

January 2019

***Great Expectations for the church
in the coming year!***

Assistant Mission director visits four nations in Africa on Three-week Tour in November (see report inside, pp. 8-11)



This photo shows the old homeplace of Bishop David Gomba's family in Shirati, Tanzania. More significantly, it is the site where Zion Assembly was first established 14 years ago in that nation, which recently has grown by leaps and bounds under Bishop Gomba's leadership. Brother Gomba's mother, Agnes Hezron [standing front and center to the left of Brother Gomba, dressed in yellow] has been a pillar in Zion Assembly from the beginning, and continues to be a defender of the faith, a catalyst for growth, and an encouragement to all of the ministers and believers. Several of Agnes' children and grandchildren and other family members are also in the photo.

Surging Ahead in 2019

Praise the Lord for all the good reports coming into the International Offices---souls being saved, members being added to the church, and buildings being erected! It seems we are now poised by His gracious providence to surge forward in the days and months ahead. The Holy Spirit has positioned the church in recent years to ride the swell of the great waves of God's glory onto the shores of Beulah land. Anticipating this mighty move forward, the prophet wrote, *"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married"* (Is. 62.4). It is thus that we expect nothing less than to behold *"... as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, [and to be] changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord"* (2 Cor. 3.18).

Even as I write these lines, I feel a surge of His glorious power run through me, burning with the assurance of spiritual victories ahead. And this power we now feel in our souls perfectly agrees with the glorious prophecies of the church in the Scriptures. Who can read these precious promises and not be elevated in spirit and moved with thrilling expectations of a glorious church?

We are now on the precipice of glorious prophetic fulfillments. We may expect, therefore, that our surge forward will not be without strong resistance from our archenemy and the demonic principalities and powers subject to him (cf. Eph. 6.10-12). Certainly, we should expect no less than what Nehemiah experienced in his day, and Daniel in his, as well as other prophetic restoration movements ordained by the Lord. These prophets were opposed mightily by demonic forces couched in political and religious agendas and crafty schemes for filthy lucre and positional power. We must set ourselves to go forward against all resistance in the forms of slander and false accusations, and all manner of evil speaking and wicked designs of the enemy. For we are warned in the prophetic Word that in these last days we will be greatly tried and tested by the spirit of antichrist; yet, praise the Lord! we are assured in the same breath of prophecy, *"But the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many"* (Dan. 11.31-33).

"Gashmu saith it"

One of the classic slanderers of all time was Geshem, an Arabian, who apparently ruled over Edom or Kedar in the fifth century B.C. This man joined with Sanballat [governor of Samaria] and Tobiah [a Persian government official in Ammon] in a scheme to sabotage the church's work of restoring the City of God [Jerusalem], which at that time was under the authority and direction of Nehemiah following the Babylonian Captivity. These rulers believed their political, economic, and religious interests would be threatened by a resurgent Jewish nation centered in Jerusalem.

After Sanballat and Tobiah's tactic to belittle and discourage Nehemiah had failed, and the restoration work continued unabated (Neh. 4.1-3), Geshem [same as Gashmu, 2.19; 6.1-6] conspired with Sanballat to begin a slander campaign to ruin Nehemiah's name and reputation, and to kill his influence in the church (6.1-7): for these men knew that if they could take down Nehemiah, the fire of the restoration movement would gradually die out. They accused him therefore of desiring fame and position, and even went so far to say that he was conspiring to become king in Israel (vv. 6-7). The "fake news" releases were composed of phrases like *"it is reported"* and *"Gashmu saith it."* But Nehemiah prayed and God strengthened him; and he responded to Sanballat thusly: *"There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest [invent or imagine] them out of thine own heart"* (v.8).

Nevertheless, the slander campaign was momentarily successful, and soon "many letters" and "rumors" were circulating to confuse the people and *"to put [Nehemiah] in fear"* (vv. 17-19). But Nehemiah was strong in the Lord, for God had encouraged him. His fear of God was so great that it vaporized the spirit of intimidation and fear of man. He became impervious to their ridicule and threats, refusing to dignify their slander and would not for a moment suspend the work of rebuilding the walls of the City of God to answer their slander and false accusations. It was thus that the restoration work went forward, and the walls of the city were completed wondrously in *"fifty-two days"* (v. 15). Praise the Lord!

Same old satanic tactics

Make no mistake, brethren; nothing much has changed since the time of Nehemiah and the restoration of the "City of God" twenty-five hundred years ago. Sinners and half-baked "Christians" resent and even fear a restored and strengthened City of God---a church that proclaims the absolute truth without compromise and without respect

In This Issue . . .

| | |
|---|------|
| Setting Missions in Order..... | 4-6 |
| <i>Joseph Steele</i> | |
| <i>SYNC & Emergency Dollars reports</i> | 7 |
| Assistant Mission Director Visits Africa..... | 8-11 |
| Ministers' and Workers' Conference in California South..... | 12 |
| Women's Ministry Event Northern California..... | 12 |
| Fresno Church Revived..... | 13 |
| Report from Central India..... | 14 |
| Senior Ambassadors' Day Cleveland, Tennessee..... | 15 |
| Zion Assembly honored in Ibadan, Nigeria..... | 16 |



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“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen”. Mark 16.20



Setting Missions in Order

Joseph A. Steele
Regional Overseer,
California South/Nevada

One of the basic building blocks for expanding the church in a state or nation is new missions. Although this has been done for longer than we can remember in our church tradition, it is good to review the procedures involved from time to time, especially for the benefit of those following us. To eliminate confusion, we sometimes speak of missions as being *established* and churches as being *organized*. This distinction is important. For it is hoped that every established mission will develop into an organized church. And we work toward this end, though every mission may not finally take root and become a church.

Many factors determine whether a mission will endure and develop into an organized church: for example, responsiveness of contacts in the community, capable and visionary leadership, the evident favor of God, etc. A mission may be established wherever there are *campos blancos* (“white fields”), that is, people hungry for the Word of God and ready to receive the visitation of God and the government of His church. A mission may be started through new home prayer meetings and Bible studies, or through the establishment of a Sunday school. Further, any of these outreaches may be launched by a zealous and capable worker in the church, not necessarily by an ordained minister or preacher; though the pastor and overseer should approve of the outreach and be involved in the planning.

Challenged by Presiding Bishop

I want to lay out here some basic principles and steps involved in the establishment of a mission to help insure its success. I have garnered some input from the Presiding Bishop and others with experience in this area. However, this should not be considered an exhaustive resource on the subject; it is rather an aid in spurring us forward in this important work. In the recent Assembly our Presiding Bishop challenged the United States overseers to gain at least one new church and minister this year in their respective regions. I believe this is very possible in California South. But it has to begin at the mission-forming level.

Reproducing the Life of the Church in New Areas

To succeed, there first must be a willingness to reach out, to sacrifice, and to “lend” to bring the church to others. A local pastor and congregation must lend some of their resources toward this endeavor: namely, people, talent and material things. And it is expected that the recipients will visit, on occasion, the host church to further garner the dynamics of Zion Assembly’s church life. The whole idea is to reproduce the life of the church in new areas, which takes time, patience and commitment. There is much follow-up and follow-through required. A pastor by himself cannot accomplish this. The cooperation of the local church, and sometimes the coordination of more than one local church, is needed to anchor new missions.

It may take months or even years to reach the stage when a “meeting” is ready to become a “mission.” But with prayer and deliberate focus this should be the goal of our ministers and local churches. After some time and effort has been spent with the new group, the first step is to identify a potential mission leader. This should be someone who can conduct the week to week services and operations of the newly established mission. The person should be spiritual and possess some business acumen and organizational skills to keep the work orderly and in compliance with the general church. Whether this person is a preacher or not (some mission leaders are teachers, not preachers) he or she should have a good handle on the Word of God and be able to guide the mission in harmony with the government and spirit of Zion Assembly. Ideally the leader should be a faithful member of the church. On the day that the regional overseer or in some cases the district overseer sets the mission in order, he should appoint a mission leader as well as a clerk and treasurer (these latter two jobs are usually joined in

one person). The mission leader will then (at that time or later) appoint other leaders to serve in various roles of leadership as the number of people and talents increase.

Upon setting the mission in order, everyone’s membership---including those already in Zion Assembly as well as anyone who may join on that day---must be located in an existing Zion Assembly local church. Church membership cannot be in a mission. PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THIS! I didn’t understand this at first and made a mistake. For example, it should not be said, “We started the mission with seven members.” That is not how it works and confuses the establishment of a mission with an organized a church. More properly it may be said, “The mission was established with eleven in regular attendance.” It is important also to keep a record of everyone attending, and the activities and financial transactions of the mission

Again the membership of anyone who joins the church on the day the mission is established [or at any time] must be located in an existing Zion Assembly church in the area. This should be decided in advance and in consultation with the pastor and the district or regional overseer. Usually membership is located at the nearest local church. This is designed so that if the mission should be dissolved at some point those members will still be under the care and government of the church. Note: it is not a requirement that anyone join the church at the time of establishing the mission; however, if someone should join at that time, a letter should be sent by the individual or the mission leader to the existing local church informing them, so that they can formally receive that member into full fellowship at an opportune time. Again, this should be planned and approved in advance by the mission leader, pastor, and overseer. The new member will also need to request transfer once the mission is organized into a local church.

When the day to set forth the mission arrives, ideally two persons should be assigned beforehand to make written records of the meeting. One should legibly list the names of everyone attending, and everyone joining by covenant on that day, including the local churches where their memberships are located. The second note-taker will make an overview of all that takes place in the meeting, including the time and date of the meeting. The details could be added later in a second draft while still fresh in memory. (A visual recording is helpful.) Then a final copy should be given to the mission leader for his/her review and signature. An ongoing record book should be kept by the clerk/treasurer containing these minutes and those of future meetings. Also, a file should be started and secured for all of the mission’s important records, including a current list of participants and officers, a ledger of financial transactions (receipts/disbursements), etc.

The *Establishment Statement* (see below) records the regional overseer’s appointments of the mission leader and clerk/treasurer; gives the location of the mission; and records the declaration that the mission is established under the authority of Zion Assembly Church of God. *NOTE:* In the actual statement/declaration by the regional overseer in setting the mission in order, there is no need for a motion or second and “all in favor” agreement. For this is an official action by the general leadership of the church once the group has expressed a desire to be established as a mission under the authority of Zion Assembly.

Establishment Statement

The following is a recommendation that may be used for setting forth a mission:

“At _____ (time and date) I, _____ (name) regional overseer of _____ (name of region) of Zion Assembly Church of God hereby call this meeting to order. We have gathered here for the express purpose of establishing a mission in _____ (city and state) to hold worship services, conduct Bible studies, Sunday school and any other duly ordained ministries under the authority and government of Zion Assembly Church of God, with international offices located at 5512 Waterlevel Hwy. in Cleveland, Tennessee. I appoint _____ to be the mission leader and _____ to be the clerk/treasurer. The mission leader may make any additional appointments at his/her discretion and in counsel with the overseer. I hereby declare this mission established and authorized to function in harmony with the rulings and government of Zion Assembly Church of God.

The meeting was adjourned at _____ (time).



A mission does not hold business meetings in the same manner as an organized church. For a mission is not an *ekklesia* (a duly ordained church-government). Business or parliamentary “motions” and “seconds” and general consent or agreement by a mission group are therefore not necessary in deciding courses of action. A mission is not required to have “regular,” “quarterly,” or “called” meetings. Still, it is wise to discuss matters and make decisions in harmony with those who support the mission. In these instances, the intent of the group may be expressed by “acclamation” or by a simple statement from the mission director. Written records of such conclusions should be kept. The idea is to keep the mission as simple as possible and unencumbered by the duties and responsibilities of an organized church. This way the focus of the mission is on spiritual and numerical growth at the outset. It should be easy to get a mission started; therefore, we might expect to establish more missions than churches within a given year.

However, a mission should not be established with the intention of remaining a mission indefinitely; rather there should be some anticipation of becoming a church as soon as possible.

It is important that the mission stay connected to the rest of the church and become involved as much as possible in district, regional, and general activities. The mission should never be allowed to become autonomous or isolated.

As a rule, church members should tithe to the local church where their memberships are located. However, exceptional arrangements may be made with consent of the overseer and local pastors. Licensed ministers report to the regional and international offices. It may or may not be necessary for a mission to open a bank account. This depends on local circumstances and peculiarities. Legal obligations, obtaining a FEIN number, and the need for other credentials and compliances with civil documents are more incumbent upon organized churches than missions. Depending on the number of people involved and the stage of development, it might be best in some cases to bypass establishing a mission and proceed directly to church organization. However, this is usually not the case, and is left to the discretion of the presbytery---the presiding bishop and regional overseer.

In conclusion, we should seek the Lord and pursue every viable means to establish missions in new communities and towns. The church grew by leaps and bounds early on in our history through the means of outreach and establishing missions in new communities. God’s favor has always been upon this process. Missions represent “troops on the ground”, so to speak, and indicate that Zion Assembly is visionary and spiritually alive and well. God will surely do His part, if we’ll do our part!

Setting the Church in Order

A final word should be said regarding the transformation of a mission into a church. Most importantly the basic teachings and practices of Zion Assembly should be reviewed with everyone involved in the mission before setting the church in order. The counseling process for new people should occur, however, before this time. The purpose for this preparation is to make sure each person interested in becoming a part of the church understands and agrees with the church’s government, doctrinal positions and other requirements, and is willing to receive teaching on these topics. There should be no surprises at the last minute. There may be rare instances where individuals who had not planned to join Zion Assembly prior to this special meeting may present themselves for membership. This is usually not a good idea and should generally be postponed until proper counseling can be done with these persons. Exceptions may be made if the overseer or mission leader knows these persons well and is willing to accept their commitment on the spot. In such cases the *Abstract of Faith* should be read, at least in part, by the overseer or officiating minister before the “doors of the church are opened” to receive candidates for membership. If there is any hint of not understanding or agreeing wholly with the church’s position on any teaching, that person should not be received into the church. Of course, there should be on-going teaching and grounding in the distinctives of Zion Assembly, including appreciation and respect for the General Assembly and the church’s government and its leaders.

Congratulations!

Below are the names of the members of *SYNC* for 2018, and also a list of the churches that labored and succeeded to become 100% in *EMERGENCY DOLLARS* for 2018. We appreciate all of the hard work by our pastors and churches to achieve these worthy aims. Hopefully, all of our pastors and churches will strive in 2019 to become 100% in these important endeavors.

2018 SYNC Members “Subscribe Your Neighbor Club”

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Dave & Judy Ashley | Eddie & Faye Davis | Mr. & Mrs. Davis Webster | Daron Miller |
| Bob & Sue Ash | John Henley | Robert Llanaeza | Ricky Graves |
| Charles & Mary Barker | Jeanette Surratt | Steve & Glenda Major | Daniel & Laura Green |
| Lanny & Wilma Carter | Todd & Kim Erwin | David Noe | Andrea Schroader |
| Anton & Grace Burnette | Howard Freeze | Tracy McCafferty | Clifford Kelton |
| Carol Brown | Laura Freeze | Ethan & Elizabeth Nichols | Vernon Johnson |
| Wanda Busbee | Rick & Stephanie Ferrell | Rosa Nicholson | Trevor & Shanda Graves |
| Ruth Tingler | Mr. & Mrs. Billy Good | Wade H. & Dale Phillips | Tyler Smith |
| Nazario Ornelas | Travis Graves | Cecil & Donna Pounders | Cody & Tiffany Major |
| Chase Larmour | Zachary Snyder | Jerry & Nicole Pounders | Roger Bryant |
| Teri Larmour | Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Henry | Thomas & Carolyn Revelett | Richard & Kim Merrill |
| Sam Monday | Lena King | Dave & Deanna Sanner | David Price |
| Juanita Pyles | Calvin Harbison | Vic & Rose Snyder | |
| Mr. & Mrs. Terry Chambers | Linda Harbison | Bruce Sullivan | |
| Mr & Mrs. Daren Childers | Daniel Hawk | Ron & Janice Tennant | |
| Tod Deakle | Ida May Church | Virginia Wilson | |
| Sheila Deakle | Renetta Kelton | Brenda Wilkinson | |
| Daniel Dodson | Rebecca Land | Henry Wright | |

Churches 100% EMERGENCY DOLLARS

Cleveland, TN
Crossville, TN
Dallas, OR
Jacksboro, TN
Roanoke, VA

Salisbury, MD
Taylors, SC
Ware Shoals, SC
West Pelzer, SC
Wilmington, NC

Assistant Mission Director visits four na

It was a great privilege to visit so many of our ministers and churches on the African Continent in November 2-21. The tour covered almost 13,000 miles by air and 1200 miles via ground transportation.

I arrived in Lagos International Airport in Nigeria to begin the three-week tour that included meetings in the nations of Nigeria, Benin, Togo, and Tanzania, being greeted by national overseers Yomi Adekunle, Mark Agbonifo, and former overseer and mission representative, Amos Agbonifo.

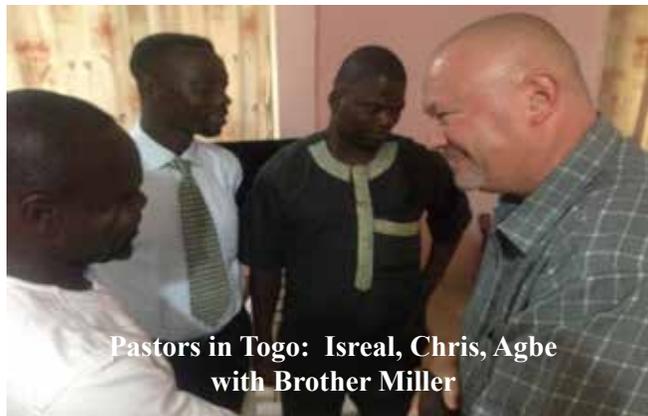


Yomi Adekunle, Mark Agbonifo, Daron Miller, Brice Cahon, Amos Agbonifo

The next morning, we were entertained by Bishop Amos in his home and enjoyed a nice breakfast. Afterward via hectic road conditions we journeyed to the Republic of Benin. While there, Bishop Adekunle, Mark Agbonifo, Bishop Amos and I visited one of the churches in Benin and were received by the pastor. In the service on Sunday, I taught on the observance of footwashing; then illustrated the ordinance by girding myself with a towel, as Jesus did, and proceeded to wash the feet of the brethren. Sister Agbonifo led the women in observing the ordinance. It was a glorious time in the Lord, and the brethren *“received the word with gladness”*.

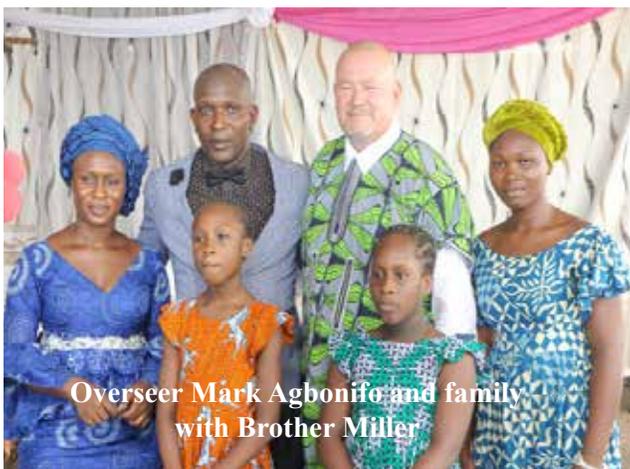
Following the service, we moved on to Lome, Togo.

In Togo, I met with pastors, Israel, Chris, and Agbe, as well as Bishop Adekunle and Mark Agbonifo, the overseer of Benin and Togo. That evening we were in service with Pastor Chris in Adje, Togo where the Lord moved mightily. We preached under the anointing and laid hands on the sick and prayed. There were deliverances, healings, and many were set at liberty by the power of the Holy Ghost. Praise God!



Pastors in Togo: Isreal, Chris, Agbe with Brother Miller

In the early morning hours, the next day, we left for Ibadan to represent the International Offices in the Nigerian national convention. The 14-hour trip was hot and dusty. We arrived at Bishop Adekunle’s home that evening, being greeted by his lovely wife and three children, all of whom are wonderful representatives of the church. Bishop Adekunle was a most gracious host, attending to our every need during the four-day stay there. After a brief rest, we went out to view the national properties, the mortgage of which had been recently paid in full. The properties include the campus of the School of Ministry, Assembly building, Mission Houses, Orphanage building and State Offices. It was exciting to see their plans for growth coming to fruition. Bishop Adekunle is a faithful and gifted leader.



Overseer Mark Agbonifo and family with Brother Miller

The opening day of the National Convention included a tour around the new properties acquired in the neighboring state of Oyo. This 5-acre property is being developed for the camping ministry. We were escorted by Bishop Adekunle and a team of ministers who had labored together recently to renovate the beautiful landscape. It was a blessing to fellowship with the ministers and members and celebrate with them the 10th anniversary of Zion Assembly in Nigeria.

The anniversary celebration began with a glorious time of praise and worship, after which I preached on the convention theme, *“Excellent Glory”*. The message focused on healing and deliverance. A mighty manifestation of God’s power and anointing showered the assembly. Hundreds came forward and many needs were met.

tions in Africa on Three-week Tour

In the afternoon, Bishop Akin Taiwo, the rector of Zion Institute School of Ministry preached on “The Shining Star” (2 Pet. 1.17-19), emphasizing that the key to being transformed from darkness to light is an intimate relationship with Jesus: for in Him alone do we experience the “Excellent Glory”. That evening, glorious singing (in English and Yoruba) by the mass choir filled our hearts and the atmosphere of the convention with the presence of God.

On the third day of the convention, several pastors preached outstanding messages under the anointing of the Lord. Bishop Adebowale Elijah in his message “Who is Jesus?” explained that Jesus was present from the beginning of the world, and continued to be present through all the events and prophetic fulfillments in the Old Testament (Prov. 8.22-31), appearing in bodily form in the fire with the three Hebrew children in the time of King Nebuchadnezzar, who with fear and trembling affirmed the existence of the Son of God (Daniel 4.25). This same Christ was made flesh; and the Life and Light of the World indwelt all who received Him! (John 1.4-5, 11-12, 14-18). I ministered later and encouraged the people to have a true heart for worship, and to worship always in spirit and in truth.

The following day, Saturday, a large number including brethren from denominational churches attended the power-packed convention. I preached again, focusing the message on “God-Ordained Church Government”, explaining the meaning of theocratic government, and emphasizing the need to be sold out to God and consecrated so as to be fit subjects for Christ’s *ekklesia*, His church (Mt. 16.16-19; 28.18-20; Acts 3.19-21; 19.32, 39, 41). I explained the difference between the church and the kingdom, noting especially that believers are first saved then “added” to His visible body, the church: which is Jesus’ eyes and ears and hands and feet acting for and with Him (Lu. 17.20-21; Jn. 1.13; 3.3-8; Acts 2.41, 47). God confirmed the message with His anointing and spiritual gifts. One sister filled with the Holy Ghost prophesied, spoke in tongues and interpreted as the Spirit gave utterance; then marvelously another thru the Spirit interpreted the message in English. The altars were filled with souls consecrating themselves before the Lord, seeking His perfect will.

During a question and answer session, the subject of modern-day apostles and prophets came up, which is problematic throughout Africa. I explained Zion Assembly’s understanding and position using Is. 43.7; Mt. 28.18-20; Jn. 12.26; Rom. 13.1; 1 Tim. 1.17; 1 Pet. 3.15; Rev. 4.11 and other passages for support: stressing that the offices of apostle and prophet are no longer needed; for the whole church now, and since the Day of Pentecost, is apostolic and prophetic. All believers indwelt with the Spirit have witnessed His resurrection in their hearts; and all of our ministers and members are anointed with special gifts and graces. Many of the brethren were open to receive this teaching. Later that evening, thirteen brethren were baptized (including Bishop Adekunle’s 14 year old son) in water in the Mokola River by Bishop Adekunle, Overseer Mark Agbonifo, Pastor Ojekunle, and me. What a time of rejoicing in the Lord!

On the final day of the convention, the church was overflowing with people including visiting ministers and saints



Nigeria School of Ministry



Ministers, workers and helpers in Convention



Bishop Adekunle administering baptism, including to his 14 year old son



Brother Gomba, His mother
and Brother Miller



Brother and Sister Gomba presenting
Brother Miller with gifts



Baptizing in beautiful
Lake Victoria in Tanzania



Convention in Tanzania

from other churches. Again, there was great rejoicing. Several support ministry programs followed, directed by the leaders. I preached for a final time, then recognition was given to students of Zion Institute School of Ministry which included ministers and members from other organizations. Overseer Adekunle's new book *Fulfill Your Destiny* was introduced and then time was given for a special Ordination Service for new ministers and deacons.

The last leg of the trip was to Tanzania. After flight delays, I arrived in Nairobi, Kenya and from there flew to Mwanza, Tanzania. Overseer David Gomba greeted me at the airport and accompanied me on a 6-hour trip to Shirati via transit bus. We then took a taxi to a small village, where we rested for a short while before the meeting. The meeting was held at Bishop Gomba's mother's house in the morning [tents were set up for the meeting], then we moved to the village for the evening sessions where a large number of people attended. Bishop Gomba was born in the place where Zion Assembly was established 14 years ago. Several churches had come into Zion at that time. The meeting was thus like a great homecoming for many of the people.

The convention was conducted November 13-18. There were 621 in attendance; sixty-two were saved, and twenty-four baptized in beautiful Lake Victoria. To God be the glory!

The services were spiritually power-packed, with healings, deliverances, miracles, and various manifestations of God's presence! The gracious and saintly people were eager to hear the Word of God. By this time on the tour my body was weary and tired; but my spirit was willing and so I pressed on in the strength of the Lord. Under His anointing and power, I was able to minister to the people sharing the Good News of Jesus and encouraging the people to learn more from His Word. I taught lessons on the *Abstract of Faith* and emphasized the importance of the government and oversight of the church. The people were receptive and responsive. Demons were cast out, souls were delivered, and various restorations were evident.

During one of the services, I preached and taught on "Tithing and Giving" and the Holy Ghost moved on the people with conviction and power. One young man came forward and put money in my hand (which I gave back to the church). Then suddenly the power of the Holy Ghost fell and engulfed the place. The people began to respond: some bringing material offerings [beautifully hand-crafted items], others gave chickens, one man gave a goat; others gave money. It was a glorious time in the Lord! In all of my ministry, I had never seen the power of God move on the people in that way. They were filled with God's Word, and with purified hearts and good consciences worshiped the Lord.

Brother Gomba is doing a marvelous job in Tanzania and in the surrounding nations. He is an inspired and capable church builder---spiritually and materially. His heart and material means are in the work. We can be thankful for him.

On the way back home, my thoughts were filled with gratitude to the Lord for all that was accomplished---for the many outpourings

of His Spirit; for the melting together of the overseers and ministers into the fellowship and work of the church; and for the instances of healings and deliverances. The work of the church is growing by leaps and bounds in Africa. I am so appreciative of those who made this trip possible through mission giving. My heart is overflowing with love and concern for our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

----Daron Miller, reporter



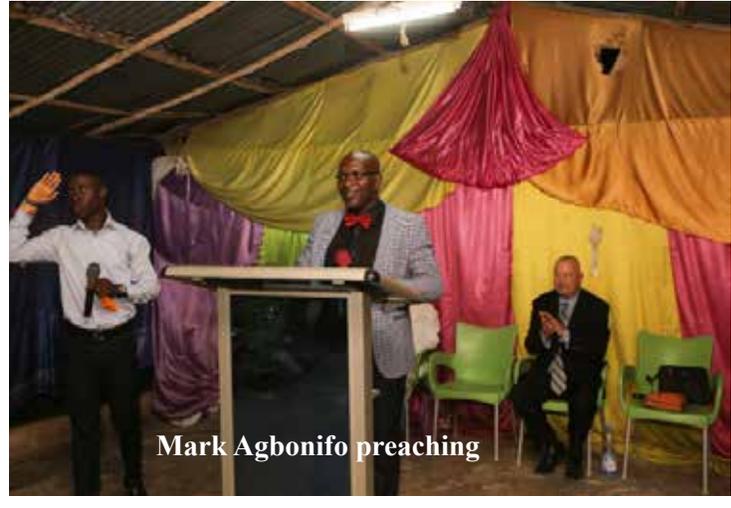
Graduate students of School of Ministry in Ibadan



Tanzania Convention Glorious Meeting!



Praying for the sick



Mark Agbonifo preaching



Headed for a baptismal service in Ibadan



Large choir at Ibadan church



Some fell under the power of the Spirit during the services



Bridge and Gate reconstructed by Zion Assembly in Ibadan, for passage into the city. (See report p. 15)

Ministers' and Workers' Conference Conducted in California South

It has been a general practice for the regional overseer to visit the churches following the Assembly and have a Ministers' and Workers' conference to layout some objectives for the year. We realized that November was late to conduct this conference, but we were trying to keep October clear for the churches to focus on the World Mission drive. Next year we'll aim for the end of September to conduct the conference. One of the emphases for this meeting was to plug the need for proper reporting and to demonstrate how to do it. We thus gave some simple instructions to help produce more consistent and timely reports, and to relieve any trepidation about filling them out. Surprisingly, a good deal of discussion followed regarding what to put on the line "number of members." The question was raised, "Should the number reported include inactive, erring, stray, and scattered members?" It was thought by some that to do so would reflect negatively on the local church. The answer, however, was that we should account for every member, and thus count the inactive, errant, and strays as well as the faithful. This launched us into discussing 1) how to deal with inactive members; 2) the responsibility of the local church and pastor; 3) how to initiate disciplinary actions; and 4) how long this process might be expected to take. It was obvious these interactions with the overseer were very much needed and appreciated by the ministry.

During the conference we also went over the steps involved in "Establishing Missions" as this was the topic featured in our Fall issue of our monthly newsletter, *La Novia Paisana*. (For the details of this seminar, see pp. 4-6 in this issue).

Overall, we were blessed in this conference with spirited worship, boosts and instructions from our departmental leaders, and afterwards enjoyed a tasty lunch served by Brother Danny and Sister Rosie Ramirez, the funds of which went to sponsor Couple's Retreat. There was also a "good-bye blessing" extended to Alex Jaramillo and family who were preparing to move to Arizona.

To God be the glory for all that He is doing and going to do in California South.

---Joseph Steele,
Regional Overseer, *reporter*

Women's Ministry Event Northern California

Ladies Day was held in San Jose November 11th, directed by Priscilla Pompa. Nineteen women attended and participated in the special event. "Anchored in Christ" was the theme based on Hebrew 6.19: *"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth that within the veil."* The core lesson was taught by Sister Pompa. There was also a special song by Noemi Diaz and a sermon by Sister Reina Romo. As the afternoon session continued, the presence of the Holy Ghost was manifested. Chains were broken, and several sisters were healed, physically and spiritually, and set free. We learned on this special day that our anchor will hold securely if we continue to trust and hope in Lord. He guarantees it! For faith and hope keep us steadfast in the Lord and the church.



Fresno Church Revived

The church in Fresno, California had been dying for several years, even going so far to suspend services this past year; but, praise the Lord! the church has in recent months been revived and restored. Much of the credit for this revival is due to the zeal and work of our new pastor, Daniel Lucero. He has been visiting and reaching out in the community since he was appointed in the state convention in July 2018.

On October 21, 2018 an opening service was conducted with twenty people in the new order.

What a day of joy and excitement and great expectancy as we relaunched the church forward in the Central Valley of California. The Hand of God is at work. The Spirit of God is on the move touching lives and breaking bondages by the Word of God! The prophet says, *"So shall my Word be that goes forth out of my mouth it shall not return until me void but will accomplish what I please and it shall prosper in the thing I sent it"* (Is 55.11). And Jesus declared, *"Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"* (Mt. 16.18). Verses like these encouraged the people to move forward with faith and courage. Zion Assembly in Fresno will not be intimidated, defeated, or discouraged: because we know it is God who goes before us.

Pastor and field secretary, Juan Lopez, from Madera, and pastor and district overseer, Art Carrillo, from Visalia, and his faithful wife, Sally, opened the service with powerful words of exhortation, followed by words of encouragement from Fela Moran. Reina Romo then brought a timely message. These leaders set the stage to launch the work forward. The people committed themselves to labor together to fulfill the assignment given to them by our Lord. Awards of recognition were presented to the four young daughters of our hosts, Alex and Carmen Martinez. Their names are Unique, Marci, Mary-Jane, and Bella Martinez; and their young nephew, Atticus Martin, also participated in the song service. Present also were Jim Parker, Lionor Martinez, Chaplain Rocky Martinez of the Refinery Church in Fresno, Zack and Lillian Martin, Andrea Cruz, and Angelina Chacon. Special thanks to Alex and Carmen Martinez for opening their home and preparing excellent food and refreshments.



---A. B. White
Regional Overseer, *reporter*

Report from Central India

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Thank you for your concern and attention to us in India. We receive the *Voice of Zion* magazines every month; they are such a blessing. We thank you also for the assistance for our Orphan Ministries. The children and all of our members and friends send loving greetings and good wishes to all the brethren and churches in the United States. Attached are pictures of orphans and children. Convey our regards to all.

Continue to pray for us

Your brother in Christ,
Talari Padma Rao
Provincial overseer, Central India



Blessing the food



Feeding the children



Worship



Awards for the children

Senior Ambassador Day Cleveland, Tennessee

On August 19th the seniors celebrated Senior Ambassador's Day. Director Billie Smith planned the morning worship service to honor our seniors---62 years and up. God blessed in a mighty way. Moving and convicting testimonies of God's faithfulness were given in word and song. Mary Orange read scriptures and commented on God's Word concerning seniors. Her testimony was moving as she told of God's greatness in her life. Sandy Morris and Alice Jones gave testimonies of "What Seniors Mean To Me". A video and song were presented by Kim Erwin entitled, "May Those Who Come Behind Us Find Us Faithful".

The youth of the church prepared cards that were presented to the seniors in appreciation of their Christian example and faithfulness. Gifts were also given to each senior. Our prayers are that God will continue to bless our Senior Ambassadors in Zion Assembly as they provide a wealth of knowledge and examples of Christian living.

also on December 8th, the Senior Ambassadors enjoyed a fellowship dinner at the local Cracker Barrel. Nineteen seniors attended. Great fellowship!

---Billie Smith, reporter

Zion Assembly Honored in Nigeria: Church tackles two Community projects

The church in Ibadan tackled two projects for the community to show their love and support for the people and to magnify the image of the church in their eyes.

Over a year ago a bridge collapsed in Ibadan closing-down a major thoroughfare into and out of the city. It created a serious problem as the city said they could not afford to repair the damage and restore the infrastructure. As a result, it bottlenecked traffic and created havoc throughout the community.

It has been said that it is better to "light a candle than curse the darkness". So rather than complain, the church in Ibadan took it upon herself to repair the bridge and restore the flow of traffic and the convenience of the road. Afterwards, our people engaged themselves in a second project: they constructed an estate gate in the entrance of the community for security.

These "exploits" so impressed the community leaders and people, that the president, Alhaji Suleaniman, and other community leaders joined with our ministers and members in formally dedicating the bridge and entrance gate. President Suleaiman and other leaders commended Bishop Adekunle and Zion Assembly and expressed their gratitude and appreciation for jobs well done. They also suggested that other religious groups would do well to follow the example of Zion Assembly and emulate her spirit and good works. The president prayed for the continued progress of the church.

Continued from Editorial Page . . .

to persons! For the truth exposes error and religious deceit and hypocrisy. Do not be surprised, therefore, if they slander our good intentions and do everything in their power to discourage our efforts: for true preaching of the Word of God manifests their sins and spiritual corruptions. Indeed, we will be wise to expect opposition from religious leaders and religious organizations [Christian and pagan] as well as from the political world. Recall the apostle's words, "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears*" (2 Tim. 4.3), and again, "*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . blasphemers . . . false accusers . . . despisers of those who are good . . . having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof*" (3.1-5). The apostle therefore admonishes the church, saying, "*from such turn away*" (v. 5).

"Tongue of the Learned"

Among the works of the flesh mentioned in the Gospel are those connected with the tongue: for the tongue reveals what is in the heart. Jesus said, "*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*" (Mt. 12.34), and James, the Lord's brother, says an unsanctified and undisciplined tongue "*is a fire, a world of iniquity . . . [that sets] on fire the course of nature; and is set on fire of hell*" (Jas. 3.6). Because the tongue has such potential evil in it, the apostle says it is "*a world of iniquity*", and indeed the tongues of men often ["*set on fire the course of nature*"] being ignited by hell. This always causes great destruction in the church as well as the world.

In contrast to a tongue that is untamed and set on fire by the sinful nature, the church under the grace of Christ is able to say, "*The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the learned, that I may know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary [i.e., to those wearied by sin]: he wakeneth . . . mine ear to hear as the learned*" (Is. 50.4)

Evil speaking reveals an evil heart. Our mouths are merely organs to express our inner thoughts and desires. Thus, if our inner thoughts and desires are evil and harbor envy, jealousy, malice, hateful resentment and bitterness, these thoughts and corrupt desires will inevitably manifest themselves in action. It was thus that Jesus and the apostles lumped together gossipers, whisperers, talebearers and slanderers with adulterers, fornicators, murderers, thieves and unclean persons (Rom. 1.29-32; 2 Cor. 13.21; Jas. 3.13-18; 1 Pet. 4.15).

Those who act out the evil in their hearts often attempt to justify their actions with lame excuses and false accusations against their opponents; couching their innuendos and complaints in crafty language, subtle facial expressions and misleading gestures. They feed their listeners with misinformation and half-truths to cast doubt on the integrity and character of others, often to misdirect attention and blame away from themselves.

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