilities and programmes. Driven by Faith, David Oyedepo laid the foundation stone of the permanent site on Sunday, January 27, 2002 and what followed was the approval by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the presentation of the operating license on February 12, 2002, by which Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, was authorized to operate as a private university in Nigeria. The first phase of development was completed in eight months; while the first batch of about 1500 students was ushered into an ultra-modern university campus after an early morning inauguration on October 2002. As at 2010, the running cost of Covenant University was put at N200 Million per month.

One would expect that a person like the Bishop with the kind of schedule he runs will only just reel out instructions to members and pastors and then watch them carry them out. In fact, the most amazing was that in order to take part in the soul winning evangelism, he bought a megaphone and goes out to the street to witness to people.



## **Covenant university**

**Photo:** <https://www.penzazo.com/Institution-Details/COVENANT-UNIVERSITY,-CANAAN-LAND/147> **A blessed giver**

At a meeting of the Ministry's executive leaders on October 4th, 1984, a sum of N3000 was urgently needed for rent renewal. No one in the meeting could raise the fund. Then David Oyedepo said emphatically with every sense of assurance, "God knows that I don't need to be encouraged to release this fund if I have it. But listen, now that we are all at the same level, understand this; a time will come when some of

*David and his wife* us will be flying in the air and some will be saying: "we don't know *once built a church* what they are using." Let me tell you

what I am using, I am sold out to God!" David had, before then, cultivated the art of service.

*auditorium worth N70 Million and handed it over to the beneficiaries. The 100 acres of land where Landmark University sits on is a*

*gift from the Oyedepo family.*

David and his wife once built a church auditorium worth N70 Million and handed it over to the beneficiaries. The 100 acres of land where Landmark University sits on is a gift from the Oyedepo family.

Every year, he invests millions in student funding and other charitable works, both within the church he pastors and outside of it. Unfortunately, he doesn't make a lot of noise about his giving, so critics believe he consumes all he's blessed with. But everyone fairly close knows that the man lives the talk in terms of giving.

***This is the place***

Living Faith Church aka Winners Chapel started in Kaduna but moved to Lagos, the former capital of Nigeria in July 1989, to start a new church after God instructed David to reach out to the people of Lagos.

Canaanland is the name of the campus of Winners' Chapel (Living Faith Church), an Evangelical megachurch in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Building a city in the wilderness with ever functional infrastructure and amenities to serve the residents of the entire community is simply amazing: the University community, the secondary school community, the church and secretariat workers, the artisans and the business environment. It becomes more amazing in a country where the very basic amenities (including electricity, water supply, and road network) are languishing in decadence due to poor management and maintenance. This is a city where, among other things, is installed a 500KVA battery-run electric power generating set; of course without fuel. Amazing things happen daily in this 'city in the desert' that calls for public attention. In November, 2011, far away in South Korea, Covenant University won a gold medal at the Young Inventors International contest, once more showcasing the glory of Nigeria. Without doubt, Canaan Land is a city of a sort, affording all manners of goodness.

In 1998, God instructed David to build a new base for the commission to accommodate the increasing number of worshippers. This resulted in Oyedepo's church's acquisition of the initial 530-acre (2.1 km<sup>2</sup>) facility known as Canaanland.

It takes a high level of spirituality and good degree of courage to "abandon" a flourishing church in a densely populated Lagos suburb for a wilderness at Ota, several kilometers away from where members are evidently highly concentrated. Everything about the move from Lagos to the other side of midnight in Ota was a total violation of every known principle of church growth. But the movement was in obedience to a divine marching order that brooks no retreat, no surrender. Just trust and obey, for there is no other way to perform mind-bending and nerve-jangling exploits for the glory and advertisement of God's power that will lead more souls to the Kingdom.

A new property of about 150 acres had been bought, and development had begun. Not less than 180 pillars had been erected from the depth beneath. But suddenly, David Oyedepo heard the voice of the Lord so audibly that he

could not pretend not to have heard: “Should the church move to that place, it will be the end of the Ministry,” the voice warned. That was the last time he stepped on that property, the investment notwithstanding, all in total surrender to divine direction.

God had told David the first time he arrived at the far away forest; “this is the place.” Every other thing therefore became secondary as far as he was concerned. Then he stood behind the podium on 17, September 1998 and boldly declared that Faith Tabernacle would be dedicated by September 18, 1999. According to David Oyedepo, such a project, ordinarily, was “... technically impossible, logistically unthinkable and (practically illogical),” because the design was not yet ready, and it would have to go through a lot of bureaucratic processes for approval. Some nay-sayers who were alien to the mind of God on the project took merry turns to wave it off as pure hallucination and mindless fantasy. But he was not perturbed, neither yielded to the professional suggestions given by economists and financial analysts. He was quiet, waiting to receive a signal from above. Then God told him: “It took me six days to create heaven and the earth; I will not need two months to finish an ordinary building, two months too much!”

All the technical, structural and mechanical logistics had to be perfected before commencement. All these couldn't have taken less than seven months to be in place. The question was; would such a magnificent monument be completed in five months? Yet in 1998, a historic groundbreaking was done and by 18th September, 1999, a city began to emerge in the centre of the formerly dreaded forest of witches and horrific spirits. The imposing first largest church auditorium in the world as recorded in Guinness Book of Records, now strategically sits in its magnificence and splendour in the city known as Canaan Land today.

Canaanland is in Ota, Ogun state and is 5,000 acre (20km) estate and campus, that houses the 50,000 church building, the church secretariat, the church's youth chapel, a primary school called Kingdom heritage model school, a full boarding mission secondary school called Faith Academy, with over 1,500 students and the Covenant University facilities, which accomodates over 7,000 students, fully resident in ultra-modern hostel facilities, with fully equipped faculty buildings and numerous staff housing



facilities. Canaanland campus also has for profit establishments operated by the church such as bakery, a bottled water processing plant, a petrol station, various restaurants and shopping stores, several residential houses that provide for the over 2,000 church employees, and guest houses. Four banks are also present on this Estate, three of which are branches of external commercial banks and one which is a community and micro-finance bank and operated by the church. The whole of Canaanland which includes a proposed 15,000 housing estate known as Canaan City has increased to 17,000 acres as at 2012. **A man of courage and boldness**

Oyedepo believes, “whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.” reassures Goethe. David Oyedepo said: “Every kingdom prince is a kingdom principality set over a territory to put to check every principality from hell.” His war campaign is not only launched against invisible enemies alone, but his audacity also led him to confront every human agent crossing his way unto exploits in the kingdom. In 1991, David Oyedepo was surrounded by fierce looking armed gang. Then he stood with his arms akimbo and roared like a ravaging lion, “In the name of Jesus!” They all took to their heels shouting repeatedly, “He has a gun!”

A man of courage is not scared by the threatening sound of the opposition’s roar; rather it gears him up to dare. In 1984 at Kaduna, during a 5-day crusade which had been planned and given approval by the appropriate authority for the facility to be used, while the programme was on, information was suddenly passed to David Oyedepo that the crusade should stop because the approval had been withdrawn. With fury in his heart, and fierceness of anger in his countenance, David went straight to the office of the officer that had sent the message and flung his door open without knocking. He looked him in the eyes and grasped his two hands. Then he uttered some high level language (tongues) at his face and threw the officer’s hand on the officer’s chest, saying, “Ten of you cannot ask us to vacate this facility till we are through”. He went out and slammed the door behind him. The crusade was held without further interruption. Courage!

Another day, a young man was sent to him with an official letter that the church should vacate the place of their regular worship in Kaduna within ten days. The lion in him stirred up again in anger. He roared at the messenger: "Tell those who sent you, in ten days you are all dead men!" The man suddenly became jittery and he began to beg, "Please sir, I was sent". He roared at him again, "Yes, all of you will be dead in your attempt to eject us." That was the last time they came with such a notice.

One day David was driving back from Ibadan (West of Nigeria) and at a check point, a soldier pointed his gun at me, threatening to shoot me. David told him, "You are too small!" Immediately, his gun dropped in his hands. The next thing the soldier said was, "I am sorry."

His aggressive campaign does not spare every political figure responsible for the African political and socioeconomic decadence; including every leader that brought Africa and Nigeria in particular, to the present state of degradation and deprivation. For example, a callous military dictator once ruled Nigeria in the 1990s who subjected Nigerians to moral and mental incarceration and rigour. David Oyedepo got aroused during one early morning service and decreed divine judgment against him. Not too long after, the oppressor died so cheaply, keeping the average Nigerian spellbound. Also, sometimes ago, Gadhafi of Libya was in Nigeria and made a statement the man of God considered blasphemous as well as inimical to the sovereign integrity of Nigeria. The man of fearless spirit got aroused and again placed on him an inescapable verdict that would end his era. Not too long after, crisis began in Libya and Gadhafi's life was unexpectedly terminated.

David Oyedepo is the only protégé of Benson Idahosa as they say, that does it the way Idahosa would when he was alive, ruthlessly tormenting the kingdom of darkness with the scintillating edges of the sword of the Spirit. Once during his sermon in Faith Tabernacle, he made it clear that "Prophets are spiritual territorial commanders, all the forces of Ota knew when a prophet arrived there!" He got to the country of Liberia on July 20, 2009 for a 3-day Empowerment Summit/Crusade in the city of Monrovia. Somehow he was lodged in the same hotel where the "Queen of Sheba", a demonic African principality and notorious witch worshipped by many was lodged.

All of a sudden, the force of the Spirit began to torment the devil, and he (the devil) was “no longer at ease”. Without notice, the “Queen of Sheba” sneaked out of town unceremoniously! Here is a portion of the report as captured in the media:

“Queen of Sheba is known in that part of Africa as the infamous follower of Lucifer and has for the past 46 years practiced deep and superior Satanism. The queen has been coroneted with blood on three different occasions, and has been enthroned as the matriarch or the Sovereign Imperial Empress of a special cult called the African Nubian Nation. Her arrival at the invitation of certain groups and traditional leaders in Liberia had raised concern in some Christian quarters. David Oyedepo had made a declaration in one of the evening crusades; “cast the devil out of Liberia for prosperity.” Immediately the Bishop stepped on the hotel ground, the “Queen of Sheba” packed out of the hotel without the hotel authorities knowing, en route the airport.” (Liberian National newspaper, National Chronicles of Friday, July 24, 2009).

David Oyedepo declared: “Witches and wizards are mere spiritual insects. When you speak in tongues (spiritual utterances), you are throwing spiritual insecticide which they cannot stand, resist or survive.”

Bishop David Oyedepo has always shown gratitude to his parents and grandmother in many of his preaching.

He has shared severally how his grandmother taught him hard work as a child and he remains eternally grateful for those early life discip<sup>lines</sup>.

### **Winners’ Chapel grows to over 54,000 members**

David Oyedepo as a dynamic leader has earned the loyalty of his large team with his compelling vision and his ability to propel his team to high performance through constant sessions of mental empowerment, maximizing all available resources including human, materials and finance, culminating in competence, efficiency, effectiveness and expertise of his team.

Without doubt, the numerical growth of worshippers experienced in Winners’ Chapel International headquarters in Nigeria is triggered by David Oyedepo’s diplomatic ability. Armed with the tool of vision (or a mandate), he has mastered how to, without gimmicks or coercion, motivate his entire

congregation to get engaged in the drive to evangelize and bring new people to fill a 50,000 seat capacity auditorium

to overflow. His congregation never saw any instruction from him as a burden or an inconvenient task, but as an opportunity and a platform for their blessing. For example, between the month of June and July 2013, David Oyedepo declared “Seven Weeks of Ingathering (evangelism).” Like a swarm of bees, members of his congregations all over the world invading their various communities, winning souls for the Lord. With much enthusiasm they continued consistently for seven weeks through various strategic outreach approaches. By the end of July, more than 54,000 new people were added to the Win

ners’ Chapel International headquarters, Ota, alone.

**More 20,000 people added to church in one location**

*The traffic of people*

On Sunday March 1, 2009, the second <sup>and vehicles</sup> Sunday service kicked off at Faith Taber <sup>experienced in Canaan</sup> <sup>Land</sup> <sup>at every meeting</sup> <sup>has no mental or</sup> <sup>human explanation.</sup> It simply meant the congregation <sup>church</sup> had exceeded the 50,000 seat capacity <sup>human explanation.</sup> auditorium. The multiplication <sup>human explanation.</sup> experienced in 2009 was not unconnect

ed with the maiden 21 days fasting and prayer platform that God commanded David Oyedepo to declare to the entire Winners’ family worldwide to usher the Ministry and the Winners’ family into the fullness of God’s agenda for the year.

One of the major effects generated by this spiritual engagement is unhindered church growth. Multitudes are attracted to the Winners’ family by reason of the strange testimonies shared by those whom God has touched in a definite way that you cannot just keep close to your chest. The year 2009 was more or less a year of spiritual adventure dedicated solely to fasting and prayer, coupled with regular specialized outreaches. It was no wonder, therefore, that on 17 January 2010, the servant of God declared the commencement of the third service on a Sunday morning at Faith Tabernacle. The traffic of people and vehicles experienced in Canaan Land at every meeting has no mental or human explanation.

David Oyedepo is an indefatigable leader who keeps scaling heights of exploits in leaps and bounds, the opposition notwithstanding. He posits that every true vision places the visionary at an advantage on the strength of faith. He once charged his teaming pastors: "As long as there is still room in the inn, we must keep going out to bring in more souls." He has a high powered spiritually inspired approach to getting every outreach mandate delivered. On Sunday, February 13, 2011 a couple of weeks after the annual 21-day prayer and fasting, the servant of God pronounced the commencement of the 4th service on Sunday morning because he heard God speak to him from Isaiah 54:2-3 saying, "Enlarge the place of thy tent..." While many were excited about it, the skeptics simply held their peace watching and wondering: "What...Why... and How?" When the day came, 20,000 new worshippers were added to Faith Tabernacle! Currently, 4 anointed services are running in succession each Sunday morning, at Faith Tabernacle, all irresistibly impactful with bundles of unprecedented testimonies trailing each. David's courage has been a source of encouragement to many of his followers and has won many followers to him globally. **Shiloh nights**

Each second week of December, Canaan land sees almost a million Christian pilgrims from all over the world gather for a program called Shiloh.

There cannot be any technical or professional explanation for the economic position and the dimension of church growth in David Oyedepo's Ministries Worldwide, particularly as experienced at the headquarters in Canaan land. The facility is almost becoming overstressed by reason of the influx of multitude into every service including Sundays and night vigils, all because someone was daring enough to follow the voice of the invisible One, whose dwelling is in the light. The annual Shiloh event has since been decentralized through viewing centres across Lagos State and various mission stations across Nigeria, African towns and cities and other parts of the world. Yet, the crowd recorded yearly still remains unexplainable. All because somebody was and still is courageous enough to turn his back to human theories and facts in pursuit of a God given vision.



**TERESA WAIRIMU**

**KINYANJUI**

*The mother to nations*

*The mother to*

*nations*

**If Reinhard Bonnke can be that way, Teresa thought, then I can too. And tears of longing spilled from her eyes.**

**When Reinhard called for the sick to come forward, Teresa watched as he laid hands on them. Blind eyes opened, lame people began to walk, people who were deaf could suddenly repeat my whispers, word for word. It was like another page being written in the Book of Acts.**

**Teresa saw that he possessed a living fire that was beyond the cold religious embers of her own experience. This was the gift she sought with tears that day. She would settle for nothing less. From the very depths of her soul she cried out, “God, oh please God, if you can give**

**Bonnke 100,000 souls, give me 100, just 100, Lord, and I'll be a happy woman.”**

**Once Teresa said this, she knew something deep down in her heart; she knew that to receive her answer from God, Reinhard Bonnke would have to lay his hands on her head and pray for her.**

Teresa Wairimu was born to Jane Njeri and James Kinuthia Kinyanjui on 15th November, 1952 in Waithaka on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. She was the second born, coming after her brother Njenga who born in 1953 and as well as the first daughter in the family. Teresa was brought up in a middle class family; they were neither poor nor excessively wealthy.

Her grandfather, Chief Kinyanjui, who later became a Paramount Chief, ruled over more than one hundred thousand Kikuyus in the Dagorreti region of the reserve near the French Mission.

In his position as a “tribal king,” he adopted a lifestyle close to King Solomon of the Bible. He fully indulged in the pleasure of marrying many wives. His wives ranged from the old ones from his youthful days to young and attractive beauties who were all found in his big compound. Chief Kinyanjui worked extremely hard to be a ruler who exercised justice, a respectable and capable leader. In the year, 1914, Karen Blixen, a young woman from Denmark together with her newly married husband Bror Blixen-Finecke bought six thousand acres of land at the foot of Ngoog Hills and started a coffee plantation. This was in the Dagoretti jurisdiction where Chief Kinyanjui reigned.

It was Chief Kinyanjui who approved that the children in the area get formal education. He worked very well with the Christian Missions in his area, the Roman Catholic, The Church of England and Church of Scotland. He mobilised his people to help the missionaries build churches, convents, schools and hospitals in the area.

Chief Kinyanjui's confessions to his trusted counsellors and sons revealed that his primary reason for collaborating with the colonial masters, settlers and missionaries was to promote education and development amongst his people. He always said that the best way to get the best out of people was

through learning from them. He wanted to learn from the British. He did not want his tribe to remain illiterate.

The seeds of Christianity that were sowed at the beginning of that century pushed their roots into hard ground and are still bringing <sup>positive</sup> results. **James Kinuthia detained**

During the time of Teresa's birth, the colonial government had declared a state of emergency. Kenyans, who then were being governed by the British, had reached a point of revolt. They were restless and discontent and wanted to govern themselves, and get their land back. The colonial government on the other hand was neither willing nor prepared to hand power back to the indigenous people. This is what gave rise to the Mau Mau movement.

The dispossession of land, the creation of a peasant squatter class and their connection with a pre-existing Kikuyu identity helped foster conditions for mobilization. Mau Mau members were predominantly the peasants displaced by settlers in the White Highlands and those living as squatters on white farms. Because settlers depended on the Kikuyu as a primary labor source a decision to halt their labor in order to mobilize potential recruits in the city was economically detrimental for settlers. It should be noted that the most effective leadership actually came from the grassroots level as squatters had less to lose by waging war.

The world wars further helped stir a shift in Mau Mau consciousness. Many Kikuyu males who fought in the rebellion, fought for the British in world war two. Dedan Kimathi a military commander of the movement affirmed that upon witnessing British casualties in the war, came the discovery that they were just as human. It defeated the myth of European superiority proving them to be physically defeatable.

Mau Mau tactics of disruption mirrored their tactics of dispossession or resulted from them. The severe loss of autonomy that came with the dispossession of land framed their battle as one that equated land with freedom. One of their common tactics was the raiding of white colonial farms and the execution of guerilla warfare in the central highlands. This can be seen as a form of violent land reclamation. They specifically raided the lands taken from them and the lands that attracted the colonials as a



form of disruption while murdering them in the process. They began slowly by slaughtering goats and cattle belonging to the settlers culminating in attacks on both settlers and Kikuyu loyalists. The Mau Mau carried out warfare in central highland forests; utilizing their familiarity with the land to disadvantage the settlers; Settlers they perceived as “foreign” to the land they originally inhabited. What they fought for came in the form of physically reclaiming the land they lost.

Perhaps the most significant and tactic of fostering political unity and momentum was their use of oath taking. To bound new Mau Mau members to the cause, they administered oaths. The oath was powerful in that it was a reclamation of culture, spirituality and reaffirmed their consciousness by tying their identity to their cause. In the Kikuyu tradition, oaths were used in initiation ceremonies to signify the moment children cross over to adulthood. This was highly ritualized and symbolic. They “ate an oath” by consuming meat, red soil, or some other designated medium in the ceremony” something that may have been a representation of their loss of land and livestock. The oath became an essential tool and embodied many uses. It became a means of recruitment, a standard of accountability, and a means to punish members. The oath became something that sustained their consciousness, radicalized members and cemented members to the Mau Mau cause playing a large role in their momentum, mobilization, *People lived in great unity and intimidation. fear. Suspicion and*

If anyone was caught or even suspected *anxiety abound. Many* of being part of illegitimate activism, *people – some of them*

very drastic punishment was meted to *innocent – were arrested,* him or her. *incarcerated and hanged*

*at Kamiti Maximum Prison.* Thus, the Mau Mau treated Christians with bitter suspicion and hatred. The colonial government, on the other hand, assumed that they were Mau Mau sympathizers.

People lived in great fear. Suspicion and anxiety abound. Many people – some of them innocent – were arrested, incarcerated and hanged at Kamiti

Maximum Prison. Others were detained in very harsh detention camps situated in hardship areas such as Lamu, Kapenguria, Manyani and the like.

Men in Kikuyu land were targeted. They daily faced the high risk of detention. Their every movement and activities were spied on, monitored and scrutinized. Even shop owners who sold supplies to the Mau Mau risked arrest. The colonial government was committed to vanishing all trouble makers.

This was the precise predicament that befell Teresa's dad, James, just as he had settled down with a new wife and a little baby boy. Sadly in 1955, he was detained. The onus fell on Jane to hold the family threads together.

Jane was barely in her twenties when she joined the league of many other women in the village whose husbands had been taken away from them. The new responsibility of raising a small child without her husband's support and protection weighed heavily on her young shoulders.

At that time, nobody knew the ultimate fate of the detainees – how long they would be detained, or whether they would ever be released. Some families whose members were hanged never got to know it until many years later.

With some support from her family and in-laws, she immersed herself into farm work and house-keeping. According to her, hard work was the perfect antidote for depression, regrets, complaints and resignation. She kept herself busy and preoccupied. This numbed her pain.

In 1956, a year after his arrest, James Kinuthia was released. He continued managing his businesses in Nairobi. Jane went on raising the <sup>children while</sup> doing small scale farming. **The full name, Teresa Wairimu**

Teresa's grandmother was called Wairimu. Being the first daughter in the family, according to Kikuyu traditions and customs, Teresa was named after her. The fact that she was named after her grandmother gave rise to a naturally strong bond of love between Teresa and her dad from the moment she was born.

The traditional naming system came with its fair share of prejudices within the extended family. A child who was named after a relative on the paternal side received preferential treatment and favours by the dad's family. If on the maternal side, the same happened.

In order for Wairimu to get a Christian name, her mother sold bananas from her farm to raise money needed for her to be baptized in church. It would have been possible for her dad to get money, but her mother held the principle that such a worthy and special event called for a honourable sacrifice. She knew that God would be pleased with her hard work and toil, and the fruit of her labour.

Young Wairimu was taken to her local church and given the name <sup>Teresa</sup>.  
**Teresa yearns to join school**

Due to the special bond between Teresa and her elder brother John Njenga and herself, when he reached school going age was enrolled ahead of her, she got totally lost in loneliness and boredom in his absence. Watching him being prepared for a new life in school filled Teresa's heart with sadness. She wondered how she would cope without him.

Every single morning when John left for school, it appeared like the day's hours stood still or progressed at snail's pace. School for junior students went on for only half a day, so John initially returned home

*From his* in the afternoon before he went into full day learning.

*descriptions, young Teresa Wairimu's little mind formed*

*vivid pictures of school life.*

She eagerly looked forward to this time he would return home, so they could play together. She keenly monitored the position of the sun to estimate the time of the day. When she noticed that it was time for his return, Teresa would fix her gaze on the gate until he entered. She would run to meet him. He

would brief her on all the things that had happened in that “strange” place called school. She would listen in utter amazement. He would also show her his drawing books and the pictures he had coloured beautifully using crayons.

From his descriptions, young Teresa Wairimu’s little mind formed vivid pictures of school life. She formed a mental image of a beautiful place with impressive buildings, playgrounds with all kinds of toys

for recreation, and a team of special and highly intellectual people called teachers. She felt ready to join the school band-wagon as soon as possible. Teresa started crying early morning, demanding that her parents allow her to go to school with her brother. That did not work. She took her morning protests a notch higher. She would sneak out and follow her Njenga all the way to school. This action caused him embarrassment in school. She would follow him around. Because of this, John was teased and laughed at by his school mates. He would constantly tell her, “Wairimu, will you stop following me around!” She never heeded his rebuke. She was determined to sample school life herself.

The teachers did not seem bothered. Probably they knew she would be joining school soon. They allowed her to spend her days in the school compound and John would ensure she was safe from other kids at school.

Eventually, when her persistence wore her parents out, they went to talk to the headmaster. She was officially enrolled at Mukarara Primary School in Waithaka before she attained the age set by the authorities. **The Re-awakened group in Kenya**

The reawakened group started from Uganda as a result of pride and refusal to listen to the advice of the elders in church and its formation marked the end of the East African Revival. Later, spread to other East African countries. They very militant, soon insisting that any who did not follow them were not truly saved. Their leader, a Ugandan had remarked that, reawakening was the final stage of salvation. You get saved, but it’s of no avail if you’re not reawakened.

To Teresa church was a tradition and a habit. Her parents ensured that the entire family attended their village church regularly. The service itself was what could be defined as a very solemn ritual. The congregants were first and foremost expected to conduct themselves in a subdued manner, or what children called best behaviour. This meant that no form of excitement, emotion, animation, noise or shouting was acceptable or permissible. Most churches in the village had put up plaques at the entrances with an engraved message: “Cemaga Ugitonya Nyumba ya Ngai” (Enter Solemnly into God’s House). The church elders and deacons made it their business to ensure that this instruction was followed to the letter.

The warning to walk quietly almost on tip-toes was often accompanied by very serious faces, lacking in smiles and happiness.

Church was a very holy building. It was made to appear like God hated noise. As little children, they therefore put on humility postures, *In those days, Christians* walked on tip-toes with heads bowed and shoulders bent, and

*in Kenya concentrated more on the “don’ts” more spoke in hushed whispers once than the “dos.” This alienated* they stepped into God’s house. *them from most people.* The adults behaved in the same *Everything they had a way, if not in a more exaggerated touch of fun was condemned manner. or branded sinful. Because*

Singing was more of a standing *of this, it was very difficult to* still endeavour. There was no clapping or dancing around. They would endure stanza after another of what seemed like an endless song.

*preach to the unconverted. They were wary of the rules to abide by.*

By the time the preacher took to the pulpit, some congregants would be fast asleep. His tone was mumbled and soothing.

In those days, Christians in Kenya concentrated more on the “don’ts” more than the “dos.” This alienated them from most people. Everything they had a touch of fun was condemned or branded sinful. Because of this, it was very difficult to preach to the unconverted. They were wary of the rules to abide by.

People who accepted Christ were called salvation “Kihonoko kia wamathia” (salvation for the suffering), because those who accepted the Lord lived a life that appeared to celebrate poverty, misery and suffering. This is not a harsh observation. People who got born again lived rigid and controlled lives.

Outward appearance was given very serious consideration. When somebody got saved, they joined “ngwataniro” (fellowship of brethren). Members of the fellowship were compelled to observe and abide by common beliefs, aims and interests. Women were not allowed to wear any make up, braid their hair, wear short skirts or trousers. They were expected to present themselves in the plainest way possible, to show modesty and respect. Things like ear rings, bracelets, magazines and novels were all demonized. They were banned.

As children, Teresa and others were terrified of God because they thought He was up there searching for their sins, looking for opportunities to punish them and send them to hell afterwards. Young people viewed salvation as a form of bondage that took all fun out of life. Other than clothing and outward appearance, certain foods were also not allowed for saved people.

Teresa always watched her mother leave every Friday afternoon to return on Monday morning. Her entire weekend was spent with other members of her religion in prayers, praise and worship.

A new convert was officially incorporated into the “Fellowship of brethren” after accepting Jesus as Lord and saviour in a very interesting way. The new convert had to stand in front of the whole congregation and confess all the sins they have ever committed.

Failure to do this was seen as proof of lack of serious conviction and determination to change. Members expected the saved person to give a full and vivid public testimony before he or she was considered truly changed.

Sometimes, people went forward and gave a suspiciously shortlist of sins. In such cases, the person testifying would be deemed not honest enough in revealing everything. Suddenly, a member of the fellowship would sing loudly, “Urahitha mehia, ui ni murata...” (You are hiding sins, thinking that sin is your friend...)

With that, the person had no choice but to make known more of the sins he or she had conveniently tucked away. When the fellowship was fully convinced that the convert had completely exhausted the list of sins, the members broke into a song popularly known as “Tukutendereza Yesu.”

The members of the fellowship usually raised their hands and waved in the air as they sang the song to formally receive the new convert into the circle of believers.

As a child, Teresa heard more of hell than heaven, more of sin than righteousness, and more of Satan than Jesus. “Thankfully, when revival broke out, emphasis was placed on the power of Jesus, the cleansing blood and the redeeming, resurrection power of the cross.”

### **Teresa studies Kindergarten Training and Administration**

*Whenever they attended Christian Union fellowships and they were preached to,*

*Teresa would attempt to stand up in response to the altar call, but her friends would pull her back to her seat.*

After completing her primary school, Teresa Wairimu joined Ngirambu Girls in Kirinyaga, in 1971, and later Gatanga High School in Murang’a. Some of her high school colleagues went on to become successful and prominent members in the society.

Life in boarding school away from her familiar family taught her the responsibility of greater independence. She benefited from interaction with people outside of her family, clan, village and tribe.

Whenever they attended Christian Union fellowships and they were preached to, Teresa would attempt to stand up in response to the altar call, but her friends would pull her back to her seat. They were keen that no member in their circle should cross over to the “saved” group.

One day, a girl who was born again and very committed to the faith and who knew Teresa’s battle with salvation looked at her in the eyes and told

her: “Wairimu, we ukahunjia kinya uhunjie ndunyu” (Wairimu, one day you will get saved, but you will preach the gospel even in market places).

Market place preaching was a calling that was the preserve of those who were extremely passionate, full of fire and enthusiasm to see souls born again. It was taken up by the few people who were bold and unashamed, those who never cared about their dignity nor shied away from public ridicule.

Being a shy and collected, Teresa could not visualize herself preaching at the market place. But it turned out, that was the second most accurate prophecy she had received up to the point. The first one was when her dad told her that she had a gifted tongue which would be a useful tool for her later in life.



**Teresa seated on the left with his elder brother and step-sister Jane Njeri and James Kinuthia Kinyanjui in 1953**

After completing her high school education, her dad asked her what career she wanted to pursue. Her first choice was the teaching profession because she had love and compassion for children. She took a kindergarten teaching course and graduated with a Diploma in Kindergarten Training and Administration.



## Teresa in love

In 1967, when Teresa was just ten years old, her grandmother developed kidney failure. After some time, she passed away. Back then, people were buried a day for their death. The matter of death was never discussed for children to understand and come to terms with what had happened.

Teresa was shocked when she saw her grandmother's body covered *In the midst of all that* up in her bed as though she was just asleep. She tried to talk to her to draw her attention, but she never responded. She got upset and cried a lot. "I wished that she would wake up and continue being there for me."

*was taking place in the burial ceremony of her grandmother, including a mix of grief, tears and*

*emotions, Teresa noticed a handsome white man*

Disgrace and despair accompanied *of medium height and* her like shadows wherever she went *build, who was constantly* in that year of 1977. Tears became a *stealing glances at her.* constant part of her make-up.

Her innocent thoughts and ideas of achieving the wonderful dream of being happy and successful were simple – grow up, meet a handsome "prince" in a magical romantic style, get married, crown the union with two beautiful children and enjoy the blissful happy marriage ever after. Just like it all ends in fairy tales.

In the midst of all that was taking place in the burial ceremony of her grandmother, including a mix of grief, tears and emotions, Teresa noticed a handsome white man of medium height and build, who was constantly stealing glances at her. They had belonged to the same church congregation. Although she shyly kept herself and made an effort to remain focused on her loss, something had begun. She could neither deny nor ignore it.

The man gave Teresa considerable amount of attention. He expressed lots of interest in her. At that time her father was already in the process of making plans for her to travel to Sweden to join her brother who had settled there. The goal was to pursue further education, carve a career of her choice and eventually, if everything out well, settle there on a permanent basis.

After their first meeting, their friendship started to develop and blossom, much to the disappointment of her family, especially her dad who had a canny ability to foresee danger in the horizon.

Slowly but surely, the man won her heart. His profession involved social work. It appeared a worthy and morally decent career in her eyes. He was supposedly a believer and a missionary in his own right.

What endeared him to her was his love for her and her little daughter Catherine, whom he accepted as his own child. Before the Teresa met him, she already had her first child, Catherine. Through her, she had become increasingly responsible, sensible and much stronger. In spite of her parents' skepticism and caution, Teresa fell in love with the white man.

He extended an invitation to her to travel with him to Sweden for a summer camp, where he was involved in mission work, holding tent meetings as well as doing social work. This required travelling through different cities from the north to south of Sweden. It was during that summer camp on 1977 that Teresa accept Jesus as Lord and saviour.

They travelled back to Kenya. In 1978, he expressed his desire to marry Teresa. Nothing had changed in her parents' mind about their relationship. They opposed it. ***Follow your heart's desire.***

### ***You might live to regret your decision***

Her father was very uncomfortable with the idea of his daughter getting married to a white man. To him, an inter-racial marriage was a recipe for disaster, a let-down on cultural values and principles. In his eyes, the union was doomed.

James Kinuthia would have been much happier and at peace if her daughter had desired to marry a Kenyan man and preferably from their tribe, from a family he knew and trusted, a man with whom they shared a similar cultural foundation. That way, he would have felt she was in good hands.

“My daughter Wairimu, are you quite sure that this is what you want? Have you carefully thought it through or are you letting your emotions rule over your reasoning power?”

Because he came from a very rich cultural heritage, James tried every means possible to dissuade her. He attempted to create the worst case scenarios to see if that could change her Teresa’s mind.

“Wairimu,” he told her, “what if he fathers mixed-race children and abandons you? How will you raise them in African culture without confusing their identity?”

Teresa stood her ground. Nothing could stop her from getting married to her man. Finally, James told her, “Follow your heart’s desire. You might live to regret your decision. But I hope with all that is within me that you are right, my girl.”

With these strong words, James lovingly gave up the fight.

Their marriage was officially blessed and legalized on 25th November, 1978 in Nairobi, Kenya. It was officiated by Bishop Gilbert I’Manyara.

Their marriage delivered Teresa’s cherished dream about the children she desired to have. In 1980, they were blessed with a bouncing baby boy. They fondly named him Robert. She had a very difficult time when delivering him, but when it was finally over, she felt hugely and handsomely rewarded for her labour. Her joy was full as she looked at their two children and thought, “I cannot get better than this!”

The new addition of a baby made Teresa very optimistic that the fire of love and trust would be rekindled, and fanned for the rest of their lives.

Their children were growing well. Teresa was determined to build a secure home for them all. Happiness was not an impossible dream. Little did she know that their happiness was short lived and memories of the marriage would haunt her for years on end.



**In church on their wedding day**

Her husband started to cause her untold grief in the early 80's. Teresa was aware that their marriage faced more challenges because of its inter-racial nature. His culture was different from hers, so were the values and circumstances that characterized his upbringing. She knew that it would take tolerance from both parties to adjust and accommodate one another. Terrible forms of abuse were unleashed on her at every opportunity without any provocation whatsoever. She had nowhere to go, having disregarded her family's warnings. She always prayed and asked the Lord for grace and strength to withstand it for the sake of her children.

His accusations against her were unbearable. Still, her faith in God kept her believing that things would change for the better.

But, one day, even the little that was left came tumbling down with excruciating pain and traumatic effect on her and her two children – Catherine and Robert. The man she had hoped would love, care, protect and support her and her children threw her out of the only house she called home. She had nothing to show for her family ex

cept disgrace. *She could not even*

*gather the courage to face her father and confess to him that his fears and concerns about her being let down by the man of her dreams had been validated.*

Teresa ended up with a broken marriage, a broken heart, broken dreams and a broken life. She was disoriented and was tormented by never-ending sorrow.

She could not even gather the courage to face her father and confess to him that his fears and concerns about her being let down by the man of her dreams had been validated.

Everything and everyone turned their backs on her. All her hopes, dreams, aspirations and the very reason to live almost died. She felt unworthy, despised, rejected and hollow. What chance did a divorced woman, a single

mother to one, and an estranged mother to another, have? What opportunities existed for her in a harsh society that mercilessly stigmatized and ridiculed people like her? How about church? Would it be less or more severe in judging her than the rest of the society?

Teresa's desire to make the marriage work put strain on her. She couldn't keep much weight on her body. In all the struggles, she never washed her dirty linen in public. She kept hoping that the tough times would slowly be replaced by happy days.

She woke up everyday with renewed determination to work harder and give their marriage another shot. She couldn't go back to her dad and tell him that his worst fears had come. He would get heart-broken, especially remembering how much he was against the marriage in the first place. She resolved to try her best to save it.

Because Teresa's life was surrounded by difficulties, her prayer to God was more of a question through a supplication throughout those years of suffering.

“God; where shall I begin? How can I pick up the broken pieces?”

### **Still a responsible wife and mother**

Thoughts of walking out of marriage did not seem good. Teresa didn't want to tear the children away from the security of a stable and healthy two-parent family. Her encouragement would come whenever she remembered how her mother endured when her husband married another woman.

Her ex-husband was the head of an international charitable organization based in Nairobi. He carried out social work in different parts of the country. The couple also had a school within the premises. Many of their employees and neighbours sent their kids to this school, and attended the church.

Teresa immersed herself fully into teaching children in the school. Whenever he travelled abroad and within the country, doing humanitarian work in the remote parts of Kenya, she managed their home and all the operations involving the school.

In the church, by the virtue of the fact that Teresa's husband was the director of the organization, she automatically became a mother figure, in spite of being young and newly saved.

### **The call to ministry**

On the night of 21st July, 1985, Teresa was alone in the house. She had relaxed in her own company to a fairly uneventful evening after her dinner. Her family was away. She had unwound the day's activities, completed all her bed-time routines, said her nightly prayers and finally settled into a deep sleep.

She woke suddenly to what she initially thought was a tremor, because her bed shook under her. She turned on the lights. What met her was terrifying. Her entire room was filled with smoke. She made an attempt to sit up in bed. Her mind was now working quickly. She would walk to the kitchen to see if she had left any appliance on. If not, she would check the main fuse box. She was convinced that the house was on fire. She knew she was in a crisis.

Before she could get out of bed, another shaking took place. This "Wairimu," the Lord time, a very forceful wind swung open windows and wardrobe doors, and

*spoke to her, the same way a man speaks to* flapped her curtains eerily.

*another. "I have called you, I have walked with you, yet you do*

At this point, she reasoned that she must have been under an attack – from *not understand me fully.* thieves or murderers!  
*From this moment*

She had heard of murderers who set *henceforth, I have set* houses ablaze with occupants trapped *you apart. Serve me."* inside.

Then she heard a clear and distinct voice.

“Wairimu,” the Lord spoke to her, the same way a man speaks to another. “I have called you, I have walked with you, yet you do not understand me fully. From this moment henceforth, I have set you apart. Serve me.”

The smoke that she had so much feared became more of a glorious fog that was dazzling and illuminating. A sweet smelling aroma filled the room. The glory of the Lord was tangible.

Nobody, for whatever reasons, could have failed to discern that this was a divine and supernatural encounter.

The Lord defined Teresa’s calling and mission comprehensively, in a clear and precise manner. Her commission was spelt out for her, like a magnificent blueprint on canvas, giving the most accurate explanation. It spoke for itself.

God made it known to her that her ministry would be founded on prayer, grounded in faith, evidenced by the gifts of the Spirit and demonstrated by signs, wonders and miracles. All what God required of her was total obedience. He would do His part, if she did hers.

Teresa’s heart raced. Her spirit was filled with the peace and the glory of this wondrous moment. She was completely swallowed up in the sweet blessedness of the hour. “I could have given anything to be in that state forever.”

She did not sleep for the remaining part of the night. Early the following morning, before 7 o’clock, she was at the gate of the church to see her pastor (Bishop I’Manyara). The gate keeper was shocked to see her so early at the gate, wanting to talk to the pastor. He asked, “Wairimu, couldn’t you sleep last night, or was God your visitor, seeing you so early in church?”

Bishop I’Manyara looked at her. He didn’t greet her or ask her anything at all. Instead he lifted up his hands and worshipped the Lord. Teresa joined him in prayer. Later, he offered her to seat in his office. She told him about her encounter the previous night. He listened keenly. She told the pastor how terrified she was by the tremor and smoke, before she heard the voice.



Bishop I'Manyara did not interrupt or interject Teresa's narration. He listened to the end. He did not show any sign of either doubting, or affirming what she was telling him. In the end, he listened for her some spiritual pointers in recognizing the voice of the Lord. He encouraged her to continue in prayer.

She thought God would allow her some time to get ready before starting to use her. "I was in for a surprise."**Teresa delivers a word of knowledge**

The following Sunday in their Huruma Church, the service was going on normally, just like any other Sunday. As Teresa was sitting in the congregation, she experienced something uncommon in her spirit. She couldn't ignore it. She was consumed by the conviction she felt within her. Finally, she decided to take action. She left her seat and tip-toed to where Bishop I'Manyara was sitting.

"Excuse me, Pastor," she whispered into his ear. "Something in her heart told her that inside the church today is a couple that has been trying to have a baby for nine years but have not succeeded yet. Last week, they were told by a doctor that they couldn't bear any children. But I feel like God would like to give them a baby."

*Teresa would have*

*been at ease if the Pastor had just conveyed the message on her behalf and handled*

*it in his way, without involving her at all.*

The Pastor was quite surprised. The church was still in session! Nothing like that had ever happened before.

It was one thing to have a couple step forward and request for prayers; it was another matter to stand in front of the congregation and ask if such a couple existed, and if they wanted prayers.

Both Teresa and the Pastor did not know whether or not there was a barren couple in church. But when he looked into her eyes and saw the bold

conviction in her, he told her, “Take this microphone and repeat to the whole congregation exactly what you have said to me. Except, instead of saying that something told you, say “The Holy Spirit told me.’”

Teresa would have been at ease if the Pastor had just conveyed the message on her behalf and handled it in his way, without involving her at all. If she owned the message, it meant she would bear the consequences if it turned out not true. The Pastor ensured that she took full responsibility.

She almost regretted her decision to share with Bishop I’Manyara what she had registered in her spirit. But when she remembered the call of God, and the obedience He demanded of her, she knew she had to pass this test, no matter the ridicule that could probably follow.

Questions raced through her mind. She trembled from head to toe. In her anxiety and panic, she forgot the piece of advice the Pastor had graciously given her, not to say “something told me.” She was in a hurry to finish this entire assignment!

Teresa stammered, “Church, something tells me that there is a couple here that has waited to have a baby for nine years. Now, God will give them a child.”

After this proclamation, all she wanted to do was to disappear to her seat. However, she gathered some courage and waited. The church became very quiet. Some people appeared restless, others nervous. Others were curious to see what would happen next. The people who knew Teresa well seemed wondering, “What might have befallen her today?”

She stood there frozen. She was quickly becoming the subject of humiliation! She looked at the Pastor for a signal on what she needed to say, or do next. He never said anything.

Suddenly, a woman who had sat at the back of the church walked to the front. Tears were streaming down her face. She could feel the congregation relax a little bit. However, curiosity was in the air.

When she saw the woman come to the front, she was relieved. She thought that her work was done. She took a step to go back to her seat. The Pastor stopped her right in her tracks. He said to Teresa, “Pray for her.”

The whole issue was getting tougher for Teresa! She had obeyed the Spirit, called out the woman, risked and waited for a response – the woman had come forward and confirmed it – the Pastor still wanted her to pray!

She whispered to the Pastor, “I don’t know how I should pray in this case.”

He said, “Pray anything. But make sure you lay hands on the woman’s womb.”

Teresa placed her right hand on the woman’s womb and offered possibly the simplest prayer ever.

“Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus because you will give this woman a baby. Thank you very much Jesus. Thank you Jesus.” She tried to lengthen the prayer, but all she was doing was repeat the same words over and over. She said very many “Thank you Jesus,” before finally saying “Amen.”

The woman requested to speak after the prayer. She said that she was a teacher and her husband was a banker. They had been married for over nine years, but had no children.

“On Thursday last week,” she said, “we had our final consultation with our doctor. He confirmed that we cannot bear children. I thank God for the prayers today, because I came to church totally discouraged.”

Exactly ten months later, God blessed the couple with a baby girl.

### **Ministry amidst criticism**

During one Sunday service in 1978, a young lady asked for an opportunity to minister in song. She sung her heart out. “You could see the love and zeal for God burning through her.” By and by, through divine connections, they formed a good and blossoming friendship. They prayed together and fellowshiped regularly. They confided in one another and supported each other. This lady is Reverend Lucy Muthoni Maini, also largely referred to as Pastor Soon.

In the 1980s, Teresa and Lucy Maina worked together as teachers in the same school. They shared a common passion for preaching the gospel. Whenever Teresa stood up in church to preach, she would call on her to interpret in order to effectively communicate with their multilingual congregation.

The more the Spirit of God worked and moved in the midst in those early days, and the more young people gave their lives to Jesus, the more opposition she received from old members of the church who were against change.

These members happened to be leaders, and they owed allegiance to Teresa's ex-husband. They worked extra hard to discredit her. They scandalized the fellowship of the new and upcoming leaders. They accused them of behaving in an over-spiritual manner.

Being newly called by God, Teresa Wairimu was determined to obey His commands and to uphold righteousness. As a result, she openly confronted and exposed sins in the church.

Some people were hiding under a myriad of sins and still confessed salvation. This group did not take rebuke and correction kindly. They hit back. However, some were quite receptive of the new move of

*Together, they* God. They hungered for more of God in their lives.

*fasted and prayed. They needed greater*

*fire and passion to reach out to non-believers.*

Although their marriage was strained and on shaky grounds, Teresa's faith in God was firm. They lived in a closely knit community. Rumours did quick rounds, producing believable accounts of malicious untruths.

God equipped Teresa's group with his power. The fellowship grew. She started a small fellowship comprising about twelve people.

Together, they fasted and prayed. They needed greater fire and passion to reach out to non-believers. They knew that it was only through intense prayer and seeking after God that they could carry out this mission.

More people joined. Pastor Soon and Bishop Allan Kiuna were part of this fellowship. They were committed to the task of evangelism. They shared the same dream.

They began going out to preach the gospel in small towns, market places and even the remote areas of the country. In all of their meetings, although very humble in the beginning in terms of attendance and equipment they had, they experienced the presence and power of God that saved, healed and transformed lives.

More awaited them. God began to reveal Himself in a powerful way. He would make known to them things that were going to happen, before they did. Teresa received visions and revelations with pin-point accuracy, a fact that greatly humbled her and led her closer to God.



**Preaching with Pastor Soon**

### **Teresa locked out of the house, son taken**

Teresa loved her ex-husband and sought to support him, make him happy and raise our children in a loving and peaceful environment. The challenges brought about by an interracial marriage and cultural differences were many. External influences notwithstanding, she did her best to bridge the gap with unconditional love, patience, compromise and sacrifice.

Their marriage was not measuring up to Teresa's childhood dreams. She expected to be married and happy even after. Those expectations were first

turning into a mirage. She held on to God as her never failing friend.

People saw a young woman with two children, married to a European husband who provided all her material needs. But that was only the surface impression. What lay was not so rosy.

Teresa purposed to stay in marriage and not initiate separation or divorce. She hoped for a resolution. She had faith that God would either turn the situation around in His own way, or He would show her what needed to be done. She waited.

She was no longer teaching in her ex-husband's school although she was still living with him. She worked in a school called Sunrise in Donholm, Nairobi. She managed the school and also taught.

One afternoon after their children had gone home for the day, Teresa felt a heaviness in her heart. From experience, she knew God was speaking to her about what was to happen. Her friends – Lucy and Meaggy, were with her at the time. She told them, “There is something I feel God is telling me. I will share it with you because it's very important.”

Her friends listened attentively. They knew she had marital difficulties, but they had no idea about the real magnitude.

“Both of you have been true friends to me this far,” she began. “But if anyone loves me because of being Mrs. So-and-so, please leave me now. After today, that will no longer be the case. My marriage will be over. I sense that tonight, I might not sleep in my house.”

Both of them were shocked. Lucy said, “We cannot let you go home alone to face whatever awaits you there. We will accompany you and see to it that you are safe.”

With that, they walked from Donholm to her house. It was quite a distance, but they were quite used to the long walk. “I was in deep emotional turmoil as we journeyed home.”

They got to the house. Teresa met a new face. She was met by a new face. The watchman was completely new to her. He denied her entry. Teresa engaged him in a conversation. She tried to explain to him who she was, and why she should enter her marital home. He adamantly refused to let her in.

One watchman who served them for a long time came around and saw what was happening. He became infuriated. He told the new guard, “If you refuse Mama Wairimu, the wife of this household to *The watchman was enter*, I am going to kill you today!” *completely new to her*.

*He denied her entry*. He was enraged. They could all see he was ready to carry out his threat. The new guard was shaken. He knew that he had to defy the instructions given to him earlier in the day by his employer, or else lose his life. He had been given stern instructions to keep Teresa out of the premises. He reluctantly opened the gate for her.

*Teresa engaged him in a conversation. She tried to explain to him who she was, and why*

*she should enter her marital home. He adamantly refused to let her in.*

Teresa requested him to allow her two friends, Lucy and Maggy to enter with her as a witness. He agreed. They walked up the main door. Another shock hit them. The old doors were covered with new ones made of iron bars, fitted with new padlocks. Even if Teresa could slid her key into the old door lock, she couldn't go through the iron barrier.

When they saw this, Maggy screamed and sat down on the concrete outside the house. She couldn't believe the harsh reality. Lucy cried out aloud. “Dear God Almighty, when things get to such an extent, what can we possibly do?”

Because of the pain build-up to this eventuality, Teresa had become toughened. Numb with pain, she sat down outside the house. She stared at the closed doors with disbelief and utter dejection. She felt devoid of emotions strong enough to express her heartache.

The series of premeditated actions – hiring new guards, and getting somebody to spend a whole day at their home fitting new doors – was extremely shocking. She wished that he could have at least told her beforehand to take out a few new of her important possessions.

Her son Bob had been taken away from her. The message she received was that she would never see him again. Her ex-husband had sworn that she could see her son “over his dead body.”

All she had was her little daughter. They had nothing to call their own except the bond of love that held them together.

The judicial system in Kenya at that time was male dominated. She knew that she was at a point of disadvantage. Secondly, even if she would have wanted to hire a lawyer to press for custody of her son and support, she had no money to do it.

Sitting outside the locked house, Teresa did not know what else to do. Lucy told her, “This is your legal home. You have a right to at least enter and retrieve your belongings. Let’s get someone to break these doors.”

Lucy had a valid point. However, Teresa made up her mind not to force or destroy property. She answered her, “Lucy, I cannot do that. For the sake of my testimony, I would rather walk away empty-handed. One day, my God will avenge and vindicate me completely.”

Teresa had no place to sleep that night. She refused to beg for shelter. She told her friends, “Walk me back to Sunrise School.” They had some mattresses which the children used for their afternoon siesta.

She spread out on one of those mattresses that night. However, the pain of a broken marriage and the pain in her heart due to agonizing separation from



her son never allowed her sleep. To keep her sanity, she called upon the name of the Lord. **The desire to commit suicide**

One day Teresa would wake up in shock and sleep in denial. The following day she would wake up angry and spend a restless day. *“It is high time you* On another day, it would be absolute pain and sorrow, then back to *end it all.* Nobody shock again.

*is for you – not the church, society, friends or relatives.*

One day, the enemy planted in her mind thoughts of suicide. *You are destined to fail. You will never amount to anything.”*

“It is high time you end it all. Nobody is for you – not the church, society, friends or relatives. You are destined to fail. You will never amount to anything.”

So constant was the train of these thoughts, Teresa began to believe what she was hearing in her mind.

She was walking up along Valley Road, Nairobi, a very sloppy stretch of road. She wanted to cross to go to the Nairobi Pentecostal Church. Cars roll down that road at high speed. The section is very dangerous for anybody attempting to cross on foot.

She said to herself, “I cannot kill myself. It would bring scorn salvation. But if I cross this road without caution and get knocked down, everybody will think it was a normal accident.”

At that moment, Teresa ventured into the road without bothering to check whether there was an on-coming vehicle.

As she walked to the centre of the road, a Kenya Bus Service (KBS) vehicle was also moving at full speed down the hill. The driver must have acted

swiftly to apply emergency brakes. All Teresa heard was the screeching of brakes. The bus missed her by a whisker. The people who were not around and witnessed what had happened were surprised that she was not crushed by the bus. “I realized that God <sup>wanted me alive, not dead.</sup>” ***Let God testify for you***

Teresa Wairimu was out of work and had no source of income. She had just been divorced and separated from her son, had been left to fend for herself and her little daughter with nowhere to stay or call home. Her list of problems appeared to increase by the day.

She had been offered temporary residence at her aunt’s house in Eastlands to allow her time to sort things out. She was desperate for her own place. At that time, she had lost all her physical belongings. But the greatest pain was not lack of material provisions; it was emotional wounds. As a matter of fact, the very first clothes she owned after all her clothes were locked up in her matrimonial home were miraculously provided.

With such a heavy burden on her shoulders at a very difficult season in her life, the enemies of the cross made her the object of mockery. In some churches, she became the subject of discussion.

People erroneously assumed that she had simply walked out of a marriage and an affluent life so early.

What the public never knew at the time because she never opened her mouth to explain, discuss or defend her cause was that she never walked out. She was locked out. A friend, Bishop J.B. Masinde (Founder and Senior Pastor of Deliverance Church, Umoja in Nairobi), called her aside and told her, “My sister, I know you are called of God and He is using you immensely in our nation. Never use a microphone to defend your case. Let God testify for you.”

She took her counsel. No matter what people said about her, Teresa chose not to justify herself. In many times of need, she went to God. She depended on him a hundred percent for provisions and support. She used to pray, “Lord, you called me into your service, please provide for my needs for the sake of Your Name. If I preach your gospel in tattered clothes,

nobody will believe you. Make me an instrument and a channel of your abundance.” ***Madam, how will you pay?***

Teresa had no source of income or savings in the bank yet she longed for a place of her own.

One morning, she decided to act in faith and step out. She went out in search of a house. She ended up in the Upper Hill area of Nairobi. There were very good, fully furnished and serviced apartments

which greatly appealed to her from outside. She went in to view.

*She ended up in the Upper Hill area of*

She reasoned that the best thing to do would be to seek a realistic solution.

She didn't own anything at all. She had no furniture, and no kitchen appliances.

Therefore, it was better to get a fully furnished

place instead of renting an empty house, then go back to God for money to buy furniture and kitchen appliances.

*Nairobi. There were very good, fully furnished and serviced apartments which greatly appealed to her from outside. She*

*went in to view.*

She walked into the apartments' office and requested to be shown around.

She liked the one bed-roomed house she was shown. The bedroom and bathroom were upstairs. The living room and a small kitchen were downstairs. The house was very neat and tidy, very close to the city (walking distance), and was situated in a very safe and quiet area.

All the positive features and attributes notwithstanding, the houses were quite expensive by any standards – Teresa's ailing financial state aside. After the viewing, she walked back to the office. They expected her to seal the deal. The cashier asked, “Madam, how will you pay?”

Teresa confidently said, “Cash.” *I will return tomorrow morning to pay*

Inside Teresa’s heart she told God, “Father, I trust you to meet all my needs according to your riches in glory. I don’t have it right now but I have faith in you – please provide.”

She didn’t have the cash but she had faith, which is the “substance of things hoped for.” Although she didn’t physically possess it, she could see it with her spiritual eyes. She knew God was going to help her.

The cashier went on to explain that they demanded a big deposit to show commitment and an ability to make prompt monthly payments. Their terms were three months equivalent of rent paid as deposit, and three months equivalent of rent in advance. In total, an upfront amount equivalent to six months rent. He took the calculator, multiplied the monthly rent by six, and showed Teresa a staggering figure.

Just before he reached for the receipt book to record Teresa’s payment, she told him, “Sir, today, I had come to view and know your rates. I will return tomorrow morning to pay.”

“What time?” he asked.

“Ten o’clock, in the morning.” Teresa replied.

He nodded and gave a look that seemed to say, “I have seen many who promise to return but never do so.”

Teresa walked back to her aunt’s house. She got into her bedroom, closed the door and went down on her knees. She prayed like she had never prayed before. She refused to get up until she heard from God. He gave her clear and definite instructions. *Are you Teresa?*

Early the next morning, in total obedience to God’s directions, Teresa woke up and got herself ready. She dressed as smartly as she could out of her very limited wardrobe. Then she headed for the city centre.

The place where God sent her to was in the Central Business District (CBD), in Nairobi. It was a tall and impressive multi-storey building. Teresa had seen it several times but had never entered it until that day.

She got into the lift and followed the instructions she had received to the letter. She pressed the twelfth floor button. The lift began its upward motion.

They landed on the twelve floor. She thought the secretary checked her rather too keenly when she went to talk to her. She was probably wondering, “Could this be another one of those ambitious secretaries who come here seeking to take over my job?”

Teresa told her she wanted to see the C.E.O. The secretary paused for a moment, then she finally asked, “Do you have an appointment?” *The amazing thing*

*was that although she knew that she needed to be at that place at that time, she had absolutely no idea whom she was going to see.*

From the secretary’s assertiveness, Teresa could tell that she would not be allowed to see the boss if the lady established that she had not booked an appointment. She thought very quickly. She had no formal appointment, but she had a divine one. Teresa’s sender must have made prior arrangements for her.

Teresa answered, “Yes.”

The amazing thing was that although she knew that she needed to be at that place at that time, she had absolutely no idea whom she was going to see. This had been kept from her. She didn’t know if it was going to be a man or woman, young or old, familiar or unfamiliar, a believer or a non-believer. She was concerned that the secretary would ask her more questions, such as “Who gave you the appointment?” or “Exactly what time is your appointment?”

She appeared satisfied with Teresa’s answer. She joined the group in the large and spacious waiting room. They all shared a common goal – to see the man or woman behind the closed door. However, unlike Teresa, the other people knew who they were going to see. She didn’t Secondly, they had an official appointment. “Mine was divine.” Thirdly, they must have

had an agenda or points of discussion once they got in. She had none. “As a matter of fact, I did not know why I was there. I had been sent.”

Teresa started to pray, “Lord, why am I here? Job interview? What will I say when I walk in? How shall I begin?”

“I knew that if I said God had sent me, I risked being branded insane or confused. Most probably I would be turned into an object of humiliation. After all, this was a corporate body, not a charitable or a faith based organisation!

Furthermore, if it turned out that I had no appointment, the secretary would get into trouble for letting me in.”

Just then, Teresa heard the secretary say, “Lady, it’s your turn.”

She stood up with her handbag in her hand and walked to the door marked C.E.O. She felt nervous, but she gathered courage to walk in gracefully. “Even if I risked being chased out, at least I owed the one who sent me a worthy representation.”

Teresa could easily sense the nature of power and influence that the office bearer carried. She looked at him. He was immaculately dressed, and appeared to possess a very confident personality.

When she entered, he rose up, looked squarely at her. Then, in a sure and commanding voice, he said, “Are you Teresa?”

“Yes,” she answered enthusiastically, affirming it with a nod. “I felt relieved! At least he knew who I was!”

She did not need to introduce herself. The feelings of not knowing why she was there vanished. If he knew her name, it meant he was expecting her.

### **Rent paid**

“You have just missed your guys,” he told her. “They were here a moment ago but couldn’t wait much longer. They left this for you.”

He handed her a bulky envelope. Her name – TERESA WAIRIMU – was printed in bold letters in rich gold ink.

She stretched forth her hand and received it. She said, “Thank you.”

The man didn't say anything. She didn't know what else to say. She thanked him again and strode out of his office.

Teresa got into the lift in a daze, landed on the ground floor and looked at the envelope again. She knew what was inside. It was rent money.

It was 9:20 am and had made an appointment to meet the cashier at 10 am.

She walked from the city to Upper Hill apartments, headed straight to the cashier's office and gave her the money still in the envelope and told him she wanted the one-bedroomed apartment. He counted the money. All notes were brand new!

He counted the money for the second time to confirm the amount while Teresa watched in great wonderment.

The money was exactly what was required: an equivalent of six months' rent. No more, no less.

The cashier handed her a receipt and the keys to her apartment. She moved in the same day. ***Report tomorrow morning and start work***

Still, Teresa needed a job to make a decent livelihood, and also to meet her obligation of rent payment in her new apartment.

She prayed God grant her something that would give her income. Her mind harboured heavy thoughts of the serious issues that surrounded her. The more free time she had on her hands, the more gigantic her challenges appeared. She found herself constantly worrying about her son, and anxious about her daughter's future. She was

*After prayers, God*  
deeply hurting for emotional wounds.  
*directed her to a*

*private, high cost school in Nairobi called Rusinga School. She knew it to be very reputable, but she had never been there before.*

She was trained and experienced in Kindergarten teaching and administration. But, at that moment in time, she had no proof of the fact. All her supportive documents, certificates of merit, previous employment

letters and ID card had all been left behind in her marital home. She had lost everything.

After prayers, God directed her to a private, high cost school in Nairobi called Rusinga School. She knew it to be very reputable, but she had never been there before. She did not know where it was located, so she asked someone for directions.

She was told to board bus No.46 from the city centre; the bus would drop her right at the gate.

She woke up early in the morning and boarded bus No. 46 as advised. She did not have any form of identification or certificates, yet she was looking for employment.

At the gate, the watchman asked her, “Whom do you wish to see?”

She replied, “The Principal.”

It was the start of a new term. The day was extremely busy. Parents as well as pupils were walking in and out of the school gate.

She saw the office marked “The Principal.” She knocked on the door.

Inside the office was a white man seated behind his desk. He appeared busy with some paperwork. He greeted her and asked her in a friendly tone, “How may I help you?”

He probably thought Teresa was and wished to enroll her child at the school.

She answered him, “I am a born again Christian in need of a teaching job. God sent me here.”

“Are you a trained teacher and what age do you teach?” he answered her.

He asked her what time she would report the following day. Teresa told him she would report at eight o’clock, in the morning.

“Report tomorrow morning and start work.”

She thanked him and left his office.

Teresa was not subject to any interview. Neither was she asked to produce documents or give names of referees.

The following morning she began her teaching job at Rusinga School. The class she was assigned had a total of eleven children, aged between four to



five years. She was given two teaching assistants to help her. *And whom do you think I am?*

Teresa taught at Rusinga School and continued to stay at Upper Hill apartments for the three months which were miraculously paid for. She was not earning much money from her new job, therefore she strived to keep her expenses very low. The fact that the school bus offered free transportation to work and back home was a great redeeming feature.

The challenge of meeting her mandatory expenses, including that of raising her daughter, became uphill with time. She was unable to raise rent for her one bed-roomed apartment. She accrued debts in unpaid rent. The management became unsettled.

One day, Teresa returned home from work and found a letter under her door. It was a last reminder, asking her to settle her rent. Attached to the letter was a list of the total amount due. Teresa was in the middle of another crisis. She took it to God in prayer.

*would receive money for rent, but nothing could have possibly*

The Spirit of God sent her back to the same corporate office in the city centre where she had been three months earlier.

*prepared her for the shocking reception she received from the C.E.O. that day.*

Unlike the first time when she never knew what she would find, this time, she knew her way around the building, the procedure and the outcome.

Nothing had changed in the office. She found the same secretary. She seemed to remember Teresa. She managed to smile at her and to relax more than she did during the first visit.

Teresa knew she would receive money for rent, but nothing could have possibly prepared her for the shocking reception she received from the

C.E.O. that day. When her turn came, she walked in and found the same man. He was smartly dressed in a black suit and a very bright tie that had dots with gold-like colour.

Instead of the cordial welcome he had extended to Teresa the first time, the man got furious when he saw her. He was extremely agitated and in a foul mood.

He raised his voice and said to her, “Lady, your usual three Arab guys were here and once again they couldn’t wait for you because you were late! Can’t you keep time? Don’t you have a watch?”

His eyes were full of wrath. He continued, “And whom do you think I am? A messenger or something? I am a C.E.O. with great responsibility, long lists of jobs to do and very tight schedule! I am sick and tired of you and your guys wasting my time. As a matter of fact, those guys lack in professional etiquette and gratitude.”

He pointed at her and gesticulated in anger.

“All they do is walk into my office any time like they own it, leave me a message for you saying they cannot wait! Then they walk out without as much as a thank you or a word of acknowledgment. What makes you people think that my office is a place of leaving each other messages?”

Teresa was speechless. In any case, he didn’t pause to let Teresa explain or say anything. He went on and on, bombarding her with a continuous angry lecture on how much “my guys and I” lacked manners and respect for him and his office.

“Twice they came to my office without an appointment, dressed in their white robes and turbans as though they own this place. They breach all protocol. They do not even take a seat!

“The first time I excused their inappropriate behaviour and thought it was a one-off event. Clearly, it has become a habit which I will not entertain. Do you hear me lady? This is the last time it is happening and I mean every word!”

To demonstrate his seriousness, he quickly buzzed the secretary on intercom. He asked her to come in immediately. The secretary came rushing into her boss' office. She found Teresa transfixed on one spot.

She was still coming to terms with the stormy outburst.

“Why did you allow the three Arab guys into my office without an appointment? This is not the first time! It happened again several months ago!” the boss thundered at his secretary.

The secretary's eyes appeared to widen with fear. She looked at Teresa. “Sir,” she said, addressing her boss. “I have never seen three Arab guys walk into your office; not this morning or any other time in the past.”

The boss ignored her. He looked at Teresa again.

“Lady,” he said. “Take the envelope they left and never come back *“Take the envelope here again! Also, tell those men that I don't want to see them ever they left and never*

*come back here again! Also, tell those men that I don't want to see them ever again in this office. I am not a messenger!”*

again in this office. I am not a messenger!”

He placed the bulky envelope in Teresa's hands. When she walked out, the door was slammed shut behind her. Immediately, the Lord spoke to her heart and said, “The three men were not Arabs. I assigned you my angels.”

From the reaction of the C.E.O. that day, Teresa knew that the brook (like in the case of Prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 17: 2-8) had dried up. She could never return to that office again. The assignment was complete. The avenue <sup>was</sup> closed. **Reinhard Bonnke comes to Nairobi**

Nairobi had always presented a challenge to Christ For All Nations. In order to go through all of the intricacies of the proper insurance and permits in order to erect the big tent, they were required to register a CfaN office inside the country. This had not been possible no matter how we tried. The

government seemed to create obstacles for them at every turn. Their team concluded that a doorkeeper placed high in the government had taken a dislike to their organization and was

working behind the scenes against them. This is how it seemed. This puzzled Reinhard Bonnke because he knew that Daniel Arap Moi, the president of Kenya, was a true Christian brother. This condition seemed hopeless until they were assisted by a man of great influence and integrity, a minister in Nairobi named Dr. Wellington Mutiso. At the time Dr. Wellington was working with World Vision. He was a Baptist minister and a representative of the Evangelical Alliance of Germany. He had been a respected delegate at Billy Graham's Amsterdam '83 Conference, the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists that had inspired Bonnke to do the first Fire Conference in Harare. In fact, Dr. Mutiso had attended their Harare Fire Conference.

When he learned of their dilemma, he offered his own ministry organization as an umbrella for CfaN in Kenya. Using his protection, they soon were able to schedule their meeting for eight days in June of 1988.

As they went forward with their Nairobi plans under the protection of Dr. Mutiso's organization, it soon became apparent that the big tent was a dinosaur. The anticipated crowds were so large that they never even installed the ground anchors for the structure. As Reinhard had promised, he called Peter Pretorius in South Africa and offered him the world's largest tent as a gift.

When Reinhard arrived for the Nairobi meeting he was put up in the Serena Hotel near Uhuru Park. From his room he could see where the platform had been erected. The opening meeting saw a crowd of more than 100,000. The preaching of the gospel was accompanied by signs following, and the crowds began to grow nearer to the 200,000 mark. They were making a big stir in the capital city.

On the fifth day of meetings Reinhard's telephone rang in the hotel. He was told that His Excellency, President Daniel Arap Moi, would like to attend his meeting that day. He looked at the clock and saw that the meeting was only two hours away.

When Reinhard arrived on the platform he saw an entire section of government gilded, golden chairs set up in the front row of the crowd. He was introduced to the president and several of his high ministers, and then he took his seat to await the preaching of the Word. As he sat there he asked the Lord what he was to preach. The Lord spoke very clearly to him: Preach as if the President was not here.

Reinhard welcomed the president in his opening remarks and started to preach the gospel. There was a great response for salvation and for prayer for the sick at the end of the sermon. When he finished ministering and turned around, the president and all his fancy chairs had gone.

The next day his phone rang again in the morning. “The president would like to visit with you at the State House.”

For an hour he asked questions. The meeting was a very pleasant one. Then Reinhard asked him for a favor. Reinhard told him of the trouble CfaN had encountered over the years trying to register as an official organization in Kenya. He went further to tell the President that they were not in Kenya under their own auspices and that it was Dr. Wellington Mutiso who had offered them his organization as an umbrella. Otherwise they would not even have a permit to preach the gospel in Uhuru Park.

The President motioned with his hand, and all of his aides in the room came close to hear what he had to say. “I herewith cut all red tape for the registration of Christ for all Nations in Kenya.”

And so it was done.

After the meetings had concluded, Dr. Mutiso received a communication from his Evangelical Alliance overseers in Germany. He was told that he would have to choose his alliance with them or with Reinhard Bonnke. One or the other, but not both. It was up to him. He told Reinhard later that he weighed the 140,000 souls he saw saved in Uhuru Park with the absence of conversions he saw through the efforts of his overseers, and made his choice.

Their campaign in Nairobi saw a total of 850,000 people attend over a period of eight days. The miracles and size of the crowd made headlines every day in the news media. They attracted both admirers and enemies. As they left the city, an editorial writer submitted an open challenge to CfaN in the newspaper. He accused them of conducting our meetings on the comfortable side of town. Real Christianity, he said, would not avoid the real poverty and violence of Nairobi's notorious slums.

Reinhard took this challenge and told his team to prepare a return campaign in Nairobi. They would set up their equipment in the heart of the very worst part of the city. Reinhard had seen it during their visit, a slum built around the city's garbage pit. It was a place called Mathare Valley, a dense collection of 180,000 souls living in mud houses, beneath corrugated metal roofs. Their dwellings were built on stilts over a seeping river of raw sewage. This mission field would represent the worst conditions in which CfaN ever attempted to hold meetings. The schedule was set for three years later.

*In the same meeting, Teresa stood weeping at the far edge of the crowd, beyond Reinhard Bonnke's field of vision.*

Continuous streams of people converged into Uhuru Park from all directions. They came using all forms of transport. Some walked long distances, others arrived on bicycles, motorbikes, private cars and public buses. Small groups had teamed up and raised funds to hire buses communally in order to reach Uhuru Park in the most

cost-effective and affordable way from upcountry. They were determined to make it against all odds. This was a historic event not to be missed.

In the same meeting, Teresa stood weeping at the far edge of the crowd, beyond Reinhard Bonnke's field of vision. 200,000 gathered in Uhuru Park that day. The president and members of his cabinet sat on the platform behind Bonnke. Reinhard preached, and they saw thousands come to the Lord. Healings manifested among the people. He was thrilled with another day of obeying the Lord and seeing His power to save sinners. But Teresa Wairimu was not a sinner, and she did not come forward. He never knew she was there.

She had stood still at the far edge of the capacity crowd. The gently sloping gradient of the park ensured that she could see the platform <sup>from where she</sup> stood. ***If you can give Bonnke 100,000 souls, give me 100, just 100, Lord, and I'll be a happy woman***

Teresa had soaked her pillow for countless days before Reinhard came to Nairobi in 1988. In recent months, her dream of serving God through serving her family had been shattered. The grief of this loss tore at her soul like a raging windstorm.

From childhood, Teresa had longed to serve the Lord. Attending church had filled her imagination with wonderful desires to marry a minister. When she finally came of age she met a charming European missionary. With this man, everything fell into place in her mind. The desire to serve God and the desire to serve this missionary merged into one. She could see nothing but happy days ahead.

Her parents had red flags about it. They did not approve of the union. To them, a racially mixed marriage was a recipe for disaster in Kenya. Besides, they were a respected business family and were ashamed to think that their daughter would marry outside traditional African values. But in the thrall of love, and in her intense desire to serve the Lord, Teresa felt sure that God had provided the answer to her prayers in this wonderful Christian man. She became willing to go against her parents' wishes to marry him.

It was a decision that haunted her a dozen years later when her missionary husband turned against her. No amount of appealing to his Christian faith made any difference. He took cruel advantage of a male-dominated court system to divorce her and leave her and their daughter with no support.

As she stood weeping in Uhuru Park that hot and steamy day, she could sense the great gulf between her and Reinhard. It was more than physical. Reinhard preached with a confidence she did not feel. She had been cruelly discarded by the one man she had most wanted to please. As she stood there, she blamed herself for choosing so badly in her desire for a ministry mate. She further blamed herself *She had no place to go.* for not being able to make the marriage work in spite of her husband's prob

lems. Perhaps her husband's problems were actually her fault, she thought. She had not been good enough, not enough like Jesus to change his heart. Round and round her thoughts spun like the arms of a ceaseless windmill, beating her down, down, down.

*Her family would now reject her. They would tell her that she had only gotten what she deserved. She couldn't*

*bring herself to even tell them of the divorce. The church was no better.*

She had no place to go. Her family would now reject her. They would tell her that she had only gotten what she deserved. She couldn't bring herself to even tell them of the divorce. The church was no better. Divorce was a terrible shame among Kenyan Christians; the kiss of death to anyone with a desire for ministry.

This is why she wept as she stood at the far perimeter of the crowd in Uhuru Park. She heard Reinhard Bonnke's voice preaching the Word of God with positive power and authority. The very sound of this kind of preaching caused hope to leap up in her heart. She had not heard the gospel preached that way. The ministers she had known had been trained in seminaries. They had been taught not to raise their audiences' hopes by their words or their tone of voice, lest someone be disappointed and blame God in their despair. Even the hope of the Good News had been watered down so that unbelievers might not be offended.

As he spoke, her heart was beating fast. She couldn't see him quite well because people were jumping up and down, waving banners and umbrellas, all of which were blocking her view.

But the Reinhard Bonnke that she saw that day preached the uncompromised gospel. Even in the presence of the president on stage, she had heard Bonnke let the chips fall where they may. He shouted the



Good News into his microphone with gusto. The way he spoke and the way he moved on stage told everyone that here was a man who believed his message and would stake his life on it. He acted like he really knew the God he preached about.

If Reinhard Bonnke can be that way, Teresa thought, then I can too. And tears of longing spilled from her eyes.

When Reinhard called for the sick to come forward, Teresa watched as he laid hands on them. Blind eyes opened, lame people began to walk, people who were deaf could suddenly repeat my whispers, word for word. It was like another page being written in the Book of Acts.

Teresa saw that he possessed a living fire that was beyond the cold religious embers of her own experience. This was the gift she sought with tears that day. She would settle for nothing less. From the very depths of her soul she cried out, “God, oh please God, if you can give Bonnke 100,000 souls, give me 100, just 100, Lord, and I’ll be a happy woman.”

Once Teresa said this, she knew something deep down in her heart; she knew that to receive her answer from God, Reinhard Bonnke would have to lay his hands on her head and pray for her.

Teresa’s faith was like this woman’s faith. Somehow she knew that Reinhard must lay his hands on her and pray for her, then she could step into her full blessing from God.

“It is something I cannot explain except to say, she had faith like the woman who touched the fringe of Jesus’ cloak. It was not Jesus’ idea that the woman in the Bible do this thing. It was the woman’s idea. In fact, Jesus was on His way to heal someone else when she chased Him down and touched the fringe of His cloak. When she did, she was healed. Jesus turned to her and said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well.”

There was no chance to have Reinhard lay hands on Teresa. The crowds were pressing around the platform with so many needs, and God was directing Reinhard to the ones He was healing. He never knew she was there.

At that moment, Teresa made a decision to say a second prayer to God, “Oh God, please God, make a way for me so that one day, your servant Bonnke will lay hands on me. It does not matter how long it will take God, or where it shall be; if it happens, I will know for sure that you have confirmed and affirmed the gift inside me.”

After that prayer, Teresa felt an overwhelming peace and joy that came with assurance that Jehovah had heard. “What I did not know was it would take several years before that second prayer could be answered.”

As she walked out of the park that afternoon, she had no way of knowing that what lay ahead of her would shake the nation of Kenya<sup>ya</sup>. **Finally prayed for**

Towards the close of the 1980s, Teresa Wairimu committed much of her time to evangelism through mass meetings all over the country. She preached in Thika, Muranga, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Kutus, Embu, Nairobi, Kapenguria, Nakuru, Pokot, Turkana, Kisumu, Eldorate, Mer, Kitui, Machakos – among other regions.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Teresa started holding revival meetings and youth meetings in the city of Nairobi. She received great support from mainstream churches in the country. She received great assistance from the Anglican Church, Baptist Church, Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church. They gave her access to their buildings and cathedrals across the nation, without limits. For many years, she held overnight prayer meetings in St. Stephens ACK Church. She also preached at Nakuru Baptist Church, All Saints Cathedral and many other churches.

Eight years passed before our paths crossed again. Teresa Wairimu had spent those years making a new life for herself in Nairobi. She had raised her daughter to young womanhood. She rose from the *During those eight years* ashes of her shattered marriage to *Teresa also tracked* build new relationships with a small *Reinhard Bonnke's* group of Christian women. They now *speaking schedule through* looked to her for spiritual guidance, and from time to time, she would minister among her friends. Their major intention was to pray together and reach out on a small scale. Some brothers learnt about them and their vision; they teamed up with them. Before too

long, the number increased. They were forced to look for a more spacious place to accommodate them. But her ministry lacked the power she had seen in Uhuru Park that day in 1988. Her spirit remained crushed by her failed marriage, and she knew she had not arrived at God's highest calling for her.

*the ministry magazine. She was always on the lookout for a city where Reinhard would be*

*preaching to a smaller crowd. This would increase her chance of being prayed over.*

During those eight years Teresa also tracked Reinhard Bonnke's speaking schedule through the ministry magazine. She was always on the lookout for a city where Reinhard would be preaching to a smaller crowd. This would increase her chance of being prayed over. She believed that the day that happened she would receive the anointing and the fire to preach with authority, the way she had seen him preach in Nairobi.

It happened in Oslo, Norway in the spring of 1996. She was excited to learn that Reinhard would be speaking there in a local church because she had friends in Oslo. She had family members and friends in both Sweden and Norway. She was sure they wouldn't mind hosting her for a few days to attend the meeting. She phoned them immediately and shared with them her desire. They readily agreed to host her. All she needed to do was to save money for a return air ticket!

She shared with a few of her friends about the trip and the desire of her heart. They bid farewell and prayed that the Lord would grant her the fire of the Holy Spirit that she so much longed for. She departed from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport with all sorts of emotions – high expectations, burning desire, divine restlessness and simple excitement.

Teresa made connecting flights from Sweden. There, she briefly visited family her members. Then they drove her on an eight hour journey to Oslo, Norway. A Christian friend, Vidar, who lived with his son in Oslo accommodated her during her short stay. They put her in a cosy guest

bedroom. However, Teresa was quite anxious about the gospel meeting; she spent much time locked up in prayer, seeking the Lord.

On the day of the meeting, Teresa made an early start even though she knew she had many hours before five o'clock in the evening. She needed to get there very early to secure a seat (in a good place) inside the hall.

When the doors of Porsgrunn Hallen opened that evening, Teresa was the first to walk in and her friend escorted her to the front row where she sat calmly waiting as the hall filled up.

While she was getting accustomed to her new surroundings, a Norwegian woman approached her and whispered, "Lady, there is something you need from God."

Teresa nodded.

She said, "Well, God spoken to me and said He will give it to you." This was wonderful confirmation. Teresa thanked her and replied, "That is good, but I am still waiting."

All seats in the hall were taken up long before the meeting begun. More people stood inside, next to the walls while others sat on every available space on the floor. The hall became too small for the many people who had come. At least two thousand people were gathered inside the car park, braving the freezing temperatures.

When Reinhard came to the platform as the service began, he knew immediately that Teresa was there. It is hard to miss an African lady in a Norwegian church. She stood out like an island of color in a sea of gray, dressed in her traditional African robes. Bonnke could see that she was trembling from the very start of the meeting.

Teresa had come with one thing in mind; when Reinhard gave the altar call for the sick, she would run forward for prayer. In her mind, she was sick. She felt sick with frustration and ineffectiveness in her ministry. This is how she justified in her own mind, coming for prayer at the call for the sick. Her focus on this idea made it impossible for her to actually concentrate on

Reinhard's sermon. In fact, Reinhard preached a salvation message. That fact did not register with her.

When he closed his Bible, Teresa Wairimu knew they had entered the *Reinhard placed his hand* most important session of the meeting. "The moment I had waited *on her head. Only for an instant, because Teresa was ripped from beneath his hands by a mighty force that threw her 20 yards*

*through the air and landed her on her back near the front row of seats from which she had come.*

for eight long years had come. It was time for a touch from God through His servant. I was desperate for this time."

When the first call was made – it was for salvation – she shot up like a bolt of lightning and rushed to the front. When she became aware that she had responded to the altar call for salvation, she shyly went back to her seat. Her heart was beating

wildly. She had waited eight long years; she would wait another 20 minutes for Reinhard's next invitation.

When Reinhard finally announced that he would pray for the sick, Teresa raced to the front and stood before him, trembling with anticipation. She knew that she was within moments of receiving the answer to the prayer that she had prayed in Uhuru Park eight years before. She would receive the anointing to minister in power and authority, just the way Reinhard Bonnke ministered.

Reinhard placed his hand on her head. Only for an instant, because Teresa was ripped from beneath his hands by a mighty force that threw her 20 yards through the air and landed her on her back near the front row of seats from which she had come. The force of this action was so strong that both of her shoes flew from her feet, high into the air. One shoe, sailed end over end far out into the middle of that gray Norwegian audience. It has never been seen again. Who knows, someone might have taken it as a souvenir.

Reinhard did not have a clue about what had happened to Teresa. He simply moved on to pray for others. When she finally came back to her senses, she was still lying on her back, surrounded by much movement and activity. The first words she heard were from Reinhard: “Miracles are happening here, miracles are happening all over this place.”

The Oslo meeting closed. Reinhard left to return to Germany. Teresa could not get up from the floor of that church. As she regained consciousness, her body would not properly respond to the commands from her brain. Her legs were so wobbly that her friends had to carry her from the church to the car. They drove her home, then carried her from the car into the house and deposited her on the bed in the guest bedroom. That’s when they gave her back her handbag and the one remaining shoe of the pair she had worn that night. She knew in her heart that she would never be the same.

### **Back to Kenya ignited**

Teresa flew back to Kenya after the impartation. Her ministry took a dramatic turn. Their little home fellowship experienced a great move of God. Great manifestations of the power of God through signs, wonders and miracles reverberated throughout the nation of Kenya. From schools to prisons, university halls, slums, churches and Uhuru Park – she preached under renewed anointing, great power and sharper gifts. She moved from smaller to bigger halls as the crowds continued to grow in size.

“My ministry battery was recharged. My fire was rekindled. That encounter in Oslo became a catalyst that ignited the spark for extraordinary results.” God granted her Teresa divine connections with the man of God. From the weeping woman in Uhuru Park in 1988, to the running <sup>woman</sup> in Oslo. ***Will you arrest me before or after preaching?***

After the great impartation through Reverend Bonnke, the fellowship changed from being a Ladies Fellowship to an Interdenominational Fellowship. The move of God was mighty. Numbers grew beyond dreams. They kept looking for and moving into bigger halls in order to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers. One time they *Reverend Teresa took* moved from Desai Hall to City Hall, which *time to seek God for* has a capacity of one thousand people. The *direction on how to* hall was packed

to overflowing. People *cope with the ever* broke doors and chairs as they struggled to *increasing numbers.* get inside. *God directed her to*

The power of God was evident. People *the massive Uhuru* were hungry for an experience. Next, they *Park grounds.* moved to Charter Hall, in Nairobi, which accommodates at least four thousand people. The turn out was huge. People filled in the balcony, and in the open spaces around. They were forced to make another move.

This time, they moved to the city of Nairobi's largest public hall, the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC). Over ten thousand people packed the hall while others stood outside. It turned out that the hall could not contain the people. The hunger of God was insatiable. The evidence of the working of God could not be ignored or disregarded. God's move in the city and in Kenya was powerful. The wind of revival was strong and irresistible. Reverend Teresa took time to seek God for direction on how to cope with the ever increasing numbers. God directed her to the massive Uhuru Park grounds. Until that point, the park was largely the reserve of international preachers like Reinhard Bonnke. Otherwise it was used for state functions, political gatherings and activity campaigns. It was unthinkable that a woman preacher could think of preaching in the huge park.

Previously in Kenya, just like in some other African countries, priesthood was largely regarded as the preserve of men. Women were not seen as worthy to be ordained to ministry. For example, the Anglican Church of Kenya ordained the first woman priest – Reverend Phoebe – she was in for tumultuous times.

The National Newspaper carried a story in their Weekender Magazine about her bitter experiences within the church. It narrated how she was once invited as a guest preacher in an ACK Church in Nairobi. She traveled all the way from Kirinyaga station to deliver the sermon.

After she was introduced, she proceeded to the pulpit ready to preach. But, she was rudely interrupted by one of the elders who snatched the microphone from her hands and said to the congregation, "I thank God I

wasn't born a woman..." The elder went on to make other unpleasant and offensive remarks against women in religious leadership. According to him, women should never preach. They were to sit and listen to men.

He could not sit to listen to a woman preaching. He stormed out of the church in protest.

This happened at a time when Reverend Teresa had already covered much ground including preaching at the massive Uhuru Park interdenominational meetings.

When she approached the Provincial Commissioner for Nairobi, the late Fred Waiganjo for permission to preach at Uhuru Park for the very first time, she did not receive a glad reception either.

The P.C. told her, "I have received reports, that you are a very daring woman. If you dare hold a gospel meeting at Uhuru Park, I will not send anyone to deal with you; I will be there in person to arrest you!" Teresa thought quickly. She asked him, "Will you arrest me before or after preaching?"

He answered, "After."  
She told him, "It's a deal."

All she needed was an opportunity to preach the gospel. The consequences did not overly concern her, as long as she had done the work.

They held their first Uhuru Park meeting on a Sunday afternoon. She preached with great boldness, fully aware that it could be her last day of freedom in the P.C. He made good his threat. Sinners came to Jesus and the sick were healed.

When the meeting came to an end, Teresa looked around for the men in uniform. She whispered to the team member in charge of security matters, Minister Michael Kinyanjui, "Have you seen P.C. Waiganjo anywhere in the park?"

He had not seen him.



The following day, Monday, the P.C. telephoned Teresa. He told her, “I was present at your meeting yesterday. But from what I saw, I couldn’t arrest you.” He issued her with an official permit allowing her to preach once every month. Through some miraculous turn of events, the license remained in force for many years.

Teresa continued to preach at Uhuru Park for fourteen straight years. That consistency became an amazing testimony in the nation of Kenya. The Attorney General, Honourable Amos Wako registered Faith Evangelistic Ministry as a society. He issued them with the Certificate of Registration in December 1996.

Teresa moved the meetings out of Uhuru Park when God called her to another level and another season.



**Preaching at Uhuru**

**Park in all weather conditions**



**Out of a wheelchair;**

**the miracle of walking again**

## **The boy receives the miracle of sight**

### **The kidnap**

The great revival that was blowing across the whole nation of Kenya faced the fierce opposition from the enemy's camp.

From criticism from the media, to discrimination and opposition from some church circles, the attacks came. When one form of attack failed to deliver the intended results, another strategy was devised

to bring down the work of God. Some people set out to intimidate Reverend Teresa and instill fear in her. That way, they reckoned, she could be forced to either slow down or stop altogether.

Most of the battles she faced were verbal, indirect and non-confrontational. But in January 1995, the enemy targeted her, obviously to stop her in her tracks.

A few days after completing a very successful meeting at Uhuru Park, Teresa decided to visit a bereaved family for evening prayers and fellowship. She was then residing in Red Hill area in Limuru. The evening was particularly dark. She left her house in the company of an elderly lady who was born again (she fondly referred to her as "Mum"). Brother Kagema, who served in their ministry, was their driver that evening.

They drove on a stretch of road that was extremely narrow. It was impossible to make a U-turn along that section. That was near the entrance of Green Acres School.

Suddenly, they saw a car speeding behind them. Its headlights were at full blast. As soon as it caught up with them, instead of overtaking them and moving on, the driver moved very close to their car. He kept swerving in their direction, to edge them out of the road.

*like split second*

*timing, four armed gangsters surrounded their car.*

Brother Kagama did his best to steer the car, but the other driver tenaciously kept trying to force them off the road.

They got to a point where their car could not move on. They were trapped. Brother Kagama decided to reverse. That was the only probable way of escape. Reverend Teresa told him, “Brother, don’t even try.”

She knew they were in trouble and things could get worse.

In what appeared like split second timing, four armed gangsters surrounded their car. They had no time to come in terms with the terrible predicament that had befallen them.

Out of their car also came out a woman who appeared very shaken and in a lot of distress. She was clearly, like them, a victim whose car had been hijacked and was now being used to hijack others. Brother Kagama was thrown out of his seat. One of the gangsters took over his place. They were now hurling all sorts of insults at them.

Reverend Teresa was occupying the front seat next to the driver. Within no time, she was pushed and shoved to the backseat. One of the gangsters took over her seat. The elderly lady who was in their car was made to sit next to Reverend Teresa. They were sandwiched between two gangsters. Their new driver started off. Brother Kagama was left standing on the roadside. There was nothing he could do.

The gangster next to the driver suddenly turned. He fixed his eyes on Reverend Teresa in a very intimidating manner. “Especially you!” he said, pointing at her. “We have been sent to finish you today!”

That horrifying threat was followed by insults. The evil hour had come. Reverend Teresa sensed that this was not an ordinary or random attack. She was the prime target. This was not a physical attack. It involved massive spiritual confrontation and warfare. She had wrecked havoc on hell. This was clearly a counter attack.

The revival that had broken out in the city had led to gangsters giving up their evil ways, to follow Christ.

“Please Lord, give us strength to fight this battle, not in our strength but in your power,” Reverend Teresa prayed silently.

She decided to pray in the spirit instead of engaging the gangsters in a conversation. She would only talk to the gangsters if they talked to her.

*Today, you will know what we are made of*

The car was now moving at breakneck speed. One of the gangsters told the driver, “Put on the music.”

The driver turned on the stereo. The tape they had been listening to before the car-jackers stuck blared forth. “Hallelujah to the King of kings...” One gangster who appeared to be the leader bellowed *“Talk about your* in rage, “Switch it off!” The car was silent again.

*God all you want, but do not mention*

The man to Reverend Teresa’s right shone a bright torch in her face. Then asked her in a very sarcastic voice, “Ee hee, so, what do you do?”

*Jesus here! We don’t recognize that Jesus of yours!”*

Reverend Teresa replied, “I’m a preacher.” “A woman like you preach?” Mmmm...What do you preach?” She said, “I preach the Gospel.”

The car continued speeding, sometimes veering close to going off the road. The elderly lady (mum) remained calm through and through. She was mumbling her prayers quietly. But once in a while she broke her silence and rebuked the men for treating them so cruelly. Because she was quite elderly compared to the rest who were in the car, they seemed to accord her a little bit of respect.

Along their journey to the unknown, one of the men asked Reverend Teresa, “By the way, what does God say about gangsters?”

It was a tricky question. She prayed before she answered. Suddenly, the Holy Spirit quickened her mind to the message of the thief on the cross. She said, “Jesus loves them and is willing to forgive them.”

She did not expect the kind of anger her simple answer elicited from the gangsters. They were berserk. One of them told her, “Talk about your God all you want, but do not mention Jesus here! We don’t recognize that Jesus of yours!”

They went on to make demeaning remarks calculated to blaspheme the Name of Jesus.

She whispered to Jesus, “Lord Jesus, I cannot fight this fierce battle for you. Neither can I possibly defend you even though I feel deeply wounded. Please give me and mum the strength to remain steadfast through this experience.”

The other man asked in a scornful way, “Tell us, how many disciples did He have?”

She answered, “Twelve.”

He went on, “If you add Him to their number, how many were they in total?”

She knew it was another tricky question. She said, “No addition is necessary. They were simply Jesus and His disciples.”

With clear indignation, the gangster told his colleagues, “Didn’t I tell you? She cannot mention the number thirteen.”

Their leader shouted at Reverend Teresa angrily, “The number thirteen which you refuse to mention is our number.”

“We are satanists,” he proudly proclaimed. “Today, you will know what we are made of.” They then engaged in a conversation about blood sacrifices and ritualistic matters.

They got to a place known as Kikuyu Township on the outskirts of Nairobi. They took a turn towards the interior. They arrived at a smaller town. The

gangsters heartedly debated amongst themselves about dropping off “mum” and proceeding with only Reverend Teresa towards the forest. But, because they were obviously possessed by a very evil spirit of lust, which was difficult to hide throughout the journey, they dropped the idea. They decided they would “use both of us”

Finally, they ended up in a place called Ndeiya, a remote and semi arid location in Kiambu district. The car came to a sudden halt in a deserted place that bordered the famous Karura Forest. The combination of this terrifying experience, harsh words, continuous intimidation and threats was all unsettling. “I do not clearly recall whether they carried me out of the car, or pulled me out forcefully. All I know is that I found myself in the middle of a pitch dark place. I was freezing. My warm leather jacket had been taken from me. One of the gangsters had put it on.”

*the disciples of Jesus died defending their faith. She prayed loudly, “My God, if I have to die today for what I believe, it is well with my soul. But please, do not let me be subjected to the*

*shame of rape.”*

The gangsters divided into two groups. Teresa was left with one gangster. “Mum” was taken to another area close by. Probably one *She remembered how*of the gangsters remained near the parked car to watch out for any signs of danger or trouble from the police or other people.

The gangster who had remained with Teresa told her, “I am going to rape you, then I will shoot you!”

Reverend Teresa gathered courage and told him, “Young man, let me tell you something; this body is the temple of the Living God.”

He asked her, “What shall you do to escape it?”

She remembered how the disciples of Jesus died defending their faith. She prayed loudly, “My God, if I have to die today for what I believe, it is well with my soul. But please, do not let me be subjected to the shame of rape.”

The gangster continued to threaten Teresa. He became impatient. He told her, "I will shoot you naked. You must undress."

She confidently answered him, "No way." He became aggressive and forceful but she warned him.

"Do anything," Teresa told him. "In fact shoot me if you want, but don't dare touch this body with your hands."

He quickly pulled out his gun. At that point, Teresa fell on her knees, lifted up her hands to heaven and cried out, "God, please remember the Uhuru Park faithfuls; will they be left without a shepherd?"

In her mind, she pictured thousand saints who gathered every month to hear the gospel. Immediately, the power of God, like an overshadowing cloud rested on her. She felt peace and warmth all over her.

The gangster who had put on Teresa's black leather jacket came running to where they were. He pushed aside his colleague who wanted to kill her. He told him, "I told you that this woman is innocent. Don't touch her!"

She said to the man who came to her rescue and was now behaving in a sensible way, "Young man, the Lord will save you."

"Thank you," he said. **Safe at last**

He held her hand and then called out for the elderly lady. He helped them escape the wrath of the other gang members.

As they walked in the darkness over rough surfaces and thorny bushes, the only sounds they heard were the chirping of the crickets and the lonely cries of the night birds.

After he had escorted them out of the forest, he told them, "You are safe here. Flee for your lives." He then quickly disappeared into the darkness. Reverend Teresa and the elderly lady walked for more than four miles in the dark night before they saw any signs of life.

They came to a small town that appeared like the devil's headquarters. People were staggering drunkenly. Others were shouting while others were locked in physical fights – well past midnight. They quietly approached a

woman and requested her to help them to get out of that place. She moved on, apparently unconcerned.

“You cannot get any help here!” was all she said.

God had been faithful to deliver them from the hands of the gangsters who had planned to harm and murder them. “I trusted Him to lead *The gangsters burned* us to safety. We walked on. We knew that *down Teresa’s car into* we were lost, but had no other choice *exashes. Her precious cept* walking.

Then the Spirit of the Lord *Bible, which she owned* directed me to go backwards and take a *since 1985 when God* route we had overlooked. Without *quescalled her was inside* tioning, the elderly lady followed me.” *the car and got burned.*

The next turn led straight into Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (K.A.R.I) Police Post in Muguga. They went in to report their predicament and seek for help.

The police man on duty listened to them narrate the scary experience they had just gone through. He told them, “The level of crime in this area has increased so much, ladies. In fact, on Wednesday last week the bad boys stole my television set. It’s very bad indeed!”

They never said a word but in Teresa’s mind she thought, “The man we are seeking help from is himself complaining about the crime wave in the area!”

The policemen were generally very kind and helpful. They calmed Teresa and the elderly woman down, allowed them to use the telephone, and recorded their statements. At K.A.R.I. they also met Dr. Damaris Murangi. She made them a hot cup of tea and ensured that they were warm, calm and comfortable until help arrived. She too was very kind and helpful. They got home safely before day break.

The gangsters burned down Teresa’s car into ashes. Her precious Bible, which she owned since 1985 when God called her was inside the <sup>car and got</sup> burned. ***See, I protect you from such as those***



From Reverend Teresa's early days in ministry, she cultivated the discipline of dedicating three full days to prayer and fasting and waiting upon God before going out for a gospel meeting.

On one occasion, one night before their meeting at Uhuru Park, she had a very disturbing dream. More fittingly, it was a vision. The clarity of the vision was outstanding. In it, she saw a man dressed in a black suit, a black shirt, and wearing dark sunglasses. He was mingling with the saints, as if interested in the Word of God. When the time for the altar call came, she saw his right hand holding a long knife. He made an attempt to reach Reverend Teresa on stage.

Everybody else seemed oblivious of the danger he posed. The ushers and security team didn't notice he was armed. They let him reach the front with so much.

She woke up shouting, "Stop that man! Stop that man! He has a knife and he wants to kill me!"

The Spirit of God said to her, "See, I protect you from such as those. Be watchful!"

Teresa knew that the dream was an advance warning of an impending attack. She had to take immediate action.

The following day, when the throngs were streaming into the park and her team members were busy with the final arrangements for the meeting, Reverend Teresa called Minister Michael Kinyanjui, the head of security. He warned him about impending danger.

She also shared the dream with some committee members. She asked them to pray. They assured her that they would be extra watchful. They made arrangements to take positions at strategic positions in the park. They all committed to remain watchful in prayer. The head of security briefed the people Reverend Teresa had shared with. They were to be on the lookout throughout the meeting. He instructed them on how to calmly handle such an incident in public without causing fear or panic.

The meeting began normally. They praised and worshipped the Lord as they did at the beginning of every meeting. Reverend Teresa took

the microphone at exactly three o'clock in the afternoon. She preached energetically to a very receptive congregation. Then, time came for the altar call and miracles. At that point, she saw the man. "My dream began to unfold in a highly accurate manner."

*Through God's leading,*

*the people who had been tasked to look out for possible sources of danger had observed his suspicious behaviour. They were monitoring his moves.*

He was dressed exactly the same way she had seen him in the dream. He had the dark sunglasses on. He appeared restless. He looked at her and then began to walk towards the platform. Many people were surging to the front to give their lives to Christ.

His eyes dashed from side to side. He quickly descended the grassed terraces as he made his way to the front. Reverend Teresa wondered whether her team members had picked him out.

She was careful not to do anything that would create panic in the multitude at the park. There were about two hundred thousand people. The permit for the meeting was in Reverend Teresa's name. She was therefore bound by duty to guarantee their safety as much as she could. The burden of responsibility weighed heavily on her.

Through God's leading, the people who had been tasked to look out for possible sources of danger had observed his suspicious behaviour. They were monitoring his moves. He was moving swiftly. He was among the first people to get to the front as was the norm, he quickly headed to the side of the dais. That is where the staircase that led to the top of the dais was. Reverend Teresa was on the platform with her interpreter. The Praise Team was on the platform too.

Their security team had been careful not to move into action before establishing for sure that he posed real danger. His attempt to climb the staircase confirmed their worst fears. They stopped him and surrounded him.

When the man realised that he had been cornered, he drew out a long knife – the kind used by butchers – from underneath his coat and slashed open both his wrists. Blood gushed out in jets.

The man became uncontrollable. His mission had gone awry. He must have decided to take it out on himself. If he couldn't succeed in killing her, he would commit suicide in the park.

Their security team did their best to restrain him without endangering themselves or members of the public. One of the intercessors tore off her lesa (a popular type of shawl used by women) and wrapped it firmly around his open wrists to stop the bleeding.

Police officers on duty at the park took over. They arrested the man <sup>before</sup> taking him to hospital. **Reverend Teresa confronts a notorious witchdoctor**

One time, Reverend Teresa travelled with her ministry team members to a place called Kitale. People in that area then lived in constant terror because of a witchdoctor who had made their lives a living hell.

As a result of his evil influence, five churches in the area had been shut down. The local people believed that the witchdoctor was directly responsible for bewitching the pastors. He had been heard swearing that he would wipe out Christianity in the region, and ensure that no gospel meeting took place there.

Christians in the area were desperate to experience revival. They were tired of the oppression. But they did not know what to do, because the witchdoctor had made the area a no go zone for evangelists. They preferred not to stir up the witchdoctor.

One pastor and a few believers who had heard about God's doing in Reverend Teresa's evangelistic campaigns got together and sent her an invitation to hold a gospel campaign in the area. They warned her in advance about the notorious witchdoctor, his threats and hostility towards the servant of God.

Reverend Teresa prayed to God about it. She asked God to grant her grace, power and boldness to confront the spirit of witchcraft which was exalting itself above His Name. God assured her of His presence, protection and victory. She organized a group of fourteen members. She selected each one carefully because she needed individuals who were very prayerful for this mission. Finally, they set out for Kitale.

Inside their hired minibus, they knew they had a tough assignment at hand. they therefore remained alert in prayer throughout the journey.

*“People of Kitale, I have heard that in*

The church that was to host them had a few *this area there is a* members. But when the villagers got the news *witchdoctor who* that they had come all the way from Nairobi *has vowed to finish* to confront witchcraft, a huge crowd turned *all the churches. Is up for the meeting, obviously expecting a big that true?”* show down.

They began the meeting. The well known witchdoctor was also there. He sat among the people on the front row. He was dressed quite normally, in a suit. Teresa thought that he was one of the church leaders in the area.

When the time for preaching came, Reverend Teresa climbed up the platform. She said, “People of Kitale, I have heard that in this area there is a witchdoctor who has vowed to finish all the churches. Is that true?” Nobody said a word.

“Who is that man that I may show him that Jesus is the Name above every name, the Name at which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, that He is Lord!”

Heads went down. Nobody dared to look in the direction of the man or point a finger at him (later Teresa was informed of a belief to the effect that if anyone pointed at the witchdoctor, their finger would wither).

Undeterred by their nervousness, Reverend Teresa continued to probe. She was doing it deliberately to challenge and provoke the devil. Up to this

time, She was not aware that the witchdoctor was present in the service. She pressed on about the power of Jesus to save and set the captives free from the bondage of the devil.

At this point, just before she opened the Bible to begin the sermon, God opened her eyes. She recognised the witchdoctor. His presence and motives were laid bare. She knew without a shadow of doubt that he was the one.

She walked the nearest she could to the front row, from the platform.

“Are you the one who has been threatening preachers, saying that they cannot preach the Word of God? Bewitch me today. If I do not fall down and die on stage, give your life to Jesus!”

People shook their heads in utter disbelief. “I am sure some were concerned that evil would befall me. Others waited for me to drop dead.”

13 about a man called Simon who bewitched people in the city of Samaria.

Reverend Teresa preached fearlessly, making eye contact with him, especially when he talked about sorcery. When she made the altar call, demonic manifestations broke out all over the grounds. Some people were tossed to the ground violently and foamed at the mouth. Others rolled back and forth on their bellies, while others spun around on their heads. The set of weird acts was long.

She refused to be distracted by the side shows, which she knew could deflect people’s attention from the power of God.

She called the meeting to order. She announced that it was time for Jesus to show up and show off in His majestic power of deliverance and sanctification. People responded to the altar call of salvation in

*After concluding the large numbers. They brought charms to the altar. Reverend Teresa meeting, Teresa took a bold move which surprised the community. Having received directions from people in the crowd, she decided to follow the witchdoctor to his house.*

was surprised to see some Christians confessing that they had been carrying protection in form of charms, to ward off evil influences and attacks.

All manner of paraphernalia was laid on the altar. They offered prayers and made arrangements to set the objects on fire.

After the powerful deliverance service, great miracles began to happen. Instant healings took place. The lame walked. The fire of God settled the witchdoctor. He became exceedingly uncomfortable and disappeared from the meeting.

After concluding the meeting, Teresa took a bold move which surprised the community. Having received directions from people in the crowd, she decided to follow the witchdoctor to his house. "I was determined to settle the matter once and for all.

She got to a small thatched mud house at the foot of a small hill. As a matter of fact, it looked more of a cave than a house. She knocked on the wooden door and waited. After a brief wait she pushed it and stepped inside.

It was extremely dark, especially after Teresa closed the door again. The house had no windows. The only source of light was a dim fire at the centre of the round house. It was just one open room, looking bare.

When she entered the house, the witchdoctor (still dressed as he was in the meeting) stood together with his wife. They greeted Teresa. Then she noticed another woman who remained seated on the floor, near the fire, her head bowed.

Through the word of knowledge, Teresa knew that the woman was *In full view of the* there for treatment. "I said to her, 'Woman, why are you here?'"

*dumbstruck witchdoctor, they* She stood up and faced Reverend Teresa. *knelt down. They prayed for them and* Before she answered, Teresa started to *led them through the* minister to her through the gifts of the *prayer of repentance*. Spirit. She told

her, "I know you have come

here because of this" (Teresa touched her protruding tummy. It was so huge that she appeared to be nine months pregnant. It was hard as a rock).

Immediately, the power of God hit her. She dropped to the floor. Every eye on the room stared in shock. She couldn't believe what had happened. Her stomach suddenly shrunk! Reverend Teresa's team members had now joined her in the hut. The witchdoctor's wife was the first to speak. She said, "I perceive that you are a woman of God. I want to be converted today."

The healed woman also spoke. She said, "Me, too. I want Jesus who has healed me."

She kept touching her stomach as if to confirm that the growth had truly disappeared.

In full view of the dumbstruck witchdoctor, they knelt down. They prayed for them and led them through the prayer of repentance. They both spoke in new tongues as they were prayed for. After prayers, the healed woman retrieved a small sisal bag from the floor. She walked out of the hut as quickly as she could. She was holding up her skirt, now hanging loosely round her waist after her bulging belly got flattened.

Reverend Teresa trained her focus on the witchdoctor. He had been silent all this time.

She asked him, "What do you have to say?"

He kept quiet.

She asked him, "Do you realize that there is a higher and greater power than witchcraft?"

He paused for a long time, then said, "Yes, I accept there is."

"Would you like to give your life to Jesus Christ, whose Name is above all names?" Reverend Teresa asked.

He shook his head and in a somber mood said, "Not now."

He refused to accept Jesus as Lord, but he acknowledged His power. The man was clearly bound and oppressed. He had seen the power of God at work in the church, and his house. His wife was already born again. He didn't object to her decision. In fact, he had become very cooperative and respectful. The only thing he resisted was accepting Jesus in his life. They prayed again before they left.

When the time for departure came, the couple gave them a gift of two chicken, both white without a speck of another colour. In some African communities, chicken is one of the items witchdoctors demand from that person seeking for help from them. It is believed that witchdoctors offer the chicken as a sacrifice to ward off evil and bring about protection. Chicken handled by the witchdoctor is therefore regarded as evil).

“I told the members of my team members to take the gift. We had to receive it, even if it was meant to harm us, because greater is the power at work in our lives.

We put the two chicken in our mini bus and headed to our camping base in Makutano, in Kapenguria. When we arrived, I told my team members, ‘Slaughter the Chickens. We are about to make a meal out of them.’ Some agreed to touch the chicken. A few took the risk and cooked it.

When it was ready, we blessed it with a simple prayer.

I took the first bite, a second and a third one. My team members took a little while, then joined me in eating the chicken. None of us experienced a stomach upset or any other adverse reaction.”





**Woman**

**died in a meeting**

**Same woman who had died came back to life after prayers**

**Reunion with Robert**

As years came and went, it appeared like the efforts of Robert's dad to stop Teresa from ever seeing her son had won. Five years, ten years, thirteen years passed – the nightmare became a harsh reality.

Torrents of fear, bouts of sorrow and times of terrible pain besieged her. But she took all her disappointments to God in prayer. "When my strength failed and weariness took over, I turned to God for renewal."

So many times during Reverend Teresa's ministry she prayed for people who were estranged from their families, and God answered them. They would return to her with testimonies of how they got reunited again. She would celebrate with them, yet her pain remained. But she never gave up. Just the time when she found herself locked out of her marital home, the Holy Spirit kept whispering words of encouragement. "My grace is sufficient for you."

One time, the pain of separation felt more than she could bear. She couldn't sleep. She constantly longed to just see how he looked like. Had he grown taller? Was he slim, or was he big-bodied? Had he become lighter or darker? His general state of health became a matter of big concern to her.

She prayed, "If only I could just see him, and not even say a word to him Lord; I will be contented."

Instantly, Teresa received guidance from the Lord.

The following day, she drove to Sarit Centre in Westlands, Nairobi. She parked the car facing the entrance of Jacaranda Hotel. She sat inside and waited to hear what God wanted, or where He was sending her.

"I had trained myself to heed the Spirit's directions and to walk by faith."

Teresa did not wait for long. Neither was God sending her anywhere this time round. Suddenly, as she looked through the car's side mirror, the Spirit said, "There is your son."

She was in shock. Indeed, there he was coming out! He paused briefly, looked around and checked his immediate surroundings with keen interest. He was oblivious of his mother's presence, but he appeared as though distantly aware of being watched. Teresa was well conc

ealed amongst other parked cars, therefore he didn't notice her.

"My boy was a few yards from me and yet I couldn't go near him! He had grown so big! I also noticed that he was smart-looking, appeared healthy and exuded a confident personality. I yearned to hold him and ask him if everything was alright." Hot tears of deep longing rolled down her cheeks. Her impulsive response was to swing open her car door, run out and embrace him. "But I was wise enough not to ruin the God-given opportunity."

Before she drove off, she told God, "God, I offer my son to you. I cannot own him, raise him or lay my claim on him. I cannot fight for him. Please raise him up for me as your own."

On the second Sunday of the month that year, Reverend Teresa preached to a great multitude at Uhuru Park.

After the meeting, she got into the car and sat on the back. While on the way home, the Lord impressed a number in her mind. The Holy Spirit said,

“Phone that number!”

That was all. She did not know the person she would reach on the number, or the reason for calling. As much as she did not have any details, she obeyed. She requested the driver for a pen. She scribbled the six digits.

Teresa was very tired when she arrived home that night. The first thing she did was to dial the phone number. The phone rang twice. She did not know who would answer or what she would say. She waited anxiously. Then someone answered. From his accent, Teresa could tell that he was an English man. He said, “Hello, Braeburn School; how may I help you?”

Until that moment, Teresa had no idea which school her son was in, or if indeed he was still in Kenya or in Sweden. But, when the person who picked the phone said that was a school, she knew why God had

*Then someone answered. From his accent, Teresa could tell that he was an English man.*

*He said, “Hello, Braeburn School; how given her the number. may I help you?”*

She calmly introduced herself as Robert’s mother. Then she made a request to speak to him. The man was very kind and understanding. He told her that she couldn’t speak to him since it was night, but if she phoned him in the morning, it would possible. He informed her that her son was in Form Six.

The following morning, she called the same number.

It had been long since she last spoke to Robert. Conflicting emotions churned inside her while she waited for him to be called. “Hello,” he said. “Hello Bob, this is your mum.” “Hello mum,” he answered.

Reverend Teresa went on, “I would like to see you if that’s okay with you.”  
“Yes mum, I would really love that. When?”

Robert was not only certain, he also longed to see her! That same day, she visited her son in school. The head of security in their ministry,

Minister Michael Kinyanjui drove her to the school.

They parked the car and came out. She saw her son standing tall and handsome. He came running. They embraced and kissed one another.  
“Where words failed, our deep bond and connection made

it easy.”



**Reverend Teresa Wairimu during her father’s funeral with Bob and Catherine**

One thing they avoided on that first meeting was re-opening past wounds. They deliberately avoided any subject that could evoke feelings of pain and heartache.

Before they left, Reverend Teresa invited her son to visit her. He agreed. Minister Michael Kinyanjui drove to the school that weekend and picked him up. He came along with two of his good friends from school. They enjoyed a sumptuous barbeque. When the school closed, Robert stayed at her mother’s home. He stayed with her for three weeks.

As soon as his dad learnt that the two had re-connected, he waited for Robert to finish his A-level exams. Immediately after, he whisked him out of the country. He was taken to Sweden for further studies.

Thankfully, Robert bid farewell to his mother. They remained in touch. While in Sweden, the members of Reverend Teresa's family who live there looked after him as much as they could. They loved, cared and supported him to adjust, especially during his first year. He had the company of Reverend Teresa's sister who was like a mother to him, her brothers and his cousins made it easy for him.

When Robert turned eighteen years old, he got the liberty to make his own choice. He began to visit her as often as he wished.

It had taken thirteen years of Teresa's waiting for her son.

### **Response during times of conflict**

From as early as 1992, when Kenya was faced by vicious tribal clashes in then Rift Valley, as a ministry they did sit back and watch. They got directly involved in ministering to the affected people.

They carried food supplies and clothing which they donated to as many families as they could, before they gathered them for a gospel

meeting. Many people responded to the love they were extended to. They offered them hope in God and prayed with them, just like they thought Jesus would have done.

In 2008, ethnic hatred erupted following the disrupted general elections. Many people lost their lives. People butchered one another with machetes. Houses were razed. People were displaced. They became homeless, refugees in their own country. In one gruesome case, people who had taken refuge in a church were burnt to death when the church was torched. "It was one of the most horrific periods in our nation's history."

They called a press conference whereby Reverend Teresa addressed the whole nation, bringing a message of peace, forgiveness and tolerance. She pleaded with the warring factions to shun violence and bloodshed. She urged all people to dwell in unity, peace and liberty, just like in the words of "our National Anthem. My message was, "We Can Live Together," irrespective of our tribal differences or political allegiances.

Reverend Teresa's partners worked in hand with her. Famous gospel artists in Kenya joined up with her. The latter produced an excellent concert under the theme "Peace Together," which was an initiative to re-unite the people through music and dance. Due to the strong feelings of opposition, anger and hatred between members of different tribes, the camps for the displaced were also tribally segregated.

They traveled to Limuru. There they found two camps; the Kikuyu were camping at a place called Kirathimo, while the Luo were in Tigoni Police Station.

"My Christian obligation goes beyond tribalism. Therefore, I visited both the Kikuyu and the Luo with the same love and compassion."

The camps were a pitiful sight. Expectant mothers were giving birth in the already over-crowded tents. Others were sick in the conflict as well as loss of their homes and livelihood was obvious to all who visited them.

The team took ready-to-eat meals, plus dry foodstuffs, clothes, shoes and medical supplies. Limuru is a very area. The internally displaced people found it very difficult to sleep in the tents at night. They gave them blankets and wooly garments to keep them warm, especially the children. When they went round Kirathimo Camp encouraging the people, some of the women whispered to Reverend Teresa that they had been raped and brutalized. They prayed with them and shared the love of Christ. They also paid medical bills and sent the women and girls who had been raped to get medical attention as well as support and counseling.

After the post election violence, Reverend Teresa Wairimu was honoured to receive the internationally acclaimed "Martin Luther King <sup>Peace Award</sup>" for Africa. **Faith Family Church dedicated**

The grand opening and dedication happened on Sunday August 14th, 20..., with Rev. Reinhard Bonnke leading the service. President Uhuru Kenyatta graced the occasion, the President said that the new church is the most beautiful he has ever seen.

"I have visited very many churches and I will say this is the most beautiful sanctuary I have seen so far," he said.

It cost a staggering sum of KSh 1 Billion to build it. A one of its kind in Kenya, boasting of comfort, class, and glamour for the worshippers. The 4,000-seater space auditorium was opened in Karen, Nairobi.

Apart from its polished as a new pin interior, the church has on its premises, a dispensary, and executive offices.

The launch was attended by among other dignitaries, Kiambu Governor, William Kabogo and his wife. Renown TV host, Jeff Koinange was also part of the jubilation.

The number of politicians and senior government officials and private sector chiefs who arrive at Faith Family Church in their gleaming cars is hard to ignore.

People admire this woman evangelist who attracts presidents – President Moi frequently attended her meetings and called her to State House for prayers – alongside those who are so poor that they can only walk to her church for lack of bus fare.

Ms Beverly Wahome, who was the head of protocol at the celebrations, describes the Reverend Wairimu as a simple but glamorous woman who is a beacon to many.

“She gets straight to the point and manages to communicate to people of all walks of life,” said Ms Wahome.

FEM associate pastor George Mathu told Lifestyle that he had witnessed the Reverend changing lives and helping many people elevate themselves through faith.

“FEM integrates everyone and does not treat people according to class or status,” said Pastor Mathu.

The church’s head of security, Mr Michael Kinyanjui, has been a follower and partner of the Reverend Wairimu since her early days of preaching at Uhuru Park and in Dagoretti.

He said the Reverend Wairimu is a force that moves many and inspires positive change.

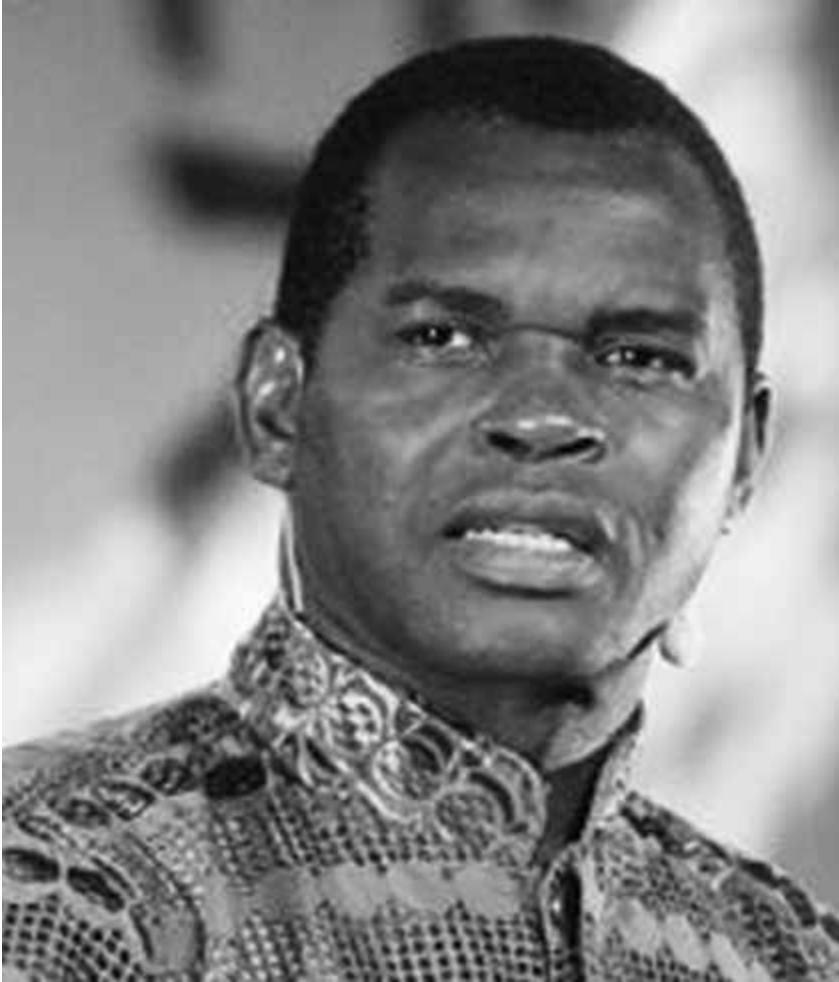
“I support her because I believe in what she believes in,” said Mr Kinyanjui.

Pastor Steve Gichuhi of Korogocho’s FEM Rescue Centre said that the centre’s programme has transformed many commercial sex workers by educating them on alternative and moral ways of making a living. Pastor Gichuhi says he is a former gangster, who reformed and confessed after listening to the Reverend Wairimu preaching at Uhuru Park. He now dedicates his life to changing wayward people. “Korogocho is a slum and, if the youth are not given alternatives, they will turn to crime and immorality,” he said about the nature of his programme. “FEM is trying to change this cycle of poverty.” It is unusual in Kenya for such high and mighty to stream through to an evangelical church every so often. The Rev Wairimu hardly makes any fuss about it.

She appears to wield soft power; and seemingly effortlessly attracts thousands to her church without shouting too loud, joining politics or stirring controversy.

When she spoke to Lifestyle, the Rev Wairimu did not seem keen on blowing her own trumpet. She said hers was a mission for God and His people and not about herself. She said she still sought advice from her mentor, world renowned televangelist Reinhard Bonnke. “I am a servant of God and His people. No more no less,” said the Rev Wairimu. “As you are well aware, year after year, we have assembled every November to give thanks to God as we mark every anniversary.





**ROBERT KAYANJA**

*The man who walks in miracles*

*in miracles*

*The man who walks*

**In 1985, God spoke to Dr. Tommy Lee Osborn to go to Uganda to hold a meeting and he came. The year, Uganda was still going through war. It was in bad shape financially, economically yet people were so hungry for God. Young Robert was not on the organising committee of the crusade. He was young and was hated by preachers. They had the committee and not everyone knew what they were planning. Robert was not influential by then though he always ministered in villages in the country. When he was told that the man whom he had seen in the movie was coming, he cancelled what he had gone to do in Mbarara and boarded the next bus to Kampala.**

**The day of the guest's arrival, Robert was attacked by a terrible fever. There was a lady who had a vehicle (a small Isuzu). She vowed to take him to the meeting. Because of the fever, he moved with an umbrella. They got to Entebbe airport to join the other people who were there to welcome Tommy. The committee had an official interpreter. Robert was only part of the congregation and not part of the committee. When Robert and another preacher went to attend the meeting, the committee turned against them. They even called them foxes. The other preacher stood bold, turned back on them and they made him a chief usher. As for Robert, no post was assigned for him.**

okana (John) and Ruth Walakira were both ministers in the Anglican church. John was an Anglican Reverend. He was a building foreman and a schoolteacher. He later grew to the rank of a Canon in the Anglican church and he served God for so many years. YRuth under mother's union in the same church. Their children too were Anglicans.

John used to do three jobs just to make ends meet. In those days, the payment as a person in ministry was not dependable. The money that came in was little yet he had to educate his kids. He had to take on other jobs in order to be able to take care of his family.

His grandfather was called (Yeremiah) Jeremiah Gyagenda. He used to travel with Apolo Kivebulaya all around the country and including Boga-Zaire, Sukuma-land carrying out evangelistic campaigns. They always saw signs and wonders in their ministry.

Apolo Kivebulaya prophesied that all his children will serve the Lord. In later years, this prophecy came to pass.

Apolo Kivebulaya had gone to Maganjo Church of Uganda to preach. As he arrived at the church, his shoes had been soaked in mud and a young boy who was a son to Gyagenda requested to assist wash the mud off his shoes which he accepted.

When the young boy returned the shoes before the church service started, Apolo thanked him and said he had nothing to give him but only to pray for

him a great blessing. It is said that Apolo prayed and prophesied that the young man would be a great preacher he and his household.

Some of them have gone to be with the Lord but others are still alive and serving God.

Bishop David Makumbi who is a Bishop in USA and Archbishop John Sentamu, Archbishop of York in the Church of England. The youngest is a pastor at the Miracle Centre Cathedral, and even their children are in ministry.

John was a good disciplinarian. Being very poor at home did not hinder him to raise his children well. The African proverb which says it takes a village to raise a child is manifest in the way John's children were raised. If you found an old man pushing a bicycle, as a child you had to help them, when they found you eating mangoes from someone's tree without permission, they reported to your father and you had to be punished. It was in this that everyone in the village was responsible for raising a child. *Wife or son*

Robert Kayanja was born on January 24th, 1962. While in Mulago hospital, Ruth collapsed and became unconscious in the process of giving birth. In 1962, there were no modern facilities in hospitals. So it was concluded that his Ruth gets a caesarean section because Robert's head was already out. The rest of the body was still stuck in her body. This was an emergency. The doctors asked John to make a quick decision on whom he wanted to keep alive rather than lose <sup>Because of the trauma</sup> ing both of them.

*brought by factors like his head being outside* Since he had enough children, he did not see it as a big deal if he lost the 12th who was in process of being given birth to. He chose his wife. They concluded to cutting the baby's head off, cut the mother to re

*for long during birth, Robert developed health challenges.*

move the other part of the body from her stomach. They rushed her from Mulago hospital to Nsambya hospital. As they rolled Ruth to the theatre she revived and was able to push the baby out.

Because of the trauma brought by factors like his head being outside for long during birth, Robert developed health challenges. The first one was that he was unable to breast feed and the parents were advised to get a cow and get a herdsman to milk the cow so that he takes when it is still hot and fresh as a way of treating him. Actually, Robert spoke of being raised by a herdsman who always gave him milk. That's how he recovered. Secondly, his speech was affected. It turned out that he started stut<sup>tering</sup>.

### **Days of unrest**

Even though John did not have a lot of money, he managed to educate his children. Robert studied in Old Kampala Senior Secondary School, a school in which was attended by great people like Gen. Katumba Wamala (former CDF of Uganda), President Paul Kagame (President of Rwanda) and several other people.

The other thing which could be remembered about him at school is that he led a strike while a student in Namasagali High School. This all began when the Anglicans in school had no freedom of worship, so Robert start a strike. At the end of it all he was expelled from school. But later, the school policy was revised though Robert had no way of going back.

During the days of Idi Amin there was brutal murder of people in Uganda. Kids usually jumped dead bodies on their way to school. They had no heads because Amin's henchmen had cut their heads off to disguise their identity. Later on to find out that some were doctors, professors, politicians who had been murdered.

### ***Why don't You send my father?***

Robert's elder brother, John Sentamu the door for his salvation when he told him about Jesus. John further gave him a book with Billy Graham and David Frost interview. He did not know Billy Graham by then but he came later to love him and dedicate his heart to Jesus.

Their father influenced their foray into Christian ministry; it was morally, for they often argued with him on issues of faith.

In 1979, at the age of 17, Robert attended the celebration of the day of Pentecost in the Anglican Church. That day the John preached a powerful message about what happened on Pentecost. This left Robert with questions at heart. So when they came back home during lunchtime, it happened that the two went into an argument with the father.

“You talked about Pentecost but I never saw tongues of fire. I never saw heard anyone speak in tongues,” Robert started.

“The reason as to why I took you to school is that you may learn tongues. Tongues are languages.”

Robert noticed all this was not adding up and had to leave the room. At around 3 pm in the evening, while in his bedroom a light shines into his room. Jesus appeared and tells him, “Go bring My people back to me. Tell them I am the greatest power, not witchcraft. I will be with you to perform signs and wonders that people may know Am the one that sent you.” He further told him, “Don’t worry. Idi Amin is on his way out.”

“Why don’t You send my father? He is already in ministry.” When he said this, he was hit by the power of God and he fell down. Tears began to roll down from his eyes. Later, he found himself when he had fallen from the bed to the floor and tears allover his face. He be- came so sensitive that he could hear a lot in the Spirit, prophesies, revelations. That same day even his stuttering stopped.

*to his mom, dad, siblings and everybody who was around and told them,  
“Tonight at 7 pm it will be raining.”*

Robert came out of his room and headed to his parents’ room. As soon as he came in, it was like his mother was hit by the power of God and she fell. John didn’t know what had happened to his son. At that very moment, Robert told them “Idi Amin is going”. They told him “Shut up. You are crazy. You want to get us all killed.” Robert continued, “on 11th April, Idi Amin will be out of this country.”

The were not moved by this because they thought he had gone mad. It later came to pass before this came to pass. Even though

*Robert turned around* that happened, Robert did not know the power that was behind it. From that moment on he began to see great miracles happening.

The other thing that happened was that they didn't have rain for over six months and everything was drying also in the north east of Kampala where his father was a parish priest.

Food had come in from the UN to help supplement on what people were having. One day they walked outside. It was so hot. Robert turned around to his mom, dad, siblings and everybody who was around and told them, "Tonight at 7 pm it will be raining." There was no sign of rain, the cloud was very clear but the voice spoke to him. At 7 pm it was raining as he had said it.

On witnessing this and several other things coming to pass as Robert spoke them, the mother noticed that the power of God was on his son.

Robert didn't want to be a preacher. He was still hesitant to obey and serve God. He didn't like poverty and struggle as he had noticed in the life of his father who was a leader in church. For four years, he rejected the call of God. But 1982, Jesus appears to him again and this time he made up his mind to obeyed. He started seeking God from that time on. His mother supported him a lot when he had just began ministry while his father caught on much later.

### **The beginning of Miracle Centre Church**

Robert found a house where they had lost a child. When he reached there, the Holy Spirit told him to go and pray for that child. Bold as he was, Robert asked for permission to pray for the child because he had faith that God's power would raise the dead child. He was allowed in and God raised the dead back to life. It was from such incident that the people of that house told him to use their house as long as he wanted. This marked the beginning of a fellowship before it became officially a church. In the fellowship was the first convert, a lady from Rwanda who neither understood Luganda nor English. Similarly, the evangelists in th fellowship didn't know Rwandese and whatever she spoke would make them laugh. Even though she didn't understand what they were saying, they always told her how Jesus loved her. One by one they endeavoured to pray for her.

They went further and started putting up lunch hour fellowships which were very strong in the city. Robert held the first major lunch hour meetings in the city. They always walked from Rubaga to town every day to hold these meetings. In Kampala city they were labeled names like “Ediini Esinda Omukwano Gwa Yesu” (The Sect that is in love with Jesus). At that time, they made headlines in the local newspapers like “The Star and Ngabo” as people got saved from all walks of life. This move was characterized by smart, good-looking, educated and English speaking people popularly known as “savedees”. This is a phenomenon the nation had never seen. Women permed their hair, wore lipstick, and yet were on fire for God. Many Moslems and non-believers began to give their lives to Jesus at a very high rate, and as a result persecution of the brethren increased.

### **Musoke is struck down dead**

Three years after Robert had his encounter with God, he went to Rubaga in Kampala where God wanted him to start a ministry and the work of God. There was a strong witch called Musoke who controlled the village and had killed many people especially those who *When Musoke heard* stood up against him. He could send them snakes, killer bees, he could appear and disappear in many kinds of

forms.

*fetishes, he confronted*

God had commissioned Robert tell the *him saying, “You better that Robert was preaching and burning witchcraft*

people to surrender their witchcraft portions and other mediums they use wherever he went. When Musoke heard that Robert was preaching and burning witchcraft fetishes, he confronted him saying, “You better leave or you will die in three days.” Everybody around advised Robert to do what the man had told him if still loved his life. In Africa when a witch tells you, you are going to die and you don’t have God, you die. As a disciplined person, Robert was scared to retaliate because of the way he was raised. Children in Africa are raised with a mindset that it is disrespect to confront their elders openly. He went back but then something rose up in him and

forgot all that and responded to Musoke, “No, its not me who is going to die in three days. It is you who will die in three days if you don’t turn to God.”

*leave or you will die in three days.”*

However, that week they began to experience situations they had never experienced before. Robert and three of his co-workers had gone to town to witness on the street. When they came back, they witnessed killer bees everywhere on their house. In Africa once killer bees come to your house, you don’t come back. The first thing they do once they come is to survey the house before they bring the queen in. So when they go, they can come back anytime even when you are sleeping and your entire place will become a beehive in seconds and they kill you.

As the young evangelists were thinking of what to do next, suddenly wind began to blow from all corners and blew them away. Their neighbours in the military barracks told them to vacate the house because the bees were coming back. Since they knew how these bees operate, they thought they were coming back. They never er came back.

Robert was scared for his life because the man had told him to die after three days. He began to pray and fast as well as waiting upon God. He knew of people who had died after the man told them the same way.

Hours before the deadline, he saw in a vision when Jesus had given him a sword. Sunday, 3 pm, the time Robert was supposed to be die, they heard that a car had crushed on Kampala – Masaka road. Ev- erybody run there to see what had happened. The body of the man Musoke who was a great witch, had bewitched everybody, his body was lying in the middle of the road but his body was beside the road. It seemed as though someone had cut off his head with a sword. It was as if something had come and knocked him down. They saw no car that knocked him even though they heard a great noise. On witnessing what God had done, more people got saved.

### ***Bring your passport***

In 1983, God spoke to Robert to go to a nation he would show him. He further told him to go to the America embassy to ask for a visa. He went



there without an invitation from anybody, just obeying God. He found a woman who was so tough on him.

“Get away from here. Where is your invitation?”

“You can’t go without an invitation. Who do you think you are? He told her responded, “The Lord spoke to me to come here for a visa.”

As they were still arguing, the consul came and asked,

“What’s going on? What’s going on?”

“That young man is so incorrigible. He comes here asking for an invitation, he doesn’t have an invitation, he doesn’t have anything.” “Young man, what is it? asked the Consul.”

“I want to get to the US.”

“Do you have an invitation?”

“No. The Lord spoke to me.”

“The Lord spoke to you?”

“Yes.”

“Bring your passport,” the Consul asked.

“For how long will you stay there?”

“Where are you going?”

“I am going to the Morris Cerullo’s ministries in San Diego, California.”

The Consul brought the forms and directed Robert on how to fill them for his visa. After he was asked to return that afternoon for his <sup>visa</sup>. **Miracle money for an air ticket**

He had the visa but had no air ticket. The Lord told him again to go to Standard Bank (now called Standard Chartered Bank). Very early in the morning, he went to the bank and sat outside. A tall black guy came with ekikapu (an African bag) full of money and hands it to Robert saying, “Thank you for lending us your money. Its here.” He walks away leaving Robert confused. He had no idea on what the man talked about. He puts down the bag, runs to look for the man but it was all in vain. He was nowhere to be found. In the midst of all this, askari warns him that his money would be stolen if he didn’t take it away.

It happened that it was the exact money he needed for his air ticket to USA. Could that man have been an Angel sent by God?

*Are you hungry?*

Robert did not know what when you are on a plane, meals are paid for on your air ticket. He looked on as they were serving other people. Though hungry, he did not order for what to eat since he did not have money to pay for the meal. He was raised up in such a way that you do not eat what you won't pay for.

“Are you hungry?”

“No. I'm okay. Am fine.”

Yet the truth of the matter is, Robert was starving.

He sat next to a woman who was drunk. As they were taking away things in which she had eaten from, Robert noticed some left over and in a low tone asked, “Lady, can I have those buns?”

In a loud tone she responded,

“Are you hungry?”

“You mean you never paid?”

“Oh. This is your first trip. This young man does not know. When you paid for the ticket, you paid for everything. Air hostess come come... He is hungry.”

***If you take me out of here alive, I will go back to Uganda when I come back from America***

*It was a winter season at that time in London so he ended up in a both freezing cold the whole night. In his mind he started thinking he may go to USA and not come back.*

So he goes buys the ticket and goes to USA. One his way, he passed through London to see his brother. Unfortunately, when his mother gave him the address through his brother living in Uganda, it was written wrongly. It was a winter season at that time in London so he ended up in a both freezing cold the whole night. In his mind he started thinking he

may go to USA and not come back. He made a vow to God and said, “Lord, “If you take me out of here alive, I will go back to Uganda when I come back from America.” But finally, someone directed him to the right address where his brother stayed and he went there.

He later proceeded to the US. He did not have anywhere to go since he knew no one there. With a small paper of written on the place where he was

going, Robert still asked for direction on how to get there. He went to a restaurant called "Church's chicken". He said, "Wow. The church here is advanced. They have their own chicken." He enters and pulls out his Bible. They asked him what he wanted. "I want chicken."

The lady who came out to attend to him was smoking and Robert thought the America Balokole (Born agains) smoke.

"Where is the money?"

"I thought this was a church."

"No money, no chicken."

Robert moves out wondering what kind of Balokole in the restaurant were. The night came when he hadn't yet reached his destination so he ended up in a homeless shelter in San Diego City Mission. He spent

*After he gave* the night there. He was given soup to take Around him were two *guys* *him money and* coughing terribly in front of him the whole *an air ticket to* night.. He gain made a vow, "Lord, if you take *Phoenix, Arizona* me out of here I will serve you and I will make

*where he connected* sure I go back to Uganda."  
*him to his friend,*

*Donald Price.* The next day he was able to find his way to

Morris Cerullo Ministries in San Diego California and met the vice president of the ministries. He welcomed him and in the during their discussion, he prophesied to Robert that he was going to be a great man of God and that God was going to use you. After he gave him money and an air ticket to Phoenix, Arizona where he connected him to his friend, Donald Price. "Go there. God will use you!"

Donald Price opened up a door for him in a mega church. This is where he met other people including a lawyer, John Charles who hosted him and became his friend.

He also ministered in another church. God greatly used him. They came to love him. So they called a meeting and asked that he agrees to become their pastor and an international evangelist. They promised him 1 million US \$ a year, to put him on television, give him a car and a house. On his way to

reach San Diego, Robert had made a vow to God that he would return to Uganda. As he was thinking about the wonderful offer, God spoke to him, “If you stay here, you will die.” He didn’t say bye to them. He just boarded a plane and headed back to Uganda. It was not until the plane stopped in London that he called them. In 1983, Uganda still devastated by war, poverty etc. It was not a good place to live in. **Demonstration of God’s power**

A team of evangelists had gone to Soroti for ministry. After 72 hours of dry fast, they went to a restaurant and ordered tea to break their fast. But out of sheer general hatred for evangelists, they poisoned the tea. Most of them drank it but before Robert had taken his, he sensed that it was poisoned. They immediately knelt down, started praying for God to save them. After some time, those who had drunk it became unwell but vomited the poison as soon as they were given milk to drink.

Again in Soroti was a witch who had controlled that whole place. He came with snakes and threw them at the pulpit as Robert was ministering. The Holy Spirit told him to get the snake which was coming after him by the tail. As soon as he grabbed it, the snake became stiff and died. The same happened to the other snake.

This was not all, the power of God hit the witch. He fell down and it was as if his eyes were getting out. That day he got saved and later became a pastor. That kind of demonstration of God’s power is what caused the nation to awaken to the power of God.

They held more gospel campaigns around Uganda as they witnessed testimony after testimony of healing and returned back to Kampala with truckloads of crutches.

Because he had no money to meet the printing costs, Robert always had to design his own posters. He would tear a piece of paper from an exercise book and write “Here comes a mighty man of God, Evangelist Robert Kayanja in a crusade.” After he would put gum on it and after wrap it on electric poles with banana fibres. This seemed strange but people always responded to the way he advertised and attended his crusade.

The Evangelist and his team would walk to and from wherever they've been hosted (sometimes it was a secondary school or someone's home) to stay up to where the crusade was to take place. Though some occasions they had means of transport.

Robert always spent nights praying. Those who were with him will tell you that he always went behind the building where there was a small banana plantation and kneel to pray from 6pm – 6am. During overnight prayers, people would all over the country by bus and other means of transportation to attend.

Everywhere he went, ministers were raised. For example, in his fourday ministry Hoima, he had no interpreter. This was in the 1980s. As preaching at a church during a lunch-hour fellowship, a young man got saved. In three days the young man went on a fast and on the fourth day he became his interpreter in the township of Hoima. They left him there to take care for the new converts. He has then been a pastor and he is overseeing several churches.

In Masindi, one person, now pastor was part of a Uganda People's Congress group which hated the Baganda so much. He had planned with his group to beat and kill Pastor Kayanja during the crusade. Unfortunately, his plan failed when the power of God hit him on the and he stayed down in the field. After hours, he rose up, looked for the man of God and confessed the whole plot of killing him and gave <sup>his life to Christ.</sup> **Miracle Centre Church**

Robert found a house where they had lost a child. When he reached there, the Holy Spirit told him to go and pray for that child. Bold as he was, Robert asked for permission to pray for the child because he had faith that God's power would raise the dead child. He was allowed in and God raised the dead back to life. It was from such incident that the people of that house told him to use their house as long as he wanted.

Robert held the first major lunch hour meetings in Uganda. Other preachers followed later.

They always walked from Rubaga to town every day to hold these meetings.

In Rubaga, it was just a place for prayer. The first convert he had was a Rwandese woman, who never knew Uganda but only Rwandese and English. The few young men Robert was with would interpret for her in turns.

The more people heard about the miracles happening and his flow in the prophetic office, the more they gathered to be part of the move of God. Later on, God spoke to him to start a church.

*The anointing was* Pastor Robert always went away for 3 days, sometimes a week to fast *so strong on him that demons on people would*

*scream as they announced that he was on his way coming even when he was still a long distance away.*

and pray. People who were around him, even before teaching them knew “If you don’t pray, if you don’t pray, God will not use you.”

The same way, the church always went into prayer and fasting. People would bring to his meetings those who were demon possessed, the mad; some

were brought to church tied with ropes for deliverance.

The anointing was so strong on him that demons on people would scream as they announced that he was on his way coming even when he was still a long distance away saying, “There he comes.”

There was a time that he was weak in his body that he could not minister that day. The Holy Spirit told him to put his hands on the table and pray for it and the sick will come to touch it. It was a kitchen table. Someone tried to touch it but the power of God hit him and he fell down. No other person could touch it, neither did anyone dared to come near it. However, healings took place that day.

The Lord did so many miracles, signs and wonders to awaken the church in Uganda to the power of God and that God is able to heal and at the same time deliver people from demons etc. In those days, many people were so

much tied up in religion and so did not know the power of God. They Some grew up in such a way that on Sunday morning they attended church and in the evening or the following day would go to the shrine for portions to help them and their children to be successful. People need to see God's working power rather than hearing about him.

The people God joined (to him supernaturally) him at that time were those who had no hope for a better future. Some of them were boxers, others were traders etc. When one of the spotted Pastor Robert moving from the lunch hour fellowship, he offered to hold his bag. Immediately, God told him, "That one is going to be your associate.

Go with him."

More young men and women came to join the church. In the later time they became great men and women of God. Most of the leading voices in the country, in one way or the other have been impacted by the ministry of Pastor Robert Kayanja.

Early in ministry Robert would pray, "Lord, send us some rich people. We need some rich people in our church."

"I don't answer those prayers. I will make the ones you have rich."

God made people who came to church broke and blessed them abundantly.

***This is a schoolboy***

During the regime of President Obote II, people used to accuse one another about being part of the guerillas. There was no way that prominent as he was in the city that Robert could escape the accusations. He was summoned by the police and every day he had to report to the Central Police Station.

At one time Kampala City Council stopped them from holding a crusade in town. This came as a prophecy that Robert had given.

Obote's soldiers came home looking for someone called Kayanja. Since they did not know how he looked like, they noticed Charles (now a pastor) and mistook him to be Robert. His size as a former boxer made them to think he was the Kayanja they were looking for. "I'm not the one. That is the one" Charles cried out for his life as the soldiers beat him mercilessly.

No matter how he pointed at Kayanja who was wearing shots, they could not believe him.

“You think we are stupid? This is a schoolboy and you are telling us that he is Kayanja.”

They beat him badly into a coma and for five months, Charles was bedridden.

This was not all, people who belonged to one of the religions in Uganda fought them a lot. Its said that they are the ones who had sent the soldiers. They would spread condoms in church and they said, “These people switch off lights and rape women in the overnights saying, “Mukama akuntumye.” (God has sent me for you). And more false ac<sup>c</sup>usations followed. **Carrying a Bible helped people to survive**

God used several churches to do many things at that time. So many churches were started in homes and a release of God’s power fell upon the country, but also the backlash was so strong. The persecution continued during the time of the Obote II government between 1980 and 1984. Because the political persecution was stronger than the religious persecution, those in political power took their eyes off of the Pentecostals because they were all suffering as a country. People were running for safety and that is when the church began to take root during that chaos. Most of the politicians were running abroad, the National Resistance army (of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni) was fighting and movements had been started up to oppose war, evil, death and government sponsored terrorism of its own citizens. They never thought about religiosity and that is when Robert began to hold crusades across the country in 1982. In fact when the NRA rebels (as they were known at that time) invaded Masindi barracks, he was there. He had just come back from crusades in Hoima and Panyamur and he was in Masindi training about 300 leaders there who were getting ready to plant churches. Even a midst all that chaos, they were experiencing tremendous growth as the Spirit of the Lord was moving. At that time, there were road blocks where soldiers would search for charms and witchcraft items. When they would find you with a Bible, they would simply let you go; they would stop checking



*Because the political persecution was stronger than the religious persecution, those in political power took their eyes off of the Pentecostals because they were all suffering as a country.*

your bags. It was so amazing; these people at the road blocks were rapists and killers and yet they had a fear for the people of God.

### **The dictator's visit**

The Kampala crusade was one of the greatest crusades Osborn Ministries International ever experienced in their years of mass evangelism around the world.

At that time over 13 million people lived in this land that straddles the equator. Until 1962 the nation was made up largely of tribal kingdoms.

Then in 1966, a coup d'etat resulted in Uganda becoming a sovereign republic within the British Commonwealth. Years later, a military dictatorship took over, which proved to be a reign of terror and tragedy. Finally, invading soldiers from neighboring Tanzania overthrew General Amin's rule, but Uganda was bankrupt and in despair.

The country was fractured by different opposing forces, menaced and beleaguered by warring guerilla troops and vigilantes, constantly subverting security and fomenting anarchy and destabilization. One of the guerilla controlled zones extended to the edge of Kampala, the capital city.

This is the political situation which Daisy went to attempt to organize a national crusade of Bible faith and of healing for the people and the nation.

It is difficult to imagine the psychological state of a people who have suffered lawlessness, terrorism and violence for so many years.

During the later years of General Amin's dictatorship, there was hope that he had changed his ways and he might be responsive to a national gospel campaign in Uganda. Those hopes were brightened during the Osborn's seminar in Kisumu, Kenya, (near the Uganda border). They were conducting the largest Soul Winning Institute in Kenya's history. Over

5,000 preachers and workers were there from seven different African nations.

*General Amin urged Daisy and Tommy to come to Kampala, Uganda for a campaign, promising that his government would give full backing and that he himself would encourage the people to attend.*

Suddenly a great dual-prop army helicopter swirled overhead and, to the Osborn's amazement, descended upon the large field where they were teaching. It was General Amin.

While Tommy controlled the people, Daisy, flanked by national pastors, approached the General and welcomed him to their platform where they ministered to him for half an hour, and later, for another forty-five minutes.

General Amin urged Daisy and Tommy to come to Kampala, Uganda for a campaign, promising that his government would give full backing and that he himself would encourage the people to attend.

They sought the Lord earnestly and, with no signal to proceed, left the matter in His hands. **When God sets the Time**

Because a head of state welcomes a crusade does not mean it is God's time. On the other hand, when things look the most impossible, God often shows His power in the greatest ways. When He is ready, nothing can stop His blessing a nation.

When the Tommy and Daisy Osborn received this urgent plea from the Ugandan pastors, the Lord impressed them that, despite the hazards and even physical danger that existed, now was His time for this nation.

Rev. Bud Sickler, missionary to Mombasa, volunteers his private airplane to carry Daisy to Kampala to meet the ministers and to begin the preparations. She spends five weeks preaching in churches, halls, theaters, universities and wherever she can gather the people.

### **Daisy's choice: Lugogo Stadium**

Daisy faced the most awkward and impossible situations one could imagine in organizing the Kampala crusade.

After she reviewed every possible option for a location appropriate to a great crusade, she goes to Lugogo Stadium. It is three miles from the city center, and the entire sports field is surrounded by a huge foot concrete wall. As Daisy walked in to the grounds, the Lord whispers to her: "This is the place!"

Daisy knew the meeting would have to be conducted during daylight hours because of the risk of people being shot if they were moving about at night.

She told the pastors: "Wherever Jesus is, the multitude will throng Him. Even when He went into the desert places, the multitude sought Him out and thronged Him. Don't worry about the three mile distance from the city center. If Jesus is there (and He will be), the multitudes will find Him. They will come from all over this nation, and you pas- tors will marvel."

Christian messengers volunteer to go to all the villages and towns and spread the news. Many pledged to go even into the "controlled" areas. **The Press Interview**

**Question:**As news spread about the crusade preparations, expectancy grew,  
**Answer:**and the news media assembled to interview Daisy.

Why have you come to Uganda?

We've come to conduct a national crusade of faith in God. We've come to light a fire of faith and of hope in the Ugandan people by bringing them the good news of Christ. If Uganda can believe that God is her best friend, and that He is powerful and loving and that He wants to help them, this will lift the people and will bring blessing to the nation.

**Question: Answer:**

What does faith in God mean?

Faith in God means you can have faith in one another – and in yourself. If people have faith in themselves, they can do anything. When people lose

faith in themselves, they lose faith in God too – and vice versa. That is a sickness and it needs healing. He begins by healing the individual, then he reaches out and heals the nation. My husband and I believe that if we share the gospel of Jesus Christ, and share what we have seen Him do for people in over 70 nations, this will give new hope and courage to the people of this nation. I can tell **Question:**you, there is a new future for Uganda!

**Answer:**

What happens in these crusades?

Always the same. Great throngs of people attend. Great miracles take place. The lives of thousands of people are changed. The greatest miracle is when ordinary people who think they are “nobodies”, and who have nothing, get the idea that God loves them and paid a price for them, and that He wants to bless them; when they discover that they are important to God and are valuable to Him – this is the greatest miracle of all. This will happen to thousands of people in this nation. *Where ever my umbrella goes, I go*

Robert Kayanja was in Uganda preaching. He had also gone to USA and made some friends there. He was showed a movie done in 1960s called “Java harvest Holland wonder” by T.L. Osborn. The man raised his hand and the cripples were walking under it and they were being healed. Robert was preaching, miracles were happening but he had never seen anything like that. Sadly, there was no way he could connect to such anointing. Osborn did not even know if Robert existed anywhere in the world. Because his desire was to connect, when he saw the movie, he prayed, “God if you are real, connect me to that man.”

Young Robert was not on the organising committee of the crusade. That was in 1985. He was young and was hated by preachers. They had the committee and not everyone knew what they were planning. Robert was not influential by then though he always ministered in villages in the country. When he was told that the man whom he had seen in the movie was coming, he cancelled what he had gone to do in Mbarara and boarded the next bus to Kampala.

*The committee*

The day of the guest’s arrival, Robert was attacked by a terrible fever.  
*had an official*

*interpreter. Robert was part of the congregation and not part of the committee.*

but this didn't stop him from traveling to Entebbe. There was a lady who had a vehicle (a small Isuzu). She vowed to take him to the meeting. Because of the fever, he moved with an umbrella. They got to Entebbe airport to join the other people who were there to welcome Tommy. The committee had an official interpreter. Robert was part of the congregation and not part

of the committee. When Robert and another preacher went to attend the meeting, the committee turned against them. They even called them foxes. The other preacher stood bold, turned back on them and they made him a chief usher. As for Robert, no post was assigned for him.

Robert was holding his umbrella standing next two influential preachers at the steps near the VIP section at Entebbe airport. Tommy came out. Though it was too hot he request to speak to the people who had come to welcome him. "I need an umbrella." Robert was the only one with an umbrella. He didn't have a connection but an umbrella was all that he had. The people on the committee ordered him, "Send the umbrella". They were stuck and had no other alternative but to look upto the young man who they refused to assign a role on the committee for help. "No, am not sending my umbrella. Where ever my umbrella goes, I go," Robert replied.

They said, "Okay, come come..." Robert with great joy went towards them with his umbrella to be of assistance. He looked at the smile the man put on. Robert knew the Scripture that there was a woman with an issue of blood who touched Jesus and was well. "I didn't have an issue of blood but had issues; the committee had rejected me, I had no money, nobody knew me, I am struggling, I have a call of God, preachers preach against me." Tommy looked like the Jesus he had always seen in the movies. He covered him with his umbrella. As Tommy was speaking to people, Robert began to pull his jacket. And Tommy turned and laughed and Robert smiled back. He kept on talking. Again Robert pulled his jacket. Tommy turned and laughed. Then he perceived that there was someone who was angry more than anybody else. As he was leaving he hugs Robert "Thank you for your

umbrella.”

“I gave him the umbrella, he touched me. I got the anointing. I got the grace. No matter what was going to happen I knew I had connected.”

## **22 mile miracle journey**

The day finally arrived to welcome Tommy Lee Osborn at the Entebbe airport. He received the greatest welcome ever accorded to them in any nation. Thousands of people managed to come to the airport.

The Christians spread crusade leaflets throughout the countryside and circulated the news about the Osborns’ arrival.

Then they began their 22 mile journey into the capital. The road passed through one village or small town after another.

Practically the entire distance was filled with tens of thousands of people lining both sides of the road, pushing, shoving and eagerly watching for a glimpse of the servants of God as they passed by.

They had carried their sick, led their blind and helped their needy to the roadside. Some sat on chairs, some were carried on beds, some lay or sat on the ground.

As their entourage of precious believing Ugandans crept along, they prayed for the people throughout the 22 mile journey.

In practically every service of the Kampala crusade, they heard reports about miracles of healing which had taken place as they passed along the roadway, praying for the people and waving to them in the name of Jesus.



**For the 22 miles from Entebbe Airport into Kampala thousand lined the road to welcome The Osborns. *Come to Lugogo***

They reached the Constitution square which was City square in Kampala. By the time they arrived, there were thousands of people already waiting. Tommy said, "People think the crusade is here. I need to talk to them. I need to tell them where the crusade is going to take place." All of a sudden the special police came and surrounded the place. They said they were going to arrest the white man. They told them that it was illegal to have a meeting without permission. "Did you get permission?" they asked. The committee had not worked on the permission. So the whole committee had to go to the Central Police Station to ask for permission so that they are not arrested including the interpreter. Daisy Osborn was in the car, T.L was tired. He asked Alex Mukulu, "Do you know how to interpret?" Alex said, "No, no, no, am not an interpreter." Alex had just gotten saved at that time. Tommy then turns to Robert "What about you? Do you know how to interpret?"

"I'll try," Robert responded. As he began to interpret, Daisy who was in the car came out staggering and stood behind him, exactly what he had done to her husband of pulling his jacket, she pulled Robert's coat.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Robert."

"Robert, you are interpreter No.1."

"What?" Robert surprisingly asked.

"You are going to interpret my husband. Because you have the same spirit," Daisy suggested.

Robert had for long desired to have such a connection ever since when he watched his movie.

By the time the committee returned, T.L Osborn was gone, Robert was standing in the same place where they had been laughing in disbelief of what just happened to him. They thought that his excitement was because he had been given money and they asked inquisitively. "I had put more than money. I had got a spiritual father."

Before he left, he whispered to Robert, "Come to Lugogo."

He came on Thursday. The following day there was a leadership meeting at Norman Cinema. T.L. arrived, Robert also went with him. "You are not interpreting," Daisy continued, "we don't want you to get tired. Let their interpreter try."

The crusade was to take place on Saturday.

The following day Robert goes to Lugogo where the crusade was to take place. The whole city had shut down. Almost everyone wanted to be apart of his crusade.

On the platform, seats were arranged with names written on, from right was the chairman's seat, next was LaDonna Osborn's and her husband, followed by Robert Kayanja's, followed by T.L. Osborn and Daisy's. Then there was an aisle separating them from where the organising committee was supposed to seat.

When the members of the committee saw Robert's name, "This boy, who told you...this boy." So they removed the paper from the booked seat which had his name. One of the members of the committee came to him angrily with the paper which had sole tape on both ends. "What is this? Why did you confuse the bazungus (whites) You are not on the committee," said the angry member. "I didn't do that."

"No, you did. It seems you talked to them." **Jesus visits Uganda**

Daisy had convinced the city that Jesus Christ is alive and that nothing is impossible if they will only believe.



It seemed as though the nation believed that God had come to help them, just because T.L. and Daisy Osborn had arrived.

On the opening day of the crusade, roads and pathways leading to the stadium were like rivers of people. They were leading the blind, carrying the sick on beds, on homemade stretchers and on their backs. Crippled and lame people were struggling to move toward the stadium using crutches, canes, limb, sticks, braces and all sorts of concocted support.

The roads were enveloped in a heavy cloud of red dust from the powdery clay surface.

The amassment of people travelled on foot because there was pitifully little transportation – and usually the pedestrians moved faster anyway.

Authorities estimated 400,000 people present at each of the services. “It is an overwhelming experience to face such an encampment of needy people.”

They conducted two meetings daily: Ten o’clock in the morning and two o’clock in the afternoon. The multitude was there for the morning meeting and for the afternoon. They sat under the hot equatorial sun, their attention riveted to every word preached by Tommy and Daisy Osborn.

Neither Drs. T.L. and Daisy Osborn hardly ever preached a complete message without being interrupted by remarkable miracles of healing taking place in the lives of the people as they listened to God’s Word and received faith through His promise.

*The Ugandans had been so brutalized by undisciplined soldiers and lawless*

*guerillas, that faith in a human person* The people of Uganda seemed to have

caught the idea that Jesus and His power *had been lost. Suspicion,* are in His Word; that

when they received *apprehension and fear* His Word and believed on Him, they *exhad*  
*reigned.* pected Him to change their lives, to for

give their sins and to heal their bodies at once. That happened day after day in the

crusade.

The Ugandans had been so brutalized by undisciplined soldiers and lawless guerillas, that faith in a human person had been lost. Suspicion, apprehension and fear had reigned.

After prayer and after urging the people to put their faith into action, crutches, canes and braces were raised above people's heads.

There were outbursts of spontaneous praise to God. The sea of people opened as those healed pressed toward the platform, often preceded by some friends parading crutches, canes or braces.

Sometimes a wheelchair or cot would be raised above the heads of the crowd as the healed one advanced toward the platform. They packed audience opened like a river before them, amidst spontaneous handclapping, weeping and rejoicing.

Even in the face of the persistent instability of government, the hope of a new future for Uganda had been born. Faith in God had been restored.



**Lugogo stadium in Kampala**

**Arrival at**



## **Teaching and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom**

### **T.L. Osborn commissions Robert Kayanja**

In those days he used to have Afro hair (long hair). He stood down and waited for the Osborns to arrive. He waited for the one who had told him to seat there to come. T.L Osborn got out, Daisy too. They said, “Robert, what are you doing down? Come on up.”

He came up to the front.

“Where is your name? Who removed it? Where did you put it? He is supposed to seat here,” Tommy ordered.

He was talking to the man who had taken Robert’s name from the seat.

He said, “It’s over there.” The paper had been muffled, but he brought it, straightened it again and put it back.

Because Robert was connected to the Osborns and they attacked him even on the first day when they said he didn’t know how to interpret and he sat down, all things being a mess and they thought they had won, they failed more. Robert came back. Tommy Lee openly took his garment that he had worn for 35 years, preaching the gospel, and put it on Robert Kayanja. “As Moses sent Joshua I send you.”



**Robert interpreting for T.L. and Daisy Osborn**



**Thousands gathered to hear the Good News**



**Meeting with Dr. Osborn in**

**USA**

Next he invited Robert to USA. While they were seated in his office, Tommy calls his staff and said to him “My office is your office.” He picked up phones and he started calling. Then he said “now am going to introduce you to this great country. You need good Bible teachers. You need to meet John and Dodi Osteen. You need to meet Kenneth and Gloria Copeland. You need to meet Paul and Jan Crouch. You need to meet Benson and

Margaret Idahosa.”

First all took him and shopped for him. He took and introduced him to John Osteen, spiritual father to Joel Osteen, took him to Kenneth Hagin ministries, to Kenneth Copeland and he was blessed with 500 US \$. T.L had noticed that Robert was not just an evangelist but also had a pastoral gift. By introducing Robert to these great ministries, T.L thought he needed to see how these churches were running. From this, his ministry vision became international.

### **President Museveni refuses to shut down churches**

Dr. T.L also prophesied concerning the construction of roads in Kampala and he the regime of Milton Obote out of power.

In 1985, Tito Okello and Bazilio Olara Okello who were military generals toppled the Milton Obote II regime. That time a lot of senseless killing and violence was seen in the country. The soldiers of the regime would loot households.

And now it was a new government in power. Another revival broke out again.

People went to the new President of Uganda and told him how the mushrooming churches were a threat in the country.

He told them, “We didn’t come to shut down churches. We have intelligence. If these people are doing wrong things the intelligence shall get them but we are not going to persecute these people because even when Amin was in power he was persecuting them.”

God began to speak to people that He was going to bring peace to Uganda and He began to give them prophetic words which were so much needed at that time more than ever before.

When Tito Okello’s military government was deposed by Yoweri Museveni’s NRM, two movements were now operating in the country; the Kiwempe Movement and the National Resistance Movement. Although many people did not understand the Kiwempe Movement, it began to gather the largest crowds around the country. The word Kiwempe or reed to the

Pentecostal church in Uganda represents those days of persecution, poverty and ungodliness. It is where it all began. It is the great move of the Holy Spirit which touched millions of people around the world. Though they did not have houses of their own, they had to put up papyrus structures where they fellowshiped from. The movement started in 1979 after Idi Amin had been overthrown.

*There was the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. Undeniable miracles were taking place on a regular basis.*

The Kiwempe Movement encountered great persecution from parents. The reason was because the Kiwempe Movement had such a great impact on the young. The parents were not fighting because their kids were doing wrong to be a part of the Kiwempe Movement. They would look at

their papyrus churches and how pathetic their people looked, and they were determined to stop their children from joining them. Unfortunately, many kids gave in to their parents' pressure and backslid. It was the religious folk who painted it as if it was the worst thing that could ever happen.

There was the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. Undeniable miracles were taking place on a regular basis. Children brought at the point of death would turn around and begin to run after prayer, completely healed by the power of God. The blind received their sight. People who were miserable because of poverty and lack heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and it gave them hope after being demeaned for so long.

People were tired of the old songs. They wanted something fresh that could transform their lives, and through the anointing of the Holy Ghost, they began to receive songs that were transforming their lives. At that time, all the songs they sang were written by their own people.

When they stood up to preach, it was real preaching which the country had never experienced before.

They had never seen such demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit in such an awesome way. People could see quite clearly the difference between the fake and real. They would watch TV and compare services.

Whenever the Pentecostals had crusade, the news would spread everywhere. People would never figure out where they got the money from and why they did what they did. No young man wanted to do what Robert was doing; they were drinking, carousing, smoking while he was gathering the largest crowds in Uganda and great miracles were happening. Friends and entire families were getting healed and that meant something. In fact they would say 'Abalokole ba Kayanja.' (Born agains of Kayanja). They were associating the man with the movement so as to make it weak. They were just like the religious leaders of Jesus' day. They loved to associate Jesus with Nazareth which they believed nothing good could ever come out of. This they did with an intention of weakening His leadership.

People began to presume to know Robert more than he knew himself. The Holy Spirit said to him, 'in their religious minds, they presume or think you are going to fall.' They have seen their priests and their religious figures fall before. They have also seen some bornagain leaders fall and get distracted from their callings into business activities and their lives are miserable. So they equate this absolutely precious thing with a man because they know that man is susceptible to falling anytime.

Everything we see here in Uganda today as connected to ministry was birthed through the Kiwempe Movement, so we need to really look closely and define what it really is.

The new government was broad-based, and some people in it began to curtail the Pentecostals; many in government had their own ideas concerning what they thought religion should be.

Persecution rose again, but ironically, without them knowing it, the President and Robert would find themselves in the same city at the same time. While Robert would be finishing a crusade somewhere, the President would be going to do a tour in the city or town. This kept on happening. At the time, the late Honorable Balaki Kirya who was born-again, loved the Lord and was filled with the Holy Ghost, and so was Honorable Mayanja Nkanji. So the Pentecostals at least had two voices who could speak for them in cabinet. At that time, the political thoughts of the NRM government, especially those of the President towards religious freedom were very clear. It was either that all people had complete freedom of

worship or they did not. So the government stood for them. Instead of being pressed again by the traditional religions who wanted to use the new government as they had done with Idi Amin. As the Spirit of God had been released on the country, and there was a new day in the country, there was no way they were going to stop what God was doing.

### ***Do you want me to build it in America?***

In the 1980s, during fasting and praying under a mango tree. Obote will still president killing people and doing all sorts of wrong deeds. On the third day, in a vision, Robert saw the building raising up from its foundation. The Lord had spoken to Robert, Build it and I will give you the city.” He asked God whether it had to be built overseas. The fact of the matter, according to what Uganda was going through, there was no hope of building a magnificent building. “Do you want me to build it in America? Because I don’t see how it is going to happen here.”

The people who attended the church were mostly orphans and widows.

Most of the attendants were orphans, widows (probably due to the wars in the country at that time), others were students who didn’t have money. People’s offerings could not be able to sustain the church building project. Pastor Robert had to do a lot of travelling. Three quarters of the funds for building the Cathedral came from overseas. With time, people in the country too began to give.

### **Robert and Jessica**

Jessica was still a student when Pastor Robert spotted her. She is a daughter of a very respected lawyer, Professor Frederick Ssempebwa. Her father is one of the top constitutional lawyers in East Africa and Central Africa. He is responsible for both the constitutional reviews of both Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania etc. Their law firm is the number one law firm in Uganda.

Pastor Robert went to Makerere College School were Jessica studied. He borrowed a Benz car from a friend when he was going to meet up with her. The first time she refused to come out but the second time she did. What proved to him that Jessica was the one God had meant for him was, when



she came, he opened for her the door of the car and she sat. Robert turned the other side to sit and Jessica too opened for him the door.

Robert and Jessica dated for five years. They could only meet privately because Robert was a public figure in the country and it was also a way of avoiding people's words. Sometimes they would meet and talk on the plane in case her and her father's travel times were the same as his.

Also, Jessica was not coming from a known Christian family, neither was she part of the any known position at Miracle Centre Church. She was unknown in the Christian circles apart from the local church which she attended.

The wedding took place on 29th August, 1992 in Makerere University Freedom Square. It was attended by many prominent people and pastors from the country.



**Cutting cake on their wedding day**

The children in this marriage are; Robert Jr, Kirstein and Kristiana. **Glass!**

Soon after Pastor Jessica had had a miscarriage of what would have been their first born child. She was still bleeding. The doctors had concluded that the chances of her giving birth again were negligible. The Lord spoke to him, "Take My healing power to the world. I will heal your wife."

Pastor Robert left his wife in a hospital in London and boarded the next flight to South Korea for ministry. In a meeting where he ministered, they

had brought a woman who was in a coma. As he prayed, she recovered from the coma. Two days later, the woman's family invited him for a dinner. He did not know that her son owned a commercial bank.

During dinner they asked Pastor Robert, "What can we do to help your ministry?" Because at that time he was thinking of the church's glasses, that's what he asked from them. They asked him to give them the schedule. They bought the glasses, shipped them to Uganda. It cost them 150,000 US \$. He celebrated the miracle with the church.

His engineer advised him, "Pastor you cannot put in the glass when there is no roof."

"If God can provide the glass, don't you think he can provide the roof?"

"How much is the roof?"

"550,000 US \$"

"Tell God. We need that money from God."

Pastor Robert heard the voice of God, "Call Moses, Elijah and another person.

'Come and see these are the people we have running our church down there. I gave this guy an opportunity. They asked him what can we do to help your ministry and instead of saying church, he said glass.'"

Pastor Robert regret prayed, "God, try me again." He resumed to travelling to different places again.

Dr. Kasirye, a pediatrician in Kampala suggested Nakato could be having cancer. Jessica was shocked. Aware of the poor medical facilities in the country, travelling abroad was the only way out to rescue their daughter arguably suffering from cancer.

"I called my husband who was out of the country and we planned to travel. It was a complete journey of faith."

Pastor Robert rented an apartment in London where his family stayed as he paid thousands of dollars. At the same time as a pastor, he had to be back to Uganda to take care of the church. He would spend two weeks encouraging the congregation, building, attending to other ministry invitations around the world and after go back to London to be with his family. For all that

time, he never told the church that they were battling for the life of their daughter.

While in a UK hospital, the diagnosis revealed brain cancer, with an overgrown tumour. The neural surgeons said there was little hope that she would survive.

Nakato had been left with two alternatives: either face a threatening surgical knife or mercy killing (euthanasia). At least according to medical experts there was little possibility of a cure.

They were told that their daughter had a big tumour and that she couldn't survive for more than three weeks. Many times she almost died. They prayed to God and started giving Holy Communion to Nakato every day.

As all this was going on, a rumour spread around Kampala especially among city pastors. They started saying that Pastor Jessica divorced, took the children away and that's why she was no where to be seen. The truth of the matter, they never saw her for 1 year, 2 years and so on. So they began to question Pastor Robert when they found him in town. "Tell us the truth. Don't hide from us."

One of the prominent preachers in town, one time while preaching at a fellow pastor's wedding taking place at the Miracle Centre Cathedral made a shocking statement: "We Born again Christians do not divorce our wives." He also thought that Pastor Robert had divorced his wife.

At one time she was die and they called Pastor Robert on phone from London when he was in Uganda. He moved out of church, went in front of his office and they talked on phone. He got into his car with some of his associates and they drove to Ntinda, Kampala were he stayed at that time. He closed himself in the room and began praying to God, crying to God, reminding God because that was the only thing he was left with to do.

*By God's grace,*

*medical reports showed that the cancer was detaching itself from the brain.*

By God's grace, medical reports showed that the cancer was detaching itself from the brain.

Pastor Jessica said, "As a pastor I could pray for miracles for other people but not my own."

"I believe that doctors' work is an extension of God's healing arm."

They were shocked the day when Pastor Jessica walked on the pulpit of the Miracle Centre Cathedral with their children. People broke in tears. Pastor Robert had only shared with not more than five people about what his family was going through.

The family had lived in London for four to five years fighting for Kristiana's life. **Attack on the glass church building project**

No pastor in Uganda had ever attempted such a big building project in Uganda. So Pastor Robert could escape being attacked for something new he had started. It can be noted that people always criticise everything, even that which they do not understand. Some of the reknown ministers in the city began to attack the building project of the Miracle Centre Cathedral. The truth is, there were months where Pastor Robert and his team were stuck due to lack of finances and nothing was going on at the site. Some called it Noah's ark, others said its ambition and came up with the question which they taught in the Bible schools. They started teaching their students the difference between vision and ambition using the building project as an example. They said that was Pastor Robert's ambition and not something from God.

One time, Dr. Morris Cerullo had come to Uganda for ministry. For some reason, Pastor Robert did not attend the meeting at Nakivubo Stadium in Kampala City Centre. In that meeting, one of the prominent pastors in Uganda stood up and directly attacked the building project that was going on in Rubaga. "God never told us to build glass churches. How can you start building glass churches when people are dying? Get that money and go do crusades."

Finally, the The first glass church seating 10500 people was completed. It was dedicated by the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the First Lady, Janet Museveni. The event

was also graced by Byron Cage, Phil Driscoll (one of the top worshippers in trumpet music in the whole world), Bishop Arthur Kitonga from Kenya as well as Pastors from all over the country. That day there were more people outside than those <sup>inside the church.</sup> **77 Days Of Glory Revival**

In 2009, Robert Kayanja Ministries came up with an initiative of holding 50 crusades around Uganda. In the crusades, they witnessed millions of people giving their lives to Christ. Powerful miracles of healing and deliverance, restoration of families were also witnessed. God spoke to Pastor Robert Kayanja after the Kyankwazi crusade. This was their 49th crusade he had organised. God spoke to him about the 77 dogs. He gave him a scripture in Judges 7:5 and told him that he was looking for those people who could lap water (reach out to the Holy Spirit) like DOGS and that's where the phrase "DAYS OF GLORY", abbreviated as DOGS came from. "I just heard a glimpse of what He said and simply obeyed.

*to be shifted from church to outside as the number increased by the day.  
Many*

*Moslems, witches, secular artists etc gave their lives to*

*Christ.*

By 18th September 2016, they launched phase one and God proved *The gathering had* his power as he healed, delivered and set many from the captivity of witchcraft free. Witchcraft fetishes were also burnt in large volumes. Pastor Robert thought he was now going to rest and continue ministry as usual after the 77 days. By December 4th, as they concluded phase

one, the Holy Spirit said phase two.

As they continued phase two, what they witnessed was wonderful. The people showed their total dependency on the Holy Spirit. The gathering had to be shifted from church to outside as the number increased by the day. Many Moslems, witches, secular artists etc gave their lives to Christ.

Remarkable miracles still happened in phase two and just three days to the end, people showed their increased desire to tarry in the presence of God. Many confessed as they testified that they still wanted their loved ones to be healed and delivered. Other nations began to flock in expressing the longing for phase three. However, after hear from God, Pastor Robert obeyed and declared another 77 days in the presence of God.

77 Dogs Revival received an award from the Azuza Street Foundation as one of the outstanding revivals in the history of the Pentecostals.

Azuza Street Revival took place in Los Angeles, California. It was led by William J Seymour, an African American preacher. Similarly to the 77 Dogs revival, the Azuza revival started as a small meeting on April 9th 1906 and went on upto 1915.

The revival went down on record among the great revivals that have taken place around the world and an award was accorded to it.

### **Every revival faces critici**

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77 DOGS is a one of its kind revival in the country. I have not heard of any revival in the past where the people in Uganda have been delivered from witchcraft as it is always witnessed night after night.

In the same meetings, kings, Presidents, former presidents, people in governments from Uganda and out of the country have desired to be part of the move of God and have attended while watch online.

In spite of all this, just like the past revivals, the 77 DOGS revival has also gone through criticism. In my study of church history, every revival is criticised in its own way. The criticisms of the East African Revivals cannot be the same the ones of the present. During the East African Revival, it was not all about repenting, singing but it also consisted of demonstration as the Holy Spirit filled believers. Demonstration of the power of God attracted attacks from people in church who did not believe in the revival.

In 1939, Chambers, then Bishop of Tanzania invited Joe Church to bring a team to a mission in western Tanzania as he was so keen for the people to

be filled with an evangelistic spirit. Unfortunately, the bishop got more than he asked for. The team preached the need for conviction, repentance and new life, and in the process to have worked the people up into a considerable state of emotion. Two of the wives of the missionaries at the Teacher Training School, while rejoicing at the outpouring of God's Spirit, began to teach that there must be signs following. One of them had been a student at a Bible College in South Wales where there was much stress on the charismatic gifts of the Spirit.

In Katoke, Yonathani and Daudi were the first to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Others followed in little groups, and then Daudi prayed for an open manifestation of the Spirit's power in the open church. The prayer was answered, when boys were being carried out one after another, their frail bodies overpowered by the entering in of Omnipotence. More fifty people were baptised. Some others who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit were bowled over, almost as if they fainted or had an electric shock or a fit. But they did not faint, they fell on the floor, often rolling about, sometimes calling out inarticulately, sometimes words of praise to the Lord Jesus, sometimes laughing in a demented sort of way. *Some others who*

*received the baptism* Bishop Chambers was greatly alarmed, and withdrew his invitation of Dr. Joe Church and his team to visit Tanzania ever again. Responding to Chambers' resolution, Bishop Stuart wrote:  
"Can you have revival in Africa without excesses? I doubt it, and certainly in Ruanda

*of the Holy Spirit were bowled over, almost as if they fainted or had an electric shock or a fit.* and Uganda we have found that they do get through these signs and go on to real deep faith and changed lives... Few of us have enough of the grace of God to appreciate being told we are a hindrance to revival... I look upon these things as 'growing pains' and so necessary."

Pastor Robert Kayanja is a man that never gives up right from the start of his ministry to date. For nearly 4 decades he is still proclaiming the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in at least 80 nations of the world through mass Miracle Crusades with over 500,000 people in attendance, his ministry is perpetually followed by miracles, signs and wonders. He is a busy man taking on a number of roles; He is the senior Pastor of the Miracle Centre Cathedral - a debt free 10,500 seater with over 3,000 branches, the President of the Miracle Bible College, which trains and raises leaders, the Chairman of Afri-Aid the First National relief organization created to respond with emergency relief aid to African Countries that are in dire need especially South Sudan and locally the Bucket project which has given food relief to over 50,000 families in Uganda, a member of the Uganda Peace team that has negotiated peace in South Sudan, the CEO of Miracle TV Ltd-Channel 44, an advisor to presidents and many influential leaders in Uganda, Burundi, South Sudan, Panama, Singapore, Australia among others, and is consistently ranked among the top most influential men in Uganda and the world.

He has been an inspiration to many young people especially by the way in flows in the healing ministry. This includes me, the author. When I got saved years ago, Miracle Centre was the first church I attended. As he preached, I used to hear him talk about prayer and fasting. So I imitated. Those are the days when I got the zeal of fasting. Again, I so much desired to flow in the same healing anointing but unfortunately, by the time I moved to another church, I had not yet got the chance of him praying for me to receive such grace.





**Photo of Pastors Robert and**

**Jessica Kayanja on their 25th wedding anniversary celebration**

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*The pioneers of mass miracle evangelism*

Gospel According to T.L and Daisy Osborn

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13. Interview on TBN by Paul and Jan crouch
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15. Interview on TBN by Paul and Jan Crouch
16. Legacy of Faith, T.L. Osborn, 35-37
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24. Legacy of Faith, T.L. Osborn, 23, 24
25. Soulwinning, T.L. Osborn
26. Legacy of Faith, T.L. Osborn, 130

27. Soulwinning, T.L. Osborn
28. Legacy of faith, T.L. Osborn 130, 131
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1. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker 15, 16
2. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 10 - 11
3. Even greater: 12 Real-Life Stories That Inspire You to Do Great Things for God
4. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 10, 11
5. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 11
6. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 20
7. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 21, 22
8. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 11 – 13
9. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 22
10. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 13
11. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 13
12. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg

23, 24

13. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker 24, 25

14. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 16, 17

15. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 24

16. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 26

17. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker Pg 26

18. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story 20

19. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story pg 15

20. Plundering hell to populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story Pg 16

21. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 35, 36

22. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 37 - 39

23. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 43

24. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 65

25. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 65, 66

26. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 67

27. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 67

28. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 75

29. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 76

30. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 77, 78

31. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 78

32. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 84, 85

33. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 85, 86

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Plundering hell to Populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story pg 37, 38

36. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 86, 91, 92, 96

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41. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg

109

42. Interview with Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke on Revelation Tv
43. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 109, 110, 111
44. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 103 - 104
45. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker 46. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker ...news of what was happening
47. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 113 - 116
48. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 119
49. Evangelism by fire, Reinhard Bonnke
50. Evangelism by fire, Reinhard Bonnke
51. Evangelism by fire, Reinhard Bonnke
52. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 122
53. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 111 - 133
54. Plundering hell to Populate heaven: the Reinhard Bonnke story Pg 84, 85, 87
55. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 165, 166
56. Raised From the Dead: The Miracle that Brings Promise to America
57. Even Greater: 12 Real-Life Stories, Reinhard Bonnke
58. Reinhard Bonnke, A Passion for the Gospel, Colin Whittaker, Pg 184
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