



SON OF A **MOTHER'S**
VOW

TIMOTHY TOW



by
Timothy Tow
an
autobiography

Son of a Mother's Vow

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T. Tow
December 2000

Prologue

*“What, my son? and what, the son of my womb?
and what, the son of my vows?” (Prov. 31:2)*

It was one of those happy hours in our early childhood that Sister Siew Ai and I would sit at Mother’s feet and talk, while younger brothers Siang Yew and Siang Hwa would be playing hide-and-seek around the house. We had just come home from school in Singapore to Senai, Malaya, for the vacation, so the pleasure of sitting at Mother’s feet was sweeter than ever.

The things we talked about were serious subjects for children of our age. Sister was eleven and I was eight, Siang Yew was five and Siang Hwa three. Siang Yeow was the baby, kicking in the cradle. The things we asked concerned our Christian faith, education and future career. “Mother,” Sister and I asked almost in unison, “What shall I be when I grow up?”

Beginning with Sister, Mother said, “Sister will be a doctor.” Then she jumped to Siang Yew, “He will be an engineer.” Of sprightly Siang Hwa, her ambition was he should become a lawyer. When I felt a little left out and implored, Mother solemnly replied, “You are to be a pastor!” Then she added, “Before you were born, I had given you to the Lord. The day that you were born, Grandpa offered you up to Him in prayer.”

Why of all her children did Mother offer me to the Lord? Three years after Mother was married she gave birth to Sister. This did not fulfil the hopes of the Tow Clan, as everyone in the old Chinese tradition expected a boy, and that usually within the first year. When it took another three years before my arrival, Mother had become

anxious. Like Hannah in bitterness vowing to the Lord, Mother vowed the same vow, that should He grant His handmaid a man-child, “then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life” (1 Sam. 1:10,11).

During the Great Depression of 1929-30, I remember another occasion when we returned home from Singapore for the school vacation. I was alone with Mother. When I told her how small Grandpa's stipend was (he was pastor of the English Presbyterian Mission Church in Upper Serangoon), being thirty dollars a month, she was dumbfounded by that remark. (A school-leaver starting out as a junior clerk was paid forty-five dollars a month.) Looking very serene, she must be praying in her heart for the son of her vow.

“So, I will be a pastor when I grow up,” responded I within, to her wishes. I loved Mother very much. I was the son of my Mother's vow. When Mother spoke again, she comforted me with these words, “When you grow up, I will send you to America!” (Now, America, which is *Meikuo* in Chinese, means the Beautiful Country, a heaven-on-earth to me even at that young age).

1

Discovering Our Roots 1815-1868

“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also” (2 Tim. 1:5).

From our earliest childhood, we were immersed in the light and love of a godly family. Not only beneath godly parents, but also under the tutelage of Grandpa, a godly minister of the Gospel. Indeed, the roots of our Christian faith run even deeper. They go down to maternal great-grandfather Tan Khai-lin, also known as Tan Soo Chuan. He was the first convert of the English Presbyterian Mission to Swatow (1859).

The English Presbyterian Mission, established in 1847, was one of the late in coming among the many missionary societies that had sprouted since the founding of the first by William Carey, “father of modern missions” (1792). But “the last shall be first” (Matt. 20:16), considering the influence that the English Presbyterians have spread through Kwangtung and Fukien, two southern Chinese provinces; to Taiwan, Malaya and last, but not least, to Singapore. And now, as the torch is handed down to Bible-Presbyterian Missions in true succession, that Gospel Light is diffused to all the ten ASEAN countries, viz., Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia; and way beyond to Saipan in the Pacific, to Australia, to India, to Africa, to Canada, and to London; and even back to the Holy Land. If we include the 400 graduates of Far Eastern Bible College, that light is extended, indeed, to the ends of the earth.

The first pioneer missionary of the E. P. Mission that brought the Gospel to our forefathers in South China was William Chalmers Burns. Acclaimed today one of the greatest messengers of the Gospel, the story of this pioneer missionary must be retold to a new generation. Here is the main root of our Christian faith.

Rev. William Chalmers Burns (1815-1868)

William Chalmers Burns was born in a Scottish manse on April 1, 1815. His father was pastor of Kilsyth in Stirlingshire. Though he was brought up by godly parents, he did not know the Lord until the age of sixteen. While the other members of the family were engaged in reading the Bible and Christian books during their leisure as the custom was in that devout age, he would rather go fishing by some country brook or shooting birds in the forest.



William Chalmers Burns

Though his father had enrolled him at Aberdeen University to prepare him for the ministry after himself, the boy broke off his course to study law at his uncle's office in Edinburgh. During the time he was in Edinburgh, he received numerous letters from his sister urging him to turn to the Lord.

One day in early 1831, however, he suddenly reappeared at the Manse. He had walked a distance of thirty-six miles all the way home. He went straight to his mother, "Mother, what would you say if I should become a pastor after all?" The Lord had turned him right around to set him on the course his father had earlier planned for him. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. 16:9). He had evidently passed through some deep spiritual crisis, like everyone called of God, that changed the whole

direction of his young life. “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me” (Isa. 6:8).

When a man is saved, his outlook and ambition is also saved. Now we see Burns back at Aberdeen studying with all his might. He took his first degree with flying colours. From here he went to Glasgow to study theology. He distinguished himself in Greek and in other languages like French and Gaelic. This training in languages was a tremendous help to him when he had to learn Chinese with its many dialects in the days to come.

During his theological studies at Glasgow, he played a leading role in the Students Missionary Society. In the winter of 1838-9, he dedicated himself for the mission field. In the providence of God, however, eight years were to elapse before his solemn decision to serve God overseas was realised. As the Chinese saying goes, “It takes a long time to make a great vessel.”

Upon graduation, Burns was licensed to preach in March 1839, but since the door of missions was not opened to him yet, he gladly took up an appointment with Dundee. He was given the charge of a large congregation whose pastor was the renowned Robert Murray McCheyne, then on a convalescence trip to the Holy Land. What a task for one just out of the cloisters! Being very conscious of his inadequacies, he threw himself totally upon the mercies of God. With the promise given in Zechariah 4:6, “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,” Burns launched out in the power of His might.

Impressed at the outset of Burns’ coming to Dundee, an elder of the congregation wrote this about the supply pastor:

Scarcely had Mr. Burns entered on his work in St. Peters here, when his power as a preacher began to be felt. Gifted with a solid and vigorous understanding, possessed of a voice of vast compass and power—unsurpassed even by that of Spurgeon—and withal fired with an ardour so intense and an

energy so exhaustless that nothing could damp or resist it, Mr. Burns was almost without parallel since the days of Wesley and Whitefield.

Edward Band, writing about Burns in his *History of the English Presbyterian Mission 1847-1947*, continues:

The most authentic proof of his ministry came to him while on a visit home where it might have been expected that a prophet would be without honour. In the church of Kilsyth on the 23rd of July 1839, a great congregation was swayed by his preaching as by the rushing wind of Pentecost. This was the beginning of a revival which was to spread over Scotland and beyond the seas.

During the next eight years, Burns visited Perth, Newcastle, Aberdeen, Dublin and various places in Canada. (One of his young converts in Canada was George Leslie MacKay, later to become the first Canadian Presbyterian Missionary to Taiwan, 1871). Everywhere he went his preaching was accompanied by genuine conversions. Amid opposition and insult, in danger and tumult and with endless strain on his spiritual and physical strength, he carried the flaming torch of his message. Though emotional excesses occurred occasionally among his hearers (there was no speaking of tongues), Burns himself marvellously maintained his spiritual balance.

The cautious Presbytery of Aberdeen, becoming alarmed over reports of an outburst of emotional extravagance at the meetings, duly held an inquiry regarding the methods and results of the mission. After carefully examining the evidence, it acknowledged with devout thanksgiving that a genuine work of the Spirit had taken place, and it could only recommend all the ministers within its bounds to go and do likewise!

Burns ended his mission even more humble in heart and sensitive in conscience than when he began. The enduring influence of his campaign, especially on the religious life of Scotland, was beyond all doubt. Surely God had shown what could be done by one man wholly surrendered to His will. No

other explanation fits the facts. Burns was one of those dedicated souls whom God on occasion sends forth to stir the stagnant waters of life. Such was the man who was led to open



Frontispiece of booklet telling the story of
English Presbyterian Mission to China, 1847-1913

up work in China on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in
England.

Missionary interest in China was widespread throughout the British Isles after the Opium War with China (1839-42), when Hong Kong was ceded to Britain and five ports—Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai—were opened to foreign residence and trade. It must have stirred Burns' heart also. For, when a poor man on the Island of Arran, Scotland, went to hear Burns and offered him one pound to be handed to some China Mission, Burns took it and

sighed, "Who knows but that I may be there myself yet?" "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord" (Prov. 16:1).

Once Burns had made up his mind to answer the call to China, he was ready to go immediately like a soldier under orders. When asked by the Missions Committee when he would be available, he replied, "Tomorrow." A man who wasted no time in the prosecution of the Lord's work, he would often abruptly take leave of a pleasant company with these words, "I must run!"

November 1847 saw him arrive in Hong Kong after a voyage of five months around the Cape of Good Hope. (The Suez Canal was not opened until 1869.) Instead of relaxing on board, he applied himself to the study of the Cantonese dialect day and night. To polish up on his newly-acquired language, he rented a house in the Chinese quarter. Here he started a school which gave boarding to a few boys on whom he could practise his Cantonese. Within two months of his settling in Hong Kong, he was preaching "deliverance to the captives" in the prison (Luke 4:18). By February 1849, he was found itinerating on the mainland beyond Canton, accompanied by two Chinese helpers provided by the German missionary Gutzlaff. Remember that he often said to his friends, "I must run"?

The method used by Burns in the primitive evangelism is described as follows:

As soon as he reached a village he commenced to read his Bible aloud, say, under the shade of a tree. (Later on he had the Ten Commandments printed on slips of paper which he distributed while he preached from the holy precepts.) Soon the villagers began to gather, and he explained to them the nature and object of the Gospel. Usually someone would ask him at meal-time where he was to eat, and he, as usual, partook of what was set before him by some hospitable villager. As evening approached, someone would offer him a night's shelter; and thus he went on from week to week preaching the Word, and lacking nothing.

In accordance with the terms of treaty after the Opium War, Burns had entered forbidden territory. He was arrested and deported back to Hong Kong. This did not bother the intrepid evangelist as he was obeying a higher law, like one rescuing a sheep fallen into a ditch over which was erected a sign “Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted” (Matt. 12:11). “A higher law overrides a lower law.”

As if arrest and deportation were not enough, Burns and his two helpers were attacked by robbers who broke into the house where they had lodged for the night. “With disguised faces and drawn swords and flaming torches,” wrote Burns in his report, “they stripped us of almost all we had, leaving barely enough clothing to enable us to return.” They got back to Hong Kong half-naked, but “rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (Acts 5:41).

When Burns’ labours in the Cantonese field became harder and harder, as if “the Spirit suffered them not” while at the same time a Macedonian call was coming from Amoy, he “assuredly gathered” that the Lord had called him to preach the Gospel amongst the Hokkien people. Accordingly he left for Amoy in 1851 (Acts 16:6-11).

It was in Amoy (Peh-Chuia) that the Lord mightily blessed the sowing of the Gospel seed. In Burns’ own words, here is the first report of a good harvest:

The eldest son in one of the families, a promising youth of twenty, Lam-san by name, early showed much decision, having on the birthday of the god of the furnace, taken his god and put it in the fire. The idol having been but in part consumed, his mother discovered among the ashes a part of its head, and father and mother together beat their son severely. But some of the Peh-Chuia inquirers, having gone to comfort the young man and reason with his parents, their view underwent so sudden a change, that in a day or two afterwards they, with their four sons, brought out all their idols and

ancestral tablets, and publicly destroyed them in the view of the people.

Called to be an evangelist, Burns had to “run” to the next towns, that he might preach there also (Mark 1:38). So he left the work which was now established in Amoy to his co-workers. It must be noted; however, that during his five years’ sojourn in Amoy he had left behind something more permanent. He had revised and enlarged the Amoy Hymnal, himself translating some of the psalms and hymns. (The Amoy Hymnal flourishes to this day, and is used not only by Hokkien Presbyterians but also by Methodists in Singapore and Malaysia, and in the Philippines.) His translation of *Pilgrim’s Progress* was ranked third on the list of Christian classics drawn up by the Centenary Conference of 1907. Another deed of Burns sweet to the memory was his offering up of a whole year’s salary to the Mission, which drew this commendation from the Home Office: “Surely that field is ripe to harvest when the reaper sends home his own wages to fetch out another labourer.”

During these years there arose in China a great insurrection known as the Taiping Rebellion. Starting out as a religious reformation, it became a political movement, which fanned into a military rebellion that swept south and central China. The leader of this pseudo-religious movement was Hung Hsiu-Chuan. A Hakka who was influenced by reading Christian literature published by Liang A-fa, assistant to Robert Morrison, first missionary to China (1807), Hung tried to topple the Manchu regime and establish a “heavenly kingdom of peace”. They called themselves the worshippers of *Shang-Ti* (the Chinese term for God).

Hearing that the worshippers of *Shang-Ti* were printing Bibles and distributing them by the thousands, Burns felt a great challenge to contact their leaders in Nanking. Accordingly, he made a straight course for Shanghai upon return from furlough, and from Shanghai he sailed up the Yang-tse River in a native boat. As there was fighting between the Taiping insurgents and the Manchus ahead, he was obliged to return to Shanghai. It was in these circumstances that

he met Hudson Taylor, later to become founder of the China Inland Mission (1865), which continues to this day as the OMF (Overseas Missionary Fellowship).

Upon further meeting Captain Bowers of the ship “Geelong,” an earnest and missionary-minded Christian who offered free passage to Burns and Taylor, the Gospel tandem was led of the Lord to open a new field in the South hitherto unknown to them, viz., Swatow (1856).

Swatow (Santou) is situated midway between Hong Kong and Amoy (Xiamen) in the Province of Kwangtung on the Han River. Twenty miles up-river straddled the chief prefectural city Chao-chow-fu, which teemed with a quarter-million population. At that time, Swatow was not yet opened to foreigners. At any rate, quite a number of European merchants had settled there, being connived at by the local authorities. With the arrival of Burns, 41, and Hudson Taylor, 24, the Gospel had also come to stay.

*Our fathers sat in prisons dark
Amidst South China's plain,
Till one from England did embark,
Bearing the Light from Heaven.*

*The vessel whom the Lord had sent:
His name was William Burns.
To Hong Kong Island first he went
In eighteen forty-seven.*

*From thence sped he forth to Canton,
But God soon turned his step
To Amoy where he found a town,
That gladly sought his help.*

*'Twas in Amoy that he settled,
That God's Word might go forth.
From thence again he went to battle,
Farther, yet farther north.*

*To Shanghai, and on to Nanking:
He scanned her from the bow.*

*But meanwhile God was planning
To bring him to Swatow.*

*The captain of a British ship
Offered to take him south.
And so in eighteen fifty-six
On Swatow soil he ploughed.*

*'Twas on this trip to our city
That Hudson Taylor came
With Burns in the same ministry,
And they were not ashamed.*

As the Lord had another purpose for Hudson Taylor, he returned to Shanghai after co-labouring with Burns for some months. It was left to Burns to establish another mission station here in Swatow, though he was arrested (this the second time) for penetrating into Chao-chow-fu, the prefectural capital, and sent up to Canton for trial. Discharged by the Magistrate with a reprimand, Burns made his way back to Swatow. While preaching in an outlying village in the Swatow district, he was set upon by robbers (this also the second time), who relieved him of everything save the clothes on his bare back.

According to a Narrative by Donald Matheson on the "Mission to China of the English Presbyterian Church",

[Burns] found the [Swatow] people more blind and hardened in idolatry and in a lower state of civilisation than anywhere in China. The people in the boats, or working in the fields, were in a state of savage nudity; and instances were told to the missionary of persons taken prisoner in their clan-feuds having been cut to pieces and their heart boiled and eaten by their enemies.

In my boyhood, I had heard from Grandpa's lips how when mini-wars were waged between village and village in his time, the war-mongers would cut up one another and devour one another's heart to bolster courage. It seemed quite unbelievable until I found it all recorded in the annals of the English Presbyterian Mission to the

Swatow district. When I now realise to what depths of humiliation and suffering William Chalmers Burns had undergone in order to bring the light of salvation to our forebears, I am ashamed of the comforts we enjoy in the Lord's service today. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4).

In spite of the people's blindness and hardness of heart, the light of the Gospel first brought by Burns in 1856 began to break through three years later. Under the hand of Rev. George Smith, successor to Burns, a first convert was made in Tan Khai-lin, my maternal great-grandfather, who was baptised 1859. Being the first believer in Swatow, the circumstances leading to his conversion deserve a fuller narration. Let Dr. J. Campbell Gibson, an eminent missionary of the E. P. Mission to Swatow (1902) who had made a thorough research of the early endeavours of the Mission, tell the story:

Take for instance, the first convert of the English Presbyterian Mission in Teochew (Swatow District). His name was Tan Khai-lin. At the age of twelve he was left to the care of his mother on the death of his father, who had been a military officer of no great rank. An uncle with whom he lived became involved in difficulties on account of a lawsuit brought against him by the relatives of a man who was accidentally shot during archery practice. To escape from his difficulties, Khai-lin's uncle came to Swatow and brought his nephew along with him. While there they heard that a foreigner was, as the Chinese say, 'telling old stories' in a street chapel. They went to hear and see.

Khai-lin continued his attendance for sometime and attracted the attention of the missionary who was in charge. He was by this time sixteen years of age, and having received a good education, he was asked by the missionary to assist him by doing some Chinese writing. When the work was finished he



Rev. Tan Khai-lin

proposed to return home, but on conversation with the missionary it appeared that the truth which he had been learning had found lodgement in his mind. He was told that if indeed he was a believer in Christ, it was his duty to confess him in baptism. He said he would return home and consult his mother, but after some conversation he made up his mind that he would seek baptism before he left. In later days he remarked: "At that time, though I was a sinner and believed in Jesus, both my sense of sin and my faith were very shallow, and I have since found out more fully how great my sin is, and also how great the grace of Christ is." He was baptised and shortly returned home. On telling his mother the new truths which he had learned he was greatly surprised and delighted to find that instead of showing displeasure he had expected, she bowed her head in token of assent and approval as he put forth point after point of Christian teaching. She too afterwards visited Swatow, accepted the Gospel and received baptism.

In after years, when Khai-lin had become himself a preacher of the Gospel, he accompanied a missionary to a market town to preach to the people. A farmer in the neighbourhood, who came amongst others to hear, has given a graphic account of his own experiences as a hearer. When the preaching began the people were saying, "What are they talking about?" "Oh," said one, "they tell us that we should renounce our father and mother." But others exclaimed, "Let us hear what they have got to say." On that occasion Khai-lin began by saying, "Everything has a lord and master; every house, field, ship. The District Magistrate is master of the District; the Viceroy of the Province; the Emperor of the Empire. Surely the heaven and earth have a great Lord who has universal control and authority over them. This is the God whom we preach to you."

The farmer, whose name was Lou-ji says that he felt at once that this was the truth, and stood listening very earnestly to what was said by both preachers. Some disputed with them and said, "Then we must not worship idols?" "No," said the preacher, "they are only departed men. Worship belongs to

God alone.” “Formerly,” says Lou-ji, “I had been very angry on hearing that the foreigners condemned idol worship, but standing there that day I felt in my heart that they were right. A remark made by Khai-lin made a special impression upon my mind.”

An old woman in the crowd asked him, ‘But now, teacher, tell us, how is this God of yours to be worshipped?’ To which he replied, ‘You must understand, madam, that this God whom we preach is not the God of western nations only. He is the God of heaven and earth, and all nations and men alike have a part in Him and ought to worship and serve Him; and as He is everywhere present and knows all things, we can always pray to Him wherever we are, women in their own houses, and men when they are on a journey or engaged in work.’ I was more and more interested as the preaching went on. Several persons asked questions, but I did not ask any, though I eagerly attended to every word that was said. So fully was I convinced of the truth of what was being said that I had often drawn the conclusion in my own mind before the preacher had expressed it.

When the preachers had left, their words remained in my heart. So fully were my thoughts occupied, that all my curiosity about seeing the foreigner was forgotten, and I did not even inquire where he was going. On my way to my own house I passed an idol temple where I had been accustomed to worship very regularly twice a month, and I thought within my own mind, ‘Ay, I need come no more to you. Now I will worship God only.’ I said nothing to anyone about what was passing within my heart, but that night I could not sleep for thinking of what I heard, and in the middle of the night I resolved to rise and pray. It used to be my custom before worshipping the idol to wash myself, and I thought, “O God, thou art great, and I must come cleansed in thy presence; so I lighted a fire and warmed water for this purpose, and then I prayed to God for the first time.”

The zeal and wisdom of Tan Khai-lin as a preacher of the Gospel was fully attested by the narrative above. He was called to pastor the

Iam-tsau Church with its three branches, being ordained first pastor as well as tutor of the Swatow Theological College, 1882.

Having paused a while to study the case of the first convert and ordained minister in the Swatow District in my great grandpa, let us “run” with Burns to his next field. In October 1859, when Captain Bowers’ ship was leaving Swatow for Foochow, Burns hitched a ride with him there. Foochow was the capital city of Fukien Province, north of Amoy en route to Shanghai.

At Foochow, Burns learned yet another dialect. He prepared a colloquial hymn book for the Church. He cast his lot with the American Methodist Episcopal Mission. “His catholicity of feeling made him ever ready to aid any weak point.” “To the weak became I weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22).

However, problems in the Amoy fields that warranted the Mission to present its case before the British Ambassador in Peking quickened Burns’ steps northward to the Chinese capital. He arrived in October 1863, thus entering on the last period of his life. While no headway was made with the authority concerned, Burns occupied himself in evangelistic work. He was the first foreigner to hold street meetings in Peking. He also translated the *Pilgrim's Progress* into Mandarin and wrote a commentary on the Psalms and a hymn-book. As the Chinese saying goes, he was “an all-rounder, a scholar and a soldier”.

After four years of ceaseless toil, he moved on to Manchuria where no missionary had yet visited. Late in 1867 he crossed from Peking over to Newchuang in a Chinese junk. When the boat reached Newchuang, the captain, though a heathen, refused to accept any payment for the trip because he observed, “You are going to help men to be good. I cannot take your money.” “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Prov. 16:7).

In a letter to his colleagues in South China, who missed him very much, Burns wrote one of his last letters, dated November 21, 1867:

It seems to me that no place more suitable could be recommended to the Irish Presbyterians than Newchuang and Manchuria beyond, a vast open and unoccupied field with a fine climate . . . Romish priests are found here and there, but the only representative of the Protestant Churches is my solitary self. 'Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named' (Rom. 15:20).

Let Edward Band tell the moving story of his last days on earth:

During these closing months Burns suffered from ill-health, probably owing to lack of nourishing food. Early in January, 1865, he was taken ill with a cold which brought on fever from which he never recovered. For weeks and months he lay in helpless weakness. Though he knew that his end was near, he was quite resigned and always cheerful, calmly making arrangements for the support of his assistant, Wang, until some other missionary should arrive to take his place.

A friend who visited him in his closing hours described the scene:

The little room in which he died had but few comforts, certainly no luxuries. The form on which he slept, a table, two chairs, two bookcases and an open-grate foreign stove made up all the furniture. The assistant sat at his feet weeping, now and then raising his eyes upward in silent prayer, and the servant on one side watching with tenderness his wants. These two single-minded natives, judging from their lives and sayings since, must have profited from his last injunctions. And so after the years of toil he passed away into the other world. 'God,' he said, 'will carry on the good work . . . Ah! no. I have fears for that.'

God in His goodness did carry on the work, for through the good offices of Hugh M. Matheson, this last request of Burns was conveyed to the Irish Presbyterian Church . . . with the result that their first missionaries to Manchuria arrived on

May 1, 1869, and missionaries from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland followed the next year. These two missions cooperated in building up a strong Church in Manchuria which after forty years numbered over 16,000 communicants with a Mission staff of seventy Europeans. Certainly, God did not fail to justify His servant's confidence.

Burns passed away on April 4, 1868. His last coherent words, which were uttered with extraordinary power and decision, were the doxology—"For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory. Amen" (Matt. 6:13).

It is observed that of the great missionaries we have known, there was none that resembled the Apostle Paul as William Chalmers Burns. As Paul remained single all his life, so did Burns, both for the Gospel's sake. As Paul's burning desire was to preach the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth, so was Burns'. His doxology extolling God's Kingdom uttered before he passed into glory was the victory cry of a lifetime's endeavour to preach the Gospel "not where Christ was named".

We sons of Swatow and Amoy are specially grateful to this modern St. Paul for bringing the Gospel, at great sacrifice, to our ancestors. And the reason why Burns refused to budge from Swatow despite his arrest and being robbed was his overcoming love for his persecutors. Without his breakthrough in Swatow, many Teochews might not have become Christians today, including the Tow Clan.

Iam-Tsau and Lechler Our German Root (1849-1949)

Of all the work done by the early missionaries of the English Presbyterian Mission in the Swatow district, there is none more mentioned and cited than that of the Church at Iam-tsau (which means "Salt Pans"). Situated some twenty-two miles north of Swatow on the sea, it is the home-town from which two families of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore have sprung. They are

the Lim Clan (Elder Joshua Lim Heong Wee and David Lim his son, a minister in the Singapore Government) and the Tow Clan.

Now, if it is asked how Iam-tsau, an off-the-beaten-track fishing village, should figure so prominently in the Swatow district, like little Bethlehem not the least among the princes of Juda (Matt. 2:6), we must go beyond William Burns to Lechler, our German root who



preceded the English pioneer by almost a decade insofar as Iam-tsau is concerned. Here is one precious root of our Christian faith every son and daughter of Iam-tsau must know.

Iam-tsau Church (1849-1995)

The life and ministry of Dr. Rudolph Lechler (1824-1908), first missionary of the Basel Missionary Society to China, 1847 (the same year Burns landed in Hong Kong), was lavishly commemorated by the Iam-tsau Church on the centenary of his coming to the same village in 1849. This celebration was held on October 2, 1949, the day after the People's Republic of China was proclaimed in Peking (Beijing) with Mao Tse-tung as Chairman. A full-sized magazine listing Rev. Lim Moh Tee, and Evangelist Lim Puay Hian (Elder Joshua Lim's grandfather and father) and Tow Khi Hien (the author's

grandfather) and (Timothy) Tow Siang Hui as four sons of Iam-tsau who had followed in Lechler's steps was published for the Lechler centennial. Nevertheless, it is from the "Theology of Evangelism" Lectures by Dr. J. Campbell Gibson of the E. P. Mission in 1902 that we are given a close-up picture of the exploits of Lechler before and after his coming to Iam-tsau. Dr. Gibson says of him as follows:

In the Swatow district the first attempts at evangelisation were made by Rudolph Lechler, a missionary of the Basel Missionary Society (1815) who, after fifty-two years of hard work in China, is still labouring among the stations of the German Mission in the hill country of the Hakkas in the district of Hin-ning.

On the May 17, 1848, accompanied by three Chinese helpers and a servant, Mr. Lechler sailed from Hong Kong. His first destination was the island of Namoa lying off the sea coast in the Teochew Prefecture. Sailing in a north-easterly direction, they reached Namoa in six days, where they found two European vessels, engaged in smuggling cargoes of opium, anchored near the shore. Mr. Lechler was provided with a letter of credit to the captain of one of these vessels, and was allowed to live on board the ship till he could find a lodging on the island.

In this way Mr. Lechler found a strange resting place from which to begin evangelistic work. His native companions after a time found a lodging for him in a village on shore, but in a very short time the owner was summoned before the authorities and commanded to see to it that Mr. Lechler should leave at once.

In another town he found a Chinaman whose acquaintance he had made in Hong Kong, and who had been baptised there by another German missionary named Gutzlaff. But Mr. Lechler found him still worshipping the god of war, and showing no trace of what he had learned of Christianity. His son was a leper who had accompanied his father on a visit to Hong Kong, and had possessed himself of a New Testament and various Christian tracts. Mr. Lechler found him still

needing them and recognised in him an upright inquiring soul. The father, however, would give the missionary no encouragement, and he was obliged to leave the island, though a year later he was privileged to baptise the leper lad....

Early in the following year (1849) he found a new home in a house which he rented in the village of Iam-tsau, or "Salt Pans." A wealthy man in the village had become an opium smoker, and in consequence had gone through his property and ruined himself. One large house remained in the possession of the widow and her sons, and they let a portion of this to Mr. Lechler. In one of these rooms Lechler began to hold morning and evening worship with his own followers, and also conducted public worship on the Lord's Day. The widow and her sons were very kind to Lechler and those who were with him, and he was able to repay their kindness by some little attentions in providing medicines in time of sickness. His relations with the leading men of the village were friendly, and he was able to assist them in negotiating for peace with a neighbouring village with which they had been at feud. The people of the village could not understand what Lechler's object was in coming to live among them. They noticed that he did not attend their theatres or the places of pleasure, and they began to conclude that he was endeavouring to "become a holy man," and doing good works in hope of meriting heaven. He gradually extended his preaching tours, and was surprised to find that wherever he went in the villages he could easily gather large audiences of attentive hearers....

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1). Though there were many unfaithful assistants with Lechler, and though he was expelled time and again from Iam-tsau our hometown, and from other places of abode; nevertheless, Lechler had laid a firm foundation. Remember also that Iam-tsau was the first Church (with several branch churches) to call Tan Khai-lin to pastor the growing parish. The sowing in tears by the German missionary a decade before the English now brought many cheers, so

that “both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together” (John 4:36).

The story of Lechler will not be complete without recounting his great success in establishing a flourishing church in the Hakka hinterland of Swatow. In 1860 he had the Gospel of Matthew which he had translated into Romanised Hakka printed in Berlin. In 1874 Dr. Rudolph Lechler was appointed president of the Basel Church Council in China. When he revisited Iam-tsau in 1881, he wept with joy when he saw what great things the Lord had done over the years after his expulsion in 1852.

In 1965 when Rev. Philip Heng and I were commissioned by Life Church to preach the Gospel in North Borneo (now called Sabah), every town we visited from Kota Kinabalu to Tawau had at least one Basel Church, while the congregations we contacted were all Hakka-speaking. It puzzled us to see why a Hakka-speaking Church, of Chinese origin, should be named after a town in Switzerland? With the exploits of Rudolph Lechler recounted in the foregoing pages, now we know, and the sons and daughters in Sabah should know! Lechler, our German root insofar as the sons of Iam-tsau are concerned, is also the root of the Hakka Basel Church in Sabah!

In deep gratitude to God for Lechler's love for the people of Iam-tsau and for the Hakkas, let us today who drink the sweet waters remember the head-springs from which they come. Lechler, our German Root!

2

Childhood Memories of China 1920-1926

*“They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness,
And shall sing of thy righteousness” (Ps. 145:7)*

I was born in the city of Swatow, Kwang-tung Province, South China, in the year of our Lord 1920. Of the day and month, I need not tell, because in the tradition of the Tow Clan, we have never celebrated any birthday. And we do not want to involve our friends in such a celebration. This tradition originated from Grandpa, who told his four sons, three daughters and grandchildren not to celebrate, because every birthday (I can hear him sigh) is a reminder of our nearer approach to the grave. (At the back of his mind, there perhaps lurked also a subconscious resentment at those who would use their birthday celebration as a means to their selfish ends.) Like the Rechabites of old who kept their forefathers’ injunction not to drink wine nor build houses (Jer. 35:6), we have faithfully adhered to Grandfather’s word to this day. For this reason, neither Father nor Mother told us of their birthdays.

Father was one of those fortunate sons of the Church to receive training at the Swatow Hospital of the English Presbyterian Mission. It was a five-year course under Dr. Alexander Lyall, (1879 - 1926).

An heirloom of the Tow Clan that has come to my hand is my father’s Diploma in Medicine. It reads:

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN MISSION HOSPITAL

(Founded 1863)

Swatow, China

Under the care of Dr. Alexander Lyall, M.B., C.M.

Know all men by these presents that Tou Keng Kee was entered as a student of this hospital in the year 1906, and remained here for five years.

He studied Chemistry, Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Medicine (including Materia Medica), Surgery (including Practical Surgery), Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children, Diseases of the Eye and Skin Diseases, as well as the administration of anaesthetics.

He daily assisted me in the diagnosis and treatment of disease in Hospital.

He has been examined by the undersigned, and is awarded this certificate in Chinese and English as evidence that he has been found competent to practise as a physician and surgeon: in witness thereof I and my fellow-examiners have hereto set our hands this fifth day of the Eighth Month 1911.



*A. Lyall (in charge of Swatow
Mission Hospital, China)*

A. Wright, M.B. (Co-examiner)

G. Dunearn Whyte, M.D.

B. Chalmers, M.D., Ch. B.

C. H. D. Morland, F.R.C.S.

After graduation in 1911, the year the Manchus fell, my father found employment as an assistant doctor in Penang and in Pontianak, West Borneo (Kalimantan), before returning to Swatow to establish his own practice and get married.

We were comfortably provided for. The two-storey terrace house in which we lived at Liang Heng Lee was spacious enough for a three-tier family, which was the established custom of those days. This included my uncles and aunts as well, whose double-decker beds I can faintly remember. There was living room for the cousins too, whenever they visited us from the country.

Father was often on call to attend to his patients. When he went visiting, he would sometimes bring me along. What a thrill to ride first-class train with him on the short line from Swatow to Ampou. I can still remember those deep-cushioned seats, with newly changed covers so clean and white, laced with a thin red lining. For recreation, Father liked to shoot wild ducks and geese in winter.

Grandpa was an evangelist of the English Presbyterian Mission. He found the Lord, like Tan Khai-lin my great grandfather, also from the lips of a missionary at the age of nineteen. One who would join in the festivity carrying and parading the village images, he “turned from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thess. 1:9). Most of the time, he was out preaching far from our house in Swatow, right up to the Hakka border. He told me he learnt the Hakka dialect in a short time. His means of transportation were his two legs and a pair of grass sandals. He carried a light cloth pack on his back. Sometimes he would be assigned to a country church where he stayed alone by himself. Grandma, daughter of Tan Khai-lin, preferred to stay in the city with us. Therefore, it fell on my youngest aunt to go and keep Grandpa company every now and then.

As a tiny tot, I admired Father a lot for he was tall and handsome, and he loved us very much. He lavished fashionable clothes on me and dresses on Sister. I can remember how I would strut around in my navy-blue sailor suit, complete with gold-rimmed sailor cap with my name stitched in gold on it. But what made our life so happy was Mother. She was ever so loving and gentle, so devout and understanding. At a very young age she taught me how to draw and read. Above all, she taught us the Lord’s Prayer, to pray for “heavenly wisdom” and to sing “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know.”

Sister was my playmate and companion. She would take care of her younger brother like an adult guardian. When we went to Church on Sunday, we often ran ahead of Mother, hand in hand.

When Mother was a teenager, she was gloriously saved at a Revival Campaign with Miss Dora Yu Tsi-tu (余慈度). Not only was Mother saved at the hand of Miss Dora Yu, Father was also greatly blessed. Sister and I were brought up under the spell of their singing from the Dora Yu Revival Hymnal. From a very young age, we had learnt such tunes as “The Gospel Bells are Ringing” and “When Jesus Comes to Reward His Servants.”

When we grew older, we often heard Mother and Father tell of the power of Miss Yu's preaching. Evangelist Lim Puay Hian also recorded in his memoirs how he was brought under the sway of Dora Yu when she visited Swatow in 1910, though he was only nine years old.

Miss Yu was one of the elite of China's rising generation before the fall of the Manchus. She came from a well-to-do family. Being educated at a mission school, she had a fair knowledge of Christianity. Having graduated with honours, she was sent by her family to pursue a medical career in Great Britain. She set sail in a ship via the Suez Canal. But the words of Christ confronted her with what her ultimate purpose of life was, as the vessel ploughed through the high seas. When the ship had negotiated the placid waterway of the Suez Canal and anchored in the Mediterranean before taking on the last leg of the voyage, her decision for Christ was irrevocably made. She went to the ship's Captain, into whose care she had been entrusted, and told him what had happened. Thinking her to be beside herself, the Captain became very angry. But as she was fully determined to serve her Lord, the Captain had no way out but to put her on another ship that sailed out of Marseilles back to Shanghai. She returned, indeed, to preach Christ to her own people. Having put her hand to the plough (Luke 9:62), she never looked back on the world again. And inasmuch as she had to break completely with the world, even parents and loved ones, wholeheartedly to serve the

Master, she also made the painful decision to part from a young doctor to whom she was betrothed to be married. Such a consecrated life was one secret of the power behind her preaching. (Read *Against the Tide* by Angus I. Kinnear)

Miss Dora Yu began to shake North China with repercussions into Korea in the first decade of the Twentieth Century. When she visited Swatow in 1910, the power of her meetings soon spread to the Hakka field. Its influence was felt also at Swabue (Swatow's Land's End) where Rev. Lim Moh Tee, Elder Joshua Lim's grandfather, was pastor.

Three young preachers from Swatow who came under the outpouring of that Holy Spirit Revival were invited to hold meetings. The phenomenon that happened in Swatow of hearers writhing in agony on the ground under the conviction of sin and leaping up to praise the Lord for deliverance was repeated at Swabue. But there was no speaking in tongues.

That Dora Yu's preaching influenced not only the masses but also preachers and pastors, as related by Lim Puay Hian above, is further augmented by this record from the E. P. Mission. It tells of the blessings she brought to a Hakka pastor and College tutor. It reads:

The year 1910 was remarkable for a season of revival in Swatow. In a series of meetings a Chinese woman evangelist Miss Yu made a deep impression. Speaking in Mandarin she was interpreted by Phang Khi-fung the Wukingfu tutor. The reports of the unusual gathering had awakened great expectations throughout the Hakka field. The College tutor's sympathetic interpretation of Miss Yu's addresses helped greatly, and he himself was wonderfully blessed Phang Khi-fung had acquired a wide reputation as a Christian scholar and ecclesiastic in Church assemblies, but henceforth he advanced swiftly in spiritual experience and preaching power. With a new religious fervour he occupied himself more in evangelising than in teaching, although he continued to hold his position as College tutor.

Phang Khi-fung's meetings in December 1910 were marked with perplexing physical manifestations, crowds praying together, people trembling with conviction of sin, some writhing in agony, others fully prostrate to the ground The movement spread from station to station No matter where Phang Khi-fung, the College tutor, had gone to hold special missions, there has been blessing. Where formerly the people were listless and careless, now there was an inspiring keenness in their attention to teaching; members who dropped away had returned and those elected to office had quite a new sense of responsibility.

After Miss Dora Yu's visit to our city, the Lord sent another faithful messenger to bless Swatow in the person of Rev. Ting Li Mei (丁立美), whose exploits for the Lord we shall discover later on.

Under the shelter of devout Christian parents, doubly blessed by English missionaries and Chinese evangelists, our childhood memories were filled with things spiritual; things that were true and honest, things that were just and pure, things that were lovely and of a good report (Phil. 4:8). A Christian home where Christ reigns supreme is a little heaven on earth, especially to children. Surrounded by a hostile world, however, in no time as we grew up to face the stark realities of life, we were soon to be shaken by storms and tempests and drenched in sorrows and tears.

Jason Linn (林证耶), in his book *Pioneering in Dyak Borneo*, describes China as a land of perennial sorrows, being plagued by "natural disasters and man-engendered tribulations". (天灾人祸) In the opening chapter of this biography, we have noted, by way of passing reference, the Sino-British Opium War (1839-42) and the Taiping Insurrection (1851-64) which occurred during the early years of the E. P. Mission.

Insofar as our childhood memories go, being refreshed by the elders' conversations and by hearing directly from Grandpa's lips, there followed in the wake of upheaval after upheaval a major one that affected the whole Chinese Church. This was the Boxer

Rebellion of 1900 in which the Protestant Church lost 135 missionaries with 53 of their children and over 1,900 Chinese members. One bright spot of heroism in that dark night, often told by Father, was the courage of two Information Officers, Hsu and Yuan. These two men altered the Imperial decree “When you meet a foreigner you must slay him” into “When you meet a foreigner you must save him.” This reversed message to the provinces allowed many missionaries to escape. For tampering with the Empress Dowager’s decree, Hsu and Yuan were cruelly executed. Surely these two men belonged to the honour roll of heroes, “who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions” (Heb. 11:33).

In 1900, Grandpa was a young pastor in charge of a country Church. Knowing that the Boxers would invade, he made ample provisions to “welcome” them. He threw open the main gate to the Church compound. On the table in the common hall, he set a big pot of the best Chinese tea with a pile of peanut caramel which the Teochews relish. Above the entrance to the common hall, he had a signboard displaying boldly the four Chinese characters for “JESUS The True Religion” (耶穌正教). When the Boxers descended with swords and spears, Grandpa, without a wince, “welcomed them to tea.” Praise the Lord for giving him presence of mind in an hour of gravest danger, and the right words to speak. Seeing that Grandpa was a just man, the Boxers left without causing hurt to life or limb. All they had was a nice time of tea drinking and caramel chewing and an old German wall-clock which they plucked away. “But when they deliver you up, take no thought what or how you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Matt. 10:19-20).

Now, while Grandpa was mercifully spared from bodily injury at the hands of southern Boxers, Rev. Ting Li Mei, who is mentioned earlier after Dora Yu, was cast into prison by Yu Hsien, Governor of Shantung in the north. During his confinement behind “iron



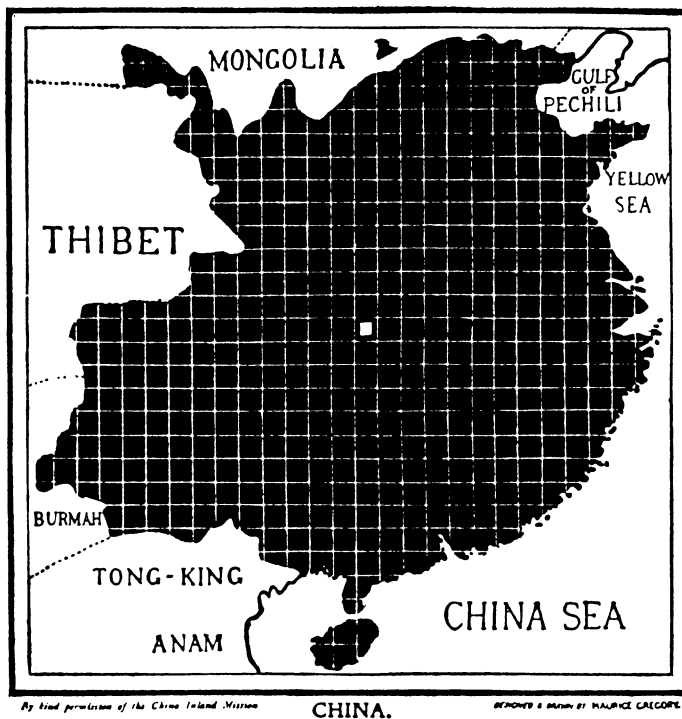
Rev. Ting Li Mei
1871 - 1936

windows,” he was beaten with five times forty stripes, according to the *Wesleyan Reporter*, dated February 1934. The young Chinese minister, through intervention of American Presbyterian Missionary Dr. W.M. Hayes with Yuan Shih Kai (who later usurped the presidency due to Dr. Sun Yat Sen), was released after forty days. But God turned his “lions den” experience for good. As it is said that “the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church,” Rev. Ting came through the fire and blood of the Boxer Rebellion a flaming soul for God.

One question that had arisen in his mind was the snail’s pace at which the Chinese Church was moving. After a century of Christian missions, dating from 1807 (Robert Morrison), China was still enveloped in heathen darkness. No wonder these blood-curdling massacres of missionaries by the scores and of his own compatriots by the thousands. As he pondered these things in his heart, he must have echoed to the words of the prophet Ezekiel, “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath” (Ezek. 22:30,31).

Then heard he the Voice of the Lord as he read Isaiah 6:8: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.” And as the Word of God came to him according to Jeremiah “as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay” (Jer. 20:9), something had to happen! Rev. Ting launched out in 1908 as an independent evangelist. In April the year following, he called a general meeting of Christian students, whereby a “China Student Volunteers for Evangelism” was launched. Its aim was “to preach the Gospel

A GREAT NEED IN CHINA:
Without Hope and Without God in the World



Each black square represents one million souls living in spiritual darkness. The small white square in the centre represents the total number of adherents attached to the Protestant churches in China, estimated at a quarter of a million.

A parallel case would be if Bradford, or Hull, or Newcastle, or Nottingham were a Christian town, whilst the whole of the rest of Europe was without Christ.

How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

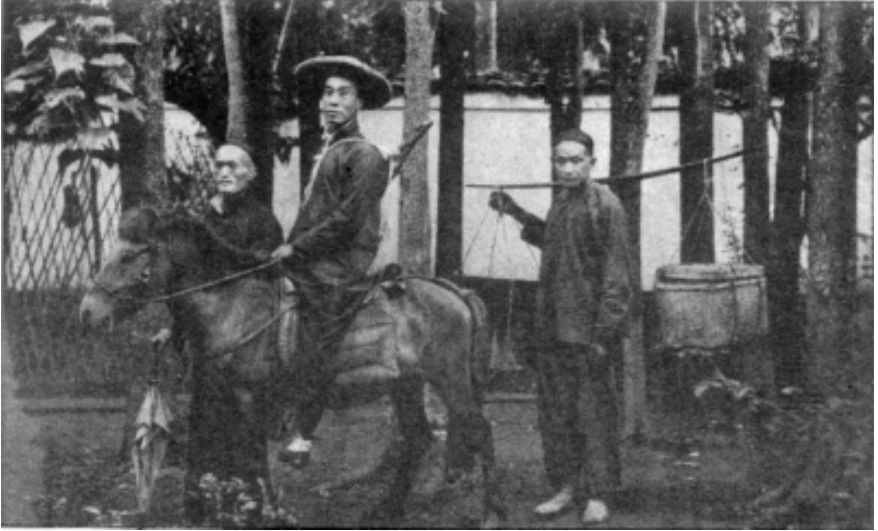
throughout China, even to the ends of the earth within our generation”.

From the beginning of his itinerant ministry Rev. Ting was mightily used of God. One of his meetings with the Methodist Church in Peking lasted from 9 o'clock in the morning until 2 o'clock after midnight. Men and women who came under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit were crushed by their sins. These wept in remorse and repentance for protracted hours, until they had made a complete clean breast of themselves through the blood of Christ. But there was no speaking in tongues. At this campaign in the national capital, 2,000 were gloriously saved. (This eye-witness account was given by Mr. Ching Fu-yin, his co-labourer in the Gospel, in the *Chinese Commemorative Book* compiled by N.Z. Zia, published by Christian Literature Society, Shanghai, 1939.)

For over a decade Rev. Ting traversed all the eighteen provinces of China, by every means of transportation, including horseback into the wild mountainous country of Yunnan. The name of Ting Li Mei was upon every lip so that he began to be called “The Moody of China, winning a thousand converts a month.”

Rev. Ting did not by-pass our home town Swatow in Kwangtung Province. He brought salvation and revival to the Tow Clan, adding blessing upon blessing to Miss Dora Yu's earlier ministry. From a young age, we children often heard the sweet names of Dora Yu and Ting Li Mei from the lips of our parents. Rev. Ting became a close family friend. One thing Mother had said of him, which has remained in our minds to this day, is that Rev. Ting, being a northerner, relished noodles. This was always served in hot steaming soup whenever he called. (For a full story of China's Moody, read my preceding book *Asian Awakening* pages 193 - 261, published by Christian Life Book Centre.)

Returning to the gloomy picture of “natural disasters”, there occurred in the Swatow District an Earthquake in 1918, before I was born. Sister could faintly remember how people dashed helter-skelter



Evangelising Miao tribes in Yunnan Province, 1919.

to the open fields. In this Earthquake, Grandpa was pastoring a country church. From Grandpa's lips, we heard many a time how he was resigned to meet his God when the Earthquake struck. He did not try to run out of the building but rather knelt where he was inside the Church and prayed. When the Earthquake rumbled to a halt, he got up unhurt, save for some loosened roof-tiles falling on the pews. The houses of the well-to-do on either side of this old rickety Church, still standing, had collapsed in two heaps.

Now, this Church where Grandpa was stationed was at Outeng. His miraculous preservation was a testimony of "the living and true God" he served (1 Thess. 1:9) to the whole village. This episode is recorded in a magazine dated 1936 commemorating the dedication of a new Church at Outeng to the memory of Tan Khai-lin, my maternal great-grandfather.

"One woe doth tread upon another's heel, how swift they come." After the 1918 Earthquake, there followed in great ferocity the August 2nd Typhoon of 1922. When the August 2nd Typhoon struck Swatow, I can still remember Father shouting orders above the storm

and the crashing of window panes onto our upstairs air well. To prevent Grandma's coffin, which was lying downstairs (awaiting burial), from floating away, I am told how it had to be secured by ropes, anchored to the staircase. For a tidal wave rising several feet in the wake of the Typhoon had swept into town. The next morning when the flood waters were subsiding, I was carried in the arms of some young woman to see the sights. Carcasses of pigs and dogs, chickens and ducks, floating outside our doorway, made a lasting impression upon my young mind.

The E. P. Mission to Swatow recorded the disaster as follows:

On the night of August 2, 1922, a terrific typhoon of unprecedented violence burst upon the Swatow district, inflicting great loss of life and widespread damage to property. Then, closely following on the typhoon, a great wave rushed in from the sea, like a tidal wave, and flooded the whole town to a depth of five or six feet. This terrible disaster caused much greater devastation than the earthquake of 1918. Steamers in the harbour were swept from their anchorage and cast upon the rocks; junks were stranded half-a-mile inland. People were lifted by the force of the wind and flung against the walls and lay mangled beyond recognition. Others were crushed by the falling buildings behind which they had taken shelter. Thirty or forty thousand persons lost their lives: some from the storm and others from the flood. Trees were uprooted and crops were hopelessly ruined. The stench of innumerable corpses lying for days unburied in the blazing sun was unbearable. Many thousands more who escaped death were bereft of hearth and home.

Mission losses were not so heavy, as the Mission schools were closed for the summer vacation and all the missionaries and their families were preserved in safety, although their houses were badly damaged, most of them being roofless.

The Chinese Christians suffered most severely; many Church members being drowned and chapels destroyed. One congregation lost 250 members, and of one Christian family numbering 25 people only three were left alive.

In the story of Lim Puay Hian (*In John Sung's Steps*), it is found from his memoirs the listing of thirty-six dead within the Lim Ah Chou Clan, that is, from his grandfather downwards. Lim Puay Hian's next-of-kin, taken by the Typhoon were two younger sisters. It was of the Lord's tender mercies that none from the Tow Clan were lost.

From his deep experiences with God's special providence in both the Earthquake of 1918 and the Typhoon of August 2, 1922, Grandpa had learned the importance of prayer, of calling on God before anything else in the face of danger. This is one rider he liked to pose to us grandchildren when we were older and boarded with him at the manse: "Grandchildren, what would you do when you meet a tiger face to face?" My first thought was, run or climb a tree! "No," replied Grandpa, "Pray!" Then he cited Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Another favourite verse of his was Deuteronomy 32:10 which he made us memorise: "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Among the wise sayings, Grandpa quoted this Teochew proverb, "Old people's word is like medicine. You need to wrap it up."

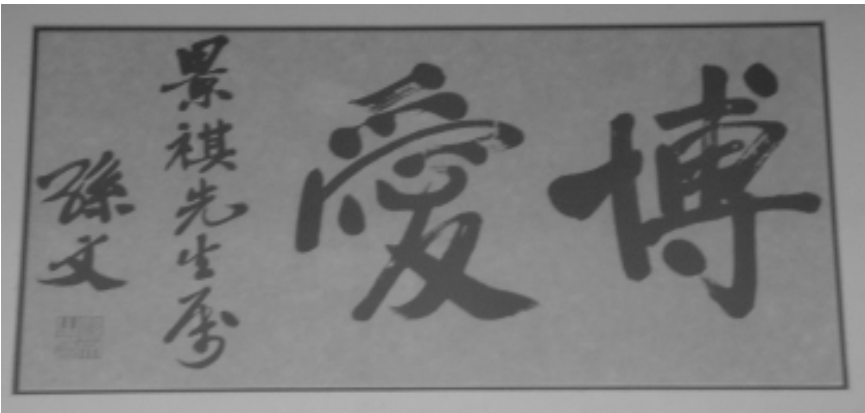
It seemed that the Earthquake and the Typhoon were twin messengers of God, like the two angels who came to Lot, to get us out of Swatow. Jason Linn further pointed out that due to "natural disasters and man-engendered tribulations", emigrants from South China ports such as Swatow, Amoy and Hong Kong amounted to 50,000 a year in the early stages. By the late twenties, according to Bobby S.K. Sng in *In His Good Time, the story of the Church in Singapore 1819-1978*, the figure had increased to 200,000. "The greatest number of arrivals in a single year was 360,000 in 1927", the year after the Tow Clan emigrated to Singapore.

The time for the Tow Clan to emigrate to Nanyang (South Seas) seemed imminent, not only because of natural disasters, but also of political upheavals. After Dr. Sun Yat-sen died in 1925, there arose a

Second Revolution headed by his disciple Chiang Kai-shek (1926-28). Years before Sun's death, Father had sent his two younger brothers, No. 2 and 3, with Grandfather to Singapore. The rest of the clan, however, he put up in Hong Kong for a stopover, and then—on to Canton (Guangzhou)!

In the welter of events, Father met his friend General Chang Chih-chung a high-ranking officer and adjutant to Chiang Kai-shek. By this contact he was attracted to enlist in Chiang Kai-shek's army. And why not? Father was a senior revolutionary and gun-runner with Dr. Sun Yat-sen. When the Revolution exploded on October 10, 1911, he was one of the very first to declare for the Republic by cutting off his queue. He was given by Chiang the appointment of superintendent of the Military Hospital in Canton, then the Southern capital. Mother's sister's son, through Father's influence, joined the Whampoa Military Academy of which Chiang was Commandant. Like Abram's migrating to Canaan, stopping short at Haran because of Terah, our southward movement was halted by Father's sudden turning to politics.

The one-and-a-half years we sojourned in Canton were full of excitement. The Second Revolution headed by Chiang was gathering momentum. Rallies and speeches, "knock-down" demonstrations against British and Japanese Imperialists, sounds of blowing bugles



Sun Yat Sen's Calligraphy to my Father

and war cries, the tramp, tramp, tramp of troop after troop of marching soldiers shouting slogans: “Onward march to the north,” “Unify the Nation,” stirred patriotic feelings to the depths of my young heart. These stirrings of heart in a young lad mounted even higher when Father brought us to the Grand Rally which sent the first contingents off on their “Northern Expedition”. Soon Father would be called, and how I’d join up too!



Myself, Father, Sister

At the height of those patriotic passions, however, Father, who for years had been suffering from acute gastritis, collapsed one night with severe haemorrhage. Oh no, Father was dying! It was through Mother's earnest prayers and a "wonder" recipe of Chinese medicinal herbs that Father was restored to life. When he recovered after weeks of convalescence, he reluctantly tendered his resignation. He brought me along to say good-bye to his chief, Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek, at his official residence at the Eastern Hills. The reason why Father brought me along was to show himself above suspicion. The Generalissimo reluctantly let my father go. At my young age, I was gripped by his commanding personality.

Father woke up to his original plan to migrate. He decided now to go south and not to go north. "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. 16:9). On the eve of the Southern Revolutionaries' forging ahead to Nanking (the new capital), the Tow Clan was beating a hasty retreat, sailing out of Hong Kong—to Singapore.

Whenever Sister and I discussed the events that overtook our young lives, especially those upheavals in China, we saw clearly the higher hand of God working for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. Childhood memories of China become even more meaningful as we voyage through the seas of time, from year to year.

3

Exodus To Nanyang (The South Seas) 1926-1935

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him . . .” (Deut. 32:11,12)

Before the Tow Clan sailed for Singapore, Father took Mother, Sister and me on a side trip back to Swatow, and on to Iam-tsau on-the-sea, his birthplace. The purpose of this visit was to pay respects to Second Grand-uncle, Grandpa’s elder brother. He had been one of the earlier converts after Lechler and Burns, a firm believer of the Tow Clan, though we were the smallest in Iam-tsau. The biggest clan were the Lims.

In his younger days, Second Grand-uncle had gone to Bangkok to earn a living as a Chinese physician. He remained a bachelor, so the money he earned could help educate Grandpa’s seven children. Father was his blue-eyed boy and received most from his hand. Therefore we could not migrate to our Southern “Canaan” without bidding him farewell. Father made a big feast in honour of the octogenarian before he died.

This side trip was of great benefit to Sister and me. Even at that young age, when we visited, it made a firm impression on our minds what Swatow and Iam-tsau our native places were like. It reminded us that our ancestors were either farmers or fishermen, “without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12).

As the airplane today is the chief means of international travel, so was the steamer in the twenties. Second Uncle, who had gone

ahead of us to Singapore years before with Grandpa, now booked for us second-class cabins on the British P. and O. Liner. Today we would call them Economy Class. What luxury as compared with the chugging, oil-stenched coaster that we took between Hongkong and Swatow to visit Iam-tsau.

While the bigger children had a time of their lives lolling in the lounge, Siang Hwa, then only fourteen months, had more fun climbing up and down the stairs. And while the Tow Clan luxuriated in their second-class cabins by the mercies of God, they did not forget those who congested the decks and holds of the same passenger ship. These were packed, literally like sardines, which increased the stench of diesel oil with their sweaty odours. When the sea was blue and the sun was bright, you could see a "swarm of human cockroaches" scurrying out of those black holes onto the open deck for a breather. But this being the season of the Northeast Monsoon with lashing rains, most of the time the decks were deserted. Hence the seasickness in dark, slimy surroundings I had reckoned in my young mind to be a sort of watery hell.

We arrived with our three unmarried Aunts, Fourth Uncle, Second Uncle's wife, cousins and all in Singapore, December 1926, after an adventurous week on the South China Sea. As it was a rough sea under the Monsoon, some Aunts and Mother got sea-sick, but the pitching and rolling was real fun for us children. It is observed that children seldom get sea-sick. Why?

We settled temporarily at an upstairs flat at the corner of Selegie Road and Sophia Road, with trams whirling over the rail below our window. We were now in *Silat*, as Singapore was known to Chinese immigrants, and "when you come to Singapore, you will eat *Sai-toh* (a fish known as *ikan parang* in Malay)". Another thing we must not fail to eat is that notorious tropical fruit called *durian* (thorny fruit) which is reputed to "taste like heaven but smell like hell". As it was the durian season, the second night after our arrival, I passed this test for *sinkeh's*, or "newcomers", with flying colours, for I could stomach

it! As for Sister, durian was taboo to the day of her death. Alas, my dearest sister, you suddenly left us July 24, 1995, but with the Lord it is far better.

The first Sunday after our arrival saw Father and Mother taking their brood to Church with the uncles, aunts and cousins in one troop. What an invasion from these newcomers from China! The Lord's House, two blocks away, was an old bungalow with two outstretched wings of verandah standing in a shady orchard at Prinsep Street. Prinsep Street and its precincts were known as *Tekka* which literally means "Bamboo Legs". That was the old Malay Mission Chapel, built in 1843, which had now become the property of the E. P. Mission. In December 1926, this building was shared by the Straits Chinese congregation and the Teochew-speaking congregation of the same Mission. As the two congregations increased, particularly the Teochew-speaking, the latter, in 1929, acquired land diagonally opposite on the same street to build a church of their own. This was named *Say Mia Tng* (生命堂) or Life Church.



The believers at the Malay Chapel.

During the interval, the Malay Chapel served also as a lodging and clearing station for needy young Christian immigrants from Swatow. On weekdays, these newcomers, usually young bachelors, packed themselves into the two wide verandahs, like little chicks snuggling beneath the two wings of Mother Hen. To make way for worship early Sunday morning, they rolled their grass mats and stacked away their detachable sleeping platforms. These consisted of six wooden planks compactly placed across two inverted U-legs. “Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising thee” (Ps. 84:3,4). How true is Calvin’s saying that the Church is our *alma mater* (benign mother).

That there should have been a Malay Chapel as early as 1843 deserves not only admiration but also investigation, inasmuch as there is not so much as a shadow of a Church built exclusively for Malays in our day. The builder of the Malay Mission Chapel was Rev. Benjamin Peach Keasberry, an independent English missionary previously with the London Missionary Society. This Chapel was the fruition of a flourishing ministry to the Malay race. On the Day of Inauguration, over sixty Malays and well-wishers attended. Keasberry himself preached, most of the time, in Malay, in this Chapel, so it became affectionately known as “*Greja Keasberry*”, or, Keasberry’s Church. He preached the last sermon in the Church that he built on September 6, 1875. After he had uttered these last words from the pulpit—“the time is coming when Mohammedans will acknowledge and worship the Saviour”—he collapsed, and he was not, for the Lord took him. May this be a challenge to us today to extend the Gospel to our Malay friends. Alas! What Keasberry had aspired has not yet come true, though there is a sprinkling of Malay and Indonesian converts through Life B-P Church.

A short walk from the Malay Chapel took us back to our Selegie Road upstairs flat. As it has been stated earlier that this was our temporary shelter, we left the Monday following for our final

destination—Senai, in Johore, Malaya. As the Causeway linking Singapore and the mainland was newly opened but for a couple of years, thus dispensing with the slow and tedious ferry system, we breezed through the thirty-two miles of smooth tarmac in little over an hour. There were few saloon cars in those days, while the collapsible canvass-roofed taxis ranged between Fords and Chevrolets. The way through Mandai to the Causeway, winding in and out in those days, was like a fairyland.

In Senai there was a “colony” of Teochew Christian immigrants, mostly small rubber-estate holders. One of them was Rev. Chiam Seng Por, grandfather of Chiam See Tong, leader of an opposition party in the Singapore Parliament. Rev. Chiam, a Chinese scholar and political refugee, was Father’s good friend. He drove a bullock cart. Father had acquired one of 80 acres through Second Uncle before our coming and Grandpa was overseer. Like Abraham building an altar wherever he went, Grandpa held a regular Sunday Service for the neighbouring Teochew Christian compatriots. Thus when the main body of the Tow Clan came to their final destination, they were not alienated from the faith of their fathers. No sooner were we settled in than Christmas was upon us. What a happily congested celebration in the big hall of the clan house, which had been serving as a worship centre for years under Grandpa before our arrival.

Father’s migration to Malaya was part of an irresistible onflow of Southern Chinese peoples to Singapore under pressures natural, economic and political. The influx of an all-time high of 360,000 to Singapore in 1927, the year after our coming, was dispersed, as in other years, to Singapore, to Malaya and to the neighbouring islands of Indonesia. As we have observed earlier, they came by the boatloads, herded together like dumb driven cattle, in the dark holds and murky decks of steamers small and great. Prior to these iron ships, earlier migrants took months to reach Singapore in unwieldy Chinese sailing junks.

Complained Rev. Jason Linn, not only about the sub-human transportation system of those days, but also of the way they were treated by Colonial masters. But, in a way, they were also refugees, and what can refugees demand? Jason said, "Having got out of the old country with difficulty, the emigrant was faced with another upon entry to the new country. Passport, luggage and body all came under stringent examination. There was no exception made for us preachers. Our books came under special scrutiny (this was Dutch procedure). The body was examined from head to foot. It is said that those entering Singapore were shipped en masse to St. John's Island where everybody was stripped for medical examination. Even their luggage had to undergo fumigation. The special marks of the head and face, the weight and height of the body, were recorded. Moreover everyone's finger prints were taken. All these made news of the world, but were they not to the shame and insult of the Chinese?"

True, those who were deck passengers had to go to St. John's Island for quarantine, but we who travelled cabin class were exempted. After quarantine, these who came by deck and had not more than that proverbial dollar in their pocket started life as coolies. (The word coolie (苦力) in Chinese means "bitter-strength" or "hard-lifer"). These were no more than indentured slaves, harnessed to the Chinese *towkay* (proprietor) who in his pristine days had started out also like this. A coolie lived on the premises of his *towkay's* shop-cum-warehouse (usually double-storeyed). He was provided three meals a day and a few dollars a month (for remitting to his family in China). But he had to sweat it out at the beck and call of his master from early morning to night. Day in and day out he slogged, with no sabbath save a hilarious week during Chinese New Year. When you look at the Tow Clan's smooth transferring to Malaya in the light of the broad picture above, you will agree how fortunate we were by the special providence of God. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it" (Prov. 10:22).

To us children, settling into the Senai rubber estate was real excitement. As for me I would get up early by the crowing of the cock to look into the many new things around us. The headquarters of the whole compound was a big, high roofed attap house with four rooms and a big hall where worship would be conducted. (Every attap roof must be high-angled for quick drainage of rain water.) Two of the four rooms were occupied by us, the third room by Second Uncle's wife and three children, and the fourth room by Father's three younger sisters. As for Second Uncle, he remained in Singapore to look for a house of his own. Grandpa stayed in a little hut, across a stream, all by himself while Fourth Uncle lived in a room, which also served as an office, attached to the rubber mangling house. Next door to his room in the rubber mangling house, there was a big tank of water where coagulated rubber slabs were soaked before mangling. Opposite this whole set-up, near the barbed-wire fence, was a two-storey smoke-house. Here the rubber sheets, after drying in the sun, were smoked. Between the rubber mangling house and the smoke-house, there stood a pigeon cote from which emanated a lugubrious coo-coo every now and then. To the far end of the barb-wired compound were the coolie lines. It was a long house over a naked mud floor, rather dark and damp. The wooden plank walls remained unpainted. Here lived a dozen rubber tappers, mostly Hakkas, from whom I picked up the Hakka dialect with ease. *Ngee-ngee, ngai-ngai, you, you, I, I*. That's how it sounds in Hakka.

The life of a rubber tapper is a laborious one to say the least. Every morning he gets up at five o'clock to prepare his breakfast. He cooks a small pot of rice and for viands he has salted fish and vegetables. He sets out with the first streak of dawn and begins tapping his allotment of several hundred trees. This he does by shaving off the bark which induces a white sticky fluid called latex to flow into a cup attached to the tree trunk. When all the trees are tapped, he begins collecting in order from the first trees operated on by his curved scraping knife. He returns to the estate processing plant by twelve noon. Having weighed in the amount of latex he has

tapped, he pours it into rectangular troughs mixing it with a coagulating acid.

Then he takes off to lunch, which consists of rice cooked in the morning. For a sumptuous meal, the rice is eaten with part of a tin of "Ayam" sardines. (Sardines in tomato sauce has become the delight of the older Chinese generation as McDonald's is to the younger generations today.)

After a little rest, he returns to the estate processing plant. He extracts the coagulated latex slabs and rinses them in the water tank. Then he takes them out and presses them down with both hands to flatten them. He puts them through the mangling machine twice so that they become sheets of a quarter-inch thickness. These sheets he puts to dry in the open sun. When they are fully dried, then they are sent to the smoke house to be thoroughly cured for export.

Indeed the life of a rubber tapper is a laborious one. It is a full-day coolie's chore, day after day. But tappers in the Tho Kang Estate, and that was the name of my father's estate, had to keep the Sabbath. God blessed our estate. With the enforced rest, the trees yielded no less than were they tapped every day of the week.

As our estate was about half-a-mile from the village, one of the coolies would be despatched to go and carry in the daily provisions. A hundred yards from our house, there flowed a fresh-water stream with a swift current. Here Mother and the Aunts would do their laundering. Whenever Mother went washing, I'd follow suit with hook and line. Usually I'd bring home with the washing a few little fishes, which I'd bake and give to the cats.

Not realising what our parents' burdens were, I was thrilled also to follow Father in wild pig hunting. Once, when some young pigs were flushed out of a nearby lallang (tall grass) nest that looked like some miniature African hut and one ran past Fourth Uncle in the chase, how the whole party roared with delight when Fourth Uncle found his quarry with a long stick. Often we had wild boar meat on

the table from Father's double-barrelled gun, which I ate with relish. Wild boar meat has little fat. Why?

But the most sensational event of those early days was Father's bagging of a tiger near the jungle edge of the estate. I remember this event well because we had to report it to the Police. Wild life there was a-plenty, yes, even the thrill of an occasional tiger scare with burning bright eyes in the night that kept everybody in. Once, when Mother sent me to the village to bring home some provisions, I single-handedly confronted a full-grown brown *seladang*, i.e., a wild ox, which galloped away into the lallang. He so surprised me (or did I surprise him?) that my heart throbbed loudly, but my mouth was clamped shut. What did Grandpa say to us in regard to that proverbial tiger? Fortunately, this was one of the bovine family.

Another interesting event from our rubber estate in Senai was the birth of Chia Hong Chek, about the time Fourth Younger Brother Siang Yeow was born. So I have known Elder Chia, formerly of Galilee B-P Church, for over seventy years! His father, a deacon in our estate congregation, was Father's *Kepala* (headman) over the lallang *changkollers* (the *changkol* is a Chinese hoe). If you do not understand what God had said to Adam, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Gen. 3:18), then come out of your HDB flat (I'm addressing this to Singaporeans) and go live in some rubber estate across the Causeway awhile. You'll see how weeding lallang is part and parcel of rubber planting, according to the mandate laid down after man had sinned.

"Thorns and thistles" there shall be in every field of human endeavour, not the least in our family situation. All the more in a big clan. To live together as a clan under one roof as in old China was not ideal then or now. There were prickly frictions which now demanded solution. By a wonderful timing of the Lord, suddenly, the Tow Clan was disintegrated, each man to his own house!

Incidentally, it was on April 19, 1926, eight months before our influx from China into the Rubber Estate that, Grandpa penned his last will in superfine calligraphy by his own hand, as follows:

The Last Will And Testament Of Reverend Tow Khi-Hien

My children, their spouses and grandchildren.

When I was in my mother's womb, I already possessed the original sin with which I was conceived. When I was young, I was brought up in bad environments until I was 19 years old, when the Holy Spirit led me to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Through the precious blood of His Cross, my sins were cleansed and, in gratitude to the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, I gave up all my desire for the wealth of this world. When I was 26 years old, I dedicated myself to preach the gospel. I retired at 58. Thereafter, I continued faithfully to preach to the people in Hwang Chiu. The rest of my life is devoted to the pleasure of personally witnessing for Jesus Christ and the salvation of the Cross throughout Theow Hwee, Seow Ang, Long Awe, Hoon Awe, Singapore, Senai, etc.

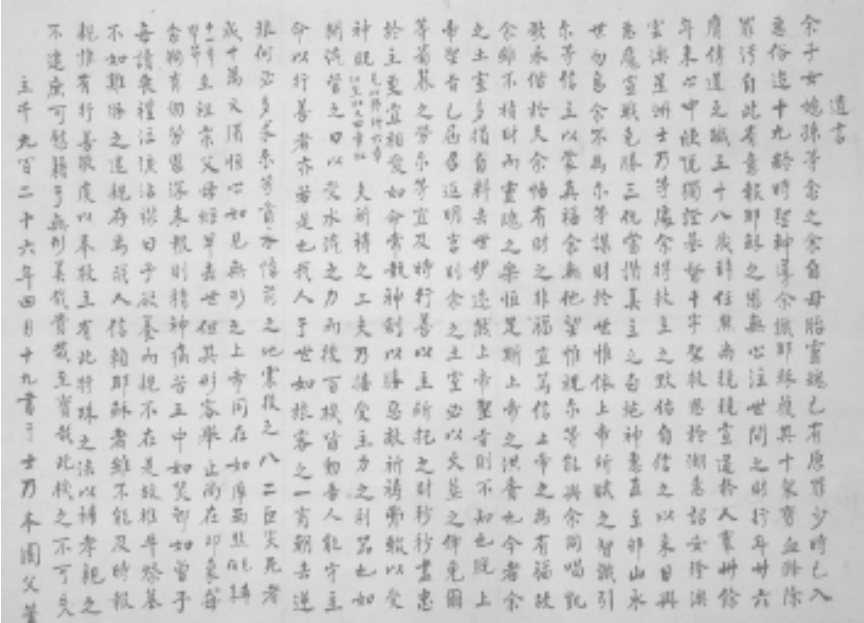
I received my call from the Lord and I deeply believe that I must conquer the devil every day, over and over again. I praise the Lord that He will bless me increasingly all the days of my life until I leave this world. I have never tried to accumulate great wealth for you, but only trust that God will give me the wisdom to lead you all to have trust in Him so that you can receive the real blessings. I have no other hope except that one day we can meet in heaven and sing the Song of Victory. I understand that a lot of money is not a blessing but that True Blessing comes from Faith in God. I therefore do not save to have a lot of wealth. Happiness of the Spirit, that is more than enough and this is our heritage from God. Although I do not know what is God's holy intention, my earthly body, which is now badly damaged, will naturally pass away one day. When the Lord calls me back, my earthly body should be cremated in order to save expense and trouble. At this time,



you people should keep good faith with Christ: make good use of what He has entrusted you by carrying out charitable works.

You must also love one another. This is an order! Put on the Armour of God so that you can withstand the wiles of the devil. Be diligent in prayer so that you will receive the protection of God. (Read Ephesians Chapter 6, verses 10 to 20, also Chapter 4, verse 26.)

The power of prayer is like having a sharp weapon. It is also like opening the mouth of a steam hose which releases the powerful steam which could move any machine. We can be thus if we live righteously and uphold His Commandments.



Grandpa's Will in Chinese

Our life in this world is compared to a day's journey. When the morning is gone, the journey is done. If this be so, why then should we ask for so many things? Never should you forget the days of the Earthquake followed by the Chinese Eighth Month Typhoon. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives at that time. We must realise that the Unseen God is always with us like the days of Moses. (See Hebrews Chapter 11, verse 27.)

Our ancestors have already passed away, but their images and achievements remain in my memory. My heart aches when I think of their dues and the hardships they went through in order to educate and bring us up. I lament at not being able to return to them their dues and my gratitude. It is like what Cheng Jee did when he read of the death of his parents. He could not stop crying.

He wanted to look after his parents but they were no more with him. So he killed animals to offer sacrifices in filial piety.

We are believers of Jesus Christ and cannot follow such traditions, but we can still continue respecting our parents while serving the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way, we can make repayments for what is lacking in filial piety and in so doing comfort ourselves.

This is the most beautiful, valuable and precious opportunity which we must not miss.

This will was written in the year 1926 on April 19, in the Garden of Senai in Father's (Grandpa's / Great Grandpa's) hand.

Translated by Elder (Dr.) Cheng Wei Nien, husband of Tow Soon Lang, a grand daughter.

Having rented a bungalow house at Grange Road (today's Orchard Road district), Second Uncle came accordingly and moved his family to Singapore. So did Grandpa, who found a pastorate at the E. P. Mission Church at the 4¾ miles, Upper Serangoon Road. There Second and Third Aunts went to keep their father company.

Father's No. 1 younger sister got married to an engineer in Shanghai. Only Fourth Uncle remained clerk of works in the estate. Of our family, only younger brothers Siang Yew, Siang Hwa and Siang Yeow stayed with Mother and Father.

Mother was most concerned for the education of her children. Only the best schools in Singapore could satisfy her. Sister and Third Aunt, in answer to her prayers, got admitted to the Methodist Girls School, which also provided boarding at Nind Home on Mount Sophia. Second Aunt studied at the CEZMS Anglican School for girls, also located on Mount Sophia. As for me, there was no place in the renowned Anglo-Chinese School and much less for a China-born like me. As there was no school in Senai, I must fly somewhere, like an eaglet turned out of its nest by the parent bird. Mother lovingly encouraged me first to go stay with an adopted mother. She had been my kindergarten teacher in Hongkong, and when she found us in Singapore, she claimed me for a season. I was doubly mothered.

From there Father put me to stay with his friend who had a photographic store at High Street. Here I found good company with his children. I rode in a canvass-hooded Chevy with the children to school at the Malayan "Seminary" of the Seventh Day Adventists at Upper Serangoon. At the seminary primary school, I was taught by an American lady missionary. I picked up English like duck to pond. I acquired an American accent, pronouncing yellow as "yallow".

After this, I was transferred to Jurong Kechil, half-a-mile from the Bukit Timah Road junction. Here was established the Lim Clan, which had migrated from Iam-tsau our home village before us. Elder Lim Wee Lin, with his son and grandchildren, lived in a big attap house in a banana grove. In fact, the Lim Clan was one of a Christian "colony" in Bukit Timah, in the centre of which was, and still is, standing the oldest Chinese (Glory) Presbyterian Church (1881). Incidentally, Grandpa was pastor of this Church for a season when he first landed in Singapore with Second and Third Uncles.

As there was still no vacancy for a *sinkeh* or newcomer like me in Anglo-Chinese School of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission, I was obliged to enrol at the ACS Continuation (afternoon) School. In those days the Malayan Railway, coming down from Johore Bahru, passed through Bukit Timah Village, Newton at Gilstead Road junction, and terminated at Tank Road, which is Clemenceau Avenue today. Now, Tank Road station was situated at the foot of Fort Canning Hill. As the ACS Primary School was located on the other side of Fort Canning, it was most convenient for me to go to school by train. I went to school barefooted, like other boys from Bukit Timah Village. This I did for nearly a year until, by Mother's insistence, I pressed into the Morning School. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7).

The problem to our boarding in Singapore was finally resolved when Sister, myself, Siang Yew (and soon, Siang Hwa) found a second home with Grandpa at the E. P. Mission Church, 4¾ miles Upper Serangoon Road. Second Aunt who stayed with Grandpa

looked after us. But times were getting harder and harder. It was in the same year, 1929, that the world's economy crashed. We merely called it SLUMP. The more deceptive word, "Recession," had not yet been coined. The rubber industry was particularly affected, the price of rubber having plummeted to five or six cents a pound. Many rubber estates stopped tapping. Many business houses folded up. Even Tan Kah Kee, the Rubber King, was badly shaken.

For Father to send his children to Singapore to obtain the best education was an increasing burden with the years. He had to borrow from friends every now and then to stay above the water. At one stage, Second Brother Siang Yew had to stop schooling because we couldn't pay the month's fee of \$2.50. We wept.

During one of our school vacations when we returned to Senai, I heard Father and Mother discussing in the night. Father said, "Perhaps we should leave Malaya and move to Bangkok where Second Grand-uncle was." "Never," Mother cut in, "We are living in a country ruled by a Christian government (Malaya was then under the British). To go and live in Siam (as Thailand was then called) means retreat to a Buddhist country." Mother's Christian faith won.

Despite the Great Depression, the Manse at Upper Serangoon with its quarter-acre church compound was a paradise to us under Grandpa's benign rule. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. . . . And having food and raiment let us therewith be content" (1 Tim. 6:6-8).

As to godliness, there was that family worship nightly at eight o'clock sharp by the chiming German wall clock. Grandpa would choose a hymn from the 120 Swatow hymnal (composed partly by William Burns) and read a Bible verse or two. After a short exposition, augmented by a Bible story or an account of his experiences in China, the service ended with prayer. Fifteen minutes every evening with Grandpa was tonic to our young souls. How we felt God's presence whenever he prayed! It was in the optative mood and not the indicative mood. There was no padding with stock

phrases either. As to godliness, there was also that automatic Church attendance and Sunday school every Lord's Day, though sometimes we might be smitten with a kind of Sunday morning sickness, which is known as "Morbus Sabbaticus". Nevertheless, the Lord's Day under Grandpa was a Day of Christian Sabbath, when no menial work or boyish pranks were permitted. And it brought us such peace and poise of heart!

As for raiment, living under a tropical sun, not as in temperate China, one needed but a few changes of clothes and that would suffice for a year or two, for we were growing up fast. We had no problem about raiment.

As for food, though our meals contained little protein, the Lord saw to it that we were adequately supplemented. In the Church compound, there were planted, by the founding fathers, half-a-dozen durian trees. These not only provided a meaty fruit with a super protein content (97%), but also a meaty flower two seasons a year. Like the children of Israel picking manna from heaven, we would be sure to gather the flowerings that fell on the dewy ground when the trees were in season. We made delicious curry with the durian petals. Moreover, there was a longan (dragon's eyes) tree that brought added seasonal sweetness. But the mainstay of our fruit supply were the bananas—green and maroon-skinned bananas, "rice" bananas and "fragrant" bananas. There was a continuous harvest of these plantains wonderfully nourished by that conservancy system under my management. This is in accordance with one law of the Chinese farmer: that nothing be wasted. To him, "manure" means "money." So do Japanese farmers treasure human waste, according to my observation while in Japan.

As for drink, there was no water bill to pay. An old well down a slope with cool spring water was another supply from heaven. It was the boys' job to carry water from this well up a flight of steps to the kitchen everyday. This daily appointment developed our muscles and increased stamina. There was no electricity for attap houses, so we

lighted the Church parsonage with kerosene lamps, which must be serviced everyday by cleaning the glass “chimneys”.

Although the world’s economy began to pull out of the Depression by 1932, to depend on our small rubber estate was no sure solution. For by now there were five sons and two daughters, so the financial burden on our parents kept mounting.

Mother prayed for a way out of our fiscal morass. As she prayed, she became fully assured that deliverance was coming, as it did to the children of Israel in the crossing of the Red Sea. (Our sea was one of red ink.) Mother said to Father, “You have been a doctor all your life, except for the last few years. Why won’t you go to the Chief Medical Officer and ask for a licence to practise, though you were not properly British-qualified? You go, I shall pray as you go. I’m sure the Lord will help us.”

Propped up by Mother’s faith, Father plucked up courage to see Dr. Fitzgerald, Chief Medical Officer, State of Johore. Father showed him all his credentials, including many testimonials of high standing. As he pleaded with Dr. Fitzgerald, the Lord touched his heart. “The King’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will” (Prov. 21:1). Nevertheless the Chief Medical Officer gave Father an impromptu test. He required him to write out two recipes for certain sicknesses. These he executed in Latin with a firm flowing hand (my Father was a famous calligraphist) to the delight of his Examiner. The Chief Medical Officer gave him a special licence to practise like any other doctor in the State of Johore, though he was registered as an “Unregistered Doctor”. Praise the Lord, Hallelujah, Mother’s prayer was answered! Now Father had regained his old life-line. Now he could earn enough to educate his children and pay off all his debts.

As Senai was such a sleepy hollow with but a few hundred souls forming the village, Father took me along to scout for a larger town to start his practice. We came to the railway town of Kluang and we liked it. For here was also a Chinese Presbyterian Church, made up

mostly of immigrants from Amoy, who received their faith from the English Presbyterian Mission, yea, from William Burns himself. So from Senai the Lord brought us out to Kluang, about 80 miles north of Singapore, in 1933. It was here on September 3rd that youngest sister Siew Mui (after Siang Hong and Siew Yong), the last of the children, was born. It was my lot to report her birth at the Police Station.

It was here in Kluang that the Lord was to show us a greater way out. Though He began to ease our financial burden, yet He had to teach us that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). He was to show us that His Word was His higher plan for our lives. He was to confirm Mother’s vow on me.

4

The Singapore Pentecost 1935

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17)

In August 1935, when we boys returned home to Kluang during our school vacation to visit our parents, we found a new spirit in the Chinese Presbyterian Church we had been attending the last two years. For the congregation had not only built a new brick sanctuary, but also called a lady preacher newly come from China. She was Miss Leona Wu, a saintly woman in her late thirties, recently graduated from Ginling Women’s Theological Seminary, Nanking, whose principal was Dr. Chia Yu Ming. She came from a well-known family in Amoy, for she was an eminent pastor’s daughter. Dressed always in a three-quarter length white linen *cheongsam*, with white stockings and white shoes, she wore an aura of consecration and holiness.

Ever since her coming to Kluang (through Rev. A.S. Moore Anderson of the English Presbyterian Mission), the spirit of worship at the little railway-town church was transformed. This came about not only by her introduction of lively new sacred songs and choruses, for she was an accomplished musician, but also through her diligent visitation of the flock and heart-warming messages.

No sooner had we returned to Kluang for the school vacation than our spirits were further enlivened. For several weeks, the lady preacher in linen-white had been reporting from the pulpit of a great

revival sweeping China. The revivalist was Dr. Song Siong Chiet (in Hokkien pronunciation). Known to the West as Dr. John Sung, he was a brilliant American-trained Doctor of Science. A Ph.D. in Chemistry, he had given up a high position and a well-paying job to preach the Gospel. Under his preaching, hundreds, yea, literally thousands, were being saved and 'set on fire' for the Lord throughout the length and breadth of China. Miss Wu urged the whole church to go and hear the preacher, now coming to Singapore! A two-week Revival Campaign was being planned at the Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church, which could seat a thousand people, August 30 to September 12. The little congregation of sixty to seventy was astir with great expectation. At Lord's Day worship and at mid-week cottage meetings, Miss Wu led in fervent prayers for the coming of God's messenger. "Who is this Dr. Song?" I wondered. The thought of hearing him thrilled not only Mum and Dad, but also my youthful heart. As stated earlier in this book, mother was converted in her teens under Miss Dora Yu Tzi-tu, China's famed lady evangelist, whose life and work had also greatly influenced Watchman Nee.

One day before the campaign started, Miss Wu led a sizeable number of her parishioners to board the train to Singapore. Not the least to join the pilgrim band were the Tow family. But, alas, minus me and second younger brother Siang Yew and fourth younger brother Siang Yeow! I was fifteen, Siang Yew twelve, and Siang Yeow eight. We three boys were detailed to guard the shophouse—Nansun Dispensary at 53 Jalan Station. Siang Hwa, who was ten years old, was the lucky one to board the train with Dad and Mum.

One day after the church party had left for Singapore, while we were gleefully playing like the three blind mice when the cat was away, there came a sharp knock on the door of the shuttered shophouse. Telegram! As eager fingers tore open the sealed envelope, it read "LOCK SHOP. COME IMMEDIATELY. GREAT BLESSING" (signed SIEW AI). Prancing with delight, like naughty boys let out from a stay-in class at school, we packed our meagre belongings and books, for school-reopening was round the corner.

We caught the 3.30 p.m. “Express” to Singapore in the nick of time, arriving back at the Church-parsonage in the twilight.

The Church-parsonage was an old wooden attap house with a big sitting hall, flanked by two bedrooms on either side. This was built for the pastor and his family below a slope upon which stood a brick-and-wood Church sanctuary facing the road. Founded in 1883 by the English Presbyterian Mission, the Church sanctuary was in disrepair by the mid-nineteen-thirties. For safety, it had to be torn down, leaving the brick pillars standing, which became a haunt for bats and owls, and a hideout where we children could play out of Grandpa’s sight. Now that the Church sanctuary was gone, the congregation was obliged to assemble in the sitting hall of the parsonage. Hence this combination of a Church-parsonage.

As we entered this our second home, the shades of night had already invaded the brown void of its high-roofed attap canopy. We were glad to be back in time to light the kerosene oil lamps for Grandpa in the gathering gloom.

Receiving his grandchildren as usual with outstretched hands, Grandpa thanked the Lord for our safe arrival, as he would pray for our going-out. Then he broke into a glow that outshone the oil lamps, as he related the joy of attending the Revival Meetings. He taught us a new chorus he had learned on the first day from Dr. John Sung.

Under the spell of a heavenly wonderment, we three hungry boys had let dinner time slip by. For we had “meat” to eat that we never knew before.

When Dad and Mum returned from the Revival Meetings with Big Sister who had sent the telegram, with Siang Hwa and the younger ones, and there were also Third Aunt Alice, Second Aunt and Fourth Uncle trooping in, a chorus of praises, “Olo Choo, Chan Bee Choo,” filled the house.

Suddenly, Father brought out from his room a parcel wrapped in old Chinese newspaper. A stern disciplinarian that he was, he now looked sheepish like a schoolboy going to see the principal. Beaming

with a joy never seen before in all his life, he testified how the Lord had saved his soul at today's meetings. Not only that, He had snapped his life-long smoking habit. Hallelujah! Then he made a bonfire in the Churchyard under the durian trees of his tin of "Craven A" and packets of "Rough Rider" cigarettes, stock of Chinese "red" tobacco, "Luzon" cheroots, pipes and all. All these infernal titles I knew by heart, for I was Daddy's errand boy to the cigarette stalls. As the poisonous substances went up in flames and ash trays were also smashed, so vanished Father's craving for tobacco once and for all. Prior to this, Father had tried to rid himself of the bad habit with peppermint sweets under Miss Wu's tutelage, but to no avail. Praise the Lord, a spontaneous chanting of Dr. Sung's Revival theme song flowed from every lip:

*In the cross, in the cross, Be my glory ever;
All my sins are washed away In the blood of Yesu.*

For the three of us who were not "initiated", that spell of heavenly wonderment now grew into excitement: "Oh, that we could have been at the Revival Meetings from the beginning!"

When the old German "eight-day" wall clock struck eleven with a rusty note, Mother urged us all to bed. For the special English meeting scheduled for students was but hours away—7.00 a.m. the next morning! That night when I knelt to pray in bed, the presence of God was felt in the attap Church-parsonage as never before, as sounds of subdued, vibrant prayers reverberated from every room through the chinks in her aged wooden partitions.

Early next morning, while the last shadows of night lingered still, Siang Yew, No. 2 of the boys, and I mounted our bicycles. Never before did we pedal at such breezy speed—all the five miles to town. We made our way for the first time to Telok Ayer Street where the Chinese Methodist Church sat, like a fortress, and like a fortress, she sits to this day.

Racing upstairs to the main auditorium of the four-storey church complex which was solidly packed with young people, even

overflowing into the aisles, our attention was immediately arrested by the doctor-preacher. Attired in a light white Chinese gown rarely seen in Singapore, with a shock of black hair flapping his high forehead, he was jabbing away in American English at the youthful audience in a hoarse voice: “You ought to die, to die! . . .” The strange-looking evangelist was charging from one end of the pulpit to the other as he preached from Abraham’s pleading with God before fire came down on Sodom and Gomorrhah. Was Singapore better than Sodom? Was Singapore holier than Gomorrhah? Were there to be found in Singapore ten righteous persons? Not a single one of us could stand before a holy, just and angry God! As the preacher thundered God’s message with lightning effect upon a wicked city, the walls of resistance came tumbling down.

When the invitation was solemnly given at the close of the message, a goodly number of boy and girl students capitulated. As one by one surrendered themselves to the Lord by going to the front, the preacher led them to confess their sins, item by item: “Do you worship idols? Have you disobeyed your parents? Have you stolen anything from your friends? Have you cheated in class? Do you go to the cinema? Have you done bad things in secret? Have you told lies? Do you play mahjong? Do you smoke? Do you gamble? Have you borrowed books without intention of returning them and they are now on your shelves? This is theft! . . . You ought to die, to die You cannot wash away your sins. But Jesus can. He died for you on the cross to pay for your sins. For you! For you!” Many a sob was heard as warm tears fell thick and fast, to the strains of

Coming home, coming home, Never more to roam.

Open wide Thine arms of love, Lord, I’m coming home.

As for me and younger brother Siang Yew, however, we joined the remaining silent crowd on tip-toe out of the Church hall. “How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17).

When the next service resumed after lunch, Dr. Sung led us, waving a white handkerchief (for he was his own songleader), in the

chorus, “Ye must be born again! Ye must be born again! I verily, verily say unto you, Ye must be born again!” This was so new to us! Like Nicodemus, this was the first time I ever heard about being “born again”. Expounding the story of Nicodemus’ encounter with Jesus in John 3 verse by verse, Dr. Sung pointed his finger at me, “Are you born again? If not, you can never go to heaven! Do you have the new life of Jesus in you? If not, you are bound for hell!”

Every word the preacher had said this time pierced my trembling heart. But Satan, who did his level best to keep me away from Christ, beguiled me with all kinds of sweet excuses: “But you are a Christian boy all your life,” he whispered, “You were baptised at birth, and now you’re taking the Lord’s Supper. You are a regular church-goer, and you attend Sunday School. Your Grandpa is a minister. Your mother gave you to the Lord”

Praise the Lord, at whatever Satan whispered into my ear, there came the Holy Spirit’s rebuttal, loud and clear, through every quickened heart-throb: “But, you are not born again! But, you are not born again! But, you are not born again” Though crestfallen from my high self-esteem and pride of a strict religious upbringing, realising for the first time I could not save myself by my good deeds which I had tried to do always, I nevertheless stiffened against raising my hand to the preacher’s call. As I struggled within, I caught a glimpse of younger brother Siang Yew’s hand going up. While the struggle raged deep within me, there came a nudge suddenly from his side. This shot my hand right up, as by an electric shock! As my hand went up, my sin-burden rolled down! I saw myself kneeling with Pilgrim at the foot of the cross, released forever from the sin-burden.

*Rolled away, rolled away, I am happy since my burden rolled away;
Rolled away, rolled away, I am happy since my burden rolled away.*

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile” (Ps. 32:1,2). O the joy of knowing that all my sins were now washed away by the precious

blood of Christ! That spell of wonderment that grew into excitement, but abruptly deadened to a stony burden, now burst into sunshine flooding my soul!

*O there's sunshine, blessed sunshine,
When the peaceful happy moments roll;
When Jesus shows His smiling face,
There is sunshine in my soul . . . in my soul!*

Now I began to experience the thrilling joy of a soul born again, a soul set free. Now I began to sing with spirits lifted to heaven the new choruses of His wonderful saving grace. Revival time was sing-time, heart-warming sing-time, reverberating sing-time! Like Ezekiel in the spirit, our souls were lifted, as it were, to the outskirts of heaven.

*Hallelujahs fill the heavens,
For the saints have all come home
To Jerusalem, to Jerusalem!
Joyfully they shout Hosannas:
Come and crown Him King of kings
In the New Jerusalem, Jer-u-sal-em . . .*

As I look back to that glorious noonday when Jesus washed my sins away, there must have been forty to fifty of us who went up to the pulpit. Assisting Dr. Sung was the chubby Rev. Chew Hock Hin of Paya Lebar Methodist Church. I can still hear him calling earnestly with outstretched hand in English, while Dr. Sung pleaded in Mandarin, and Miss Wu interpreted into Hokkien. "Who wants to be saved, come right up to the front! Who wants to be saved, come right up to the front!" The earnest evangelists spared no effort to haul in every struggling soul. While it is true that no soul can be saved without the work of the Holy Spirit, the earnest pleading of the evangelists in the words of our Saviour, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden", is a part of the saving process.

Now that we were born again by the washing of regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), a wonderful surge of new life was felt in our innermost being. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our

spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:16). That surge of new life soon burst upon our lips in a spontaneous cry of “Abba, Father”, when the evangelist called us to pray. Hitherto, whenever I prayed, it was the perfunctory repeating of a few stock phrases or the mechanical saying of the Lord’s Prayer. To pray to a Heavenly Father with tender, filial feeling and with assurance of loving acceptance was something quite unknown before this day. I felt like a long-lost orphan found by his real father.

As the revival meetings progressed and more and more were born anew, the auditorium of Telok Ayer Church was transformed into a powerhouse. The phenomenon of tongues-speaking was wholly unknown, nor was there any manifestation of unbridled unruliness like “slaying in the spirit” which intrudes into today’s charismatic meetings. As in the days of the Apostles who “lifted up their voice to God with one accord”, every message was closed with the whole congregation standing to pray in a loud, yet harmonious chorus of praises and supplications. As the petitions and praises welled forth in a lively stream from deep within (John 7:38), there was no need of padding with so many repetitious and stuttering “hallelujahs”. But one phrase so characteristic of the John Sung Revival was their fervent and spontaneous Hokkien equivalent, “Olo Choo, Chan Bee Choo” which also means “Praise the Lord.”

In between meetings, small groups of young people, old people, middle-aged people could be seen gathered in their own corporate prayers, on bended knees. What a joy now to call on the Name of the Lord! What a release to bring our burdens to Him!

Revival-time is not only sing-time. Revival-time is prayer-time, earnest, fervent, united, corporate prayer-time!

As a new-born babe needing milk, I suddenly realised I had no Bible. Practically everyone of the forty to fifty who went to the front with me were in the same boat. Perhaps I could excuse myself for not owning one, since there were plenty in the Church-parsonage. The real reason why we possessed no Bibles of our own was quite

obvious. Could a dead man eat and a blind man see? “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

The first good thing, that happened to us that day after my brother and I were born again, was to go to the Colporteur’s table downstairs in the lobby to buy each one a Bible. During the two-week campaign, I bought in all three Bibles. First an English Bible, then a Chinese Bible, and last but not least, a Chinese-English New Testament.

For the first time in my young life, I awoke to the importance of the Chinese language, since after a few English meetings, Dr. Sung switched entirely to Mandarin, our spoken national language. This was translated into Hokkien. Hokkien was the common vernacular of



Miss Leona Wu interpreting for Dr. John Sung

the Chinese in Singapore and remains as what I’d call the “unofficial national language” of Singapore. (Singapore is 76% Chinese.)

Incidentally, Dr. Sung had a male interpreter, a Government Chinese-language teacher, who happened to be Miss Wu’s elder brother. Unable to cope with Dr. Sung’s rapid-fire preaching, he had

to step down after a few engagements. His position was filled by his sister, our lady preacher from upcountry Kluang, to the satisfaction of the whole congregation. Especially to me, for I admired her, she being Mother's best friend. How true is the saying, "The last shall be first, and the first last" (Matt. 20:16).

The Bible Society's stock of Chinese and English Bibles and bilingual Testaments sold out in less than a week. To cope with the situation, large quantities were rushed from Kuala Lumpur, the Malayan capital. Revival came also to the Bible Society.

To confirm us in our newfound faith, Dr. Sung would autograph our newly-bought Bibles with an appropriate verse, signing his name, John Sung, in English. One favourite verse of his was 1 Corinthians 15:58. Another was Psalm 23:1. Furthermore, he told us to write on the front page of our Bibles the day, month and year of our second birth. So I printed in the best handwriting in every Bible I had bought: "Born again on September 1, 1935. Praise the Lord!" To strengthen my dedication to follow the Lord, I added many a resolution in the back page for the next few years.

Dr. Sung told us he read eleven chapters of the Bible a day and thirteen on the Lord's day. So he exhorted us to read ours everyday. If we read an average of three chapters a day, he said, we would cover 1095 chapters out of the total of 1189 in one year. Reading the Bible was no chore then, but a wonderful new experience: "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).

As for me, attending the John Sung Revival Meetings not only made me realise the importance of the Chinese language, but also helped me to study it as a subject for the Cambridge School Certificate Examination. By reading the Chinese Bible through, which has a vocabulary of about 2,000 different Chinese characters, I had gained not a little to equip me for the test. Praise the Lord, this was one added blessing in reading God's Word in Chinese for me. Reading the Bible in English had also improved my English. When

one of the earliest modern translations by Moffat appeared, I bought a copy to further improve my English.

Another benefit I had gotten from the Revival Meetings was the unction of “linguistic gear-shifting” of my native Teochew to Hokkien. The two dialects are very similar, nearer to each other than Portuguese is to Spanish. The important element in learning any spoken language, however, is acquiring the right accent. It was a marvel for me, a Teochew, who rarely had contact with the Hokkien-speaking before this, to adapt to fluent Hokkien after a mere two-week campaign. This was a gift of tongues from the Holy Spirit I had experienced in my own way! Not only was the Lord preparing me for ministry among my own people in Mandarin, but also to the various vernacular groups, and Hokkien was just the beginning!

Apart from Bibles, we bought each one a lightly-printed booklet of 130 John Sung Revival Choruses. Three quarters of these choruses were new to us who were hitherto either tethered to the 120 Swatow Presbyterian Hymnal or to the bigger 200 Amoy Hymnal. Though we went to English school, we attended Church service, the Teochew in Teochew, the Hokkien in Hokkien. English services were not in vogue then. Nor was Mandarin spoken popularly as it is today.

Another piece of literature that was quickly snapped up was Dr. Sung’s *My Testimony* in Chinese. This Chinese text was soon translated into English by Mr. Tipson, the English Secretary of the Bible Society, himself a fluent speaker in Cantonese. The sale of books was brisk not only because it satiated our spiritual hunger, but also because Bibles were sold at a subsidised price anyone could afford. The English Bible which I bought at the Revival Campaign was one printed on thin paper with imitation leather cover. It cost \$1.65. Chinese printed matter cost but a fraction of the English, which had not yet condescended to paperbacks in the thirties.

During the two-week campaign at Telok Ayer, Dr. Sung preached forty sermons. The forty-first session was given to praying for the sick and the forty-second and last for testimonies and farewell.

Although the doctor's sermons lasted two hours, there was never a dull moment nor the resultant embarrassing subconscious nod of a drowsy amen. For the messages were graduated and presented in logical progression. Not like some dry-as-dust lecture-type sermons based on abstract truth, Dr. Sung clothed the doctrine he was putting across in vivid, lively figures, like Bunyan in *Pilgrim's Progress*. He excelled most preaching biographical and allegorical sermons.

The theme of his message was further emphasised by an appropriately chosen chorus. This he made us sing time after time in order to drive home the message on the one hand, and to keep up our attentiveness on the other. The preacher was no professional perfunctorily spinning out some stereotyped liturgy. A bundle of super-charged energy with one consuming passion to save souls, he used every audio-visual aid, well in advance of his time, to put across the message. Did he learn this from Jeremiah and Ezekiel?

Once while he was preaching on the Five Loaves and Two Fishes, he plucked out a French loaf from nowhere. And as he continued with the preaching he peeled it. As he peeled he propelled the peeled pieces into the sea of faces. Upon whomsoever the morsels landed there was added sweetness to the mouth upon that sweetness to the ears. And has not that double sweetness remained with me unto this day?

On another occasion, Dr. Sung fanned a little charcoal stove so that it became a miniature furnace. The fan represented the Holy Spirit and the charcoal stove our heart, kindled by the new birth. As it is written, "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Luke 3:16).

The evangelist used the blackboard most as a form of visual aid. How he caricatured our carnality and spiritual impotence by chalking a big head which was our pride, a big belly our laziness, little twigs of hands and feet our inability to do anything good. John Sung was no graduate of an approved theological school, but he spoke with refreshing originality and with power. Some foot-bound old ladies

were overheard assessing their preacher: “Dr. Sung can make us laugh and also make us cry.” Dr. Sung spoke to every heart old or young, male or female. We young people enjoyed his sermons no less than the old, and there was not a word he said that we missed.

Half-way through the campaign, the preacher began to call for volunteers to his Preaching Bands. Now that we were saved, we were saved for a purpose—to witness Jesus Christ to those who had never heard. Dr. Sung lamented the fact that Chinese pastors were consigned by an unconscionable congregation to every chore, big or small, in the church. The pastor was treated like an old *amah*, he said. Unless members would go out evangelising, the prospect of church growth was dim. With these admonitions, he drew in batch after batch of volunteer preachers. Thus the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League was born.

Every band was made up of at least two members. As for me, I teamed up with Grandpa and a younger brother. Every band was given a number. This was indicated on a triangular flag on which was imprinted the red Christian cross. The whole wording in Chinese read “No. ____ of the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League.” This flag was carried about without shamefacedness wherever we went witnessing. For a while, the Lion City, for that is what “Singapore” means, was taken by storm.

As the preaching bands were being formed in the course of the Revival Meetings, we went up to the pulpit to covenant with the Lord to preach Christ at least once a week. Dr. Sung prayed movingly for us as hearts further yielded in solemn consecration. Every team would congregate at a monthly meeting on a Saturday afternoon at one of the Churches participating in this revival campaign, on a district by district rotation. Miss Wu, Dr. Sung’s interpreter and successor in Singapore, was elected president, which position she held year after year until her promotion to glory in 1974, an octogenarian.

Like an army on the march, the Preaching Bands could be seen at every street corner in the Telok Ayer district during recesses of the campaign, singing with one voice the famous theme song, "In the Cross . . . All my sins are washed away in the Blood of Yesu." This was followed with distribution of Gospel tracts and invitations to come and hear Dr. Sung in Church.

A higher call came to us when Dr. Sung followed up with an appeal for "whole-time consecration". Now that we had found salvation full and free from the Lord Jesus Christ, should we not further dedicate our bodies a living sacrifice to serve Him all our life? Like the ageing Paul calling Timothy into service, Dr. Sung was enlisting beyond the "reservists" of the Evangelistic League to "regulars" of whole-time consecration.

When this call was made, I was one of the first to go up front. In all, there were 85 old and young. One of the young men a few years my senior who stepped forward that day, September 8, 1935, was (Rev.) Quek Kiok Chiang. Another who did not make a public profession then but always looks back with joy to the John Sung campaign is third younger brother Siang Hwa. (Siang Hwa did give himself publicly to the Lord at another John Sung campaign three years later, in Muar). Indeed, the spirit and vitality of the B-P Church has stemmed in no small measure from the Singapore Pentecost of 1935.

Before the doctor's appeal, insofar as I was concerned, it was crystal clear what I should be when I grew up. When I was born, Mother gave me, as Hannah gave Samuel, to the Lord. Grandpa prayed the prayer of dedication. From a tender age, Mother would tell me of her vow and that when I grew up, I should serve God as a pastor. Thus, as the working of the Holy Spirit in my heart deepened with the quick passing of the days of the Revival Campaign, I was resolved to give the Saviour my all.

As Dr. Sung related how a young man surnamed Lee was taking the Gospel to Mongolia, with overgrown beard and feet shod with

Chinese straw-sandals, I vowed to carry the cross, if need be, even to Tibet! Such was my zeal to serve the Lord, constrained by His dying love and reinforced by Mother's vow.

Now, the Whole-time Consecrators were to be doubly nurtured above the Preaching Bands. Whereas the Preaching Bands had a scheduled monthly meeting, we consecrators, on top of that, had another. This second monthly meeting was in the charge of Mr. Phoa Hock Seng, a Government school teacher. Gloriously saved from Anglicanism with his whole family of many sons and daughters, he turned his big bungalow house at Pasir Panjang on the remote West Coast into a preaching station, and from a preaching station into a church. (This property is now bought over by Nazareth B-P Church). After World War II, he was ordained pastor of his church. Under his wife, they built a sanctuary on a slope of the Pasir Panjang hills overlooking the Singapore Straits. This church serves not only its own congregation, but also others who come here to camp during school holidays.

Though Dr. Sung laboured day and night without let-up, he never seemed to tire. What was the secret of his strength? No doubt he was sustained by "one chicken a day". He would not eat pork, relished by the Chinese, because he disdained such an unclean animal. He was given dilute chicken soup to sip on the pulpit in order to make up for profuse sweating in the course of intensive preaching. Whereas Samson's strength lay in his unshaven long hair, Dr. Sung's strength came from the joyful satisfaction he derived from his work—the countless souls saved, campaign after campaign. "For the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10).

Thus in between the preaching sessions, the good doctor found strength to counsel and pray with the heavy-laden and broken-hearted, and time to read from anyone who would unburden his or her heart by letter. After every Revival, he would carry in his personal luggage a bundle of such letters. Thus he was not only an evangelist and a preacher, but a pastor as well—to an evergrowing flock in the Far East.

On the flat-top of the Telok Ayer Methodist Church, there stood a curved-roof Chinese pavilion. Here, with the cool sea breezes blowing in from Telok Ayer Basin, Dr. Sung would be reclined on an easy chair as those who needed further spiritual help went to see him. Out of curiosity, I too went up to the pavilion, only to be solemnised by more tears of repentance on bended knees. One I could recognise was Elder Heng Mui Kiah, father of Rev. Philip Heng. Not only tears of repentance, but tears also of restitution and reconciliation. Stolen sums of money were publicly returned to the Lord. Feuding elders and deacons of the same church made up with one another. Heading a list of sinners come to repentance was one Rev. Huang Han Kwang, pastor of the Independent Mandarin-speaking Jesus Christ Church of China at MacKenzie Road. I can remember him well for his pock-marked face. A stout man, he can be identified seated next to Dr. Sung in the photograph of the 85 whole-time consecrators taken in the Telok Ayer Church compound, September 1935.

On the last day, at Testimony Hour, Rev. Huang was one of the first to witness with a beaming moon-face of how he came to be born again at the Revival Meetings. "Praise the Lord," echoed Dr. Sung, who abruptly had him stand down in order to give a long line of others a chance. The testimonies went on without let up, punctuated by spontaneous choruses of "Olo Choo, Chan Bee Choo". I would have gone up to the pulpit to say a word for the Lord had I not felt inadequate as a school-boy. Since I did not go up, my conscience troubled me, but I made up for it by testifying for my newfound Lord at the Literary Society of my class in the Anglo-Chinese School. Only then was my conscience salved!

Time will not suffice to retell more than a fraction of the vivid testimonies I heard which remain deeply impressed on my mind to this day. Let me relate three or four more of the outstanding ones.

Mr. Gan was a rich import-export merchant with head office located in the Telok Ayer district. Was it by this geographical proximity that he was drawn to the Revival Meetings? I cannot say. This man came with his three wives to the meetings, and he and his

three wives, together with their sons and daughters, were gloriously saved. He made an appropriate settlement for his second and third wives, and, committing his business to his eldest son, went about his new enterprise as an itinerant evangelist. He became one of Father's bosom friends, so that whenever his preaching circuit took him to Johore State in Malaya (now West Malaysia), he would preach at Father's church and stay in our house. He continued faithfully year after year, to the end. He published a commentary in Chinese on the Song of Solomon.

The two wives of a commercial artist, whose studio was on Cecil Street, next to Telok Ayer where the Chinese Methodist Church is, were surely attracted by our singing. They both came to the meetings and were also gloriously saved. Both the young women came not only in tears of repentance, but also to offer their lives to serve the Lord full-time. They both left their unrepentant husband to study at Chin Lien Bible School, the continuing ministry of John Sung through Miss Leona Wu in Singapore.

Before World War II, the elder of the two women, Madam Ang, migrated to the inland Malay state of Pahang. There she founded a church on a hillock at the gold-mining town of Raub. After the War, she built another at Bentong, an adjacent town, both of which were visited by this writer and Rev. Hsu Chiang Tai, another John Sung convert, in our missionary journeys to inland Malaya in the early fifties.

Mr. Lim Kim Seng was a Buddhist when he came to the Revival Meetings. A young man of nineteen, he gave up his old religion. With no promise of support from anywhere, he went out preaching Christ. He affiliated with a Brethren group and later founded a Church at Bukit Panjang (Long Hill), which flourishes to this day. He lived until the ripe old age of 83.

One great haul of souls by Dr. Sung extended to a remote part of Singapore Island—to a chicken farm by the Johore Straits in the backwaters of Lim Chu Kang. Mr. Sim Eng Koon, with his wife and

several farmer-and-fisherman sons and daughters, were among those who entered God's Kingdom by "violence". As they had to travel a long distance to town and were further bogged down by their farm work, they prayed for a way out. "Olo Choo, He answered our prayer," said old Mr. Sim, "In one night all our 700 chickens were taken by a sudden epidemic. This released us to go to the Meetings to hear the Word." Mr. Sim and his wife, sons and daughters, were all turned to the Lord like the house of Cornelius. Whenever the monthly meeting of the Preaching Bands came around, he would be seen trooping into the meeting hall with his wife, sons and daughters, after riding 20 miles in an open lorry to town. Mr. Sim was a man of ardent prayer and how I felt drawn closer to God as he wrestled with Him in prayer! He was a tower of strength in the Evangelistic League until he was called home. I always enjoyed his testimonies of God's mighty workings in his life, particularly, deliverance from Japanese soldiers who landed on his farm by the sea after they had crossed the Johore Straits.

Today, Mr. Sim is survived by several sons, one of whom is an elder and another a deacon. The eldest son Sim Choo Un is Senior Elder of Glory Presbyterian Church and chairman of their overseas missions committee. He is a separatist fighter in his church against Ecumenism, and a frequent co-labourer with this writer in our outreach to the Riau Islands of Indonesia. Said he to me of his father's conversion, "He smashed up his wine bottles, and threw his cigarettes and Chinese tobacco into the drain."

And so I could go on with many more accounts of the abiding fruits of a Holy Ghost Revival which swept across not only continental China, but also the sprawling lands and archipelagoes of Southeast Asia, or, *Nanyang*, as the Chinese call it.

Last, but not least, of my first encounter with Dr. John Sung is his practice of divine healing. Not like charismatic faith-healers today who put healing above preaching, Dr. Sung did not announce praying for the sick until one day before the event. In fact, he had emphasised elsewhere that he was called to preach the Gospel and

not to heal. In view of many in North China woefully lacking medical facilities and groaning under a heavy burden of sickness and disease, he was constrained to this work of mercy in the Spirit of Christ. He was persuaded to do so by a British missionary!

On that afternoon of the last day of the campaign, many sick people among those who had received the Lord formed a queue to go up one side of the pulpit. The doctor knelt by a chair while the patients went up one by one and knelt beside him. A number of those closest to the doctor also knelt, praying with one accord. As each patient knelt before the chair where Dr. Sung was, he dipped his fingers into a bowl of olive oil. With a quick smack on the forehead he commanded in a hoarse voice, “Be healed of your sickness in the Name of Jesus Christ!” At which the patient rose up quickly and left by an exit on the opposite side.

The healing session had taken a whole afternoon. At the final and closing session of the campaign, those who were healed gave testimony briefly, culminating with “Praise the Lord, thank the Lord”. To these praises came loud echoes from the doctor himself. Dr. Sung was careful not to usurp any glory, and would rebuke sharply any who mentioned his name or gave credit to him.

I cannot remember seeing any blind man opening his eyes or any lame man who walked. But I can recollect those who, like Father, were delivered from their smoking habit. Delivered not only from cigarettes, but also delivered from opium. Opium-smoking was a particular social evil of the Chinese race. In the thirties when Singapore was a British colony, one could see government-operated *Chandu* (opium) retail shops. These were patronised by scrawny, sunburned rickshaw pullers and pale-faced coolies. It was said of them that they would rather eat “black rice” than white rice. What a manifestation of the total depravity of the human heart. Praise the Lord, I saw one of these scrawny opium smokers rise up to testify to the saving power of God with a new gleam in his eyes.

As for me, I was healed of a recurrent gnawing gastric pain that had plagued me since childhood, though I did not go up to Dr. Sung that afternoon. For the joy of the Lord was my strength (Neh. 8:10). As I had come to trust in the Lord, and to acknowledge Him in all my ways, this had become health to my navel and marrow to my bones (Prov. 3:5-8). That there is a close link between a person's psychological and physiological make-up is a latter discovery of modern medicine.

As all good things must come to an end, the night of September 12, 1935 descended on us, a new generation of born-again, God-praising people, too soon! As the doctor himself led in the singing of "God will Take Care of You", tears streamed down his face while our eyes became dimmed.

*We share our mutual woes, Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows The sympathising tear.*



Telok Ayer Church

Committing us his Singapore flock to the Lord, Dr. Sung bade us farewell. His next campaigns would swiftly take him to Muar and Malacca, and up the Malay Peninsula to Seremban and Penang. From Penang Island, he would cross the Straits of Malacca to Medan in North Sumatra, Indonesia.

On October 18, 1935 Dr. Sung returned to Singapore for a week of “spiritual nurture” meetings. Again the church hall, where he had so recently said farewell to his sheep, was packed to overflowing. Many who came this time were from up-country where he had lately been. Through the second campaign in Singapore, 21 Preaching Bands were added, so that the Evangelistic League now swelled to 132. All inclusive more than 5,000 souls were won in Dr. Sung’s first expedition into *Nanyang* (Southeast Asia). The meetings closed on October 25 with further zeal infused into his followers.

When the doctor finally took leave of us, I was one of the thousand disciples who went to the wharf at Keppel Harbour to bid him good-bye. How the triangular banners with the red Christian cross of the Preaching Bands fluttered in the wind as one by one wended up the gangway to say to one they had come to love, “Fare thee well.” As he looked down with deep emotion on his spiritual children, like a mother leaving her brood, he felt the Lord saying to him, “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Feed them the whole Word of God in a Second Bible Institute.” As for me, though I lingered on the wharf until my spiritual father was lost from sight, I no longer felt lonely and listless as before. I had the Risen Saviour with me and in constant communion. Wherever I went pedalling the bicycle I loved, He was always by my side. How I wished I could serve God someday, answering to his call through the song introduced by Dr. John Sung:

*I hear my Risen Saviour say.
Follow Me, Follow Me, Follow Me.*

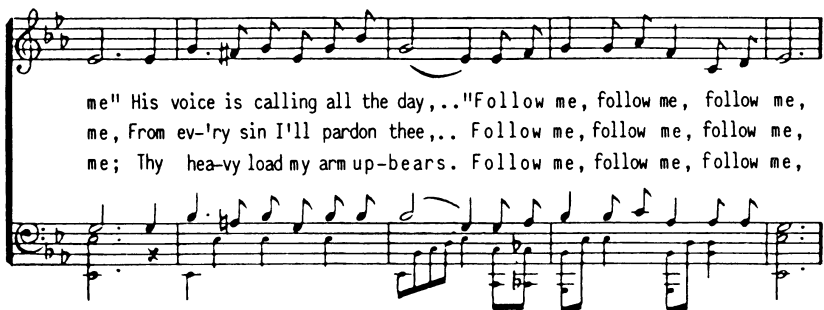
Follow Me

GEORGE D. WATSON

Arr. by HERBERT G. TOVEY

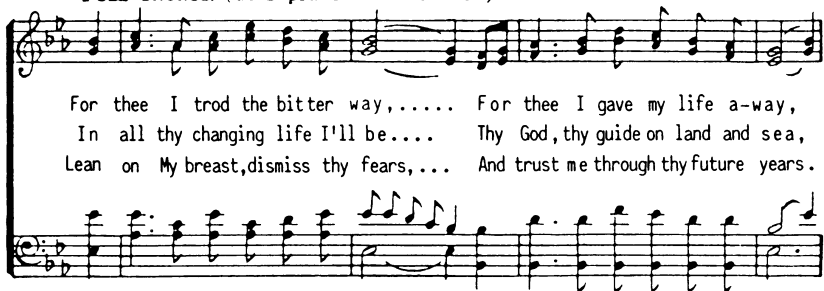


1. I hear my risen Saviour say:.. "Follow me, follow me, follow
 2. "Tho' thou hast sinned I'll pardon thee,... Follow me, follow me, follow
 3. Bring un-to me thy many cares,.. Follow me, follow me, follow



me" His voice is calling all the day,.. "Follow me, follow me, follow me,
 me, From ev-'ry sin I'll pardon thee,.. Follow me, follow me, follow me,
 me; Thy hea-vy load my arm up-bears. Follow me, follow me, follow me,

FULL CHORUS. (Or Soprano and Alto Duet.)



For thee I trod the bitter way,..... For thee I gave my life a-way,
 In all thy changing life I'll be.... Thy God, thy guide on land and sea,
 Lean on My breast, dismiss thy fears,... And trust me through thy future years.

DUET

ad lib.


And drank the gall thy debt to pay,..... Follow me, follow me, follow me."
 Thy bliss thro' all e-ter-ni-ty,..... Follow me, follow me, follow me."
 My hand shall wipe a-way all tears,.... Follow me, follow me, follow me."

5

No Failure, No Success 1936-1948

*“When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up;
and he shall save the humble person.” (Job 22:29)*

From 1928, when I enrolled at the Anglo Chinese School, to 1936, the year after Dr. Sung’s visit to Singapore, I maintained a top position (once or twice a second) in the A Class of every standard. That top position was the lowest of my parents’ expectations, so when I dropped to second, there was always something unpleasant coming from Father’s hand! (But a father’s cane is in its final stroke a sugar-cane.) By God’s grace, there was not much of a burden to carry as one went through the school curriculum. This gave me time to join the Boy Scouts which proffered many a thrilling weekend camping experience at the Changi woods and seaside. Our hideout in that remote corner was known as Purdy Camp.

After the Singapore Pentecost of 1935, I began to lose interest in scouting, but joined the young friends I had found at the Revival Meetings, such as Peter Yap and his cousin Yap Chin Choon, in our Preaching Band activities. Apart from Sunday witnessing at Tan Tock Seng Hospital or in street meetings, there were the monthly Saturday meetings of the Evangelistic League and of the Fulltime Consecrators to attend.

In my Senior Cambridge year, the last year of school, like the hare taking a nap midway in the race with the tortoise, I somehow began to slacken and backslide. I began to find a tedium doing algebra and logarithms and learning history. As a result, in the school midyear examinations, I plummeted from the first position to the

thirteenth! There was no luck, good or bad, involved, but sheer delinquency. This gave me the first great shock of my life. Waking up from that silly stupor, I do not know what it was, I began to double up to catch up. For to be first boy was always my ambition from the beginning, and how could I let go this final round? As I stood by the glass-cased notice board displaying the much-coveted Seow Poh Leng Medal for the top boy in Senior Cambridge, there came my rival (Dr.) Lau Choo Toon from behind with a friendly grin and a slap on my back, "Hey, Siang Hui, I know you are aiming for that medal!" Indeed, I was, as what had been the Tow spirit was endorsed by Mr. C.P. Woodford my Standard VII class teacher. In my autograph album he wrote, "In whatever you do, aim for the highest." The spirit of excellence is not alien to the Christian faith, inasmuch as St. Paul has also stressed in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? so run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. 9:24). When the results of the Senior Cambridge School Examinations 1937 were announced the following year, He helped me climb back to top position. As it is said, "Failure is the Mother of Success." Rather, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

In 1936, Father felt the Lord was leading him to Batu Pahat on the west coast of Malaya, and to a better practice. So to Batu Pahat we went, helping Father in the moving. A bigger town than Kluang, with clean and green surroundings and another Presbyterian Church where we could worship, this was like one of the better inheritances God gave to Abraham in his sojournings in Canaan. After the Cambridge Final Examinations, there were several months of waiting before a young person going for higher studies in Singapore could do anything. In order not to waste my time I returned home to help Father as a dispenser. One thing I learned as a dispenser was the need to be absolutely accurate to the Prescription. Thirty drops means neither thirty-one nor twenty-nine drops, but thirty drops. So must God's Word be dispensed with precision, without addition or subtraction.

As I was ambitious for some tertiary education in the steps of Sister, now halfway through Medical College, I joined Raffles College (precursor to National University of Singapore) to take up science. I decided upon science like a blind man choosing colours. I chose science without seeing what I could do with it in future. The matter of serving God full-time, so firmly established in my mind in 1935, was now completely smothered. Serve the Lord, yes, but let me get my degree first—was the rationale at the back of my mind. Little did I heed our Saviour's word, "For without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

The subjects prescribed by the Science Faculty were three: Chemistry, Physics and Higher Mathematics. For three months I struggled through the subjects, like running a handicap race. My forte in school had been languages. I had done well in Latin and Chinese. I was an Arts Stream student. How did I wander into the Science Stream like a lost sheep (Isa. 53:6), and worse still, like one led to the slaughter? When the results of the First Term Finals were announced, the top boy of ACS managed to pass in Physics, but failed in Chemistry and Mathematics! Were I not a Christian and the son of Mother's constant prayers, I would have sunk hereafter into deeper depths of woe.

By God's gentle mercies, the Lord upheld me. Though I went through the Valley of Baca (weeping), He made it a well (Ps. 84:6). The Lord was my Sun and Shield (Ps. 84:11) who dispersed the mists of my sorrow and kept me from the darts of despondency of the Evil One. While I was brooding over this shameful failure (or loss of face, as the Chinese put it), Sister came up to me, "I met Quek KioK Chiang in the trolley bus today, and he told me there's a vacancy at the Chinese Secretariat for a student interpreter." Quek himself had joined the Interpreters' Training six months before this. With him there for company, I felt very inclined to become a Government interpreter. When the interpreters graduated, they would be posted to the law courts as a medium of communication between the English-

speaking judges, magistrates and barristers, and the Chinese-speaking litigants, witnesses, etc.

Like recovering from the first failure of plunging to the thirteenth position in the mid-term Senior Cambridge, I now must study to the best of my ability English, Phonetics, Chinese and one assigned dialect, viz., Cantonese, to qualify for the Final Examinations in December 1939. I could graduate together with Quek. I was assigned to the Supreme Court, while Quek was retained at the Secretariat as Translator.

Some months before I joined the Interpreters' Training, I had come to know a young lady, Nancy Loh Lan Yin. She was daughter of a Hakka Methodist pastor, retiring in Batu Pahat. Her father and Dad were good friends through the John Sung Revival. She was another fruit of the Singapore Pentecost, but found the Lord rather at

the hand of Lim Puay Hian, John Sung's disciple. (While John Sung had won his ten-thousands to the Lord, Lim Puay Hian his disciple had his thousands. His exploits are told in a book I wrote of him under the title, *In John Sung's Steps, the Story of Lim Puay Hian.*) She was one of the first batch of seven students to join Chin Lien Bible School, established by Miss Leona Wu, May 14, 1937. It was a case of love at first sight, when Mother and I went to see Miss Wu at the Bible School. After her graduation from Chin Lien Bible School in May 1939, she had a



Lim Puay Hian

few months' preparation for the Great Event. On January 12, 1940 we were married at the Batu Pahat Chinese Presbyterian Church by Rev. Quek Keng Hoon, Quek Kiok Chiang's Uncle, with the blessing of Father and Mother, Second Uncle and the whole Tow Clan.

During the two years I served at the Supreme Court under the British, the Lord gave me plenty of time for self-improvement (for



Engagement of Tow Siang Hui and Loh Lan Yin at Chinese Presbyterian Church, Batu Pahat, December 26, 1938, Rev. Quek Keng Hoon officiating.

cases for trial were sparse). Now the area where I needed improvement most was Chinese. Encouraged by a good bonus of \$25 a month, I worked on classical Chinese and passed what was known as Chinese Grade II after two years. During intensive working hours, that is, interpreting in the Judges' Courts, I found great interest following the legal procedures and arguments. I enjoyed seeing the lawyers cross swords before their Lordships and marvelled at the clarity of thought and precision of expression from the bench. One barrister who impressed me most was Mr. David Marshall, then in the prime of his youth. Tall, handsome, gracious and dignified, he was so full of eloquence and persuasion. I guess this is what we call charisma. David Marshall, a son of Israel, became Singapore's first Chief Minister after World War II and after serving his country as Ambassador to France for many years died in 1995 at the age of 87. A lover of literature, he had declared the King James Bible to be his favourite Book of good English.

As certified interpreter, my starting pay was \$100. Though I was not bad financially by comparison with the clerical, whose starting pay was \$55, I was ambitious to climb up the pay-ladder. For now, as a married man running a household, there were demands on every side. According to Chinese custom, however, as soon as a son begins to earn, he is expected to give a portion to his parents. With a wife and son to upkeep after eleven months of married life, there was not much that I could send home. But Father and Mother loved us, so instead of giving them, we were given. Such is the love of Christian parents.

I was not long in Government service before we felt the hot breath of War blowing eastwards. Great Britain declared war on Germany September 3, 1939 after absorbing months of threats and bluffs, cajoling and raving by Adolf Hitler. One memorable act in response to the rantings of a power-mad dictator was King George VI's Call to a Day of Prayer and Humiliation for the whole Empire. I heard him speaking clearly and serenely over the BBC, "We must pray to stand on God's side rather than God stand on our side." "If

my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chr. 7:14). Ultimately, Right-is-Might must prevail over Might-is-right. But for the next six years the prairie fire of war ignited by Adolf Hitler was to engulf the whole world, killing millions upon millions.

The conflagrations in the West began to have ominous repercussions in the East. Government servants were expected to play a part in civil defence, so everyone had to belong to some passive defence group, whether it be St. John’s, ARP (Anti Air-raid Precautions) or the Vigilante Corps. I joined up with the ARP.

At the same time, the Singapore Broadcasting had opened a Listening Post to monitor the Enemy newscasts, and our Enemy was Japan. Being a Supreme Court Interpreter and a trusted Government servant, I was offered the monitor’s job three nights a week at \$30 a month. My particular assignment was to listen to Japanese broadcasts emanating from Tokyo and Taihoku (Taipei) in Hokkien and Cantonese (in which I was qualified) and to make a summary in English. When asked if I could type, I said yes. In the interval of a fortnight before my appointment, I rushed to buy a Pitman’s Typing Manual. A-S-D-F, A-S-D-F, I learnt the Pitman’s touch system and not Matthew’s “seek-and-ye-shall find” (Matt. 7:7) in two weeks, but not very proficient. Nevertheless, this stood me in good stead, whereby I could earn that extra \$30. By January 1941, I drew a total of \$140 per mensem. By the middle of 1941, I could own a good second hand Hillman which I bought from a Jewish couple for \$900. I resold it at a profit. I bought a two-seater Fiat Marvellette to save on petrol, which I frugally maintained when the Pacific war broke out in no time.

One event at the Supreme Court, my place of work, that shook Singapore concerning Japanese intentions on our Island as the Sino-Japanese war loomed larger and the Pacific War in the offing, was the trial of Mamoru Shinozaki. I can remember this case clearly even

now because I was involved as one of the interpreters at the trial. Shinozaki was press attache with the Japanese Consulate-General in Singapore. In September 1940 he was detailed to help two high-ranking officers from the Japanese Imperial Army Headquarters spy out the land. He took them through the beaches of the southern coastline of Singapore. After this, they proceeded up the East Coast of Malaya to Mersing and Endau before conducting their spy work on the Malacca side of the West Coast. He felt he was being closely shadowed by counter British agents. Sure enough, when the Japanese officers had returned with their mission completed, the net was sprung on Shinozaki. He was arrested and charged with espionage. In legal language he was indicted for "collecting information which might be useful to a foreign power". He was found guilty and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment.

In a book published 1974 titled "*Syonan* (Japanese for "Singapore")—*My Story, the Japanese Occupation of Singapore*," Shinozaki philosophically reflected how his detention in Changi Prison did him a lot of good. The would-be captor, by first becoming captive, had learned to sympathise with those who came under the terrors of *Kempeitai*, the Japanese Military Police, an Oriental version of the German *Gestapo*. Thus, when Shinozaki was released after a year or so in gaol to become Head of the Welfare Department of Syonan Tokubetsushi (Syonan City Government), "he was impelled—at considerable personal risk—to do what he could to ameliorate the personal suffering and anguish of so many", says Professor H.E. Wilson of the University of Columbia, Canada, in his foreword to Shinozaki's book. From what I had gathered of Shinozaki's reputation during the Japanese occupation, I can agree to that statement. The Japanese were brutal invaders with little milk of human kindness in their breasts, but God who rules and overrules could use one or some of their number as instruments of mercy. Whether Shinozaki was one such instrument, he pleads his case with a most tell-tale book. It is a book every Singapore old-timer must read!

Musing on the Second World War insofar as Singapore and Malaya were concerned vis-a-vis the onslaught of a coming Third World War, I would liken it to boys shooting with catapult at one another in the back alleys. While the Third World war is in the offing in the light of Prophecy (read *Prophescope on Israel* my book with Dr. John Whitcomb's Foreword and *From Millennium Bug to Millennium Bomb*, published by Far Eastern Bible College Press), nobody, apart from the superpower chiefs, seems to be aware or to care. But before the Japanese invasion, there were months of feverish preparations before our eyes, which helped cushion the final crunch. The poor, like me, could stock up some tinned foods and a bag of rice. The rich had plentiful supplies stashed away in cellars. They built air-raid shelters and dug trenches in their gardens. Pillboxes were constructed hastily by the British Army along the southern coastline, but the Japanese came from the north!

Why do not nations visibly prepare now? It is reported that Sweden and Switzerland are two countries that have made full preparations to shelter their people from a nuclear war. But many other countries in the European scenario, seeing how stupendous a task it would be to provide like the two countries mentioned, simply give up. Cheer up, my Reader, our refuge is not in any man-made shelter, but in God. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee" (Ps. 91:1,7).

The Japanese invasion which we all expected burst upon the Lion City at about 4.30 a.m. in the predawn darkness of December 8, 1941. Amidst the wailing of sirens and the crashing of bombs, I could see flaming onions opening like instant flowers over the low hills of the Chinese graveyard from the verandah of our Tiong Bahru flat. (Tiong Bahru in Malay means New Graveyard). The anti-aircraft guns had gone into action: puff, puff, puff in the distant horizon. A chill came over me—so this is war!

The stories of any war are myriad, and the historical records perpetuated in the Wax Museum on Sentosa Island are a grim reminder of what sin has done to a world originally created peaceful and beautiful. Let me tell, on my part, what God had done for the Tow Clan, and especially for my training.

Soon after the inaugural bombing of Singapore, the Japanese pursued their nefarious purpose to shatter the morale of the people by trying to destroy the pride of British Institutions, viz., the high-domed Supreme Court. On this occasion when the sirens wailed, the whole court staff were gathered on the ground floor, from their lordships the judges to the peons, the messenger boys. In between were the clerks, interpreters, and all the lawyers that happened to be there. Each scrambled for a safe place to hide. Most huddled in the void of the high counter that separated the public from the clerical office, and I was one of them. Everyone stayed quiet, like mice at the meowing of the cat, but I was praying nervously inside, unnoticed. “And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth” (Isa. 2:19). Suddenly all hell was let loose. The detonations of bombs in one concerted explosion were ear splitting. The ground trembled as in an earthquake. Their lordships, who looked so crimson-rich like roosters on the bench, suddenly turned a pastel orange. The yellow brethren amongst the Asian staff turned egg-white. But for the grace of God there would have been many casualties had not that stick of fourteen five-hundred pounders landed almost in a straight row across the road on the soft ground of the Padang (Field). Our souls were shaken to their foundations but our bodies were intact. I marvelled I was still alive! Just then the verse that Grandpa gave came to mind, “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye” (Deut. 32:10).

The Japanese invasion of Singapore via Kota Bahru, northeast Malaya, was swift and sure. By February 15, 1942, which fell on

Chinese New Year, everything was over. Insofar as the Tow Clan was concerned, this was a time of pulling together. As the Japanese advanced by way of the West Coast, Batu Pahat was seriously threatened. Father and Mother escaped in the nick of time with youngest sister in an Austin Eight, driven by Mr. Ng Ho Choon with his family of three. I couldn't imagine how that little whippet of a car could have carried such a numerous load. Nor can we figure how the Boat People of more recent years dare leave Vietnam, like packed sardines in frail little junks. Deeds of daring are born of danger.

During the early forties, the present Toa Payoh Town was a farming district and sparsely populated ("Toa Payoh" means "big lowland"). Second Uncle had bought a piece of land deep in Ah Hood Road with an attap house on it. When the war broke out, he had a haven and a shelter already prepared where we could all hide. He dug deep trenches into the side of a hillslope to accommodate more people. While we all crawled into the sand-bagged shelters and Second Uncle's friend, not a Christian, burrowed with his family, like rabbits, into the earth trenches, Grandpa remained unfettered in the open corner he chose without fear of being hit. His refuge was in God and his communication with Him was prayer without ceasing. While one should not be foolhardy, it is very true that "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). In the thick of shelling during the last stages before surrender, the earth trench dug into the side of the hillslope received a direct hit. Two members of the family of Uncle's friend were seriously wounded. Father rendered first-aid immediately despite the shells falling all around. The only two victims in our compound were rushed to hospital, but we heard no more of their fate.

Now, while the whole Tow Clan huddled for three days in their country hide-out in an atmosphere of ominous silence, for the Battle of Singapore was ended, the city itself had become a mass concentration camp. From this mass round-up, from which we were mercifully spared, many young men were taken, affecting almost every household. Like the slaying of the first-born in Egypt, there

went up to heaven a wail and cry from parents and loved ones. Of those who were taken, none ever came back to tell the tale.

But numerous are the testimonies of Christian families who, like the Hebrews during the last plagues on Egypt, were kept safe and intact to the last hair. Here is the record of God's salvation upon the Yap Clan as narrated by my good friend in the John Sung Revival, Peter Yap (who in his latter years was Billy Graham's interpreter at the Singapore National Stadium, 1978). On page 52 of his biography, *God's Abiding Grace*, he says,

Japan invaded South-east Asia on December 8, 1941, bombing Singapore and Pearl Harbour, and inflicting many with much misery and sorrow. We were living in a small village at 6½ milestone Bukit Timah Road. The community comprised about ten families, only two of which, including ours, were Christian families.

Not far from the village, a garrison of British soldiers were encamped in the rubber plantation, preparing for the defence of Singapore as the Japanese swept through Peninsula Malaya. On the evening of February 10, 1942 (25th day of the 12th moon in the lunar calendar), the British soldiers began disposing of their petroleum supplies by burning them in the plantation. Within seconds, fanned by gusts of strong wind, the flames shot high into the skies. Soon the whole plantation was a burning inferno. The surrounding vicinity was enveloped in billows of thick, dark smoke and scorching heat. The villagers panicked. Terrified and worried, some vacated their homes and started moving their belongings to the open space. Others tried to find places to hide. The village was enveloped in total confusion and chaos.

Father realised that it was unwise to remain in the village and decided to bring the whole family to live with relatives. The women and children were asked to leave first. Thereafter, my three brothers (Ee Suan, Sian Leong and Huat San) and I loaded our bicycles with some of our important belongings in preparation for a quick departure. Meanwhile, we heard the incessant pounding of cannons and explosions of grenades;

and it was clear that the Japanese were reaching the Johore Causeway. On realising that we were leaving the village, our neighbours asked Father for permission to occupy our vacated home and the air-raid shelter. Father readily agreed to their requests. We departed with hasty farewells.

It was already 7.00 p.m. and fast becoming dark when we reached the main road. British soldiers were present all along the way, and we had to pass through several road blocks. We soon saw a checkpoint when we heard a loud shout from a British soldier commanding us to “Halt!” We obeyed and stopped immediately. With a bayonet pointed at my chest, the soldier asked for our identifications. He wanted to know where we came from and our intended destination. I replied that my Father and we, his four children, were from the village where the plantation was set ablaze, and that we were going to seek refuge in a relative’s house at Thomson Road. Having examined our identifications and belongings, he allowed us to continue our journey. We went through three other checkpoints, walking for more than two hours, before reaching my uncle’s home at 10.00 p.m.

Praise the Lord! He used the fire to get us to leave the village. His mighty hand and boundless love delivered our whole family from the Japanese massacre of the village!

On Chinese New Year’s eve, four days after our departure (29th day of the 12th moon), the infantry regiment of the Japanese army had already advanced to Bukit Timah Road from the north of Singapore. At 9.00 a.m., a platoon of Japanese soldiers arrived at the village. Their commander placed a notice, written in Chinese characters, for the villagers. It read:

“This is an auspicious day in the Chinese calendar. You should therefore accord hospitality to the Imperial Army of Japan.”

Out of fear, the villagers did their best to accommodate the Japanese soldiers. They prepared a sumptuous feast of chicken

and duck for the unwelcome visitors. After dinner, the villagers were rounded up again to receive another message:

“All villagers are required to report at the centre where each will be issued a special identity pass.”

Not realising their diabolical motives, the men crowded around the centre and even jostled for better places to obtain this “special identification.” The women and children, however, remained in hiding. On seeing that the men were all present, the Japanese soldiers surrounded the group and ordered them to form into four rows. Using four long, thick ropes, they then bound the hands of the men in each row together.

They realised too late the cruel intentions of the Japanese. Many sobbed, wailed and pleaded for their lives. The men were then dragged to an adjoining vacant plot of land and made to kneel. One after another, the bodies slumped to the ground as the soldiers mercilessly drove their bayonets into the helpless, kneeling men.

Amidst the agony, mournful groans and bloody scene, Mr. Ong Chai Bock, who is related to our family, lifted his eyes and saw a radiant old man in pure white apparel. At that very moment, he felt the ropes on his hands loosened. He saw the old man beckoning him to move forward. Immediately, he disentangled himself and dashed desperately toward the thick foliage nearby. Just as he was nearing the bushes, three Japanese soldiers caught sight of his fleeing figure and pursued him. But in the nick of time, Mr. Ong made it to the bushes, which had thick undergrowth and tall grasses.

The soldiers feverishly combed the area, jabbing their bayonets wildly into the bushes. After many futile attempts to locate Mr. Ong, they returned to join their colleagues, who were still engaged in the brutal and beastly killing of the villagers. Mr. Ong managed to escape. Several days later he found his way to Uncle's home, where we were staying, and related the tragedy that had befallen our village. All the

villagers were cruelly massacred, except for Mr. Ong, the sole survivor, who had witnessed the cold-blooded murder.

On February 17, 1942 (3rd day of the 1st moon in the lunar calendar), the third day after the surrender of Singapore, Father returned to the village to see the damage for himself. Taking a narrow side route, he walked several miles before reaching it.

An eerie silence shrouded the village. As he entered by the kitchen of our home he saw a pile of bodies decomposed beyond recognition. In the bedroom, a corpse was lying on the bed. The bedsheet, mattress and mosquito net were splattered with blood. A dead woman sprawled in the adjacent room. A foul stench greeted him as he approached the self-dug air-raid shelter. It was filled with dismembered corpses. Dead bodies were scattered all around and even dumped in the nearby well. Every house he visited presented the same revolting scene of scattered and battered dead bodies, bloodstained walls and nauseating stench!

Father surveyed the horrifying remains of the lifeless village with mixed feelings. He was overcome with sorrow by the ruthless killing of his neighbours, but was deeply grateful to God for preserving his family.

We were reminded of God's promise found in 1 Corinthians 2:9:

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

Indeed, God does not forsake His children. He is our “refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” We thank our gracious Lord. We had experienced the working of His mighty power. The whole village was wiped out but the Lord preserved all eleven members of our family from danger, even every strand of hair on our heads. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

In this connection let Peter Yap relate from page 56 of his biography how the Lord saved him also from being taken at the concentration camp:

Four days after Singapore's surrender (February 18, 1942), all the residents of 3rd milestone Thomson Road were required to assemble at two tennis courts in Newton. The crowd, numbering several thousands, were gathered for the purpose of obtaining "identification passes." Our family members except me were allowed to go. Those who were released had their identification marked "acceptable." I was ordered to remain behind.

Realising that I had been detained, Father whispered that he would wait for me. Together with those who were detained, I was shoved into a room. That night, I was rudely interrogated thrice. They repeatedly questioned my willingness to cooperate with them. I knew I had no choice but to agree. It was only the next morning that they released me, marking my identification with a check.

Exhausted but relieved, I finally emerged from the room. My poor, tired father was still at the tennis court, patiently waiting for me. I was deeply touched by his act of love. As a result of this screening exercise, more than 30,000 people were executed. God's mighty hand preserved my life. His grace is bountiful. I praise and thank the Lord!

Shinozaki, who stood between the Japanese Military and the Chinese population, admits in his book that "thousands were massacred in this notorious operation". Why this unnecessary brutality since the British had surrendered? Shinozaki says this was an Operation Clean-up of all anti-Japanese elements, including Chinese volunteers who fought so tenaciously against the Japanese and all who were involved in the China Relief Fund. (China was continuously at war with Japan from 1937.)

By the time we young men of the Tow Clan blissfully and innocently emerged on the streets of the city, the concentration camps were over. Nevertheless, people could be seen scurrying here and there. They were like frightened animals in the wilds with pricked-up ears and glinting eyes when they went past Japanese sentries set up all over the Island. Everyone passing a sentry point

must walk up and bow to the mighty Japanese soldier on duty. When I tried to by-pass one that guarded a road junction to my Tiong Bahru flat, I was given a good knuckle on the forehead. Once beaten, twice shy, henceforth I so conducted myself with circumspection that this became the first and last time of a rough deal from my Japanese captors. On the streets I was confronted by a number of midget tanks rumbling with the Red Rising Sun flag fluttering, while overhead circled the famed Navy-O Japanese fighters like giant eagles. The Japanese Imperial forces were using this further show of power to cow a subjugated people.

Here is another picture of Singapore in the first days of Japanese occupation, painted by Dr. Yap Pheng Geck, a well-known banker and leader of the Chinese community, and Officer Commanding the 'E' Chinese Company of the Second Battalion of the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force. After a period of confinement by the Japanese Military, he was let out on parole. But his way home was full of obstacles, so that it took him almost a whole day to travel two or three miles. He says on page 59 of his book of Reminiscences:

In the evening I tried again to go home, but the bridge in South Bridge Road was blocked by a sentry. At that moment another male Chinese rashly stepped forward and wanted to pass. The sentry quickly turned his attention to this rather bold person. An altercation ensued and the sentry brutally hit the man with the butt of his rifle. When he fell backwards, the sentry promptly bayoneted him with one savage jab in the stomach. I was transfixed to the spot in horror until I heard someone from behind shouting in alarm, "Get back, get back!" It was then that I realised the full impact of the Japanese occupation.

The first thing I did when I got home to my upstairs flat in Tiong Bahru was to call on my downstairs neighbour for the latest information. Mr. Loh Mah Siong (now deceased) told me I had come at the right time as he was just going to the City Council to report for duty. All former British Government employees were summoned to register immediately. Loh was a clerk with the Naval Base and I an

interpreter of the Supreme Court. So we went together to register without delay.

After almost a day of filling forms, all registrants were lined up in the main hall of the City Council which was draped with a gigantic Rising Sun flag facing us, which served also as a backdrop to the speaker. A Japanese Officer of rank gave a long lecture requiring us to join the Japanese Government in the building of a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. It seemed a very conciliatory speech. When the long message in staccato 'Japanis-Inggeris' was ended, we were commanded to bow by a stentorian voice: "Kiujo-yohai, sai-kei rei!" which means "Most respectful bow to the Imperial Palace". Overwhelmed by such a situation, I joined a herd of subjugated people in an act of obeisance. Suddenly, I noticed to my left a young Eurasian girl standing nobly erect. As the story of the three Hebrew boys in Daniel flashed before me, I was smitten to the dust in my trembling heart. Praise God that of all the Christian young people in that great throng of ex-British Government servants, it was a girl who dared to stand for her faith. Here was another Ahn Ai Sook of "If I Perish, I Perish", the story of a Korean girl who refused to bow to Japanese gods in World War II. Why that Eurasian girl was not arrested I did not know, but this promise is true: "Them that honour me I will honour" (1 Sam. 2:30).

As things began to settle, Father decided he had to return to his practice in Batu Pahat. Since I still possessed the two-seater Fiat Marvelling and had found some black market petrol, I was glad to drive him and Siang Hwa to the Singapore end of the Causeway. From a shady spot a good distance from the sentry, I retreated. Father had to face the music this end and the other end of the Causeway by himself. Life was still quite uncertain. Many received slaps on the face for nothing, but what could a conquered people do? When everything in Batu Pahat was rehabilitated, then did Mother and the younger brothers and sisters return. The distance between Singapore and Batu Pahat was ninety-six miles.

During the three-and-a-half years of Japanese occupation, all schools, English, Chinese or Malay, were closed to all intents and purposes. If there was any semblance of school life, it was the teaching of Nippon-go, the Japanese language. Japanese classes were started promiscuously, that is, without Government control. A Japanese Kaisha or business company could start a class for its employees. The Military could run one for its civilian staff. At the top of Oxley Rise, a Japanese monk conducted a big school called the Honganji. Some of the former Government schools also held Japanese classes. May we not call all these endeavours Japanese mushrooms?

As Japanese now became the language, one could not afford not to study, like English during the Colonial days, the young scrambled to learn Nippon-go. As an interpreter, I had been interested not only in improving my Chinese but also in learning another language. I should have inclined to Malay, but instead, Japanese! It happened we had a Japanese interpreter attached to the law courts, whose name was Kiriū. He taught me and a fellow interpreter, Low Seng Boon, Japanese for several months before War came. He bought for us Vacari's Complete Japanese Conversational Grammar, a thick book of sixty lessons which was most profitable for self-study. Now that Japanese was a compulsory subject for study for all Government servants, the possession of Vacari's Textbook gave us a good headstart. As a linguist, Vacari says Japanese is the most difficult language in the world!

Though I returned as an interpreter of the Supreme Court, there was not much work to do at first. So I was absorbed along with Quek by the Economic Research Bureau under a Lieutenant (Professor) Mukai. He squatted in a mezzanine floor of the Supreme Court Building. This one-man Research Bureau dealt mainly with the historical and economic conditions of Southeast Asia. Our job was simply to copy on stencil from Lt. Mukai's Japanese manuscripts, mostly translated and compiled from English sources. And of course

to make cyclostyled copies from the stencils and staple them for "mailing".

When we had attained a certain proficiency in the spoken language, we were recalled to interpret in the Supreme Court or at the Attorney General's office which was housed in the same building. It is interesting to note that the Japanese Judges and the Attorney General were quite friendly people. I dared to witness to the Attorney General, who knowing I was a Christian, argued against the Virgin Birth of Christ.

Two years after the Japanese occupation of Singapore, Siang Hwa joined us as a clerk in the Supreme Court to avoid being drafted by less civil concerns. About this time there went out a Government announcement inviting young men to a proposed Judicial Officers Training Institute. It was the Japanese Military Government's attempt to nurture local law officers, such as magistrates and prosecuting officers, so as to give some semblance of self-rule. It was a two-semester course of six months each. Local British Colonial (Straits Settlements) laws, Japanese laws, Japanese language and history formed the curriculum. A competitive entrance examination that drew in three hundred and eighty-six candidates resulted in twelve being chosen. Pursuing my ambition for self-improvement in whatever branch of learning available under these wartime conditions, I was determined to take this entrance examination. It consisted of writing an English essay and a test in Japanese, written and oral. By God's grace, I was one of the chosen twelve. Five were from Singapore and seven from Malaya.

This Judicial Officers Training Institute gave not only twelve young men a break, but also almost as many former Asian magistrates and lawyers a chance to occupy themselves and earn something to keep soul and body together. The rest of the legal profession were "walking the streets and counting the milestones", to use a local idiom.

Under Arai Sensei, our Japanese Tutor, we learnt the language and history of the conquerors, plus indoctrination in Shintoism. Shintoism claims the Japanese Emperor to be the Son of Heaven. The late Hirohito was one of the one-hundredth and so-and-so generation under one dynasty, which proved his divine origin, he said. He believed even with a zeal the Japanese Sun Goddess Amaterasu Omikamisama. It is amazing how such a powerful and scientific nation as Japan today is still bound by the superstitions of a dark age. Japan is steeped not only in Shintoism but also in Buddhism. After World War II, many strange sects like Soka Gakkai mushroomed to further darken the Japanese mind. The latest and extremest is the Aum Shinrikio, which killed twelve and injured thousands in the Tokyo Subway with Sarin poison gas.

The twelve of us who were now law trainees were given VIP treatment. A former Chinese hotel at Waterloo Street was converted into a hostel for us. Each student enjoyed a room by himself. A cook was employed to serve us three meals a day, though our menu consisted of a monotonous rice, dried fish and vegetable diet. This was all provided by the Japanese Government. After twelve months of practically non-stop study, we were graduated with a colourful ceremony and dinner in June 1945. We spent a month or so awaiting our posting. Low Seng Boon, one-time star interpreter under the British and now “first boy” in the graduation, was appointed magistrate to Tanjung Pinang in the Riau Islands, formerly under Dutch rule, but now under Syonan jurisdiction of the Japanese Military.

Realising that the War was coming to an end as more and more news seeped through that the Japanese forces were retreating before the Allied onslaughts, my father wrote a letter to the Chief Judge entreating him to appoint me to Batu Pahat. As the Japanese also teach filial piety according to Confucius, he deferentially agreed. By a mysterious leading of the Lord’s Hand, I was reunited with my parents, wife and children (who had gone before me) in the second house of the Tow Clan in Batu Pahat. A paradox of events, it was

now my turn to evacuate and have my flat locked up. It was the beginning of August when I arrived back in Batu Pahat, but by the 6th day two atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which brought the War to an end. I never went through the ordeal of sitting on the bench of the Johore State under Japanese administration.

When it was heard that Lord Louis Mountbatten, Commander-in-chief of the Allied Forces in Southeast Asia, had reconquered Singapore, I and Siang Hwa were already itching for action—to return to the Singapore arena. The moment we got back to Singapore, I pedalled a new Japanese bicycle I had lately bought, with my younger brother riding pillion—to conclude some business deal at Raffles Square. We locked the much treasured bicycle on the five-foot way before climbing a staircase to an upstairs office. When we came down after a short while, lo and behold, the iron steed had bolted. A thief had done this. We were so worldly-minded, to make some fast buck, so the Lord had to teach us a lesson. We were beginning to join in a post-war rat-race, leaving God out.

Soon everything reverted to the old order, at least during the days of rehabilitation under the British Military Administration. Siang Hwa went back to school while I returned to the Supreme Court as interpreter. The new judges were all attired in smart military uniforms. I was back in Government service no more than two months when one afternoon, fourth younger brother Siang Yeow came from Batu Pahat to see me. “Big brother,” he said, “Father has sent me to tell you he is giving you four thousand dollars! This is to enable you to finish your law in England.” “What a chance of a lifetime,” said I to myself. I couldn’t have thanked my brother enough for bringing me this good news.

Immediately, I set about making applications to England. I found admission both to London University and to Middle Temple, not only on the strength of my London Matriculation based on the Cambridge results, but also on the good recommendation of Brigadier Briggs, President of the Military Court, and on the good reports of former

lecturers of the Judicial Officers Training Institute. I resigned from the Supreme Court by end of February, 1946. Before March 1946, all necessary procedures were completed. So I booked with Mansfield a ticket to London on the cargo boat "Argus". The ticket cost ninety pounds. (After the war, one English pound was equivalent to Singapore eight dollars and sixty cents.) Second Uncle, hearing I was launching out to England, was mighty pleased. He bought me some warm clothing. As to wife and children, I left them in Batu Pahat under my parents' care.

On the eve of my departure for England, however, that night, something very unusual happened. At ten o'clock when I went to bed, as I switched off the light, the overhead bulb "popped". I switched again, but there was only darkness. Then after I fell asleep, in the middle of the night, I was aroused by a burning sensation. Lo and behold, the mattress was on fire! A burning mosquito coil had tilted over at the foot of the bed. It was like a nightmare. Were these omens from the Lord?

Early next morning, a telegram messenger came pounding on the door downstairs. When we opened the door and tore open the envelope, it read, "Mother went home to the Lord last night. Come back immediately. (signed SIEW AI)"

Mother, my beloved Mother, who gave me to the Lord, had contracted influenza for a short five days. On the fifth night, she suddenly departed in the presence of Father and Sister, who were attending to her illness. When asked by bosom friends in the Lord what she had to say to her children, she said, "Tell them to serve the Lord with all their heart." Saying this she exclaimed, "Angels have come to receive me. I can hear piano music, I can hear piano . . ." and at that she closed her eyes forever. (Yes, Mother loved music, and best of all the piano. She had bought a piano as soon as Father could afford it and she got all her children to learn pianoforte during the Japanese occupation when there was no other subject to study save Nippon-go.)

*Mother, you are gone
To your heavenly home!
Why, O why, Lord, is she taken,
As by a whirlwind, up the mountain?
Mother, are you gone
To your heavenly home?*

Mother's passing at her prime of fifty-five came like a bombshell not only to all of the Tow Clan, but also to the whole church. Father spent many days lamenting her, but strange to say, I was little affected. Though I had sorrowed with the whole family, because I was all booked for London, my heart had become hardened. "Mother's going to heaven before me was a matter of course. As for me, why, I must go and conquer the world!" So persevered grimly I myself within, but I was far from the Lord.

By now the cargo boat on which I was booked had sailed. And in view of the fact that the school term in England would not start until the Fall, i.e., September, Father was in no hurry to let me go. (About this time Mr. Lee Kuan Yew was also applying to Middle Temple. He managed to get a berth in a British troopship which brought him to London in October, one month late.) So I stayed behind to keep him company while Nancy and children returned to Singapore instead. Since I had resigned from the Supreme Court and London was far away, I was caught on the horns of a dilemma. I was obliged to help Father again as dispenser, while marking time.

Mother died on March 9, 1946. Five weeks later I received another telegram, this time from my wife in Singapore! "Baby Lilyn in hospital. Operation today. Come immediately." Taking leave of Father the early morning I received the shocking news, for Lilyn was only seven months old, I left for Singapore by express taxi without delay. Arriving back in Tiong Bahru, I proceeded to take the bicycle out of the stairway. As I bent to clip my trousers, a procedure needed in cycling, a vial of Erasmic perfume I had brought for Baby slid out of my shirt pocket, and crash! It broke in pieces, spilling the fragrant

drops on the ground. “Ahhh!” Did I believe this to be another bad omen? I surely do! But I am not superstitious.

At the Kandang Kerbau Hospital, as I entered the Babies Ward, I saw the grim spectacle of Nancy becoming hysterical. In a torrent of tears, she kept pinching Baby’s cheek, in an effort as if to bring her back to life. Baby had been operated on some hours before for intussusception of the intestines. As the Lord would have it, there was no way the surgeon could bring her round. Second Uncle’s wife and Siang Hwa stood around in sombre mood. I, who was adamant as rock all this while, readying myself to resume my London journey, suddenly wilted. “Man’s life’s like morning dew”, that old Chinese adage melted my heart. In the twinkling of an eye, I felt a fainting sensation and an overwhelming darkness. I felt all defeated and shattered. I was like the rich young ruler in the Bible story who went away from Jesus sorrowful. I felt like being relieved of five hundred thousand dollars from each hand, now cold and clammy. I saw myself passing out of this world. All the glories of fame and power that I was seeking after became a smouldering rubbish heap to a dying man. “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36). Then began I to pray with faint trembling lips, “Lord, save my soul. If you will give me back my life, I will serve you forever. Amen.”

Suddenly, my pale face and limp body slumped in an armchair, returned to life. As I drank a cup of rabbit soup Second Uncle’s wife had brought, I brightened. I shone like a new bulb switched on. I said to Nancy and to all around, “Praise the Lord, I’m not going to London. I am now returned to serve the Lord.” I recalled Mother’s vow. I knew I could not get out of it. In one of my prayers before this, I tried to ask the Lord for thirty years’ leave before I would really serve Him! He did not answer.

When we saw Second Uncle on our way home and I gloriously explained to him my new determination, he was dumbfounded. But I was praising the Lord. So did Siang Hwa show a brotherly sympathy. On April 12, 1946, little Lilyn’s body was laid to rest at the Bidadari

Christian Cemetery, Upper Serangoon, a stone's throw from the old E. P. Mission Church where Grandpa was pastor.

Now that I was turned one hundred and eighty degrees around to my consecration at the John Sung Revival, back to Mother's vow since the day I was born, I must learn how to serve Him. With Miss Leona Wu's (吴静聆) good advice and by writing Dr. Marcus Chen (陈崇桂), principal of Chungking Theological Seminary, who visited Singapore before the War and whom I had contacted, I was all set to enter theological training in China. Meanwhile Third Aunt Alice, who had all the War years been serving as an independent missionary in Fukien Province, welcomed me to her Yung Chun "hideout" (the Japanese stopped short at Amoy in their invasion of Fukien Province). And so we planned to sail to Amoy where she would meet us, November 1946.

Like Abram called out of Ur of the Chaldees to a land he knew not where, I took Nancy, John, Leah and Shen Pan, our three children, with fourteen pieces of luggage to go back to China. We took leave of good old Singapore from the ancient landing steps down New Bridge Road. We gingerly loaded our precious cargo onto a motor sampan. Sadly we waved goodbye to Sister and one or two others who saw us off. The motor sampan wove us through the congested Singapore River to the outer roads, to an old China steamer called "Anhui". When we all got on board, how wonderful it was to meet with Quek Kiok Chiang and his pastor father, who had booked on the same slow boat to China. They would be disembarking before us at Swatow. Our destination was one port beyond—Amoy, ahoy!

When our boat came alongside the wharf at Amoy, sure enough there was the beaming moon face of Aunt Alice to welcome us. How it warmed our hearts to meet with flesh and blood of the same Clan, after one decade! How welcome like the winter sun as it sheds its rays on the earth on a cold frosty morning.

After a day or two in Amoy, Aunt Alice said it was time we headed for the inland town of Yung Chun, her “hideout” from the Japanese. In fact she became quite famous during the War when she played interpreter to some American airmen shot down by the Japanese, but parachuted their way to Yung Chun! To get to Yung Chun from Amoy, which is less than a hundred miles as the crow flies, it took us more than a week! We travelled by coastal steamer, sedan chair, bicycle and river sampan, via Anhai and Chuanchow.

At Anhai where we got off the coastal steamer, we lodged for the night at a newly opened three-room inn. For our comfort, fresh straw was spread on our stiff wooden beds, which it was our business to straighten and smoothen before lying down. They gave us old newspaper for bedsheets. How this reminded us of our Lord’s manger. For food, it was up to us to cook what we liked, rice and boiling pot being at our disposal. As for viands, Aunt Alice bought a slice of fresh pork from the street stall. In one hour our family sat down to a bowl of hot pork porridge each. We took no bath as the night was cold, for this was late autumn. We put on our woollens.

The next day dawned bright and clear. Aunt Alice and my family got on two sedan chairs, each borne on the shoulders of two coolies. I rode an old Raleigh sports bicycle, relic of Japanese times, which I had brought from Singapore. Starting out early morning, we passed by Golden Well en route. Here Dr. John Sung had held revival meetings in the thirties. We arrived Chuanchow, the City of Springs, an ancient city visited by Marco Polo in A.D. 1275 and described by him as “one of the two greatest havens in the world”. Here we halted for the night, for there were disciples Aunt Alice had found who gave us shelter. We were lavishly treated to a hot meal which we had not eaten for almost a day. We prayed God to bless our hosts. “And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if that house be worthy, let your peace come upon it . . .” (Matt. 10:12,13).

When morning dawned again, a river sampan we had hired came to take us on the last leg of our journey. Two sampan coolies loaded the boat with our boxes and suitcases. A sleeping platform was made



Scenic Yung Chun River

in the rear for us to lie down any time. For provisions there was a tub of rice and a tub of salted vegetables. This the boatmen had manufactured themselves by sowing plenty of salt on giant white-and-green vegetables all chopped up. With this we were off. “Heave-ho, heave-ho,” the sampan coolies began to row up the scenic Yung Chun River. Yung Chun means “Eternal Spring”.

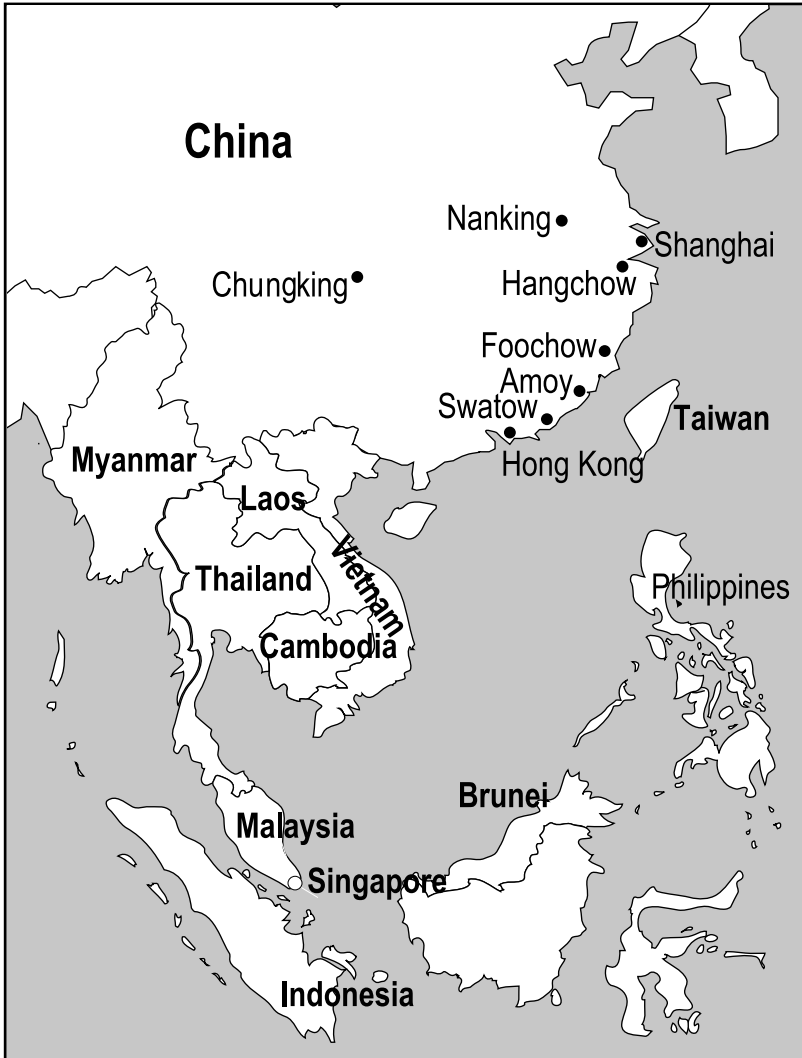
To the children, this was great adventure. To Aunt Alice, this was her customary way of travel. Though this was scenic country through which we passed, we had no bath, thanks to the cold, no convenience in personal hygiene, no proper feeding. Every meal—morning, noon and night—was hot rice porridge and salted vegetable, hot rice porridge and salted vegetable, hot rice porridge and salted vegetable! Fortunately we were supplemented every now and then with salted peanuts and some other preserved food like barbecued pork from Singapore. What delicacies!

One river scene that remains indelibly impressed upon my mind was fishing by cormorants. These expert webbed-foot, feathered divers, with eagle eyes, would take off suddenly from their master's boat, plunge into the deep and return with a wriggling catch in their bills. To prevent the birds from swallowing their game, the cormorants had a ring worn round their necks. How marvellous it was to see birds doing a professional job. Said I to myself, "Will I be able to catch men as these birds catch fish?"

On and off our sampan had to climb a rapid. The boatmen would jump into the river, which fortunately was shallow enough, and heave the boat through with their shoulders, standing in the current. Sometimes we came to a place where rowing was impossible because of the sharp gradient of ascent. Here the farm hands along the river, usually boys, would be enlisted, eight or ten of them, to haul the boat onward and upward as in a tug-of-war. As they pulled in unison upstream they chanted, "Heave-ho, heave-ho." No wonder they who labour thus are called coolies, which in Chinese means "hard-lifers".

After four or five days we arrived on the outskirts of Yung Chun. Our sampan was drawn aside a sandy bank studded with boulders. It moored below an ancient villa given over to my aunt because it was a "haunted" house. Suddenly five or six young men appeared from nowhere! In a matter of minutes, our luggage was brought to land and hurriedly carried off to its destination. Following suit, we wended our way upward to that ancient "haunted" house.

Having settled my family in Yung Chun, "I must run", in the words of William Burns, to Shanghai—to take the river boat to Chungking. Accordingly, Aunt Alice committed them to the care of attendant women and took me and John, my eldest son, then five years old, back to Amoy. Instead of proceeding straight to Shanghai, she proposed we visit Foochow en route. For here was to be held a ten-day Revival Meeting conducted by her friend, a Madam Ho, a staunch John Sung follower. Having attended the course, we were all set for Shanghai. We were put on a boat with a sum of money



supposedly adequate for the journey. Aunt Alice, however, would stay on for a while before catching up with us, by plane. Air travel had developed tremendously as a result of the War with Japan.

It took us several days to sail from Foochow to Shanghai. As meals on board were sold at exorbitant prices, I found the sum of money my aunt gave me dwindling faster and faster. On the last day

before reaching Shanghai, father and son both had to go on a survival diet. I stopped buying the usual hot meals that day, by resorting to a tin of peanuts fortunately tucked into our luggage at the last moment. John asked his father, “Papa, how is it we are eating only peanuts today?” Not willing to discourage him with the bleak financial situation in my scanty pocket, I replied, “Hold on a while, we will be in Shanghai soon!” I had to keep a little money, at least for taking a rickshaw from the wharf to First Aunt’s at Hart Road. First Aunt had been married almost two decades to an engineer in Shanghai. Finally, we got to Hart Road where First Aunt’s double-storey house was, when lo and behold, another rickshaw pulled up abruptly to the gate as we were about to ring the door bell. “Oh, it is Aunt Alice having caught up with us, by plane!” She paid our rickshaw fare in the nick of time when I had hardly any! She led the way into the house! Wasn’t she another kind of angel sent from above? (She flew in, didn’t she?) This was another spiritual lesson I learnt: “The way of the cross leads home.” Indeed, when I yielded to the Lord to serve Him fulltime, never to return to the world, this was that John Sung Chorus that kept humming within me, and had been through all the days of our pilgrimage to China:

*“The way of the cross leads home!
The way of the cross leads home!
It is sweet to know as I onward go,
The way of the cross leads home!”*

The reason why my wallet was so empty was I was “played out” by Aunt Alice’s friend who claimed to be a John Sung convert. I had with me all my Singapore savings in a two-thousand dollar Hong Kong cheque. (One Hong Kong dollar was equivalent to Singapore 55 cents). As this “friend” knew I needed to change the bankdraft into Chinese currency, he offered to give me a good rate. With that bankdraft, he flew away to Hong Kong. When he returned after three months, the sum of money at the agreed rate of exchange had dwindled to one-tenth its original value. Inflation galloping like a runaway horse was the plight of post-war China. Why did the Lord

permit poor me to be swindled thus? To take all props of support away that I might henceforth rely on Him (Prov. 3:5,6). “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me” (John 15:4).

By the time we got to Shanghai, winter had set in. To prepare me for the bitter cold ahead, my aunts tailored a Chinese gown, padded with silk, to keep me warm. It was of a shiny, light blue hue, most attractive. Without this silk gown, I would be frozen to death!

Now, that schedule of mine to sail 2,000 miles up the Yangtse River to study with Dr. Marcus Chen in Chungking seemed quite crazy to my aunts, when in Nanking, only a hundred and fifty miles away (the distance between Singapore and Malacca), there was the seminary founded by Dr. Chia Yu Ming (贾玉铭), China's No. 1 theologian. Just as we were discussing the shorter route I should take, Dr. Chia Yu Ming was around to conduct a week's “Spiritual Nurture” meetings in Shanghai. First Aunt insisted I should go and hear him. To go and hear him I did, in the company of Aunt Alice, who had studied under Dr. Chia after the 1935 Singapore Pentecost. Aunt Alice was not only a staunch John Sung follower but also a disciple of Dr. Chia. By her I was introduced to the venerable theologian.

Having heard him just once, I was fully settled for Nanking. I found myself in the capital city immediately after that series of “spiritual nurture” meetings. Here was another instance of the higher hand of God in our decision-making. Like Paul trying to go to Asia and Bithynia but was forbidden of the Holy Ghost, I was similarly shunted from sailing up Chungking to Nanking. That this was no doubt the Lord's directive will be clearly seen hereafter.

Dr. Chia Yu Ming, like Rev. Ting Li Mei, was one of the illustrious sons of the North China Theological Seminary, founded by Dr. W.M. Hayes of the American Presbyterian Mission. Whereas Rev. Ting developed to be a nationwide evangelist and a man of

prayer, Chia Yu Ming, some 10 years his junior, became China's doyen theologian. By him were published sixty books, including a complete work on Systematic Theology and the popular version of it called *The All-complete Plan of Salvation* (完全救法). He also published his own Hymnal. For this contribution to the advancement of theological learning in China, he was honoured with a doctorate from Princeton—through Dr. A.B. Dodd, Dr. Chia's colleague and friend.



Dr. Chia Yu Ming

These two men were champions of fundamentalism, who stood against the first efforts of ecumenical union of Protestant churches in China as early as 1927. Dr. Chia himself, one-time principal of the Ginling Women's Theological Seminary, Nanking, had to withdraw from that institution because of modernism, as Dr. J. Gresham Machen did out of Princeton. He separated from modernism to establish the Spiritual Training Theological Seminary (灵修神学院) 1935, as Machen separated from Princeton to found Westminster in 1929. Dr. Chia Yu Ming may be called the Machen of China.

At this new school in Nanking, just rehabilitated after World War II, we were a happy family of thirty students. There were three teachers: Dr. Chia, principal; Rev. Andrew Hsieh, assistant; Miss Grace Jephson, CIM missionary. Dr. A.B. Dodd, who still helped out at North China Theological Seminary at Tenghsien, Shantung, would come as visiting professor. But Dr. Chia was so superb in his teaching, and he loved to teach, that I'd be more than satisfied just to have him. The spiritual lessons I imbibed from him out of the deep well of God's Word were refreshing and revitalising. Dr. Chia's spiritual emphasis was like John Sung's. He often prayed that God would raise up another revivalist like Dr. Sung for China. (John Sung lived for 43 years. He died in 1944.)

With Rev. Andrew Hsieh, I learned my Greek as well as the early period of Church History. From Miss Grace Jephson, I got 92 marks for Exodus, and much more than that!

As I was the only English-educated, coming from British Singapore, I was naturally drawn to her. Like a mother, she would sometimes give me cakes and sweets, so rare a commodity in a Chinese seminary where our daily diet consisted of coarse rice and vegetables. It was she who introduced me to Rev. & Mrs. Paul Contento and to Mr. David Adeney—the former were missionaries of the China Inland Mission, while Mr. David Adeney was seconded to the Varsity Christian Fellowship. Another person of eminence I came to know was Rev. Calvin Chao (赵君影), General Secretary of VCF, who later fled communism to come to Singapore, and founded the Singapore Bible College. In China's megalopolis Shanghai, I met with other eminent servants of God like Rev. David Yang Shao-tang and Dr. Timothy Dzao Sze-kwang. I did not get to see Mr. Wang Ming-tao because he was located in Peking, up in the north.

It was also through Miss Jephson that the thought of furthering my theological education in the U.S.A. came into focus. Since I was more English-educated than Chinese, would it not be more expeditious to study in America? Miss Jephson gave me two catalogues, one from Dallas and the other from Faith. Having perused the two catalogues quite thoroughly, my heart was drawn to Faith, then located at Wilmington, Delaware. Miss Jephson concurred.

As Singapore was a British colony, we never had any contact with America. To make a first contact with this great nation was to me a great venture! Without anybody's recommendation, I wrote to Dr. Laird Harris, Registrar of Faith Seminary, but I didn't receive a reply. So I sent a second letter, but mistakenly addressed it to Dr. Harold Laird. Like a green horn, I got the two names mixed up. Now Dr. Harold Laird was pastor of the Independent (Presbyterian) Church in Wilmington located nearest to Faith Seminary, where both students and faculty worshipped. Dr. Harold Laird, who was also a

founding member of the seminary, passed on my letter to Dr. Laird Harris, the Registrar. It was then that the comedy of errors was revealed. Truth is stranger than fiction.

Dr. Harris quickly rushed a reply, warm and friendly. He also offered me a foreign scholarship of US\$100 a year. There were no tuition fees inasmuch as this was a seminary founded *by faith* for the Faith. I was overjoyed. The only thing I needed to do was to go to Shanghai to see Rev. Albert Greene, a graduate of Faith teaching at China Bible Seminary, Kiangwan. I needed a letter of recommendation from one who could examine me face to face. Incidentally this was the seminary founded by Miss Dora Yu I had earlier mentioned. Come June 1947, the first academic year of rehabilitated Spiritual Training Theological Seminary in Nanking ended. For, during the Second World War, Dr. Chia's seminary had also moved up to Chungking, like Dr. Marcus Chen's, to escape the Japanese.

I returned to Shanghai to lodge with First Aunt and see my son. Meanwhile Third Aunt Alice had long returned to her Yung Chun "hideout". From there she took Nancy and the other two children to Amoy and had them repatriated to Singapore.

After two more months of lodging with First Aunt in Shanghai in my China sojourn, during which time I had the opportunity of seeing more things including the famous West Lake in Hangchow, I prepared to sail back to Singapore. Whereupon First Aunt seized the opportunity to come along to visit her clansmen, whom she had not seen since her marriage two decades back.

The reunion with my family, the meeting again with Father and Stepmother (for he had remarried), with Sister and all the brothers and sisters, was a time of untold happiness. What a world of difference between a southern paradise like Singapore and a China teeming with hungry people, sick and homeless people, in poverty and strife. Indeed, Mao Tse-tung and the Reds were winning steadily against the Nationalists and refugees were beginning to dribble into

Shanghai from the north. By October 1949, a matter of one year and ten months after my leaving China, the communists had taken over. The higher hand of God was leading me out of impending persecution and arrest when such a danger was unknown to His child. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Ps. 32:8).

Entrusting the family to Father's care in Batu Pahat where they could be nurtured also by her mother, a well-known midwife living round the corner on the main street, I said good-bye to them, November 1947. I was now booked on another cargo boat, the boat of the Lord's choosing, the "Azalea City" of the Waterman Line, to take me no more to London but to New York. The fare was US\$450 from Singapore or US\$400 from Penang. As every dollar counts to every non-earning student, I decided to save US\$50 by sailing from Penang. I spent a fraction of that sum taking a third-class train to Penang, via Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh, visiting relatives and friends en route. This was killing two birds with one stone. The rate of exchange then was US\$1=S\$2.20. Sister kindly provided my ticket, for she had been a practising doctor since the last days of British rule before Japan took Singapore.

As I had missed one semester by not arriving in September when the Fall term began, I was desperate in catching up by preparing for the "propaedeutic" test in Greek. As the journey from Penang to New York took forty-two days, I had ample time to go through the whole of Huddilston's Greek Grammar, grinding paradigm after paradigm at breakneck speed! (I had finished half of this Grammar in Nanking.) This was one advantage of travelling by boat, for it gave one total time to study. (The cost of flying was way beyond a poor student's pocket.) Another was the fine cuisine three times a day. By the end of the journey my trousers had become too tight with the adding of the better part of seven pounds around the waist. Now, all these things are well said if one is not prone to sea-sickness. By God's grace, I made a good sailor all the way.

Going through the Suez Canal en route was a unique experience. As the ship churned daintily through this 100-mile stretch of man-made waterway, one could drink in all the desert scenes of Egypt on the left and of Sinai on the right. How luscious green an oasis was, in contrast with the burning hot sand dunes and jagged rocks outside and beyond the water zone. And how pictures of date palms and camels came to life as one beheld them inching their way in the distant setting sun. That same afternoon the captain pointed to us Mount Sinai, faintly visible in the blue haze yonder, where God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. “And Mount Sinai was altogether on smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly” (Exod. 19:18).

On board the “Azalea City”, I met the wife of Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, British High Commissioner to Singapore and Southeast Asia. She said she was a Presbyterian by faith and was returning via New York to Canada. She was a tall, dignified, gentle lady, but so solitary and forlorn. Another person who talked with me was the ship’s Second Engineer. Hearing I was headed for Wilmington his hometown, he gave me this riddle to test Americans with. The riddle he pulled out of his sleeve was, “Which is the first city of the first state?” (I later tried this riddle on several American friends and some got stuck.) “Well,” the Engineer explained, “The first state of U.S.A. is Delaware, the first to join the Union in the early days of nation-building. The first city of Delaware is Wilmington where Du Pont is, the biggest city in Delaware.” Yes, now I knew I was headed for “the first city of the first state”, and to a first-rate seminary in America.

When our boat slipped past that mountain of a rock called Gibraltar, last guardian of “Britannia-rule-the-waves”, we felt real small in the black Atlantic ocean, under an overcast wintry sky. As the Chinese saying goes, we’re no more than “a leaf on the waves”. For two days we seemed to be lost in a watery desert—so still, so silent, so vast. Suddenly there blew a first gust of a stormy blast from a downcast horizon, and the ship reared like a frightened horse. From

then on the ten-thousand ton vessel, a relic of “Liberty” ships of wartime construction, began to pitch. From pitching it began to roll. We were headed toward a storm directly in our path.

Of all my experiences with ships, this was the most traumatic and scary. In a raging tempest with waves lashing fifty feet high, our fore-deck was intermittently washed by a boiling ocean. Were it not that the bow was hermetically sealed like a duck's back, water would have poured into the hold. At night when we slept, we had to cling on to the railing or else be spilt all over! The crockery stacked in the kitchen racks kept rattling as the vessel battled the waves. “O Lord, save us from this watery grave,” I prayed. The story of the disciples of Jesus, crying to the Master to save their ship from sinking, suddenly sprang to life.

*Ye mariners on high seas steep
That toil amid the foaming deep,
Behold the mighty works of God
And His great wonders, as you plod.
O that all men would bow to Thee,
Thou God of heav'n and earth and sea.*

*By Thy command the breeze so mild
Becomes a storm and tempest wild,
While oceans writhe with billows high
And wave 'pon wave mounts up the sky!
O that all men would pray to Thee,
Thou God of heav'n and earth and sea.*

*Like drunken men they stagger on,
And at their wits' end they are thrown;
They reel and roll, and to and fro—
The fearful lot of men below.
O that all men would cry to Thee,
Thou God of heav'n and earth and sea.*

*“Peace be thou still,” spoke Christ the Lord,
And wind and wave obeyed His Word.
Today the God of Galilee
Still saves His own from sea to sea.*

*O that all men would praise Thy Name!
Thy mercies mild endure the same.*

(To the tune of "Eternal Father Strong to Save")

After a week, wherein our boat had to zigzag along a path of least resistance, the sun shone again. The sea suddenly calmed. The Lord had heard our prayers. Soon specks of land in the New World began to appear. O the joy of seeing the skyscrapers of New York sticking up like ten fingers in the distant horizon. The most welcome sight of all was the Statue of Liberty beckoning to sons and daughters of freedom, seeking freedom in the land of the free. Suddenly, there rang out loud and clear dearest Mother's words, spoken one dreary day during the Great Slump of 1929-30: "Son, when you grow up, I will send you to America!"

As I landed in New York in the night, I was obliged to put up in some hotel. At US\$25, it was a big slice of me. It was a painful slicing all right. Slogging through foot-deep snow in the foreign streets of New York was another discouraging experience for a son from the tropics. A sudden sense of homesickness gripped me. The only consolation I got was to have found an Italian barber in the subway who charged only 40 cents, though my hair had grown doubly long in the wintry weather after forty-two days.

On my train journey from New York to Wilmington, a distance of 120 miles or so, I had the first experience of conversing with an American girl, Virginia Brown by name. But I did not ask her if she knew which was the first city of the first state. When I told her I was a seminary student, the subject of religion could not be avoided. She said the Bible was not accurate in describing the Garden of Eden as being located somewhere in the Euphrates region (Gen. 2:14), because it also mentioned the apple that Adam and Eve ate. According to scientific investigation, she said, apples didn't grow in the Euphrates region. I asked her where in the Bible was recorded that an apple was involved. She couldn't say where, but insisted that everyone knew it was an apple! There is an English saying, "A little knowledge is a great danger."

When I arrived at Faith Theological Seminary early January, I was given such a warm welcome that all the icy feelings of “a wandering son from home” instantly melted. Particularly glad were my American friends to see a Chinaman, still a rare species in a state like Delaware in those post-war years. In the seminary at this time there were two of us. The one who came before me was Paul from Mukden, Manchuria. A young American, Schuyler Marshall, took to me immediately. Finding my Chinese name Siang Hui hard to remember, he spelled out immediately, “Hey, we have a Paul from Manchuria here. Let’s call this chap from Singapore ‘Timothy.’” That’s how I got my Biblical name! All praise be to God, He gave me a humble name to go by. To live up to the great Apostle is a much harder task. To live up to his disciple Timothy is easier. And Timothy is a good name for a theological student, because Calvin says the first three rules in the study of theology are Humility, Humility, Humility!

Arriving at the Seminary during the short break between semesters, I was given the opportunity of taking the qualifying test in “propaedeutic” Greek. Praise the Lord, I passed with 95 marks. This meant I could go straight to reading the Greek Testament, saving me a year of Elementary Greek. This gained me time equivalent to ten credit hours, and I needed them the more as I was late by one semester. Great was the encouragement I had received at the very outset of studying at a Christian institution of higher learning in America! I felt I was now stepping up briskly on the road to Success.

6

Faith Of Our Fathers 1948-1950

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.”
(Heb. 11:1,2)



Dr. Carl McIntire

There was another fervour in Faith Seminary that warmed my heart, and that was the constant discussion of the need of a new Reformation. Martin Luther I had heard of before; now I was made aware of the same need today as in Luther's day.

One wintry morning in mid-January, when it was snowing hard and fast outside, there came in a tall and distinguished looking man, viz., Dr. Carl McIntire. He was pastor of Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church and President of the Board of Directors of Faith Seminary. He spoke to us at length at our Chapel Hour. As he presented his case for a Twentieth Century Reformation and a return to our fathers' faith, and called young men like us to join the Cause, I felt my heart strangely warmed, to use Wesley's words. I felt my heart knit to his heart, like Jonathan's to David's (1 Sam. 18:1). I became that day his disciple. I have been loyal to the Separatist Cause of the International Council of Christian Churches, which he founded, all through the years. I have stood by him despite many ups and downs for half a century.

Faith Seminary was founded in 1937 after coming out of Princeton through the lineage of Westminster Seminary, which was

established by Dr. J. Gresham Machen. Dr. McIntire was Machen's pupil both at Princeton and Westminster. But as Westminster developed to be strongly amillennial and defended smoking (cigars) and drinking as Christian liberties, this gave rise to another "split". Hence the founding of Faith Theological Seminary.

When the Seminary was started, there was nothing but plenty of faith and three men praying under a tree: McIntire, MacRae and Harold Laird. Because the platform of Faith's stand was right, God blessed the school mightily. The first class began with twenty-four students, all College graduates. Francis Schaeffer was one of Faith's earliest students. So was Jack Murray. When I enrolled in January 1948, the student body had increased to eighty. The faculty was comprised of men of outstanding ability, piety and learning. This was Faith's golden age when we had stalwarts like MacRae, Buswell, Eppard, Harris, Sanderson, Douglas Young, Jack Murray, Harold Mare, and Schaeffer's father-in-law, Dr. Seville.

To make up for my late arrival, I had to take two summer schools, one at the National Bible Institute (Shelton College) in New York where Dr. Buswell was president, and the other at Faith Seminary itself under Dr. MacRae. As the Word of God was highly exalted in all her teachings, I treasured every course I took. The learning of God's Word under able and devout teachers was such a joy and never a chore. Though late in coming, I graduated with 12 credits to spare.

The greatest treasure I had found in Faith Seminary was through a two-hour elective in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* offered by Dr. Sanderson. I became so enamoured with Calvin's teaching that I spent a whole summer reading the Four Books of the *Institutes*. I annotated every hard word with the meaning culled from Chambers Dictionary, the best for theological terms. I like Calvin's theology because it is Pauline theology restated lucidly and systematically. To help those who cannot afford the time or energy to read these great works, I have during the years abridged Vol. I, Book I and II, and latterly, Vol. II, Book III and IV. These are now bound in

one volume in hard cover published by Far Eastern Bible College Press.

Says Dr. B.B. Warfield of the Institutes: “What Plato is among philosophers, or the Iliad among epics, or Shakespeare among dramatists, that Calvin’s Institutes is among theological treatises Even from the point of view of mere literature, it holds a position so supreme in its class that everyone who would fain know the world’s best books must make himself familiar with it.”

In May 1950, I was one of twenty-odd students to graduate in the “mid-century” class. I was conferred the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, “with all the rights and privileges appertaining thereunto”. Where I had failed miserably in science against the will of God, I had now made good, by His grace and to His glory in the study of the “queen of sciences”. I count my years at Faith one of the peak periods of my life. For in this school of Faith I was firmly established in the Faith of our Fathers.

Ever since I was gripped by Dr. McIntire’s message on the need of a Twentieth Century Reformation, that wintry morning in January 1948, I had been following his ministry and writings through his eight-page tabloid religious weekly called *The Christian Beacon*. Now that my studies were completed, I found myself more actively involved in the testimony of the International Council of Christian Churches.

The ICCC was founded in Amsterdam, August 1948, through the genius of Dr. McIntire. The ICCC was precipitated in fact by the Ecumenical Movement organising itself into the World Council of Churches (WCC), also in Amsterdam in the same month and the same year. The ICCC, though a small body, stood like Elijah on Mount Carmel to contest the WCC, a much larger organisation, like the four hundred and fifty Baal prophets. But truth is qualitative, not quantitative. One with God is majority.

Pressing on without let up against the liberals and modernists that masterminded the World Council of Churches, McIntire called

for a Second Congress of the ICCC to be held in Geneva, August 1950. Since I would be returning to Singapore after May, I was persuaded to the Geneva Congress, en route.

Between Amsterdam and Geneva, in the latter part of 1949, however, Dr. McIntire and Dr. T.T. Shields, Vice-president, had made a trip to the Far East. This was in order to offset the advance of the WCC into Asia through the East Asia Christian Conference held at Bangkok. As the Lord's servants would use this opportunity out in the Orient to spread the Reformation cause to Southeast Asia and Australia, I wrote Quek Kiok Chiang about their availability to Singapore. Quek responded with great enthusiasm and gathered a number of Chinese churches through the Singapore Chinese Inter-church Union to welcome the ICCC team. (Though not in this team, mention must be made of Sir Arie Kok of Holland, ICCC General Secretary and former Chancellor of the Dutch Embassy in Peking, a friend of Wang Ming-tao who went together to Bangkok.) Dr. McIntire and Dr. Shields were preceded, in fact, by Dr. Chia Yu-ming who had represented China in Amsterdam. Dr. Chia visited Singapore en route back to Nanking at the invitation of "old girls" of Ginling Women's Theological Seminary of which he was once principal.

Dr. McIntire and Dr. Shields naturally spoke at *Say Mia Tng*, our mother Life Church at Prinsep Street, and it was Christmas. Though Chinese Christian Church leaders came to hear them, their polemical message was not easily digested. Nevertheless, Miss Leona Wu and Miss Ng Peck Loan of Chin Lien Bible Seminary, received them cordially on behalf of the Evangelistic League founded by Dr. John Sung. The ICCC spirit found affinity with the John Sung Spirit.

From personal contact with Dr. McIntire, Quek was all "worked up" to attend the Geneva Congress. In order to pay his way to this world gathering, he sold a small parcel of land, which reminded me of the merchant, who, having "found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matt. 13:46). Having thus provided himself for the long journey (it took thirty-six hours to



Chin Lien Bible Seminary

make it from Singapore to London by DC-7 propellers), he wrote me to rendezvous in London before heading for Geneva.

Here is a close-up of a self-portrait of two youths who were now fired with a mutual zeal for the Faith of their fathers. This self portrait was made decades ago of the early days of our struggle for the Faith. The backdrop was London-Geneva: “One sunny afternoon in the summer of 1950, two young Singapore Christians were eagerly seeking each other in the hustle and bustle of London. They had just landed at Heathrow Airport within an half-hour, one from the West and the other from the East. They had planned this rendezvous to see the great Metropolis for the first time in their lives, but their main purpose was to proceed together to Geneva to attend the Second Plenary Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches. For since entering Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware, that young Singapore Christian flying in from the West had been imbibed with the spirit of his fathers’ faith for a Twentieth

Century Reformation Movement. Hence his keenness to go to Geneva. Now, this same Spirit had also lifted up and transported the other from the East.

“Although they did not meet each other at the Airport, they finally found themselves checked in together at the House of Rest at No. 10, Finchley Road. As they began to rehearse what the Lord had done for the Reformation Cause, did not their hearts burn within them (Luke 24:32)?”

*Faith of our fathers, living still,
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword—
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death!*

7

**Mother's Vow Fulfilled
1950**

*“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.”
(Eccl. 5:4)*

But there was another important mission that brought Quek to London. Recently elected elder, he was personally representing the Session of our home church to invite me to the pulpit of a proposed English Service. Hitherto, *Say Mia Tng* (Life Church) Prinsep Street was a Teochew-speaking congregation, holding services only in this southern Chinese dialect. After the Second World War, however, the elders began to feel the need of an English Service to cater to an upcoming English-educated younger generation. Without an English Service, one by one of their sons and daughters were slipping away to some other fold. An anomalous situation ecclesiastically and linguistically, to be sure! Whilst representing Life Church and the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League as observer to the ICCG Geneva Congress, Quek was also carrying in his portfolio an epistle from our home church to the ICCG President requesting my ordination.

The few days of sojourn together in the Commonwealth capital brought me more up-to-date on the situation back home. Whatever the situation, was I not unconditionally surrendered to do the Lord's bidding in any corner of His vineyard? If need be, to the no-man's-land of Outer Mongolia, yea, even unto Tibet! This was the vow solemnly and sincerely made from my heart and lips at the Consecration Service of the John Sung Revival, September 12, 1935,

at the Telok Ayer Methodist Church. Yea, this vow had long been foresealed by my beloved Mother when she offered me at birth, a Samuel to the Lord. Yea, this vow was trebly confirmed by a further renunciation of every worldly ambition in April 1946 at the sudden death of my darling baby daughter, five weeks after Mother's equally sudden home-call. I had no conditions. I was prepared! I took the invitation of the elders of my home church to be the Master's call.

From London, we travelled by sea and rail to Paris. On the train chugging up from the plain of Paris to mountainous Geneva, I told Quek I was ready. Now while I was yielded to the Lord to serve in my home church, there lurked somewhere in my heart a hesitancy about getting ordained. Was it from a genuine sense of humility and unworthiness? Or could it be reflecting a spirit of independence bordering on pride? But ordination by the hands of men is a Scriptural practice (1 Tim. 4:14), so that through Quek's earnestness in the matter, coupled with the zeal of Dr. Peter Stam, Jr., Registrar of Faith Seminary and an elder of the Bible Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., I submitted to the Life Church ordination request.

Accordingly, an ordination council comprising twenty-four Presbyters was called together, which elected Dr. J.O. Buswell, Jr., as moderator. This Presbytery then authorised its moderator and Dr. Allan A. MacRae, beloved president of Faith Seminary, to examine me concerning my call, doctrinal beliefs and ministry. Since both examiners were my teachers, they were personally assured before this of my call. As to my doctrinal beliefs, a Presbyterian of Presbyterians, a much thought-out Presbyterian, I had no difficulty cutting a straight line (2 Tim. 2:15) of my Presbyterian doctrines. What of my ministry? From the joy God had implanted within me to study theology and to preach and teach the wonderful truths of God's Word, particularly its Calvinistic emphasis on the sovereignty and grace of God, I confidently replied, "My ministry is to preach as well as to teach. I cannot say which is before which." And so, in the City of John Calvin, by the sombre shadows of the Reformation Monument where stand to this day the statues of Farel, Calvin, Beza,

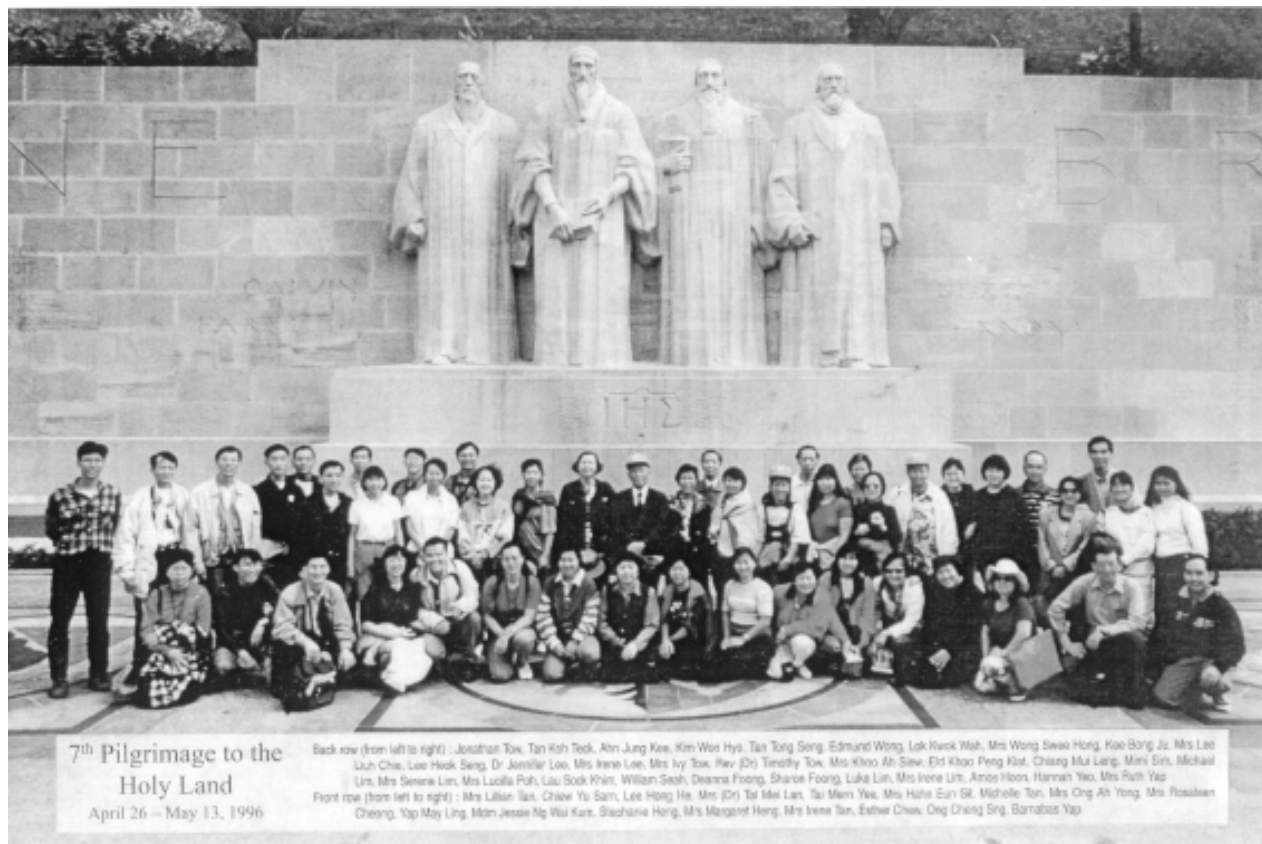
Knox, our spiritual forebears, the hands of the Philadelphia Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church of U.S.A. were laid on my bowed head. The blessing of this ordination service, bolstered by Mother's vow, has ever remained with me in the ministry of the Gospel, especially in times of setbacks and discouragement. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. 4:14).

By the ordination received at the hands of the Philadelphia Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., I was welcomed to the fraternity of these dearly-loved American ministers. By this ordination I was accepting the call to the pulpit of the proposed English Service of Life Church.

Simultaneously, there was received another invitation to serve in another corner of the Lord's vineyard, viz., a letter from Miss Leona Wu, principal of Chin Lien Bible School (金鏈灵修院). The affirmative reply to this invitation was to mark the beginning of many joint Gospel enterprises between the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaysia to come and Miss Wu, representing Chin Lien Bible School and the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League.

But the zeal for a Twentieth Century Reformation was glowing warmly in the hearts of the two young Christian comrades, so that whatever there was to be done back in Singapore, within the Church or without, must be linked to the Reformation witness! During a recess of the Congress, on a balmy Saturday afternoon, my friend and I went on a boat ride on Lake Geneva and there further sought the Lord for guidance for the battle ahead.

The Lord's answer was felt in our conviction of the necessity of publishing a bilingual periodical to answer the modernists and ecumenists, which we spontaneously named *The Malaysia Christian*, and in Chinese, *The Nanyang Christian* (南洋基督徒). Incidentally, in 1950 when Singapore and Malaya were still a colony and a protected country under British rule, the word "Malaysia"



The 16th Century Reformation Monument: Farel, Calvin, Beza, Knox.

denoted only a geographical region without political significance. Since 1965 it has taken on new dimensions of meaning with the forming of Malaya and the Bornean territories of Sabah and Sarawak into a new political entity under that name. The purpose of publishing *The Malaysia Christian* was stated on its masthead, "To preach the Gospel of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and in defence of the faith once delivered unto the saints" (see Jude 3). It has been used of the Lord not only for the defence of His kingdom but also for its extension. Today, the original bilingual quarterly has branched into a Chinese monthly called *The Nanyang Christian* and its English counterpart *The Far Eastern Beacon*. Both papers are edited by Rev. Dr. K.C. Quek.

At the Geneva Congress, delegates and observers from forty countries were gathered for one week of indoctrination, but there was time also for reports, discussions and prayer according to linguistic groups. Not many Chinese brethren or sisters were there because the movement then was still young, so that when one looking like a daughter of Cathay crossed our path a warm conversation was sparked between us and her. She was Miss Adeline Char, an American Chinese of Hakka extraction, representing the Kaimuki Community Church of Honolulu. Who could have thought by this "chance" acquaintance Miss Char would come to Singapore as an independent missionary?

Apart from Geneva, the ICCC had also organised a ten-day tour of the Holy Land. Taking advantage of this golden opportunity, we proceeded by train to Rome where we saw the Vatican City and St. Peter's Church on one hand, and the Colosseum and Catacombs on the other, a live page of contrasts out of church history. From Rome we flew to Beirut. Here we took a taxi to Damascus to rendezvous with the ICCC party that came in by chartered plane. We did not travel with the main party by charter because we had not made reservation earlier. Coming to the Holy Land was a last-minute decision and a windfall from the Lord. Once again, let me repeat, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow

with it" (Prov. 10:22). Seeing the Lord's land in the steps of our Saviour not only inspired our hearts to a closer walk with Him but also expanded our mind to comprehend the deep and great events of sacred history. Our only regret, as we tried to retrace the footsteps of our Saviour, was that we were often side-tracked by obstacles erected across our path by the works of men. We refer especially to the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox shrines with all the candles and incense-burning that clouded our view of the true Christ.

*A pilgrim band we are
 From many a distant land.
 We've come with yearning heart,
 Led by His loving Hand,
 To walk where Jesus walked,
 And tread the Promised Land—
 We're a pilgrim band from afar.
 Lord, save Thy sons from each idol-shrine
 Man has erected in Thy Name.
 Help us seek Thee in truth, in spirit more sublime,
 And help us Thy Word to proclaim.*

The Lord not only opened a way for us to the Holy Land but led us on to Egypt where we gained further background knowledge of the Bible by visiting Cairo, the Nile and the Pyramids. From Cairo we proceeded to Suez to catch a steamer home, like going to a bus station. See how they had lined up, one after the other, to enter the 100-mile Canal in a one-way operation, and now they are arrived at Suez to enter the Red Sea.

A Mr. Ekmekjian of the Bible Society kindly gave us a week's shelter in a room on the roof-top before we found a Dutch cargo boat heading east. This slow boat to Singapore, after many days of drowsy sailing, put in at the port of Belawan, in North Sumatra. What a relief that we could take a side trip to see Medan. There we had fellowship with Rev. Yap Un Han, pastor of the Methodist Church, who later became principal of the Singapore Bible College. (Rev. Yap Un Han was called to glory in 1995 aged 80.) From Medan to Singapore it was only a day's journey and home sweet home at last! This was late

September 1950. It was four years and six months since Mother's work on earth was done. My only regret was I could not say to her, "Mother, I am now a pastor, as you have vowed!"



Suez Canal in the nineties when
visited by Life Church - FEBC Pilgrims.

"For ships may come and ships may go, but I go on forever".

8

Beginnings Of A Young Pastor 1950-1951

“If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: If any man serve Me, him will my Father honour.” (John 12:26)

If the saying, “Where the bishop is, there’s the flock” is true, then the corollary, “How the pastor is trained determines the pattern of the pastorate” is also true. Two vital lessons that the pastor-designate of the Life Church English Service had learned in his seminary days that were vital to the founding of the new Church were: (1) separation from doctrinal and ecclesiastical apostasy and, (2) absolute dependence on the Lord for financial support.

When we met with the Session of our mother church to discuss the policy of the English Service, it was agreed that the English-speaking congregation, while remaining in cordial filial relations with the mother church, should stand immune from Synod control. For the Malaya (Presbyterian) Synod of the Chinese Christian Church, of which Life Church was a member, was linked to the Ecumenical Movement. With regard to the second vital lesson, that is, absolute dependence on the Lord for financial support, it was proposed that the English Congregation be self-sufficient from the start. The pastor was willing to subsist on whatever was willingly offered by the congregation.

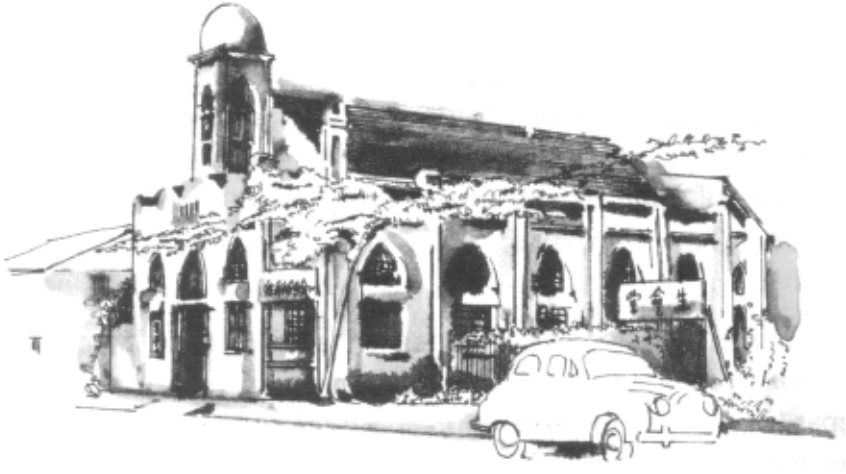
This second proposal took the Session of the mother church by complete surprise! How much could a congregation of young people contribute to the support of a full-time pastor with a growing family? The Session of our mother church, which was minded to subsidise

the daughter church up to one hundred and fifty dollars a month, agreed with some reservations. Thanks to the years of spiritual lessons learned from post-war China, through which the pastor as a theological student with wife and three children had passed, through which Psalm 34:10 came often to their succour, "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," the pastor had full confidence this financial arrangement would work. (All the freewill offerings collected by the English Service and Sunday School would be his stipend. The first month's collection amounted to \$110. In six months it increased to \$200.)

With these proposals fully accepted by the Chinese Church, the stage was set for the launching of the English Service. A cyclostyled letter was sent to members of the congregation to inform them of the return of their son from theological training abroad. The Reverend Timothy Tow Siang Hui, B.D., graduate of Faith Theological Seminary, U.S.A., would henceforth pastor an afternoon English Service every Sunday at 5.30 p.m. This English Service was scheduled to be inaugurated on the Lord's Day October 20, 1950, at the Life Church, 142 Prinsep Street. Such a worship service would cater to the English-educated younger generation not only of Life Church but to all and sundry. "ALL ARE WELCOME."

But how many English-speaking sons and daughters of the three-hundred-member Chinese Life Church would be minded to come to the Inaugural Service? Our faith being small, it was deemed the fourteen long pews on one side of the church auditorium would suffice such a humble beginning. Accordingly, the pulpit was shifted to that side. When the old wall clock sitting like a time-keeper over the last pew on the pulpit side struck its half-hourly "dong" for the worship to begin, well over one hundred and twenty had come and spread themselves comfortably on either side of the pews. This prompted the pulpit to be hastily shunted back to its rightful central position!

The message preached by the young and inexperienced pastor that first Lord's Day was an exposition of the Bible slogan chosen for



The Old Life Church at Prinsep Street, built 1929

the English Service. It was “Holding Forth the Word of Life”, taken from Philippians 2:16. Why was an English service inaugurated for the Teochew-speaking Life Church? To hold forth the Word of Life to the younger generation that they, like their fathers and forefathers, might inherit both the Written Word (the Bible) and the Living Word (Jesus Christ) that they might have life everlasting.

But who were their forefathers? From the narrative earlier of the migration of the Tow Clan to Singapore, December 1926 and how they attended a Teochew service at the Malay Chapel, Prinsep Street, we have a lineage with earlier Christian migrants from South China dating back to the mid-fifties of the nineteenth century.

From the converts made by William Chalmers Burns and his successors in the Amoy and Swatow districts, a trickle of the same and of their relatives was beginning to flow to Singapore and the Malay States. One Tan See Boo, a direct convert of Burns from Amoy, attached himself for a time to Keaseberry, founder of the Malay Chapel. As the trickle of Christian migrants grew into a rivulet by the seventies, the English Presbyterian Mission felt it their duty to divert some missionaries to Singapore to do follow-up work. Accordingly, the Mission sent Rev. and Mrs. J.A.B. Cook to

Singapore in 1881 after a year's language study in Swatow. A man of drive and vision, Rev. John Cook, better known to his Chinese parishioners as Pastor Ko Yok Han, gathered the scattered flocks and got them organised in lightning succession at these four localities: (1) Bukit Timah, 1881; (2) Tekka (Prinsep Street), 1883; (3) Hougang (Upper Serangoon), 1883; (4) Tanjong Pagar, 1883. When Cook retired in 1924 after 43 years' spirited service, the number of Chinese Presbyterian Churches under his care had increased to thirteen, not counting those he had established in Johore State such as at Johore Bahru and Muar.

Coming back to the pastor's support, it is to be stressed that the Lord's servant must first learn how to be abased before he can abound (Phil. 4:12). He must learn to be diligent and conscientious in his labours (Prov. 27:23) or else he should not eat (2 Thess. 3:10). Though a Church may not be able to support its pastor fully, the Lord is no man's debtor. What is lacking from one hand, He can supply from another, and often abundantly at that. There is no need for God to rob Peter to pay Paul either.

It is not necessary to relate how God supplied our needs where the pastor's monthly stipend was insufficient. Suffice it here to recount how He solved a most acute problem, viz., housing, upon my return. During the years I was away, my Tiong Bahru flat, under the control of the SIT (Singapore Improvement Trust), was shared between my family and the brothers and sisters. There were three rooms for about ten occupants, big and small. With my return, the congestion was increased for we were now a family of six.

I remember how I had sought help from a teacher who taught me at the Anglo-Chinese School and was now a well-known leader of the Progressive Party. (Colonial Singapore was on its way to becoming an independent state.) I asked him to use his good offices to apply for another SIT flat on my behalf. The SIT was the precursor of the present Housing and Development Board (HDB). His reply was there was no chance at all. In that post-War rehabilitation, supply was far short of demand. He told me the

number of applicants was well over fifty thousand. “Even *amahs*, nowadays, are applying,” he averred.

Having learned another lesson, that vain is the help of man (Ps. 108:12), I turned to the Lord. Remembering one of my mottoes, “Self-help, with God’s help, is the best help” (Phil. 4:13), I gathered courage to fly over the fifty thousand queue, “. . . and by my God have I leaped over a wall” (Ps. 18:29). I made a direct telephone call to Mr. Carter, manager of the SIT, whose office was a stone’s throw from the flat where we were staying. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matt. 7:7).

“Sir, I am a minister of the Gospel, just returned from study in the United States. I have a three-room SIT flat, but it is shared between my family with four small children and my brothers and sisters. We have all together eleven in this flat. Sir, can you help me, please?”

After a pause that seemed ages, the voice said, “Er, . . . come and see me tomorrow afternoon.”

I went to the SIT Office the next day, promptly at 2 p.m., the beginning of the afternoon business session. Crowds of people filled the waiting room, overflowing onto the five-foot way. These were being awarded their flats in order of priority. Some were asking for application forms. Sensing the best time to see the Manager was when all had been dealt with, I sat patiently and prayed. (I never prayed so long before.) At 4.30 p.m., the end of the day, when all the applications had been attended to, I found myself alone, the last of the queue. At that I presented my card through the receptionist. After a five-minute wait that seemed an eternity, I heard a bell—*rrring!* I knew that my hour of deliverance had come.

“Come in!”

“Good afternoon, Sir. I am the person who spoke to you on the phone yesterday. I am the pastor just returned from America”

No reply. Mr. Carter kept on pushing his pen, pipe in mouth. Then, with a quick glance at me, he said matter-of-factly,

“Come next week for your key.”

“Thank you very much, Sir!” At that I sheepishly bowed out of the Manager’s office. But my heart throbbed hard and fast! I saw once again the hand of Almighty God and reconsecrated myself to Him.

I was awarded a two-bedroom flat which opened into a large verandah, with a small sitting hall and a small kitchen, at 10A, Kim Pong Road, on the far end of Tiong Bahru. Rent was at thirty-six dollars a month. When I moved out of the old flat at 21A Seng Poh Road to make room for my brothers and sisters still schooling and entered the new flat, the Lord added, through Deacon C.T. Hsu, a three-cornered shelf measured to fit into the limited space outside the bathroom and toilet unit. How thoughtful! My sister sent in an American-made Leonard refrigerator costing nine hundred dollars. Praise the Lord, let me say it the third time, “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it” (Prov. 10:22). We dedicated our little flat for the Lord’s use. The sitting hall with installation of a telephone, a 14-inch typewriter and Gestetner duplicating machine became the Church office for the next eleven years. The touch typing I had acquired before the War qualified me to be the Church typist. A piano partly paid for by Sister simultaneously made the little sitting hall a music studio for Leah, my first daughter.

Starting out on my life’s ministry as a pastor in fulfilment of Mother’s vow was thrilling business for me. I was my own boss. I had all the time in my hands. I was to lead and not to be led. I was to implement and not be implemented. As I have taught my students both at Chin Lien Bible School and Far Eastern Bible College, I was like a lion, the king of the beasts, monarch of all I surveyed. It was up to me to go out and forage, to conquer new territory for the Lord’s

domain. But a king lion could also sleep seventeen hours a day. It all depended on me!

Although the Inaugural Service on October 20, 1950 saw a crowd of a hundred and twenty, the weeks following found the congregation dwindling to half! This is what Church work is like, and that is how God keeps us humble. According to the Chinese Life Church records, only thirty communicants transferred to the English Service together with their children. Our core membership, including children, was between forty and fifty.

As the flock was young and needed more care than an older congregation, visitation was next to sermonisation. In order to move about freely, I asked Sister for a bicycle. This would save time and money waiting for a bus. This would simultaneously provide good exercise to my body. Besides all these reasons, the chief one was I liked cycling. I had been cycling throughout my school life, even to Raffles College and to the Supreme Court right through the Japanese Occupation. I chose a maroon-and-white BSA racer costing S\$165.

I breezed through the length and breadth of the city not only to visit the young flock but also to Chin Lien Bible School in the Geylang-Katong suburbs to teach. This speed-steed became my travelling companion for about two years before I inherited an old 8 h.p. Ford Anglia from Father with a leaking rubberised roof.

“Economy is the mother of prosperity.” By not easily spending out of Church funds, the young English Church began to accumulate a surplus for extended ministries beyond its four walls.

While it is stated that the Life Church English Service was to cater to a rising English-educated generation, the overall mandate to any and every church is what is known as the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). However, I would also call the Great Commission “The First Commandment to the Church”. It would be a great mistake for any pastor to sit in his sheepfold and watch that none stray into another pasture. Such a defensive policy is defeatist. Rather, we should heed the Master’s call to bring in the other sheep,

those wandering in faraway valleys or on mountain slopes, those who are crying for help. The First Commandment to the Church, as has been proven through the years, is evangelism and missions.

Since Quek and I were members of the John Sung Preaching Bands, we renewed our covenant to preach the Word outside the four walls of the Church at least once a week. We took an active part in a “rehabilitated” Evangelistic League under the care of Miss Leona Wu, for the Preaching Bands were disbanded during the years of Japanese Occupation. We involved ourselves with a new outreach into Johore State across the Causeway. One John Sung old-timer not to be left out was Deacon C.T. Hsu. To preach Christ in his own unique way he had an old Ford car written all over with salvation slogans. Deacon Hsu especially was attracted to my testimony. He remained a loyal and loving friend, supporting my ministry wherever I was called, to the day the Lord called him home. He used to send me a cheque at Christmas for ice-cream. Ordained a minister of the Gospel in 1956, he served the Lord for 40 years to the very last.

Of the early church at Antioch, it is recorded that as Barnabas and other leaders “ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them” (Acts 13:1,2). What was the work whereunto they were called? To leave Antioch and preach the Gospel beyond their city, in obedience to the Lord’s marching orders. This was their first missionary journey. This was the pace the Apostles were setting for the Church. The Book of Acts is not only a historical record of the early church but also a blue-print, an infallible pattern, for Church growth and missions for all ages. (Read my exposition of Acts of the Apostles—*Pattern for Church Growth and Missions.*)

As the leaders of the Life Church English Service waited on the Lord, a burden came upon the pastor and Deacon Hsu to go on a first missionary journey to Malaya, an immediate neighbour and our Judea. This burden was precipitated by the political situation in the early fifties when the Communist uprisings were causing great anxiety to the Malayan Government under British protection. To beat

the Communists in their game, Lt. General Sir Harold Briggs, soon succeeded by Gen. Templer, Director of Operations, had half-a-million Chinese squatters living in the rural and near-jungle areas resettled in six hundred new villages. This was to cut off supply to the “bandits”, who had been preying on them. This gave us a wonderful opportunity to bring the Gospel to an uprooted people ten times easier than were we to go preaching to scattered households.

With the prayerful support of the whole congregation, Deacon Hsu and I launched out together in June 1951 in his new two-seater Fiat Marvellette. In the “hold” of this mini-car, we carried thousands of tracts and Gospel portions in Chinese, Tamil and English, a roll of Gospel posters, a public address system, a gramophone and Gospel records topped up with a projector and colour slides of the Holy Land. Over the back bumper of the vehicle, we displayed a red sign with bold white letters in both English and Chinese: “JESUS SAVES.” Our mission was simply to tell the good news of Jesus Christ, Saviour of all mankind and soon coming King, to as many of the villages as possible. We planned to penetrate the inland State of Pahang up to Raub where Madam Ang, a Chin Lien graduate, had built two pocket churches after the War.

The first people to receive the tracts were the Tamils. All along the main highway up the Peninsula, we met gangs of Indian coolies, practically all Tamil speaking, engaged in road repairs. To tell them the Good News, all we needed to do was aim a wad of tracts at them like throwing a Gospel grenade as we drove past. As the tracts scattered in the wind, it was a delight to see the curious go after them. Others moved by curiosity followed suit. By that time, we had practically lost sight of them, but the seed had been sown: “But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” (2 Cor. 9:6).

Upon alighting at a new village, which was protected by barbed-wire fencing, our method was to find a vantage point and hoist up the roll of Gospel posters. To further attract the crowd, we played a Gospel record. Now as the music floated on the airwaves children

Malaysia Pioneer Mission

PREACHING IN THE NEW VILLAGES



would come running from every side. Some could be heard saying, "Here comes the patent medicine vendor." Medicine vendors we were indeed, that would heal their souls' diseases. We had something better than *Tiger Balm*, a famous Chinese menthol ointment that was supposed to be a cure-all, even for snakebites! And if they didn't recognise what we were, soon they would know we were messengers of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. 55:1).

In the new villages the dialect most spoken was Hakka, then Cantonese and Hokkien. Where the schools opened to us the medium of communication would then be Mandarin. A Gospel message delivered in a new village, from start to finish, including tract distribution and personal witnessing, would take about two hours. Tracts and Gospel portions would be given away after the street meeting and to the shophouses that formed the business centre of the village, from door to door. We covered on an average two villages a day. We planned to put up at some boarding house in a nearby town for the night.

On the evening of the first day, however, after we had finished preaching at Yong Peng and thereafter to a new village in the Tampin district, we drove to the old town in the vicinity to look for shelter. But before that, we entered a coffee-shop to eat a hot meal. When we had eaten and begun to stroll along the five-foot way, a John Sung old-timer and former male nurse at the Tan Tock Seng Hospital where we evangelised every Sunday afternoon accosted us. Delighted to meet old friends in such strange circumstances, he entreated us to stay with him for the night. Brother Mok had moved from Singapore to Tampin during the war years to set up a little dispensary for a living. So here we were all "medicine men", with a Medicine that would cure every heartache. For a more delightful evening, we showed the Holy Land slides to the Mok family and his neighbours and friends. This spontaneous provision—and he gave us

a clean bed with breakfast the next day—truly was of the Lord. This brought to mind the words of the Lord of harvest: “And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it...” (Matt. 10:11-13).

The evening of the second day found us parking the little Gospel car on a side road which had an entrance to a “boarding house” upstairs. Here we shared a room at \$5 a night. It was a Saturday. Suddenly a Methodist minister, pastor Fang Tsau Hsi, whose name we knew, came up the stairs to look for us. He was delighted to see the “Jesus Saves” sign on our vehicle. After a brief exchange of courtesies, Rev. Fang said, “Oh, you are the young America-returned pastor I have heard of. Now the rule here in Seremban is when a Singapore pastor visits, he cannot go away without preaching in our church!”

“But I did not bring my tie and jacket!”

“That’s no problem, you can wear mine, though a little broader.”

And so I was the Lord’s messenger to the Chinese Methodist Church of Seremban with a big congregation the first Sunday we were on the road. After service, we were entertained to a good sumptuous lunch. Pastor Fang opened up again, “We have a branch church at Mantin some ten miles down the road. We shall be delighted if you will go and preach there too.” And so I was the Lord’s messenger to the Chinese Methodist Church at Mantin. Deacon Hsu supported me with a broad grin all the way!

On our way through the winding mountain road to inland Pahang, we passed through the gap below Fraser’s Hill. Somewhere down the mountain path near a small town was the spot we were “ambushed” by a platoon of Kenyan soldiers! Were it not for the broad grins on their faces revealing rows of ivory white teeth, we might not have spotted them in the dark forest terrain. Seeing we had no offensive weapons but rather missiles of peace, one of the two

being a “Tow” rocket, they waved us on! The war with the communist terrorists had become so acute that the British Military had to enlist the help of Africans. For it was recently that the British High Commissioner to Malaya, Sir Henry Gurney, was ambushed and killed on this mountain road leading up to Fraser’s Hill.

We arrived at Raub in the afternoon shadows to find Madam Ang Soo Hua all prepared with a chicken dinner to receive us. Here was built a pretty country church by her single-handedly for the Methodists. Here was called together a congregation of fifty to sixty that evening to see the Holy Land slides and to hear a Gospel message.

The next day Madam Ang led the way to two new villages. This time our target was the village schools. By appointment, the principals of the two schools opened their doors to the Gospel. About two hundred students each were assembled on the playground to hear us preach and sing, particularly Deacon Hsu who had a good voice. After the message in song and word, we distributed to each youngster a PTL (Pocket Testament League) Gospel of John. Through Attorney James E. Bennet of New York, a Bible Presbyterian elder and earnest soul winner, we had received a consignment of fifty thousand of these orange-covered Gospels, with the salvation verses underlined and the way of salvation explained on the inside back cover. “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it” (Isa. 55:10,11).

From Raub we were taken by Madam Ang to Bentong where another church patterned after Raub had been built, which was manned by her colleague from Chin Lien Bible School. By special appointment with the Military, some eighty Kenyan soldiers who were Christians were given a treat of the Holy Land slides. In all our

upcountry itinerary here was the only instance where English was used, and where English gospels were distributed. In this case, we gave away the English version of the PTL Gospel of John. As the Boy Scouts' motto is "Be Prepared", so we who go on such a journey must also be prepared for every eventuality and need. We were glad we had all things for all men.

In the daytime, we witnessed to the Kenyans. In the evening we spoke to another church gathering, this time in the Hokkien dialect. It was wonderful to work in unison for the Lord, for without the unity of the Spirit, His power would be hindered and his work retarded. Deacon Hsu was so touched by Madam Ang's ministry that he returned to do a follow-up work himself. Madam Ang was a fruit of the Singapore Pentecost. Now we "crowned" her "Queen of Pahang".

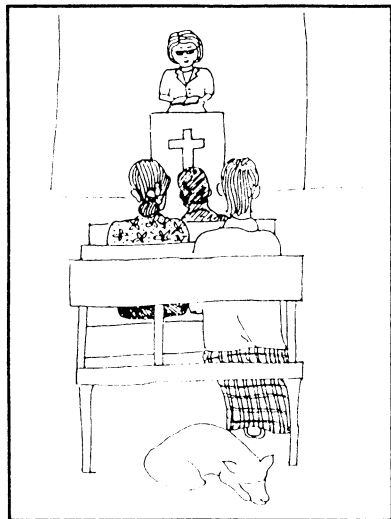
From the mountain strongholds of Raub and Bentong, we coasted down to the railway towns of Temerloh and Mentakab, preaching along the way. What happened at Tampin, where we were entertained by a John Sung old-timer Mr. Mok, was repeated in Mentakab where Mr. Teo, the proprietor of a provision store and "general merchant", accosted us also through the "Jesus Saves" sign on our car. "Why," he said, "you must stay with us tonight. We are members of the Methodist Church, but we have no pastor now." As we were already checked into an old boarding house, we felt constrained to remain where we were. Had we met Brother Teo earlier, we would have gladly lodged with him, for this boarding house was not only old but unhygienic, to say the least. The mosquito net was a brownish colour and the pillows were a cosy hiding place for a species of crawling insects called bed bugs. Nevertheless, we were invited to an instant dinner. Brother Teo, like Abraham meeting the three distinguished visitors, hastened here and there into the kitchen precincts, and in no time served up two gigantic bowls of beef noodles, steaming hot! That fragrance of hot soup, *a la Mentakab*, has lingered on my palate to this day.

In years to come when Mr. Teo's son had difficulty joining an elite college in Singapore, I was glad to be able to enrol him and get

him also a place in the boarding school. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42).

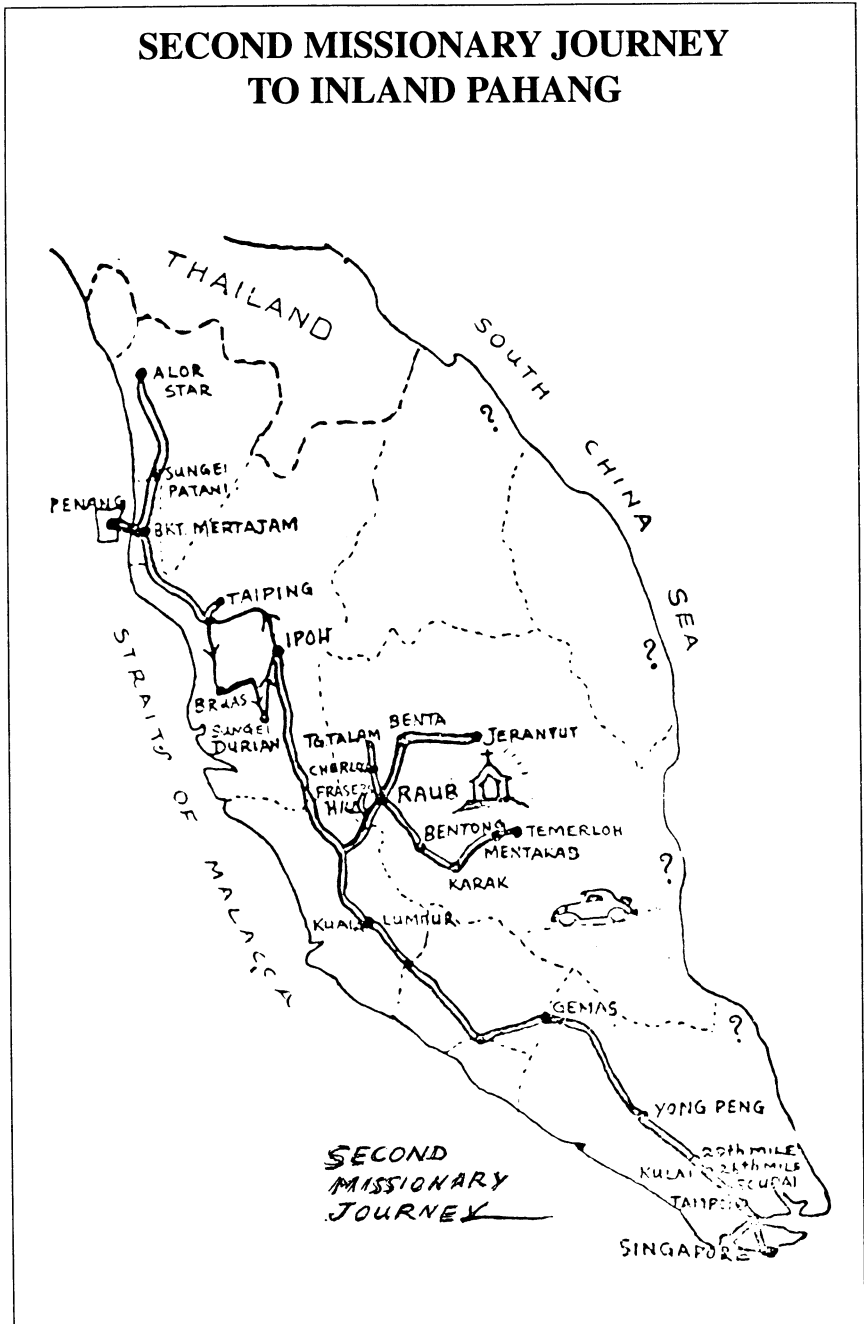
After his first missionary journey Paul followed up with a second. It behoved Deacon Hsu and me to undertake a longer one the second time. This took us a fortnight along the West Coast all the way to Alor Star in Kedah State. En route to Kedah, we turned left to Penang to stay a night with the Singapore-Penang Evangelistic League Annual Retreat on Penang Hill. This Annual Retreat, founded by Miss Leona Wu, continued into the nineties under Miss Ng Peck Loan, her successor. The Holy Land slides which were a part of our equipment proved to be a great attraction and a blessing to Christians who could not afford the expensive "pilgrimage".

After this longer second missionary journey, Deacon Hsu and I made two more forays along the unbeaten tracks of the East Coast up to Mersing and Endau. This led us to introduce Miss Adeline Char of Honolulu to setting up a first station at Jemaluang, 13 miles south of Mersing, with land granted "on the spot" by the British Administrative Office of New Villages at Mersing. For those were trying days when the British strategy of rounding up rural dwellers into new villages was part of a life-and-death struggle against the communist uprising. Any church that would go dwell among the evacuees was received with open arms. In all these trips up and down the Malay Peninsula, we covered about sixty, i.e., one-tenth of the new villages, with the Gospel message by word, by tract, by song, by showing of slides of the land of



Miss Adeline Char

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY TO INLAND PAHANG



our Saviour's birth. The figure includes scattering of Tamil tracts to Indian work-gangs engaged in road repairs all along the highways.

“And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27). According to this pattern set by the Apostles, we also rehearsed to the whole congregation at Prinsep Street the door to the new villages God had opened, and how He kept us safe from the communists and from the hazards of the Malayan roads, reportedly one of the worst in the world with frequent fatal accidents. For, they were narrow and winding.

The fervour of the church session was so high that on March 12, 1952 a meeting for the formation of a missionary society was called at 9 Beng Wan Road, home of Elder and Mrs. Quek Kiok Chiang. A thank-offering taken on the spot amounted to \$241. The name chosen for this new society was “Malaysia Pioneer Mission”, which set our sights on the lands around us. Our energy was to be bent on places where Christ had not been preached. With such an organisation, it was also decided to establish mission stations in some of the new villages we had visited.

One of the new villages we had visited was Kelapa Sawit at the 26th mile Kulai Road, Johore. This village was one of three that came

into the orbit of the Evangelise China Fellowship, an extended mission work of Dr. Andrew Gih through Miss Leona Wu. It began in 1952. By January 1954, however, this work was to be relinquished by ECF, so Miss Wu offered to continue it on a joint sponsorship between MPM and the Evangelistic League. It cost \$230 to send two Chin Lien graduates to this village at \$100 per person per month. Thirty dollars was paid for the renting of a two-storey wooden terrace house in the business centre



Miss Leona Wu

of the village. “For who hath despised the day of small things?” (Zech. 4:10).

On the home front, we saw the opening of the Sunday School one month after the inauguration of the church. In succession were formed the Youth Fellowship, then a Bible Camp, the first of its kind to be organised in Singapore. From the beginning, a Prayer Meeting was held in Church every Wednesday night. When a Friday night Family Worship was instituted, the Prayer Meeting was shifted up to Tuesday, a tradition we have kept to this day. A more permanent work of indoctrination, however, was carried out every Sunday morning with a group of zealous young people studying the Bible together in the Government quarters of Elder Heng Mui Kiah at Hooper Road. The pastor took them through the Gospel of John. Gospel meetings followed suit whenever well-known evangelists were contacted. Church attendance increased slowly but steadily. So did finance and the pastor’s stipend. These beginnings of a young pastor bring to mind that Chinese proverb, “Every beginning is difficult.”

9

By Sword and Trowel 1951-1956

“For the builders, everyone had his sword girded by his side, and so builded.” (Neh. 4:18)

The ministry of Life Church English Service might be likened to Nehemiah's building of the broken Wall of Jerusalem. As the Jews were opposed by the enemy on every side, they were told to build with one hand and to fight with the other. That is to say, some would be working with their trowels while others would be on guard with their swords. This had given Spurgeon the name of his periodical *Sword and Trowel*, for Spurgeon was not only a church builder with a congregation of five thousand every Sunday morning and evening at his famed Tabernacle, but also a defender of the Faith against the unbelief and modernism of his day.

Having joined the Twentieth Century Reformation organised as the International Council of Christian Churches, Life Church English Service would henceforth be thickly involved in a polemical ministry that took the pastor and his comrade Elder Quek to the four corners of the earth. Not only a trowel, we carried also a sword. “Think not that I come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law” (Matt. 10:34,35). The cross carried horizontally becomes a sword. In standing for Christ, in-laws often become out-laws!

No sooner had Deacon Hsu and I returned from our itinerant preaching in the new villages than a call to Manila was received. As

the WCC had invaded the Far East by convening an East Asia Christian Conference in Bangkok 1949, so the ICCC was now calling one in the Philippines to counter the Ecumenical advance to Thailand. This was November 1951.

As our Church was still in her infancy, Quek and I were given our air-tickets. Deacon Hsu, not willing to be left out of defending his Lord, paid his own way. “How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Ps. 133:1). Not only to dwell together in unity, but to fight the Lord’s battle together, Quek, Tow, Hsu began to be called the “Three Musketeers”, but while our namesakes were fighting for an earthly kingdom, we were fighting for a Heavenly. We would rather be counted with the three who broke through the Philistine ranks and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem and presented it to David their king (1 Chr. 11:18).

Though the Manila gathering was small, the name by which it was called was great! We were constituted the First General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches. We were not speaking as individuals, but in the name of the Church, yea, for the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the Far East. Here comes the Church, in the Name of her King Jesus Christ, “terrible as an army with banners” (Song 6:4). We were welcomed by the President of the Philippines to the Malacanang Palace. One memorable event in the Palace was the right hand of fellowship extended by a Filipino pastor on behalf of the people of the Philippines to Rev. Goto of Japan, representing the Japanese. This handshake was a symbol of forgiveness for Japan’s atrocities committed during the Second World War. This forgiveness was possible only in the Lord Jesus Christ. The President was touched.

Though our Conference in Manila was insignificant by worldly standards, the Resolutions and Manifestos issued through the press were powerful, like a great searchlight throwing its beams into the distant darkness. At the time we were meeting in Manila, China was just trampled under the iron heel of Mao’s “Liberation” forces. While the name of Mao had shaken every nation bordering China and the

Church inside China was beginning to reel under his persecution, the ICCC's strong anti-communist stand in Jesus' Name would surely give help and comfort to the fearful. A Christian Manifesto on the evils of Marxism with words of encouragement to our suffering brothers and sisters in China was broadcast by the ICCC President in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. 2:1).

Other manifestos and resolutions concerned as many aspects of the Church in the Far East as had come under Satan's attack, such as the erosion of faith by subtle liberal and modernist teachings in the seminaries, Roman Catholicism, Charismaticism, Ecumenism. These brief and precise statements became a standard to which the weaker churches might rally and stand together. At this Conference, Rev. Antonio Ormeo of the First Baptist Church of Manila was elected President.

Returning from Manila, the "Three Musketeers" were nominated by the mother Life Church as commissioners to the Synod of the old denomination, the Chinese Presbyterian Churches which, under Ecumenical influence, had changed its name to the Malaya Synod of the Chinese Christian Church. Having discovered the rank unbelief in the missionary leadership of our Chinese churches and their bringing them in affiliation with the Malayan Christian Council which was linked to the WCC, the three Life Church commissioners brought this matter to the Synod, with a proposal that our Presbyterian Chinese Churches withdraw from the MCC. This matter was so noised abroad that it is recorded by Dr. Bobby E.K. Sng in his *Story of the Church in Singapore 1819-1978* as follows:

Meanwhile, a serious theological storm was brewing. The Singapore Life Church was a part of the Synod of the Chinese Presbyterian Church which in turn was affiliated to the Malayan Christian Council. Rev. Timothy Tow, Elder Quek Kiok Chiang and Deacon Hsu Chiang Tai, as commissioners from Life Church, sought to get the Synod to dissociate itself from the MCC because "not a few of the promoters and

leaders of the MCC are modernists who do not accept the fundamentals of the faith, including the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, His bodily resurrection and personal second coming.” Further, it was alleged that the “MCC is a part of the one world church movement promoted by the IMC (International Missionary Council) and WCC which include in their membership the idolatrous Greek Orthodox and Unitarians who deny the deity of Christ. Membership in the MCC would thus make this Synod unequally yoked with such unbelievers in disobedience to God” and “the MCC is a part of the ecumenical movement promoted by the IMC and the WCC which are seeking a union of Protestants and Roman Catholics. This is undoing the Protestant Reformation and betraying the very martyrs of the Reformation.”

The debate raged back and forth. Each time the motion for disaffiliation was presented at the Synod, it was defeated. The last battle was waged in January 1955 when commissioners from all parts of Singapore and Malaya met at Muar. Again the motion was defeated. Life Church English Service therefore decided to withdraw from the Synod. Rev. Tow writes: “In order to distinguish ourselves from Synod Churches, we prefixed the word Bible to make ours the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. January 1955, indeed, saw the birth of the Bible-Presbyterian Church movement, but only the good Lord knew what blessings were in store for us as a result of this separation from the entangling alliances with unbelief.”

Since then, the B-P Church has developed at a rapid pace but largely in isolation from other churches. Its strong call to all Protestant Christians to separate themselves from churches that had liberal leadership struck a responsive chord in some but antagonised the leaders of the larger churches.

(In His Good Time, by Bobby E.K. Sng, pp. 254 & 255)

In his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul called the Christians of his day also to separate from unbelievers and idols, and not to touch the unclean thing. However, he did not end on such a

solitary note but went on to assure them and us of consolation from the Father, the Lord Almighty who would take care of us His sons and daughters. Though we seemed to be ostracised by the main body of the Church in Singapore, the Lord now gave us a worldwide fellowship with those who had also separated from apostasy and unbelief.

In 1953 we were called to the Second General Assembly of the FECCC in Japan, and in 1954 to the Third ICC World Congress in Philadelphia. In August 1956, our little Life B-P Church, only one year and eight months since coming out of the old Synod, hosted the Third General Assembly of the FECCC.

For a week the delegates from ten nations met in high spirits, as in the preceding conferences. Morning sessions were held at Prinsep Street and evening meetings for the public at Jubilee Church, Tiong Bahru (Rev. Torrey Shih). "The Three Musketeers" fought the Lord's battle as one man, for not too many were trained to fight. Nevertheless, the young people rallied, and a choir was assembled under the baton of Philip Heng, still in his teens, to sing at the Victoria Memorial Hall.

Before the Conference proper, there was held a series of Gospel meetings with Rev. Antonio Ormeo, resulting in twenty-four souls won to the Lord. Another significant work was the ordination of Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang and Rev. Hsu Chiang Tai by a council of nine Presbyterian ministers attending the assembly, and the ordination of Rev. Phoa Hock Seng by Bishop D.A. Thompson of the Reformed Episcopal Church of England, a break-away from the Church of England because of her ecumenism. Thus separately ordained, Rev. Phoa remained an independent "Anglican" since he was a son of the Church of England. Another John Sung old-timer who was taught the importance of separation



Rev. Hsu Chiang Tai

from liberalism and modernism, he could not have sought ordination otherwise. The Church founded by Rev. Phoa since the Singapore Pentecost, by God's grace, has remained separatist to this day.

Another permanent fruit of the FECCC Third Assembly is an anthem presented by Rev. J.S. Scarrow of New Zealand, the words of which came to him on the plane as he was flying in to Singapore. This has since been sung at the other Assemblies and Congresses of the ICCC. This anthem may be sung to the tune of "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts" as follows:

*All Scripture, Lord, as Thou hast said,
Through holy men, inspired to write,
Is given to Thy Church on earth
To furnish fallen men with light.*

*We meet to pledge with solemn vow
Thy written Word shall ever stay.
Nor shall we wrest one smallest part,
Nor add thereto nor take away.*

*The Word made flesh was virgin born,
Eternal Son of God is He.
Two natures—God and man in one—
Redeemer through His blood to be.*

*Born of Thy Spirit, Lord, we praise,
One Only God, and Three in One.
O Abba Father, hear our praise
Thou lovest the world and gave Thy Son.*

*We therefore strive, contending all
Not in our strength; the battle's Thine;
O speed the promised day of Christ,
That blessed day, that glorious time.*

A most significant token of God's approval on the Reformation testimony was the "inheritance" of a valuable property, the Zion Kindergarten in Serangoon Gardens, from Rev. Jason Linn of Indonesia. Jason Linn had done a great work in acquiring 38,000 sq. ft. of land in the estate and building a multi-classroom school as a



Zion Kindergarten's Original Building

means of starting a self-supporting church work in Singapore. Owing to unforeseen circumstances, he was not able to pay his contractors. Being encumbered with a \$90,000 debt, he felt the only solution was to "bequeath" the property (worth twice the amount owing) to some worthy institution. Since we had become close friends through a book he had written of his experiences as a missionary to the interior of East Borneo, he happily let Life Church take over. His book of 258 pages is a Chinese missionary classic, which has gone through two or three printings. We have translated it under the title, *Pioneering in Dyak Borneo*. This English version, which has a first printing of 6,000 and a second of 5,000, has found a niche in not a few Bible colleges and seminary libraries.

Out of the handsome Zion Kindergarten building was developed a Sunday School under Elder Chia Kim Chwee, April 1957. In June, Rev. Quek Kioh Chiang was installed as pastor. On my part, I became honorary principal for a year to help out financially. In times like these, "the principal was also peon, and the teacher bell-ringer". We did everything ourselves to save towards paying off the debt. We saved a thousand dollars a month which was quickly absorbed by the creditors. One member of the kindergarten staff worthy of honourable mention is Tor Cheng Huat, caretaker and bus-driver, whose loyalty and diligence helped us not a little through a very difficult time.

Not only did the Lord reward us materially, but also spiritually. We have seen how out of Zion Kindergarten came Zion Church. In rapid succession, out of Zion came Faith Church (Chinese) the following year. This was possible because there was brotherly love and cooperation. Rev. Quek's diligence in looking after two flocks using the same building must also be mentioned. Elder Quek Kiok Meng, his elder brother, was instrumental in bringing the congregation of Central Christian Church in town to amalgamate with Faith Church.

Meanwhile, Life Church had earlier, on January 20, 1957, opened the first Sunday School at the home of Elder and Mrs. Seow Chong Pin at 95 Nemesu Avenue, Sembawang. This earliest offshoot from Life Church, a few months before Zion, has since become a "big brother" church. It owns a converted shophouse in the Teachers Estate at Kalidasa Avenue where Sunday Services are held. The pastor of Sembawang B-P Church has all along been Rev. Bob Phee, one of her illustrious sons. A graduate of FEBC, he and his wife received further training at Covenant Seminary, U.S.A., where Bob obtained a double Masters. Through his leadership, a valuable property at 13 Bright Hill was acquired at \$2.067 million. To trade for the Lord, it was later sold for \$8 million. With this sum, Bob tendered successfully for 27,000 sq. ft. of land at Simei Road in Tampines and built a new church named Moriah. Moriah has today two services in English and Chinese. It has missions to North Thailand and West Africa.

By sword and trowel, Life B-P Church had forged ahead to build God's Kingdom in Singapore in the first seven years of her founding.

Hitherto, we have heard a great deal of the exploits of China's revivalists and evangelists, but here is one whom I would call without apology the "Livingstone of China", who had mightily increased our Singapore work by giving us the Zion property.

Jason Linn was a product of the Christian and Missionary Alliance under the tutelage of Dr. R.A. Jaffray. He graduated from

the CMA Seminary in Wuchow, Kwangsi Province, Southwest China. He was the sterling projection of the pioneering spirit of R.A. Jaffray, who enlisted him for the Dyaks of East Borneo. Dr. Jaffray did not merely send him to a wild country, but was also instrumental in organising an Overseas Chinese Missionary Union under Dr. Leland Wang to keep up his support. In other words, here was a great American missionary who was the genius behind a Chinese Missionary Society, and the first one at that. He was the mainspring of three Chinese missionaries to the regions beyond, to an otherwise impenetrable country.

Here is Jason's testimony of his call to Borneo:

1927, my last year in Seminary, saw Dr. Jaffray return from reconnaissance of the South Seas to report to the alma mater. Displaying a map, he showed us the darkness over the Southern Archipelago. With the exception of the Philippines and British Malaya where the Gospel was preached, many regions were little evangelised. Particularly the Netherlands East Indies. The places he visited, including many big towns inhabited by overseas Chinese, were devoid of ministers. Churches were scarcely to be seen, but temples and mosques everywhere! The Chinese in several towns who had been hungering and thirsting for long entreated him to find them pastors from China.

On his return journey Dr. Jaffray dreamed, to his horror, how his hands became stained with blood. The Lord was revealing to him this truth: If he did not go to the resuscitation of thirsty souls in the South Seas, then thousands of these would perish, and their blood upon him! Therefore he dared not keep silent upon his return to China. He would launch a "Save the South Seas" project! He felt that the South Seas were the vineyard of the Chinese Church. Hence, his appeal to Chinese youth. So, whilst on one hand he planned the progress of future work, on the other he sought young volunteers to the front.



When I heard this report I was deeply moved. “To the South Seas”—this call kept pounding in my heart. But I dared not say a word because I wasn’t sure of the Lord’s will. Moreover I had consecrated myself for North Kwangsi Province.

Nevertheless, graduation came, and after that, appointment to Hong Kong, which appointment was linked to my marriage. Now before I commenced on the work undertaken, this new call was addressed to me. Dr. Jaffray wrote, and Rev. Leo T. Chow, also returned from the South Seas, talked it over with me. But I excused myself with “the time has not yet come.” Then one day, while I was drawing some Gospel posters at On Lok Yuen Restaurant, I was accosted by Dr. Jaffray and Mr. Leland Wang who came there to dine. Dr. Jaffray said, “Mr. Linn, I was looking for an opportunity to talk to you. I feel the time has come. Because in

my prayers these few months God has given me two young men to send to the South Seas. The marvel is, whenever I prayed, you and Paul Lenn came right before me.” He further asked, “Where is Paul Lenn?” I replied, “He is teaching in Kowloon. We could see you tomorrow.” Thus God appointed us to our future ministry

Summarising the work he had done during the fifteen years he served with his wife in East Borneo and looking forward to new fields after coming out of the jungle, Jason said,

In this unevangelised and uncivilised island, I hung up the signboard of ‘Gospel Hall’ and thus the first Chinese foreign missionary society, viz., the ‘Chinese Foreign Missionary Union’ was born. Three years later (i.e. after they had learned the language), I took leave of this overseas Chinese work to go inland to open up work amongst the half-civilised Dyak tribes. In fifteen years of hard labour we have turned three thousand mountain tribesmen to the Lord. We have built over ten churches. We left for Java only after the Japanese surrender. When we came to the Indonesian capital we established the first Cantonese Christian Church. Yes, we are a pair of bovine pioneers.

For the last twenty-five years God has been using me in pioneering work, great and small. Adding our ages together, we are about a hundred years. Will the Lord lead me into this type of pioneering work in the future? Though our bodies deteriorate with the days, our hearts are strong. Unless God excuses us and lifts the yoke from our shoulders, we both are ready to receive God’s call. We can say at any time to the Lord, “Here am I, send me!”

It was some time after Jason Linn had founded a Cantonese Christian Church in Java that he came to Singapore to build Zion Kindergarten, which he relinquished to abler hands because, as he admitted, he was more used to the less sophisticated ways of the Dyak world. “And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth” (John 4:37).

We count Jason Linn no less a comrade with us at Life B-P Church, “by sword and trowel”.

10

“Lengthen and Strengthen” 1957-1962

“Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.” (Isa. 54:2)

From this clarion call of the prophet, William Carey composed the couplet: “Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God.”

Before the FECCC Third General Assembly, the Lord had given us a twin vision. The first one was the building of a church of our own. A Building Fund was started in 1955. The second was the founding of a Bible College. This came to me at our first Bible Camp at Telok Paku, 1954, which vision I shared with Quek. This proposed College was not only to train pastors, teachers and missionaries for our church, but also for the far-flung harvest fields of the Far East. To establish this college, it was agreed that I should return to Faith Seminary for further training.

Meanwhile, as we had no sound English Bible School in Singapore, those who needed theological studies had no choice but to go abroad. Three young persons—Philip Heng, Quek Swee Hwa, and Tow Lehia—who felt God’s call, were preparing to join Shelton College within a year of each other. But I was the first of the four to go.

Eleven months before my departure for the States, however, the Government had granted us 52,233 sq. ft. of prime land near the junction of Dunearn and Gilstead Roads on a 99-year lease as of

August 1, 1957. (Today it is cut down to 30 years.) The fee was \$25,920 with an annual rent of \$1,036.80. Trustees of the property, named in the “Indenture between His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-chief of the Colony of Singapore on our behalf of the Queen’s Most Gracious Majesty” and Life Bible-Presbyterian Church were Quek Kiok Chiang, Lim Hong Hock, Heng Mui Kiah and Lim Khng Seng. (Alas, the last three have since departed this life.) Jubilant over this long-awaited approval, the Church held a Land-claiming and Thanksgiving Service on the property July 20, 1957. Incidentally, the valuable property God had favoured us with (Ps. 16:4,5) abuts the higher ground of a Chinese tycoon (now developed into Morimasa Gardens) which in earlier days was the headquarters of the English Presbyterian Mission under Rev. J.A.B. Cook. When I was a boy, Grandpa would bring me along to see the new missionary who succeeded Cook stationed here. His name was William Murray. Geographically, we also have a good lineage to the E. P. Mission!

In the meantime, offerings to the Building Fund steadily flowed in, so that the \$30,000 mark was surpassed on the Seventh Anniversary Thanksgiving of the Church. As the Church grew correspondingly in numbers, reaching a membership of 200 by the beginning of 1958, more deacons were elected to help shoulder the heavy responsibilities ahead. They were Tow Siang Yeow, Edmund Tay, Willie Seah, Lau King Hong, Seow Chong Pin and Chia Hong Chek. In January 1958, Brother Joshua H.W. Lim joined the English Service and began teaching a Sunday School class, though he attended the Inaugural Service in 1950.

The decision for the pastor of the budding Life B-P Church to go for another year of study in the U.S.A. was made at a Session Meeting held at Deacon and Mrs. Seow Chong Pin’s Sembawang home late one night. To kill two birds with one stone, the pastor was also delegated to represent Life Church at the Fourth Plenary Congress of the ICCC to be held in Brazil August 1958. Rev. Quek was to act in his absence.

Not only Rev. Quek, there was the enlarged Session, and another leader rising in the person of Dr. Tow Siang Hwa, my third younger brother. Under his keen leadership, the Sunday School had grown to over 250, supported by a consecrated staff which included OMF missionaries. Though Rev. C.T. Hsu did not have a pastorate, he was ever with the Church as hands and feet. But he also wielded a ready pen and his articles and translations from English were beginning to appear in various Chinese religious periodicals.

It is not easy for a man with a family to leave so abruptly. With the addition of Lily and Le Anne since my return, we were a family of eight. To leave wife and children this time was not like the last, the roots having sunk deeper into the ground. Fortunately there were the aunts, particularly my Sister and the uncles around to help the little ones in more ways than one. Nancy was now well-established in Government Service as a mid-wife, which meant she had a double job to do—earning a living besides caring for the children. With Quek’s encouragement, however, I made the decision to go.

At the time of departure which was July 1958, my monthly salary was \$350. This sum was reduced to \$300, which was wholly given over to my wife while I was on study leave. As for my transportation and support abroad, I simply trusted the Lord to provide in order not to burden the Church, now in a building fund drive. With my way paid on this end up to Amsterdam, and about US\$85 in my pocket, I set out with this chorus as a prayer upon my lips (1 Sam. 30:6):

*I know the Lord will make a way for me;
I know the Lord will make a way for me;
If I look to Him and pray,
Darkest night will turn to day;
I know the Lord will make a way for me.*

One way whereby the Lord provided for my world travel was for me to catch an ICCC chartered plane flying out of Amsterdam to New York. This was open to delegates from Europe and Asia. From the U.S.A. to Brazil there was another flying out of Miami to Rio de

Janeiro. This chartered flight also had a free seat for me. Between New York and Miami, I hitched a ride with a friend down the Eastern seaboard of the continent.

The ICCC is a worldwide movement. Our testimony in South America, particularly, was a vigorous one. Before coming out to the Far East in December 1949, Dr. McIntire and his missionary team had first gone around that far-off southern continent. From this visit, a Latin American Alliance of Christian Churches was organised, a “pre-emptive” action taken against the WCC.

It was an eye-opener to see Rio De Janeiro and its twin city Sao Paulo, where rallies for the Twentieth Century Reformation cause were held. After Sao Paulo, we were taken by coach to Quitandinha, a mountain resort of Rio where the Congress proper was held. The language they speak in South America is either Portuguese or Spanish. What is *Muito obrigado*? It is “thank you very much” in Portuguese but literally, “much obliged”, like our Cantonese, “*mkoī*”.

Though Portuguese and Spanish are the *lingua franca* in that region of the world, English was still the medium of communication at the Congress. In this regard, I was not hampered in the Lord's service. Apart from delivering a message on Billy Graham and his widening compromise with Liberalism and Roman Catholicism, I pursued one job I had “acquired” in Philadelphia 1954 our Third Congress, and that was editing the Congress daily news-sheet, *The Reformation Reporter*. With God's help, I maintained the tradition of this publication without a break through every World Congress to 1988. It was in Brazil that I met Dr. Bob Jones, Jr., whom I introduced to Rev. Peter Ng Eng Hoe when Dr. Jones visited Singapore in years to come.

After Quitandinha, we returned to the States by the same charter. I made my way without delay to my alma mater. But Faith was no more at “the first city of the first state”. She had shifted to a “French” palace sitting on thirty-four acres of the former Widener Estate at Elkins Park on the northern suburbs of Philadelphia. How glad I was



Faith Theological Seminary, Elkin's Park, Philadelphia

to see my principal, Dr. Allan MacRae and his able wife again, and Dr. Alfred Eppard, head of the New Testament Department. But of the rest, several had gone out to form Covenant Seminary in St. Louis.

But no man is indispensable. Dr. MacRae had groomed a team of young professors to take their place. These were Faith graduates after my time, but I had no qualms to sit at their feet. In this respect it is good to heed the wisdom of Confucius: "There is no seniority in learning. Whoever attains is my teacher." (学无先后, 达者为师) And another, "The young are to be respected." (后生可畏) Since I had come back to the alma mater to learn, I would open wide my ears to listen. I must practise the docility of the elephant (with its big ears) which is the virtue required of every pupil.

Incidentally, my coming back to Faith Seminary 1958 had induced Peter Ng Eng Hoe, the son of an eminent Methodist Pastor, to come at the same time. After his graduation and return to Singapore, he wed my youngest sister. He is the founder of the Jesus Saves Mission.

The Degree of Master of Sacred Theology required an entrance examination in Greek and Hebrew for old-timers like me! As I had been out of school since 1950, it was to my good that I submitted to the matriculation examination. Having arrived in Seminary one month before its reopening, I spent this time brushing up. Praise the Lord, I managed to pass. Now, one compulsory requirement for the degree was the writing of a thesis. This was my bugbear while ransacking for a theme. Without a theme, one is all at sea. This is also true in the preparation of a sermon.

The Principal suggested writing on the first eleven chapters of Genesis. This is the portion of Holy Writ most attacked by unbelieving scholars, as experienced by John Sung when he studied at Union Seminary in New York. They treat Adam and Eve as a saga, a fairy tale if you will. Noah's flood was no universal flood but a local one. There were other aspects of Genesis 1-11 to write about in defence of the Truth, but I did not think it profitable to concentrate on just eleven chapters of the Bible. I wanted to research on a more popular subject in order that the findings would benefit the whole Church.

After a fortnight of wrestling with the theme, I struck on the idea of correcting a widespread notion brought about by the dispensational teaching of the Scofield Bible. It says the Ten Commandments are totally done away with in this age. The theme of this study was reduced to "The Law of Moses and of Jesus". It meant to say what law Moses had given to the children of Israel was from Jesus. Being the eternal moral law of God, the Ten Commandments can never be abrogated. The position of my thesis is therefore in contradistinction to Scofield's which teaches the doing away of the Ten Commandments together with the abrogation of the ceremonial and civil laws. In throwing away the bath water, Scofield would throw out the baby, too!

This thesis, which is now printed into a book of 168 pages with a Foreword by Dr. Peter Masters of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, was successfully defended before the whole faculty, taking a whole

morning. In this connection, I must thank God for putting me through the channels of legal studies both in the law courts and at the Judicial Officers Training under the Japanese. Law is a science of precise, logical reasoning. And without Law, there can be no appreciation of grace.

I was conferred the Degree of Master of Sacred Theology in May 1959. The trials and heartaches I went through in the research were like fire that purifieth the gold of my theological understanding.

During that year at the alma mater, the Lord supplied me just enough through the churches I ministered unto, as well as through odd jobs available to students every now and then. I also took a weekend job of washing the toilets, which was nothing compared with my young days staying with Grandpa at the E. P. Mission country church. This service was far lighter than managing that conservancy system that enriched the bananas, according to the Chinese economy, “Manure means money”. Working with one’s hands had a double advantage in that it also afforded a healthy exercise of the body, free of charge! While others jog with their feet, I prefer to slog with my hands.

As the Lord did not give me much to spare, at the end of the academic year when I had to make preparations for home, I booked a cargo boat, paying a \$100 deposit. Two days before graduation, however, there came as it were out of the blue, a long-distance call from Rev. Clyde Kennedy, President of Highland College, Glendale, California, on the other side of the continent. Rev. Kennedy said, “Timothy, I want to invite you to speak at Highland and to our churches on the West Coast.” When I replied I had already booked a slow boat to Singapore, he asked me to cancel the booking. He told me not to worry about finance as the Lord would provide, and promised to pay for my flight from Philadelphia to Los Angeles. He was coming to the Faith Graduation and he would take me with him to L.A.

Rev. Clyde Kennedy was no stranger to me. He had delivered some lectures on Church History, particularly on the Sixteenth Century Reformation and on the Puritans. He, like Dr. McIntire, touched my heart. He regretted that Protestant Christians today with no knowledge of Church History, particularly that which concerns their liberation from Roman Catholicism, are now led like sheep to the slaughter back to Rome. This challenge, I remembered clearly, which whetted my appetite for the study of Church History. For his contribution to the Twentieth Century Reformation Cause, Rev. Kennedy was conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity at our graduation.

So the Lord paid my way to Los Angeles in the company of Dr. Kennedy. From L.A. I took a Greyhound through giant Redwood country up the West Coast to Seattle and Tacoma to speak at the Twentieth Century Reformation Camp, in the company of Dr. McIntire and Attorney James E. Bennett. Here I met my good classmate, Dr. Lynn Gray Gordon and was invited to preach at his church.

From Seattle I booked a ticket to fly all the way back to Singapore, stopping at Hawaii and Manila en route. I spent one week in Honolulu at Miss Adeline Char's home, being well entertained by her parents. I was invited to speak at the Kaimuki Community Church, which was supporting Miss Char in her labours at Jemaluang and Endau, Malaysia. From Honolulu, I flew to Manila to visit with Rev. Ormeo before that final hop back to good old Singapore.

All the days I spent studying abroad, I had kept in touch with the congregation at home through exactly fifty-two airletters. These were published in the *Malaysia Christian Weekly*. All the days I was abroad, I kept in touch with the building project, whose drawings were sent to U.S.A. for my perusal and suggestions. I praised the Lord for so wonderfully supplying my needs. When I looked into my wallet after arriving back at Tiong Bahru, I showed it to Nancy:

“Look here. When I left you I had about US\$85 in my wallet. Now, I still have that sum; see, US\$85 still with me!”

After I had left for the States in July 1958, Philip Heng caught up with me in September. He came to Faith Seminary to visit me. But two others I had mentioned earlier, when I returned in July 1959, were now about to set out, viz., Quek Swee Hwa and Tow Lehia. How happy we were as parents to see our children following in our footsteps.

According to the commemorative magazine of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaysia, 1950-1971, this is the historical record of the send-off:

Brother Quek Swee Hwa and Sister Tow Lehia were given a solemn send-off at a Commissioning Service at Prinsep Street, August 2. Commenting on this special service, the pastor said, “This is not a show of ceremony, but a means whereby the Lord might further seal their hearts for Himself. There is no quickening life to any Church that does not produce young people willing to give their lives to serve Him who died for them. The future of our Churches and many unborn souls lies in the hearts of young soldiers of the cross today. God is working in Singapore and Malaya yet! He is calling you also to give up all to follow the footsteps of His Son. Who’ll be next? Meantime, we gladly offer our children as a living sacrifice to the Father Almighty, that they will devote themselves to a life of saving lost souls for Christ, that they will study diligently the Word of God to preach it to those who have never heard. We also pray for Philip Heng and Ng Eng Hoe, both studying in U.S.A. ahead of these two in the race of life. A new Singapore and a new Malaya present a new challenge to the Church of Jesus Christ.”

Having sent these first two batches of young people to U.S.A. to study for the ministry, the pastor, who returned now more prepared to start our own training in Singapore, wrote in the *Malaysia Christian* dated September 6, 1959. Under the caption, “The Trend is Towards

the Trained”, the slogan of a college in San Francisco that caught his eye, the article reads:

The strategy of Christian Missions in this day of social change is not so much in western missionaries (though we heartily welcome them) as in the sending forth of our own. But how can they be sent except they be called—and be trained?

Hitherto we have sent some of our young people to the West for theological training. But if the Lord will call another half-dozen, how can we afford to send all? The solution to training future ministers of the Gospel, I believe, is in the founding of a Bible College in Singapore. Yes, a Bible College, a college that reverently teaches the Bible to be the infallible, inerrant Word of God, that seeks to obey all its commands, that will make no compromise whatsoever with the subtle forces of Satan that are so actively undermining theological institutions everywhere today.

We need to found a Bible College that will nurture future leaders of our Churches who will be able to stand in the gap in an evil day, and pursue the Word of the Lord by opening more and more preaching centres that the Kingdom of God might be extended to the uttermost part of Malaysia.

The flicker of such a hope was first lit at the Session meeting of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church last week. But we are still waiting on the Lord for the breathing of His Spirit on the hearts of other children. If you believe as we do that a Bible College should be established in Singapore, may we hear words of encouragement from you.

Praise the Lord, this appeal soon reached our ICCC friends in U.S.A.! One year and one week after this plea in the *Malaysia Christian*, there arrived in our midst Rev. Philip Clark, General Secretary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions and Dr. Arthur Steele as an answer from the Lord. At a dinner given in their honour by the Presbytery, the much-discussed subject of opening a Bible College became the topic of the evening. The dinner ended joyously for the launching of a Bible College at

last, with Rev. Clark’s promise “to cooperate with us on a fifty-fifty partnership basis”. What was meant by this partnership was that “both nationals and missionaries were to labour together on an equal footing of Christian love and cooperation. As sons of the soil, we should own the property and be responsible for its erection. As missionaries, they should be fully supported from home and help us in the things we could not do, such as filling certain vacancies of our faculty. Missionaries using our property would pay adequate rent”.

At a Presbytery meeting held at Zion Kindergarten on Monday, September 19, 1960, to which all deacons and deaconesses of Life, Zion, Faith and Galilee Churches were also invited, the lot for the launching of a Far Eastern Bible College (the name was suggested by Dr. Tow Siang Hwa) was cast. The College was purposely constituted an independent institution within the fellowship of our Bible-Presbyterian Churches. The location was also found—the spacious sylvan site of the new Life Bible-Presbyterian Church at Gilstead Road. An interim three-man committee was elected to draft a constitution and prospectus for the College and serve as liaison between the Presbytery and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. These three men were Rev. Timothy Tow, Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang and Dr. Tow Siang Hwa. However, the decision of Presbytery had still to be ratified by Life Church. Although there were one or two dissenting voices, the testimony of certain Session members strengthened Presbytery’s decision to launch out in faith. Further confirmation of the Lord’s blessing on this epochal undertaking was recorded in the *Malaysia Christian* dated September 24, 1960, only five days after that historic Presbytery meeting of September 19. It says:

For several months Life Church Building Fund has been flowing at a low ebb. Our weekly average could hardly rise above the \$150 mark. The Lord has been testing us. Since the announcement last week of our joint Sessions meeting on the formation of the Bible College, the Lord has poured through windows of heaven several showers—big, medium and small—to the amazing volume of \$5,820 The building of



The Former Eye Clinic, now Beulah House

a Bible College on the new Life Church site might give occasion for debate amongst Lifers. But if the Lord has indicated His will to do so, there is nothing we can do apart from following wholeheartedly through. “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts” (Hag. 2:8,9).

Mr. Ang Kheng Leng, an old Lifer of *Say Mia Tng* days and a good friend of mine from Anglo-Chinese School, kindly offered his free services as our Architect. When at long last the news of the approval for the building plans was announced, it rang like a wedding bell to the whole congregation waiting for the bride. The building contract was awarded to Messrs. W.K. Tham for \$173,600. The contractor donated back \$3,000 “in thanksgiving to the Lord”. The total costs, however, amounted to \$300,000. This included the land price, earthfilling, piling, plumbing, sanitary and electrical installations, furniture and fittings, etc.

But the eye of faith was not dazzled by the staggering figure, nor the ear of trust embarrassed by that regular monthly phone call for the payment of between ten and fifteen thousand dollars. "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail" (1 Kgs. 17:16). The Lord sent just enough to tide us over, from month to month. Now, once the building operations started, and the contractor's fees were paid in time, the superstructures of both College and Church rose "like bamboo shoots after the spring rains". One happy statement made by Mr. W.K. Tham, our contractor, upon



Church and College rising together

receipt of our prompt and regular payments that I remember to this day was, "I see that the God of your Church is greater than the God of other Churches." God blessed our contractor though he was not a Christian. After his work at Gilstead Road was completed, he won the contract to build Jubilee Presbyterian Church at Tiong Bahru. He began to drive a Mercedes-Benz

By April 28, 1962, the foundation stones for College and Church were ready to be laid. The honoured speaker for the stone-laying was Rev. Paul Contento of Vietnam. Rev. Contento, previous to this, had

been OMF missionary to Singapore (1951-60). Standing under a red and white banner, "Jesus Christ Himself the Chief Corner Stone" (Eph. 2:20), the Lord's messenger reiterated his faith in the founding of the Bible College and exhorted the Church to send her sons to the School for training. He hoped that a Moody or a Wesley might someday come from the halls of the College.

At the double ceremony, Elder Heng Mui Kiah presented the trowel for the laying of the Life Church foundation stone, which reads in English and Chinese, "This stone was laid on the 28th day of April in the 1962nd year of our Lord for a witness that the members of this Church as lively stones are built up a spiritual House to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Christ Jesus." The trowel for laying the Bible College stone was presented by Elder Lee Tsu Hwai. The words in English and Chinese say, "This stone was laid for the founding of a Bible College for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ in the Far East on the 28th day of April in the 1962nd year of our Lord."

But equally important was the laying of another kind of foundation stone, the stone of brotherly love that sealed us closer to Zion and Faith churches. At a Session Meeting on October 31,

1961, Life Church decided to relinquish her one-third interest in the Zion Kindergarten property. This unilateral action and offer, like the dew of Hermon descending on Mount Zion (Ps. 133), moved Elder Teo See Yah eloquently in brotherly appreciation. Incidentally, he



Tow and Quek

was the Chinese calligrapher of our Church and College foundation stones.

Jesus’ statement that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” must be practised. Here is demonstrated the virtue of Bible-Presbyterian government that the bigger churches should help the smaller. Another principle of our church government is that every congregation should own its property. Vesting property of a local church in the hands of the Presbytery or Synod is a restraint to church growth and a source of tension and dispute. Not centralisation, but decentralisation, is one genius of B-Pism. “... and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes” (Josh. 11:23).

In no time September 17, 1962 arrived, the date of FEBC’s opening. Although the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was not able to send missionary teachers at this juncture, the principal launched out by faith with three students, viz., Eddy Chan and Ng Sang Chiew of Batu Pahat, and Ivy Tan of Pasir Panjang, Singapore. Mr. Peter Ng Eng Hoe, B.D., Th.M., just returned from the U.S.A., was assistant to the principal.

Those who could not teach, but loved the College, gave liberally to the Building Fund, while others offered furniture, refrigerators, crockery and other useful household utensils. While it is true that God is our only source of supply, it is also true that He chooses His children as channels of His bounties.

Here are some examples of cheerful givers who kept Treasurer Seow Chong Pin supplied from month to month to pay the bills:

1. There were three little sisters of Sembawang, who took \$200 out of their Post Office Savings to give to the Mother Church.
2. An old lady of Batu Pahat, reading of the progress in the *Chinese Malaysia Christian*, gave the visiting pastor an envelope. It contained \$500.

3. Another old lady of Batu Pahat slipped \$200 into the pastor's pocket (which he did not keep!).
4. An old lady of Singapore, who takes the initiative to donate to every Church Building Fund, gave not only once, but several times, as the building of the College and Church progressed.
5. A middle-aged lady, friend of the Church and College, brought \$2,000 and said, "Please don't let my children in your Church know about this!"
6. A member of Life Church made a promise, "Every fifty-cent piece that comes my way is the Lord's." A tinful of this yielded three figures.
7. Another member who got a good buy of a car sold it when moved by the Building Appeal. He gave half of the proceeds and loaned the other half, which he finally also gave.
8. Another member gave her tithes, which through the years amounted to tens of thousands.
9. Yet another took a \$5,000 loan partly to pay for two years' pledge, and the remainder, though loaned to the Church, was eventually given to the Lord.
10. Finally, but far from exhaustive, an old lady of eighty, after conversion at the new Church, made it her rule to put \$20 in the offering bag every Lord's Day.

And so we can go on to tell the story of loving hearts who have given, some much, some little, even widow's mites; but these are sweet-savour offerings that rose up for a memorial before God. And has not God blessed those, whose hearts are right toward Him and who obey His Word? But there are those who sow to themselves and earn wages only "to put it into a bag with holes" (Hag. 1:6).

"Lengthen and strengthen." The days after my return from the States were days of exciting labours with the brethren for the Lord.

11

Testing Before Blessing 1959

“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” (Rev. 3:8,9)

The year 1960 was an epochal year for the Bible-Presbyterian Church. From this year, the Lord began to open us a door of expansion of His Kingdom that no man can shut. Before blessing, however, there must be testing! Before the Church of Philadelphia was given an open door of service, she must pass the test of faithfulness to His Word and loyalty to His Name. To expand further, our Church was faced with one obstacle posed, unwittingly, by the Government.

Soon after the PAP (People’s Action Party) swept into power, a campaign was launched to speed up social amenities for the people by various construction projects, such as Kallang Park and the Promenade on the sea front along Nicoll Highway. These projects were to be accomplished, however, by volunteer labour, on Sundays. Since not a few of our members were Government servants and a sizeable number were members of other churches and denominations, here was a poser not only for us but also for the whole Christian Church.

This question confronting the Church was made the more difficult when the Bishop of Singapore, the Right Reverend H.W.

Baines, enjoined his parishioners to participate in the Sunday work. The call by the Bishop to his people to volunteer for Sunday work received wide publicity in *The Straits Times* of September 16, 1959. This started the ball rolling for much debate and controversy in the press as to whether Sunday Volunteering should take precedence over Worship.

To cope with the more serious situation engulfing our members in Government Service as a result of the Bishop's statement, an emergency meeting of the Sessions of Life, Zion and Faith Churches was called.

After much prayer and deliberation, the three Churches boldly issued a "Statement on Volunteering for National Construction on Sunday" in the name of the "Bible-Presbyterian Church of Malaya". We rushed to print such a letterhead and God used it for His glory. It read:

The Singapore Government, in its efforts to speed up the provision of social amenities in the interests of the people, have called for volunteers on Sunday to help various constructional projects, such as the Kallang Park and the Promenade on the sea front along Nicoll Highway. The response has been most enthusiastic and the achievements most spectacular.

It is the teaching of the Holy Bible, the Word of God, that Christians should be law-abiding and civic-minded (Rom. 13:1-7) and should pray for the Government (1 Tim. 2:1,2). These Divine injunctions we have obeyed and will, by the grace of God, continue to obey.

It is, however, also the teaching of the Bible that Christians should keep Sunday as a holy Sabbath dedicated to the worship of God, for which reason it is called "The Lord's Day" in the Bible and "The Christian Sabbath" by the Christian Church. The Westminster Confession of Faith, which is the standard of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches throughout the world, states: "The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men after due preparation of their hearts,

and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.” While we will gladly volunteer in support of these praiseworthy efforts of the Government, we are anxious, however, that in so doing, we do not break the Commandment to keep Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. It is therefore our desire, when called upon to volunteer for national construction on Sunday, to offer our services on other days of the week, such as Saturday afternoon or any other evening, or on public holidays other than Sundays.

We have noted with astonishment and dismay that the Bishop of Singapore, the Rt. Rev. H.W. Baines, has, as reported in *The Straits Times* of September 16, 1959, enjoined his parishioners to participate in the Sunday work. While we are in full agreement with the Bishop who hopes that “. . . our people will answer this call and volunteer—both Government servants and others,” and that “When we do so, we shall both take part in useful neighbourly activities which is what must needs to be done and shall join with those who are building a nation,” we believe, as we have herein before stated, that working on Sunday will encroach upon the holy Sabbath and worship which the Word of God commands us to keep.

In allowing the Seventh Day Adventist school-teachers in Government service to absent themselves from compulsory teaching on Saturdays, and that still on half-pay, the Singapore Government, in our view, has shown full respect for religious practices and convictions in accordance with provisions in the Singapore Constitution. It is our trust, therefore, that when the occasion arises from time to time, our desire, especially of those in public service, to volunteer for national construction on any other day than Sunday will meet with the full understanding and appreciation of the Singapore Government.

This statement issued in the name of the “Bible-Presbyterian Church of Malaya” became news in *The Straits Times*.

When the Government issued a call to launch Operation *Pantai Chantek* on Changi Beach, Sunday October 25, the Churches met again to decide on the right course of action. According to their previous statement, it was decided that the Bible-Presbyterian Church would offer 200 volunteers on Saturday October 31, a public holiday, even at the expense of cancelling Life Church Sunday School Picnic and Zion Church Youth Fellowship Retreat, which had been earlier scheduled to be held on the same day.

A letter was addressed on October 14 to Mr. Lui Boon Poh, Chairman of the Organising Committee of Operation *Pantai Chantek*, and explanatory letters, with regard to our members in Government Service, to the respective Ministers. Revs. Tow and Quek also obtained a personal interview with Mr. Lui, who received their proposals most graciously.

On Friday October 16, Rev. Tow, on behalf of the "Bible-Presbyterian Church of Malaya", received Mr. Lui's reply. The Organising Committee of *Pantai Chantek* had considered our volunteering on the alternate date of October 31, but regretted that "it would not be possible to make the necessary arrangements". However, our name as a volunteer was recorded, and "if there is any project in the near future, which does not fall on Sunday," added Mr. Lui, "I will extend your members an invitation to come forward." The letter concluded, "The Committee has asked me to convey appreciation of your generous and spontaneous offer to assist, and to thank your members for their willingness to participate in Operation *Pantai Chantek*."

The Malaysia Christian dated October 17, 1959 reciprocated: "We are deeply grateful to the Singapore Government for respecting the religious convictions of our Churches, which surely reflect those of Bible-believing Christians in other denominations with regard to Sunday as a day of worship and holy Sabbath. We once again assure the powers that rule over us of our humble desire to serve the nation to the best of our ability. We exhort readers to come forward enthusiastically when the occasion arises."

This test of keeping the Lord's Day holy, of faithfulness to His Word and loyalty to His Name, was passed in the strength of the Lord. It became a blessing to all the Churches, the low view of the Christian Sabbath of Bishop Baines notwithstanding.

As to issuing the Statement on Volunteering in the name of the "Bible-Presbyterian Church of Malaya", it is to be noted that the desire of forming the Presbytery was expressed as early as 1958. This common action taken by the elders of Life, Zion and Faith Churches hastened the formation of the Presbytery, which took place some months after this.

12

A Church with Five Doors 1960-1963

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9)



The Church that our architect had designed according to our specifications has six pillars, a bell tower and an eighty-foot steeple. Its classical beauty that reflects an American colonial style has earned us a place, together with several other churches such as the oldest Armenian Church (1835) at Hill Street, for preservation as a National Monument.

Our Church has also found a niche in the book, *Singapore—a Guide to Buildings, Streets and Places* by Norman Edwards and Peter Keys (page 100). It comments, “This very eclectic, yet simple, straightforward design in classical vein, not Gothic, is reminiscent of the early Coleman Georgian period of Singapore ...”

What I would like to point out as of symbolic significance from our angle is that this handsome church has five doors. Over the iron gate leading to the main door is an arch forming the words, “JESUS SAVES”. This is the door that reminds everyone entering what our Lord says of Himself: “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (John 10:9). It brings to mind also Peter’s declaration, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). “JESUS SAVES”. Can anyone compose a sentence of two words more powerful than this?

After this main door, there are two big side doors, and two small back doors leading out of the colonnaded corridors. The two big side doors and the two small back doors are symbolic of the evangelistic outreaches of Life Church—north, east, south, west; big and small! Some outreaches grew into permanent Churches. Others lasted for some years or for a shorter duration by reason of their temporary locations. Nevertheless, both were equally precious in the eyes of the Lord so long as they were faithful and true. As the Lord gave talents to His three servants, one five, one two and one one, so He sent Lifers forth to trade according as they were endowed. Whatever was done in loving obedience to God must bear some fruit. “Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

The earliest outreach after the pastor’s return 1959 from the States was Cheun Kwang Sunday School on the premises of Cheun Kwang School at 420 Balestier Road. (Cheun Kwang means “True Light”.) Deacon Joshua Lim was superintendent. The medium of instruction was Mandarin, “with Teochew and Cantonese thrown in for beginners”. Since it was held in the morning, in the days when

Lifers worshipped in the afternoon, we sent our children to Cheun Kwang. Tow Le Anne (now with the Lord) wrote in *Life Church Annual Vol. V*: "I like to go to Cheun Kwang Sunday School. Every Sunday I sit in Mr. Joshua Lim's car to go to Cheun Kwang Sunday School. My teacher's name is Miss Loo Keng Eng . . . I learn many Bible stories and songs like 'O Come All Ye Faithful'."

Cheun Kwang Sunday School carried on faithfully until July 1965 when Jesus Saves Mission leased the premises and took over the reins. "Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" (John 4:38).

At the time Lifers started a Sunday School at Cheun Kwang, there was meeting regularly at the same school a Prayer Band by the same name. The Cheun Kwang Prayer Band, headed by Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan, my Fourth Uncle's wife, was the main support of an independent mission work on Tekong Island, founded by Rev. John Chen Ping. (Tekong is Singapore's biggest off-shore island, a half-hour by motor sampan ride from Changi Point.) The Prayer Band was instrumental even in building a \$4,000 pocket-size church on June 2, 1957 through the sacrificial labours of brother Tang Fook Yue (now with the Lord) of Wai Yan Tong (Grace Cantonese Church).

In December 1959 the Cheun Kwang Prayer Band requested Miss Leona Wu, principal of Chin Lien Bible Seminary, to take over this struggling work. Miss Wu in turn requested Life Church to share this undertaking on a fifty-fifty basis. Hence January 1960 saw Pulau Tekong come under the joint mandate of the Evangelistic League and Life Church. Alas, with the taking over of Tekong by the Military after a decade, this Gospel work is now a closed chapter.

The Founding of Galilee Church

Two of Life Church's staunchest friends were Rev. and Mrs. Paul Contento, whom the pastor had known since his student days in Nanking, 1946. This exuberant couple came to Singapore in 1951 in

the great exodus of missionaries from the Chinese Continent after the Communist “Liberation”.

Mrs. Contento helped Life Church Sunday School a great deal by running a teacher’s training class whilst Rev. Contento preached at the Sunday pulpit from time to time.

During the Easter Holidays, April 17-21, 1960, Rev. Contento was invited to hold a Gospel campaign at Prinsep Street. It was during this week of co-labouring in the Lord’s work that an offer was made to us to take over tenancy of their house at Pasir Panjang for the continuance of a Christian testimony. They would not give the premises over to a charismatic group. The Contentos were leaving for Vietnam in May to their new field of service.

Now, the Contento house was situated right on the seafront and used often as a Christian Conference Centre. Delighted with such a handsome offer, the pastor quickly reported to Session. To his surprise (because we were heavily burdened with building the new church), the brethren unanimously replied, “Let us take it.” However, it must be recorded that the decision to take over the Contento house was precipitated by the consideration of our Pasir Panjang young members’ need of a meeting place. These Pasir Panjang young Christians, numbering fifteen and headed by Miss Ivy Tan, had seceded from a church in Pasir Panjang. Having nowhere to go, they came down town to worship at Life Church on Sunday but held their own meetings at the community centre. How thrilled they were when informed of the Session’s decision. Now these young people could have a permanent home.

The transfer of tenancy from the Contentos to Galilee, our new project was effected only a few hours before the missionaries sailed on May 7, 1960, for Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City). On June 5, which was a Saturday, at 2 p.m., Galilee B-P Church was inaugurated. Rev. Tow became her honorary pastor (for six years until succeeded by Rev. Philip Heng). Deacon Chia Hong Chek left Cheun Kwang to head Galilee Sunday School. Elder O.J. Tassicker

(of Australia) and Rev. Marvin Dunn (OMF) supplied the pulpit regularly once a month. When the Bible Presbyterian Synod, Collingswood, New Jersey, U.S.A. heard of the founding of Galilee Church, they sent the little Church by the sea fraternal greetings by the hand of her Stated Clerk.

The fervour of founding a Bible-Presbyterian Church on the West Coast of Singapore may be seen in these first lines of Galilee's theme song:

*In this world of darkness, men are groping in their sin;
Who will go and bring the lost ones in?
Let those who are redeemed by our Saviour's precious blood
Tell forth the glad news of His Word.*

*In Galilee there's a great light,
In Galilee there's a great light,
The people that walked in darkness and shades of the night,
In Galilee has seen the Light.*

(To the tune of "Brighten the Corner")

Today, Galilee is one of our flourishing congregations with a big church and kindergarten complex, situated side by side with Calvary Pandan Church at Pandan Gardens, beaming its light not only on the big housing estates all around but also across the Straits of Malacca to Medan and Kuta Bahru in North Sumatra.

In the midst of activities on the local church level as well as on the Presbyterian level, Revs. Tow and Quek were preparing to attend the Fourth General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches in Seoul, South Korea, August 31 - September 6, 1960.

Rev. Tow had in the meantime received an urgent call from Korea to hold a month's evangelistic campaign in advance of the Assembly. Accordingly, he set out ahead of Rev. Quek on August 4. As the burden of this evangelistic mission weighed heavily on him, his heart overflowed with these lines for the task before him when he broke journey at Hong Kong:

*There are many who roam this world
In search of glittering gems and pearl.
A Christian who travels today
Meets pleasure seekers all the way,*

*In Mandarin rooms with music sweet,
And foods and wines, much to repeat.
He does not like this hotel life,
His heart is with his home and wife.*

*Yet travel is a job he took
When at the cross he all forsook
To serve the Master where He'd call,
All over this terrestrial ball.*

*Lord, give me courage to follow,
Through valleys deep, through paths narrow;
Nor wing, nor sail, can change the course
Pilgrims of old have set for us!*

*Let every Gospel messenger
Travel not as a passenger,
Who lounges 'way the precious hours—
Our journeying is not a tour!*

*It is a race that must be won
With sweat and tears, under the sun,
Till Heav'n above is reached at last
And at His feet our crowns are cast.*

These words of renewed consecration helped the pastor-evangelist in no small measure during the last leg of the marathon. The pattern of this evangelistic drive, under the auspices of the ICCA, was to preach twice at every Church in Mandarin through Rev. Han Pyung Hyuk, a Korean pastor, who had studied in China. (This opened a door to many Chinese hearers, especially to those migrated from North China and settled in Inchon and other cities on the West Coast.) Leaving after a morning message by car or jeep, depending on the terrain, the two-man team would arrive in the afternoon at the next church. After a short rest and dinner, they would go on the pulpit about 8 p.m. Then the service would start

with plenty of singing by a packed congregation of several hundred seated on the floor. The message with interpretation would last one-and-a-half hours. The meeting usually ended by 10 p.m.

The biggest meeting was held at Taegu, an inland city. At the Town Hall with tiered balconies, there were over a thousand two hundred that night. A big banner announced the speaker as the Billy Graham of Southeast Asia. That big name rather scared me. All the more I had to trust the Lord, calling upon Him to help at this crucial hour. The fervour of my Korean interpreter in putting the message across helped me tremendously. Many hands were raised in surrender to Christ, their only Saviour. I was uplifted.

But every mountain has a valley. To preach fifty-two different sermons in twenty-five days drained me dry as we approached the end. Bumping over unpaved country roads behind clouds of dust thrown up by a forward vehicle on many a stretch of the journey stifled my spirits. As one felt like quitting, a still small voice whispered, "Did you not vow to serve me even to Outer Mongolia? You are only in Korea, still far from the wild interior." At that reminder, I picked up courage to follow to the very end. From that gruelling marathon of sometimes having to leave before morning to a distant town came these words:

*Earthly life is transient,
Like a traveller's day;
Ere you greet its presence
It seems to fly away!*

*The dark night descends too soon
And then the grey dawn breaks,
By the light of the setting moon,
He leaves before men wake.*

*Wise is the soul that's ready
To go at Jesus' call,
Lest when you reach the ferry,
The gate is closed to you!*

How Jurong B-P Church Came Into Being

No sooner had I stepped into my Kim Pong Road flat from the Korean trip, suitcase in hand, than the phone rang. It was exactly 6.30 p.m., September 9, 1960. From this phone contact with Chandra there developed a chain of events that resulted in the establishment of Jurong B-P Church.

Let Chandra tell the story. Giving his testimony in *The Bible Presbyterian Annual, Vol. V*, he says:

On September 1, my child Joseph Roslan fell from the arms of my daughter while being carried. From then onwards he became ill. We took him to the General Hospital on the 7th, seeing he was not better. On the 8th he got worse and by Friday the 9th he was in a very bad condition. The doctors told me they were going to give blood transfusion. I rang Rev. Tow's house the same morning but was told he was in Korea and was coming back the same evening. At 6.30 p.m. sharp I rang him when he was just climbing the steps to his house. He answered my call and said he would be coming over at 10 p.m. as he was going to a family service at Mr. Tassicker's house.

All this time I was uneasy, running here and there. At 10 p.m., he was at the ward. When he met me, the first question was if I attended church. I said, "No." He asked me what I wanted him to do. I said, "Please baptise my child." He said, "You must give up your Roman Catholicism and idol worship. You must have faith in Jesus Christ." I said, "Yes." He then told me that baptism itself cannot save anyone and that it was only an outward sign of an inward grace that God worked in the heart. I believed what he said and we both went into the ward to see my wife and baby. The same teaching was given to her and she answered Yes. Rev. Tow baptised our child after asking God first to save his soul and then his body, according to our faith. The next day my child's blood pressure rose up. My wife told me he had become much better. The doctors were much surprised at his rapid recovery. He was discharged on September 12.

Now, listen to Mrs. Chandra's testimony:

I could hear my son wailing in the Children's Ward. I as a mother was feeling the difficulty of restraining my tears from rolling down my cheeks, as I knew my son had little hope to survive. By hearing from Pastor Tow that one should have faith in God, I prayed very hard to God to restore my son, who was suffering from lack of blood. My husband had phoned Pastor and asked him to come and baptise my son. God restored my son, praise the Lord!

I was a Muslim until 1960. Pastor Tow and Chee Ah Chai came to my home and told me about the Lord Jesus Christ. I believed in Him and received Him as my personal Saviour. I was baptised in October 1960 at Life Church.

Before becoming a Christian my husband made me kiss the cross before I went to bed, and follow the rituals of Roman Catholicism. In my heart there was no peace. Life at home was miserable. My husband often spent his time drinking with his friends. Now I thank the Lord for saving him too, and for his giving up alcoholic drinks. I am glad I became a Christian for we are now a happy family.

As a result of Baby Joseph Roslan's healing by the Lord (of leukemia), the whole Chandra family of ten—husband, wife and eight children—were baptised. To further ground them in the faith, Miss Ivy Tan of Pasir Panjang was sent to conduct a Saturday Bible Class for the Chandra family. The reason why she was sent was she lived nearest to the Chandras, who were located at the Telecoms quarters, 14½ miles Jurong Road. Even then it took time to travel, for Jurong in the sixties seemed like another country. Ivy wrote:

We would travel there by bus. The journey lasted an hour. From Galilee Church to Jurong we had to change three buses. On the way we could only see stretches of prawn ponds and mangrove swamps on both sides of the road. The two-mile Day Road was narrow and winding. Made of laterite, it was very dusty. We could only see attap huts dotted here and there with large compounds full of rambutan and other fruit trees.

During rainy days the road being slippery, was impassable, and on sunny days the huts and trees were covered with red dust.

From the bus terminus at Day Road we would take a Jurong bus. Along the road there were brick works, coconut plantations, and attap huts. Most of the surrounding lands were not developed yet. Finally we would reach brother Chandra's house, situated near the Broadcasting Station. This was the place where we held our weekly Saturday Bible Class.

One year after we began holding these Bible Classes, it was the consensus of the pastor of Life Church and brother Chee Ah Chai, a Lifer working with Chandra at the Broadcasting Station and the Class teacher, to advance the Saturday Class to Sunday. It would become a Sunday School for the kampong children as well. After much prayer and with the encouragement of Mrs. Chandra our hostess, we decided to start a church service also. On the first anniversary of Jurong Saturday Bible Class, October 8, 1961, the Jurong B-P Church was inaugurated. With the regular support of brother Chan Lay Seng from town and a group of young people under Moses Tan of Hume Heights, etc., the little Church flourished, drawing Mar Thomites and Jacobites, mostly Malayalese living in the Telecoms quarters, to the service. A Building Fund was started which brought in \$800 from Jurongites themselves. Rev. Tow served as honorary pastor making Jurong the second station on his Sunday circuit of three, in this order: Galilee, Jurong, Life.

When Rev. and Mrs. Paauwe, missionaries from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, came to Singapore in 1970, Jurong was given to their care.

After they left Singapore in 1980, Rev. Burt Subramaniam, who married Janet, one of our Jurong girls (she joined us in 1961), became shepherd to a growing Jurong Church, now predominantly Tamil speaking. Burt Subramaniam graduated from Far Eastern Bible College in 1979.

Under his able leadership, there had sprung a Tamil Church movement that has three congregations linked to Jurong, Life, New

Life in Singapore and two at Ulu Tiram and Kelapa Sawit in Johore. As for the Jurong Church itself, it has been renamed Bethlehem Jurong (not Bethlehem Judah!) with a division of an English-speaking congregation and the Tamil congregation. Rev. Yap Beng Shin, another FEBC graduate, shepherds the English congregation, now named Olivet. By 1992, the Tamils had made a great leap forward to acquire their own property at 1 Dunearn Close, junction with the trunk road from Malaysia. The new property they named Rehoboth.

This information of our growing fellowship with the Tamil brethren and sisters would be incomplete without a look back to earlier days when the Lord had sent the Life Church pastor to India on nine occasions, between 1954 and 1989. These nine trips to India were with the view of ministering to the Indian churches within the ICCC. Half of the times was spent in Kerala among the Malayalee-speaking St. Thomas Christians. From my contact with the Thomas Christians, I marvelled how the Gospel had reached India in the earliest pages of Church history through the Apostle Thomas. This page of Church history and traditions is appended here for the inspiring especially of Indian Christians.

The apostle Thomas is said to have landed on the southwestern coast of India near Cochin in Kerala State in the year 52 A.D. According to Rev. John Stewart of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission in his book, *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise—The Story of a Church on Fire*:

Seven churches were established by him, and clergy ordained to be in charge over them. He then proceeded to Mylapore (now part of the city of Madras) where the king and all his people turned to Christ. From there he went to China and spent some time at the city of Camballe, returning later to Mylapore, where the Brahmins, moved by jealousy, instigated the people to stone him to death, after which one of them pierced him with a lance.

The date of St. Thomas's death is given as A.D. 72, and the place of burial as Mylapore, a few miles from St. Thomas' Mount where the actual martyrdom is stated to have taken place. His remains were, it is claimed, removed from Mylapore to Edessa at a very early date. From there, later on, they were taken to Chios, an island in the Aegean sea, and later still to Ortona in Italy where they now repose. The supposed grave at Mylapore is still on view. It is in the nave of the new Roman Cathedral there, completed in A.D. 1896, and is visited by large numbers of pilgrims from different parts of South India and particularly from the Malabar Coast.

Going back to 1960, the year of rapid expansion wherein the Lord had extended us to Tekong, Galilee and Jurong, we see another humble beginning made before the year ended in what has become a group of "mountain" B-P Churches, today. How it all began is best told by Dr. Tan Kim Ping, an elder of Mount Hermon, an offshoot of Mt. Carmel, as follows:

Mount Carmel Gospel Mission—A Brief History

How it began

On July 27, 1958 a young man gathered some children together in an HDB flat at 220-B Redhill Close and taught them a Bible lesson. For more than two years, all by himself, he continued this class every Sunday afternoon in his home. The attendance: between six and twelve. With much optimism he called it the 220-B Redhill Close Sunday School. He was Robert Ong, a member of Life B-P Church.

A visit by Rev. Tow, pastor of Life Church, introduced Eio Eng Hua, a young man just out of school, to this work. Together they organised the work and the Mt. Carmel Sunday School was born on December 4, 1960 on the same premises. The name was auspiciously given by Rev. Tow, for opposite 220-B Redhill Close stood a Chinese Temple on a hill. He saw



Founder of Mount Carmel Sunday School with the first class, 1960

in this a parallel with the challenge between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on the biblical Mount Carmel.

How it wandered and grew

More and more children came to Sunday School. Ang Beng Chong (a medical student) and Paul Choong (Robert's brother-in-law) joined the staff. These four people were the steadfast pioneers.

Soon, the sitting-room in the flat could not contain them all. An empty wooden hut with zinc roof in nearby Henderson Kampong attracted the teachers' attention. They saw the compound in front of it as great potential space for use. So on July 22, 1961 the Sunday School moved down there. The rent of \$30 per month was borne by the teachers and the Malaysia Pioneer Mission (an arm of the B-P Church).

The Sunday School stayed here for about two years—now fondly referred to by the Sunday School as The Pigsty. Besides having pigs wandering around, it had to contend with mud and flood whenever it rained. Things improved slightly when a wood-zinc roof was constructed over the compound and the floor cemented. There were pupils who came faithfully in spite of rain, mud and pigs.

The Sunday School moved back to 220-B Redhill Close on May 12, 1963 when it became possible to make use of another room beside the hall. It was definitely more congenial to operate here than by The Pigsty. The Sunday School grew slowly but steadily. A class was even held in the common corridor of the block of flats. Many other Christians came to help for short periods. Among them were Miss Ivy Tan (now Mrs. Tow), Miss Gan Sai Lin, Miss Su Hong Hai (now Mrs. Ang), Miss Tow Lehia (now Mrs. Paauwe) and Mr. Victor Kam.

About this time it was noticed that many of the older boys and girls were dropping out of Sunday School. As they searched for the cause and the cure, the Lord showed the teachers that Sunday School was not meeting the needs of those in secondary schools. A worship service was felt to be needed. So on November 1, 1963, a Teenage Service was started. Speakers were invited to speak on different topics that were relevant to teenagers.

Slowly, more and more secondary school students joined in the Teenage Service. There was a close bond of friendship among these teens, and also between them and the leaders. They often came during the week as Robert Ong would teach them to play the guitar and the accordion. This grew out of hand and the neighbours complained of the noise to the HDB. The Sunday School was ordered to quit operating from 220-B.

This was a crisis. Alternatives were considered, disbanding among them. But the Lord had already prepared a way out. Robert Ong had in the meantime moved to another flat in nearby Jalan Rumah Tinggi. With much sacrifice, he

warmly invited Mt. Carmel to move there. So on October 31, 1965 we moved to Rumah Tinggi: more space and more growth.

In a matter of two years, every nook and corner of his home was filled every Sunday with children and youth. Sunday School classes were held in his bedrooms and kitchen too. Teenagers filled the hall and overflowed at services. The next stage of development had arrived.

How it matured

A year after the Teenage Service was inaugurated, a weekly prayer meeting was begun. From the beginning this helped to knit the teenagers together, for they shared openly their joys and problems and prayed together.

At Rumah Tinggi, the teenagers came together on Saturdays to study the Bible and enjoy one another's company. The girls decided in June 1966 to band together for Bible Study on Fridays. This group was instrumental in bringing together many girls who could not come to Mt. Carmel on Sundays. Later many did eventually unite with Mt. Carmel. This group became known as the Ladies Bible Society, or LBS in short. One other service the LBS rendered was the running of a small bookstall to sell Christian books.

As early as July 1966, the leaders realised that operating in flats would only be temporary. The group had to remain small and great sacrifice of privacy was demanded of the hosts. From their limited resources they started a building fund. That this was a prudent move was shown in less than a year.

The Sunday School was managed by the teachers and so was the Teenage Service. But at Rumah Tinggi some of the older teenagers who were promising Christians were invited to participate in service and sit on its committee.

The final move took place on April 26, 1967. Robert Ong came across a shophouse in Lengkok Bahru which had been

empty for several months. It was at the end of a block of flats and shophouses on the edge of the housing estate. A small field stood next to it. It was within easy reach of the residents of Redhill Estate and yet was quite secluded.

With support from Rev. Tow who allowed his name to be used in the application, Mt. Carmel got this shophouse at the minimal monthly rental of \$240. The migration from Rumah Tinggi to Lengkok Bahru required quite a sum of ready cash. And Mt. Carmel had this money ready in its building fund. Every month, \$100 was received from the Malaysia Pioneer Mission (MPM), the rest of the expenses was borne by members.

In January 1970, the Sunday School was split into two sessions—Juniors in the morning and Seniors in the afternoon. On moving to Lengkok Bahru, a Chinese Sunday School was started with help from outside Christians. Evening tuition classes were begun to help children in the neighbourhood in their studies. A very small sum was charged which went to pay the PUB bills.

The management of the Teenage Service began to be borne more and more by the young people who were now in Pre-U classes. Some of them taught in Sunday School. With more space and time available at Lengkok Bahru, activities began to proliferate. A higher body was constituted to oversee the whole Mission and to formulate policies. This was known as the Administrative Committee.

1968 and 1969 saw steady growth in all departments of the Mission. More youths were coming to the services and accepting Christ as their Saviour. Some of them confessed Christ in baptism. A monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper was begun and baptisms were held whenever desired. The members now felt that the Service should no longer be called Teenage as the bulk of the congregation was growing to their late teens and beginning to work. So it was changed to Worship Service. Greater giving by members enabled the MPM subsidy to be reduced to \$50 per month.

The Sunday School grew and another two sessions were started—Primaries and Bible School. By 1969 the Mission premises were used continuously from sunrise to sunset every Sunday, one session after another. The Sunday School adopted a Five-year Plan which was to serve as a guide to a well-rounded development.

Camps, Gospel campaigns, and social activities were regularly organised by the Worship Service committee. As the older members began to enter their twenties, the need was seen to cater for the younger teens. So the Youth Fellowship came into existence in 1969. Then a few members entered the University and were intrigued by a system called the cell-group. They managed to enthuse many other members and it became part of Mt. Carmel. The purpose of the cell-group is to enable small groups of Christians to share together regularly in Bible study and prayer.

The Administrative Committee kept a very loose watch on the activities going on in Mt. Carmel. Each department was left to run on its own steam controlled by its own committee. There was much enthusiasm and multifarious activities mushroomed. This led to much duplication of manpower. A thorough review was undertaken and the Administrative Committee overhauled in August 1970.

Mount Carmel Gospel Mission recognises that all the progress made in the last ten years was by the grace and help of God and to Him all glory is due.

Unsung Heroes

Having read the interesting record of Mount Carmel's growth by Dr. Tan Kim Ping, let us retrace our steps to the year after Carmel's founding, i.e. 1961.

In military strategy, it is no use opening up new fronts unless supply lines can be maintained. Except for "Sharon Woods" (November 1961), there was no opening of new fronts in the Lord's battle, but rather consolidation. In this connection, the recruitment of

Sunday School teachers, speakers for the Sunday pulpit, visitations, counsellings, prayer meetings and Bible Camps and Gospel meetings are of cardinal importance. Laymen, like the infantry, must play a major role. Many are the unsung heroes in this respect who have advanced the Bible-Presbyterian Church and caused that small beginning at Prinsep Street to become what has been known as the Bible-Presbyterian Church Movement. According to *Operation World*, the Bible Presbyterian Church is one of the fastest growing churches in Singapore. O that what has begun with a man which grows into a movement might not degenerate into a machine and become a monument!

It is impossible to give a list of the unsung heroes who in 1960 joined the new units of the Church movement—Cheun Kwang, Tekong, Galilee, Jurong and Mount Carmel. Suffice it to mention two Gospel campaigns that brought many new inquirers and Sunday School pupils to the Lord.

The first was held in December 1960 for Galilee under the preaching of Dr. G.D. James of the then Tamil Evangelistic Crusade. This campaign benefited not only Galilee but Jurong as well. As many as 15 children were transported by the pastor every night to the meetings in a Nash Rambler provided by his sister. The Chandra children received the Lord publicly at these meetings, and in testimony presented this chorus:

*I'm glad I'm a Christian,
I'm trusting the Lord.
I'm reading the Bible,
Believing His Word.

My past is forgiven,
From sin I am free.
A mansion in heaven
Is waiting for me.*

The second was a series of Gospel and Revival meetings held during the whole month of August 1961, a marathon that took Rev. Antonio Ormeo of Manila through Life and Zion Churches, Grace

Church Batu Pahat (then under Rev. Tow's superintendence), the Bible Camp at Tanah Merah and finally Galilee. A paper called *Awake for Life Church* and another called *Good News for Pasir Panjang* for Galilee Church were issued each night to promote the meetings.

A visible fruit of the Ormeo Campaign at Galilee Church was the conversion of Mr. Lim Eng Siang, who declared that when a man had reached 51 he must start to prepare to meet his Creator. On the night he received Christ, he felt himself automatically healed of arthritis which hitherto had plagued him for years and cost him \$10,000. Mr. Lim joined Life Church after the campaign and was instrumental in loaning a big sum to the Building Fund, as well as drawing another of almost five figures for the opening of a mission work in Sabah. This sum came from the tithe of Mr. T.G. Jones, a retiring British engineer. When Life Church sought to promote God's Kingdom and His righteousness, she was relieved of a very tight financial situation by the fruits of the Gospel campaign.

At the beginning of this chapter, it was noted that Life Church was designed with five doors. Apart from the front door which signifies the Door of Salvation, the remaining four doors are symbolic of the evangelistic outreaches of the Church, N.E.W.S. As we conclude this chapter, there comes to mind the Word of the Lord, "And I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isa. 54:12,13).

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Life's Red Letter Day February 16, 1963

“Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. . . . This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Ps. 118:19, 20, 24)

The Far Eastern Bible College block opened its doors to the first class of three students on September 17, 1962, but the Church auditorium needed another four months to catch up. Thus, it was decided that the Congregation should move over to Gilstead on the 12th Anniversary, October 21, 1962, using the College Hall for a start.

The last service held at Prinsep Street was on October 14, 1962, a Farewell Service of sweet reminiscences. What mighty works the Lord had wrought in this aging Church, built 1929! And what would God do for us in the Promised Land?

The first Service held at Gilstead Road on the 12th Anniversary kept to the same afternoon hours in order not to disrupt the pastor's speaking schedules with the daughter Churches. This epochal day was marked by an income of \$4,030! Items of praise were offered by the Sunday School, Jurong, Galilee, Kelapa Sawit and Zion and a Lifers Quartet. Rev. Reiji Oyama, a visiting Japanese pastor lodging at the College, brought greetings. But the most lively offerings of all were the baptisms of Ho Chee Kin, (afterwards a leader in a Chinese Church in London), Lillian Low (now Mrs. Moses Tan), Alice Low (now Mrs. Chan Lay Seng), and Jenny Low, our Hume Heights group regularly worshipping at Jurong Church.

From January 6, 1963, Life Church changed her time of Sunday School and Worship to 8.45 and 10 a.m. Now that the Mother Church changed her time of services to the morning, all those branch Churches and Sunday Schools depending on her were obliged to change theirs to the afternoon, or advance earlier in the morning. Sembawang, Jurong and Galilee were all affected. Hitherto much time was shared by Life Church with her branches. It was only fair that as the new Church, like a bride adorning herself for Wedding Day, neared completion, more time be now spent on her.

The Dedication of the New Church

The red letter day of Dedication of the Church was scheduled for Saturday, February 16, 1963, 4 p.m. Measuring 50 x 116 x 26 with an eighty foot bell tower and spire (the \$1,300 bell was offered by two sisters and ordered from London by brother Chan Choon Keng through United Engineers), the new Church stood as a new land mark dominating the approaches to Newton Circus on the Bukit Timah side. How joyful the Rev. John Cook would have been were he still alive, staying at what was once No. 1 Gilstead Road, to see the projection of the humble beginnings he had made at Prinsep Street and Upper Serangoon.

For this historic and memorable occasion Bishop D.A. Thompson, Chairman of the British Consultative Committee of the International Council of Christian Churches, was invited to officiate. On the day of Dedication, a crowd of six hundred thronged the Church grounds by 4 p.m. The pastor made the Call to Entrance whereupon Elder Heng Mui Kiah presented keys to the Bishop who opened the Porch Gate and Main Door to the strains of *Gloria Patri* by the Congregation. Mr. Ng Eng Hoe called the people to worship which began with the singing of "Come, Thou Almighty King". The pastor offered the Invocation and this was followed immediately by Zion Church Choir singing "The Church's One Foundation". After a Word of Welcome, Dr. Tow Siang Hwa presented a Report on the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church as follows:-

The Life Bible-Presbyterian Church was founded by members of the Chinese Presbyterian Life Church at Prinsep Street in 1950, in order to provide an English Service for its English-speaking section. This infant Church from the outset was firmly grounded in the fundamental Biblical doctrines of the Christian faith. Its leaders have adopted a strong evangelical and missionary emphasis, 'to preach the gospel not where Christ was named.' Launching out, therefore, in the spirit of John Sung (for many of its members had been mightily blessed by his ministry), the Church has steadily increased and branched out into the regions around. Today it has grown to a group of eight co-operating Churches and 15 Sunday Schools in Singapore and Southern Malaya. It is not intended here to stress unduly on numbers. Yet it is evident that the Lord has honoured this work and increased it manifold as the members have sought to obey and honour Him.

The building adjacent to the Church house is the Far Eastern Bible College, a project jointly supported by friends and members of the group of Churches. The Bible College is a centre for the training of indigenous workers for the Lord's vineyard in South East Asia. While the white harvest fields cry out for more reapers, the response is far short of the need. In order to meet this demand for workers, the Far Eastern Bible College is dedicated to the training of gospel warriors and fighters of the faith.

The witness of the Church and Bible College is not confined to the regions around, but extends to other parts of the world in fellowship with 62 countries, within the framework of the International Council of Christian Churches.

The property—land, Church and Bible College annexe—has been acquired at a total cost of \$300,000.00. The decision to build was taken seven years ago as a step in faith, without any endowment or substantial financial backing. The Lord has since proved Himself faithful in supplying every need. Funds have come in from members of the Bible-Presbyterian Churches and friends, with only minimal help from overseas. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the services of Mr. Ang Kheng

Leng, Honorary Architect, and of Mr. W.K. Tham, the Contractor. Their untiring efforts, co-operation and devotion over the past one year have made the dedication service a reality today. Grateful thanks are due to those of you who have helped with your gifts, talents and prayers. May the Lord prosper you all abundantly.

The Life Church is a national Church, completely self-supporting and self-administered. It is also a missionary church, as we have seen, with an energetic programme. For financial and material supplies it relies on members' pledges and free-will offerings and gifts from friends.

The Life Church welcomes all worshippers with open doors. This is a House of Prayer. May the troubled soul find peace and the weary find rest within its sanctuary. May the Gospel light beam forth with the hope and good cheer to those in darkness. The Church's clarion call for a witness against unbelief and false teaching rings true and clear. May its stand in obedience to the Lord's clear command be an encouragement to those who are sitting on the fence.

Today the Dedication of this building marks the fruition of a period of giving and planning on the part of many faithful Christian men and women. It also marks the beginning of a new era of greater efforts in the spiritual warfare against the forces of evil. May the dedication of this structure of bricks and mortar be matched by a greater dedication of human hearts and lives "for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" in South East Asia.

After the Report, Elder Lim Khng Seng read the Holy Scriptures, 1 Chr. 29:9-18. The Presentation of Thank-offerings was made through the Deacons to the strains of an Anthem in Chinese by Chin Lien Bible Seminary, Miss Leona Wu directing. Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang gave the Offertory Prayer. As the setting sun cast its slanting rays above the words "O Send Out Thy Light and Thy Truth" arching across the pulpit, the Congregation sang Psalm 43 from which the simple Prayer is taken. The sermon was delivered by Bishop

Thompson at the close of which the Life Church Male Chorus sang, "Brighten the Corner Where You Are".

The Act of Dedication followed:-

Bishop D.A. Thompson:

Beloved in the Lord, we rejoice that God has moved the hearts of His people to build this house and the Far Eastern Bible College to the glory of his name. I now declare this building to be known as the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and on behalf of the congregation dedicate it to be set apart for the worship of Almighty God and the service of men. Let us therefore solemnly dedicate this place to its proper and sacred uses.

Then all astanding, the Bishop said and the people responded:

*To the glory of God the Father,
who has called us by his grace;
To the honour of his Son,
who loved us and gave himself for us:
We dedicate this house.*

*For the worship of God in prayer and praise;
For the preaching of the everlasting Gospel;
For the celebration of the holy Sacraments;
We dedicate this house.*

*For the hallowing of family life:
For the teaching and guiding the young;
For the perfecting of saints;
We dedicate this house.*

*For the comfort of all who mourn;
For strength to those who are tempted;
For light to those who seek the way;
We dedicate this house.*

*For the defence of the Gospel;
For the advancement of the Reformation cause;
For the revival of Biblical Christianity;
We dedicate this house.*

*For the training of Christian ministers!
For the conversion of sinners;
For the extension of the Kingdom of God;
We dedicate this house.*

And the Bishop and people together recited:

We now, the people of this church and congregation, compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, grateful for our heritage, sensible of the sacrifice of our fathers in the faith, confessing that apart from us their work cannot be made perfect, do dedicate ourselves anew to worship and service of Almighty God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Finally all the ministers and the people in a final solemn yet joyous act of worship chanted Psalm 84, culminating with the benediction pronounced by the visiting Bishop.

The Dedication of the Church was followed by a week of lectures in the morning under the auspices of Far Eastern Bible College, and Gospel Meetings at night. This week of spiritual feasting was crowned with a Rally of International Christian Youth-



Malaysia with the showing of the film “Light in Amsterdam”, being a record of the Fifth Plenary Congress of the ICCC meeting in Amsterdam, August 1962.



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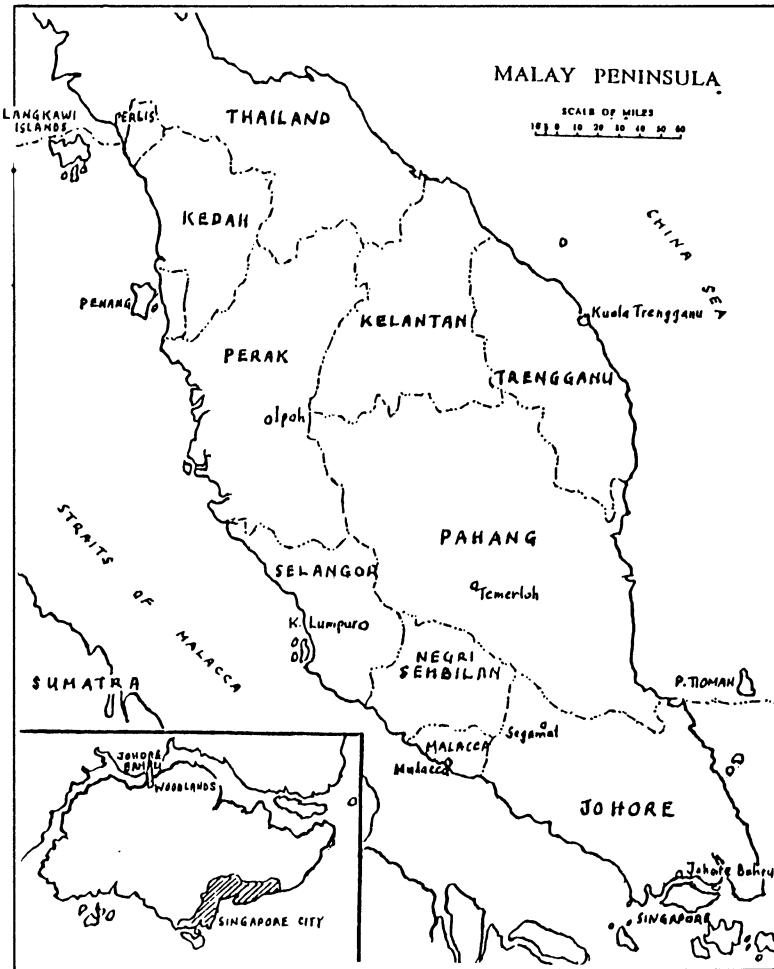
Sowing Beside All Waters 1963-1965

“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.” (Isa. 32:20)

The Bible Presbyterian Church being a movement, it must be on the move wherever the Spirit of the Lord would guide them. A layman's movement, it will be seen how God used even the least in knowledge and strength to sow the Gospel seed. Before we consider these who are the least, we have “the feet of the ox and the ass” in the Pastor and Rev. Ng, his brother-in-law, sent forth into the jungled interior of the Malay Peninsula, 250 miles north of Singapore.

During the long vacation that followed the first academic year of Far Eastern Bible College, the two pastors felt burdened to pay a visit to Temerloh in interior Pahang. The purpose of their visit, partly as a follow-up of Tow and Hsu's first missionary journey to Pahang in 1951, was to bring together several like-minded believers whom the Lord had settled in Mentakab and Temerloh to raise a Gospel witness.

The reason for raising such a witness was twofold. First it was felt that although there was a Church at Mentakab, it was part and parcel of a denomination that had avowedly promoted the Ecumenical Movement. To join this church or to continue supporting it would be contributing to a cause that denied the Lord. Second, the starting of a new English Gospel witness at Temerloh (six miles from Mentakab) would expedite tenfold the extension of God's Kingdom in this unchallenged hinterland of Pahang.



Map of the Malay Peninsula

It was agreed that this Gospel testimony would be an autonomous effort with the view of establishing a more permanent local church according to New Testament pattern. The founding members of Temerloh Gospel Centre comprised Dr. and Mrs. Tow Siang Yeow and their three children, Dr. and Mrs. Ng Eng Kee and Dr. (Miss) Hooi Siew Hua. The Gospel Centre was to be housed at Dr. Tow's quarters at Bukit Angin, Temerloh, and would run a

Sunday School with a regular service. With hearts overflowing, the founder members decided on an early Inauguration on July 7, 1963.

The founding of Temerloh Gospel Centre at the instance of Revs. Tow and Ng received not only general support from Life Church Session, but also the special commendation of Elder Tow Siang Hwa.

With three zealous medical doctors to lead the Centre, and with Life Church supplying the pulpit once a month through the pastor and his associate, Temerloh became an instant success, all praise be to God! To strengthen the stakes of the new work, sister Ivy Tan, FEBC's first student, was sent by train to conduct DVBS during the Christmas vacation. One year after the DVBS, a letter was received from a young man thanking his teacher for imparting him the Word of salvation. "So shall my word that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void" (Isa. 55:91).

Ten months after the founding of Temerloh Gospel Centre, Dr. and Mrs. Tow Siang Yeow received orders to transfer to Malacca. At this time the Sunday school, according to the *Malaysia Christian*, May 9, 1964, had reached a regular attendance of 45. Together with the worship service, the Sunday School was moved to Taman Bahagia where Dr. and Mrs. Ng Eng Kee were settled.

Although Dr. Tow had left Temerloh, Life Church continued to supply the pulpit. In the meantime other Christian professionals were transferred to Temerloh who gladly joined the testimony. By August 1966, a half-acre plot of land in the centre of Taman Bahagia was purchased for \$9,500, and in two years a \$35,000 Church Auditorium was built.

The instant success of Temerloh was due in no small measure to the zeal and diligence of the founders, and to that liberal spirit imbibed from St. Paul that we should by all means save some. For the Gospel's sake, Bible-Presbyterians were willing to cooperate with brethren of another denomination. While it is good that Christians of different denominations in the Communist Underground co-operate, according to Richard Wurmbrand in *Christ*

on the Jewish Road, it is better when they do the same in freedom and plenty. There is a Church of Smyrna, and there is a Church of Philadelphia (Rev. 2:8; 3:7). And though Temerloh Gospel Centre is now affiliated to the Gospel Halls, Lifers have no regrets. We can say with the apostle, “and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (Phil. 1:18).

In contrast with the instant success story of Temerloh Gospel Centre, there are the less known or even forgotten Gospel stations and outposts set up once on the highways and by the hedges (Luke 14:23).

Inasmuch as God looketh not on the outward appearance but on the heart, this historical sketch will not be complete without



Temerloh Gospel Centre

recording the loving labours of Sharon Woods (November 1961), St. John’s (March 1962), Hume Heights (1962) and Chia Heng (1963).

Sharon Woods

“Sharon Woods” was the name given to a rambutan estate at 8½ miles Upper Changi Road. This estate belonging to Dr. Tow Siew Ai was opened for a Discipleship Camp in 1961 when Bible camps were prohibited from holding in Government Schools. (Hitherto, all our camps were held at some Government school by the sea.)

After the Camp, when Sister Loo Keng Eng and her mother and aunt moved in to Sharon Woods to stay, a burden was felt amongst them to start a Sunday School. With the encouragement of Deaconess Ong Soo Kheng, the Sunday School was launched in November 1961. For several years until Sister Keng Eng, mother and aunt shifted to Amber Road, this children’s work was faithfully maintained with a regular attendance of forty.

St. John’s

St. John’s Island Sunday School was a labour of love maintained by brother and Mrs. Lim Kim Hee (my younger sister) for a couple of years from April 1962. About 30 regularly met. Later on a youth club was organised. The languages here used were English and Malay. The Sunday School and youth work had to be discontinued when the Lims, both teachers, were transferred back to Singapore. It is reported that some of the young souls saved on St. John’s have given their testimony to the Galileans. Several more were baptised at the Chinese Service, Life Church, two decades later, with Elder and Mrs. Lim Kim Hee witnessing.

Hume Heights

About the time St. John’s Island saw the light of the Gospel, an individual light began to gleam in the hidden kampong of Hume Heights, nestling closely to the Ford Factory, 8½ miles Bukit Timah Road, the venue where British General Percival surrendered to General Yamashita of the Japanese forces. That lone witness was brother Moses Tan Boon Chiang. Through his shining smiles in the

household of Mr. and Mrs. Low Onn Soon, members of Glory Presbyterian Church, a Saturday night Gospel Meeting was started. By the preaching of the Gospel, several families came to the Lord. Souls were saved among the Lims, Hos, and Lows, who were severally baptised at Life Church and at the Life Church Mandarin-Teochew Service. A Malay, Amir bin Jelani, came to Christ and was baptised, whose wife, Sister Ai Eng of Hume Heights and he, keep attending our churches to this day. Amir, our gardener, is a founding member of Life Church Indonesian Service, and now a Deacon.

Indeed, the Hume Heights testimony prospered so much that a zinc “tabernacle” was constructed with the help of “uncles” of Life Church. From a Saturday night Gospel meeting, it matured into a Sunday School and Sunday Night Youth Fellowship. Often the attendance exceeded fifty or sixty. When the Life Church Mandarin-Teochew Service was formed in October 1965, Hume Heights enthusiastically supported this new work by coming to service in a van. This happy state of affairs went on for a couple of years, when owing to heterogeneous doctrine from Taiwan infiltrating the group, a number of them seceded to meet separately at Bukit Panjang. The breakaway occurred in 1969. Since then practically none of the Hume Heights Youth have come to the Chinese service at Gilstead Road. The remainder of the group, without proper supervision and with Mr. and Mrs. Low, the host and hostess, gone above, and the founding members shifted out, disintegrated. What a glorious yet gloomy chapter in the annals of the Greater Life Church Family.

Chia Heng

Last but not least of these weaker members of the Life Church Family is Chia Heng. Chia Heng is another hideaway kampong, off the Thomson Road and Newton Road junction, in the shadows of the Novena. Begun in 1963 by OMF missionaries worshipping at Life Church, this work was soon handed to the Life Church Youth Fellowship. It was an open-air Sunday School with little children running around while the teacher was teaching. The work was so

zealously carried out in the beginning that a building fund was started for the purpose of putting up some structure to house the meetings. This fund was later given to the Church for building the Kindergarten Extension Block.

For the last couple of years the work persevered through the loving labours of Fan Kwai Sang and Lau Chin Kwee, Deacon Khoo Peng Kiat, the adviser. Today Fan Kwai Sang heads the Baptist Fellowship Church with a handsome property in Serangoon Gardens. Lau Chin Kwee studied at FEBC and with further training in U.S.A. became first ordained minister of the Evangelical Reformed Church. We do not regret some of our sons joining other denominations as long as their branching out is to "sow beside all waters".

With the Church branching out north, east, south and west, labourers were needed more than ever before. When it was heard that brother Philip Heng had graduated from Columbia Bible College with a B.A. in Missions in June, 1963, the Church extended him a cordial invitation to return. Philip arrived back in Singapore at the end of September, and warmly spoke to Life Church of the needs of crying multitudes he saw everywhere.

Mission to Sabah

A moving spirit to "sow beside all waters", even to Sabah, was Mr. Lim Eng Siang. At a Presbytery meeting held at the beginning of 1965, the consensus of the presbyters was to send Rev. Tow and Mr. Heng on a mission to Sabah with a view to establishing some local Gospel work. With an offering taken plus two tickets presented by "an enthusiastic Sabahan", the two missionaries were ready to go. A Commissioning Service was held at the Life Church Revival Hour on March 14, 1965, the 13th Anniversary of the founding of the Malaysia Pioneer Mission. Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang brought the message.

On March 19 the two missionaries set sail on the "Kinabalu". A 2,000-ton coaster, the little ship took three weeks to make a round

trip to Kuching, Miri, Labuan, Jesselton (Kota Kinabalu), Kudat, Sandakan and Tawau. Whilst their main mission was “to spy out the Land”, they made use of every opportunity to speak the Word and give out tracts. They had opportunity to speak at several Basel churches and schools, but mostly in Mandarin and Hakka. They were kindly received by Mr. T.G. Jones who, prior to this, had given a tithe of his gratuity for mission work in Sabah. They learned many things about Sabah from him, but they could see no possibility of starting a permanent work there. Nevertheless, much precious experience was gained for future missions from distant waters.

15

“With Christ on the Mount” April 19, 1965

*“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.” (Ps. 121:1)*

While the missionaries were at large in Sabah, the Church at home was planning conquest of new spiritual heights by holding a Family Bible Camp on Cameron Highlands during the Easter holidays.

“With Christ on the Mount” was the theme chosen for this time of refreshing. The speakers were the pastor and Rev. John Grauley, missionary from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions and lecturer at FEBC. Deacon Joshua Lim was Camp Master.

The response to this Bible Camp was most enthusiastic. Fifty campers signed up including Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan (my aunt) of Cheun Kwang, who though Chinese-speaking came of her own accord, because she had found good company in Mrs. Nancy Tow. “Uncles” of the Church generously loaned their vehicles for the use of the campers, which consisted of a brand new VW Kombi, a new Volvo and a Holden.

Since Cameron Highlands is 400 miles from Singapore, the Campers were obliged to break journey midway. Malacca and Muar were the halting points for the night because here free accommodation was available. First, from Dr. and Mrs. Tow Siang Yeow with their spacious government quarters, and second from Elder Lim Siew Guat with her newly completed houses. In view of

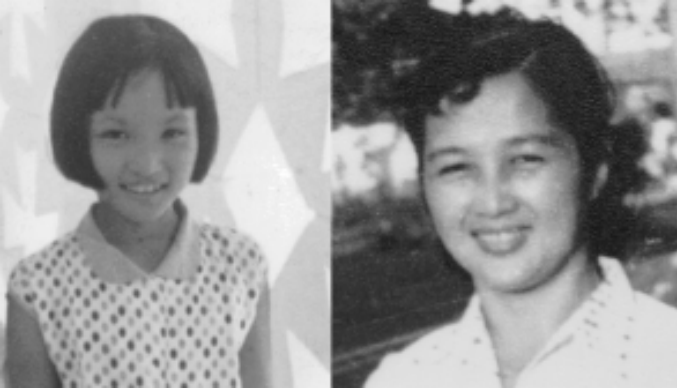
the fact that the pastor had a preaching appointment with Muar, Easter Sunday evening, thus obliging him to stay on for the night, Nancy and the two daughters would not ride in his Kombi but in the VW Sedan she was wont to drive herself. The reason for not travelling with the pastor was that both she and Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan desired to spend the night in Malacca with the relatives. O, mysterious working of predestination!

On the afternoon of the next day, while the caravan was heading steadily towards the foot of the mountain, two by two, suddenly the Volvo broke ranks and overtook the Kombi, the leading vehicle. This started a sort of race between the VW Sedan and the Volvo. A surge of anxiety gripped the pastor’s heart as he was overtaken! For it was drizzling heavily, and the road was wet. Sure enough, the pastor’s premonition turned into stark, brutal fact! Driving out of Bidor, he saw a commotion ahead. The Assistant Pastor waved him to stop. O no! It was the VW Sedan, the “Jesus Saves” car, in the ditch in a head-on crash with a big lorry! Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan in the left front seat, Nancy and Le Anne in the left back seat, were taken. As by a whirlwind, in a lightning flash! Paul Tsao at the wheel suffered internal injury. The other survivor, Lily, my second daughter, had a broken thigh and bloody head lacerations.

The deceased being gone, what must be done at once was treatment for the living. Paul and Lily were rushed to Ipoh with Miss Ong Soo Kheng tending. Praise the Lord, an immediate operation on Paul saved his life. Lily’s leg was plastered up and her head stitched.

“With Christ on the Mount” was the message of the Highlands Camp. The message was now spoken not by the living but by the dead. Hearts were melted, washed by tears of sorrow, mingled with love and repentance. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21). “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him . . .” (Job 13:15). The dead spoke again when the three caskets bearing them were brought back to Life Church, Gilstead Road. At their combined funeral service on April 22, 1965 conducted by Revs. Quek, Ng and Grauley, and Mr. Jacob Fung of

Grace Cantonese Church, no sermon was needed. The mountain theme song “Is not this the Land of Beulah” was sung by the fifty



Le Anne

Nancy Lan Yin

campers to the sympathising tears of the thousand mourners.

Was this triple tragedy sheer accident? Could it not have been avoided? One very close to the beloved deceased, being thus perplexed, took pains to find out the facts of the case. She came to the conclusion that “God has worked in a mysterious way for a higher purpose, to His Glory”. Thus wrote Mrs. Lim Siew Yong (my younger sister) in *The Malaysia Christian*, May 8, 1965:

The recent departure of my sister-in-law Mrs. Nancy Tow, my niece Le Anne and my aunt Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan was most sudden and unexpected. The news of their deaths came as a great blow. I was struck speechless and I could only weep and mourn over the great loss. The three were with a group of fifty campers on their way to the Life Church Bible Camp up on Cameron Highlands when the fatal accident took place.

Before this, there were revival meetings in Church. Then there was Good Friday Night Service. I still remember seeing Mrs. Tow smiling from a distance after the Good Friday Night Service. This was followed by the Easter Sunrise Service and the Easter Service in Church. Surely God would protect them and keep them safe on their journey to and fro, I thought.

In my deep grief, I was determined to find out the cause of this seeming calamity. After much praying, observation and interviewing, I have come to realise that what had happened was all through God’s mysterious guiding power.

From many Church members I learnt that Mrs. Nancy Tow has been preparing months ahead for this Bible Camp. According to Mrs. Lim Geok Kim, she had to line up before dawn to get her leave at K.K. Hospital a few months earlier. How delighted she was to get her leave, for immediately thereafter she drove to Mrs. Lim’s house to tell her of the good news. A few weeks before Camp, she had packed her clothing. She took much pains to tend the garden in the Church grounds. She spring-cleaned the whole parsonage before leaving. On Easter morning, at 4 a.m., she was the first to get up to play Easter chimes on her radiogram, while preparing to attend the Easter Sunrise Service.

My beloved niece Le Anne always reminded me of a beautiful, smiling and sweet-natured girl. She never once lost her temper, although my clumsy son often broke her toys while playing with her in the parsonage. Of late, she often asked the Bible College students about Heaven, and was very eager to know what Heaven was like. She also expressed her earnest wish to be in Heaven, since the beauty of Heaven is unsurpassed by earthly splendour. Her father also testified that she read her Bible regularly every day, and was very obedient and helpful in the home.

My beloved aunt, Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan, was a zealous and prayerful Christian worker. The nurse who attended to her at my sister’s clinic described to me her last visit to the clinic. Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan complained of sleeplessness for more



Below the Parsonage is
the Sea of Galilee
Fountain

than a week, but she felt no ill-effects during the day. The nurse took her temperature and tested her blood pressure, but found her to be perfectly normal. Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan was pleased to know that she was in good health and was therefore fit to go to the Bible Camp. She also expressed her desire to sit in the same car with Mrs. Nancy Tow, so that she would have someone to talk to. Before leaving the clinic, she cheerily told the nurse that she would go and pray for everybody on Cameron Highlands.

From my account of the three loved ones, we can be assured that they were all prepared to meet our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed, God had prepared a much more wonderful place for them than Cameron Highlands, for before reaching their destination, their course was changed heavenwards. Mrs. Nancy Tow, Le Anne and Mrs. Tow Keng Chuan had received the greatest thrill of all, for “in the twinkling of an eye” they found themselves ascending into space, soaring past the sun, moon and stars, and finally they found themselves coming face to face with our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a glad and blessed reunion, for they were also reunited with many other loved ones and friends who had gone before them. While on earth they had been practising the Camp Song “In Beulah Land.” Now would be the joyous and perfect moment to sing the chorus, “Is not this the Land of Beulah? Blessed, blessed land of light; Where the flowers bloom forever, and the sun is always bright.”

During the Easter Church Service on April 18, I was deeply moved by the Scripture passage read by my big brother, Rev. Timothy Tow (1 Cor. 15:51-58): “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed . . .” This Bible Passage gives us the greatest consolation while we are yet on earth. Death is conquered by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To the worldly-minded people and heathens, the recent motor accident is a great tragedy, but we Christians think it

otherwise. God has worked in a mysterious way for a higher purpose to His own glory. He wants us to be prepared for eternity, and not to be engrossed with worldly pursuits. Whether it be death or the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, are we ready to meet our Saviour face to face?

The conclusion of Mrs. Lim that it was God who had worked in a mysterious way for His own glory is right. For our Lord has promised his children protection to the last strand of hair on their head (Matt. 10:30). Such a great calamity could not have happened without His decretive permission. Now that it had happened according to His will for His own glory, good must come out of it.

According to the writer’s knowledge, one young soul received Christ up the mountain the night of the accident. Back home in Singapore, another who was spending a night with brother Koh Kim Hiang in Deacon Joshua Lim’s house, was called to serve the Master. When the phone rang to break the news of the tragic deaths, this person, groaning with tears, surrendered to the Lord. His name is Goh Seng Fong, a Government School teacher. Immediately after this, he joined the Bible College, graduating with a Certificate of Religious Knowledge.



Since that day brother Seng Fong has won many young souls at Monk’s Hill School and at the Jesus Saves Mission, Bukit Ho Swee. In the course of time Seng Fong left Singapore for the U.S.A. where he earned double Masters. A founder of several churches in Singapore and Malaysia, he also taught at FEBC. And he continues to teach to this day, having earned his D.Min. from U.S.A.

Many other testimonies of lives changed and consecrated were given by Rev. Grauley, Sister Anna Tan, Dr. Ang Beng Chong, brother Tow Siang Kwang in *The Malaysia Christian*. Suffice it to mention another testimony, the consecration of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Tsao, parents of that young driver of the fateful car. Ever since this bitter-sweet experience (their son was saved by an operation) they have given themselves to the Life Church Mandarin-Teochew

Service. And not the least is Mrs. Tsao's sister, Mrs. Lee Choon Ngee.

These new additions to the church have heard the call of the Christ on the Mount. With their strong support, a Chinese Service was started in October 1965, which after 35 years has grown to a congregation of well over 200. It supports three mission stations, viz., Kuching, Sarawak; Tanjung Uban, Bintan Island, Indonesia and Cambodia. Elder Sng Teck Leong is its leading Elder and lay-missionary.

In a white book, *Songs and Verses from the Holy Land* published Easter 1970 by the author, one page is dedicated to our beloved dead to their perpetual memory.



In loving memory
of
NANCY LAN YIN, LE ANNE
MRS. TOW KENG CHUAN
my beloved
first wife, daughter and aunt
who were taken
as by
a whirlwind in a motor accident
at
Bidor
at the foot of Cameron Highlands
Easter Monday
April 19, 1965, 3.30 p.m.
DEATH
was swallowed up in victory
when at the funeral service
held at
Life Church, Gilstead Road
the fifty fellow-campers
sang
the mountain theme song
"Is not this the Land of Beulah"
to the
sympathising tears of the thousand mourners

"To that mountain above the moon
Ye have soared away too soon!
But Jesus has called you to rest,
And His will for us is best.
Blest are ye who died in the Lord,
And have found rest from your labours,
And your works follow after you —
One by one we say adieu!"

Scripture: I Cor. 15:54; Rev. 14:13; Isa. 62:4.

16

Behind Every Man . . .

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” (Gen. 2:18)

“Behind every man, there is a woman.” In the Confucian tradition, the mother would precede the wife. In the Biblical context, the wife must succeed where the mother leaves her son when he comes of age. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Now I will tell you as much as I can of my relationship with Mother after my marriage, and with Nancy.

One question you might have posed at the back of your mind is this. Since I was the son of my mother's vow, what was her reaction when after my Senior Cambridge, instead of theology, I chose science? Well, I believe she was as unguided as I in the process of seeking a higher education. In 1938 there was no theological college in Singapore, and if there were, which came into being in Trinity College in 1946 after the War, it would be a modernistic and liberal one. Should I enter such a school, I would have come out of a different mould from what I am. Without any higher wisdom and guidance, Mother was also at a loss.

Secondly, Mother, more than Father, was ambitious for the educational attainments of her children. Like the mother of James and John, Mrs. Zebedee, she would see her sons, especially, to the very top. For me to go to Raffles College at that young age of eighteen was not contrary to preparing for the ministry after that.

In the midst of these struggles for excellence, before one could see life's problems more clearly, there exploded the Bomb of the

Pacific War. After the War, I had little contact with Mother, since she and Father lived in Batu Pahat and we in Singapore. Then why didn't she stop Father who now desired I should go to London to complete my Law, himself offering four thousand dollars? Did Father keep this a secret from Mother? Without verifying from fourth brother Siang Yeow who brought me the message, I knew full well Father had told Mother all about it. There was no secret between Father and Mother all the years through, and we children knew as a fact that everything concerning the welfare of the family was common knowledge and came under common discussion. If Mother knew about Father's plan, why didn't she object?

Remember what I said at the beginning about my remark to her that Grandpa's monthly stipend was only thirty dollars, and how she was struck dumb? How she must have prayed in her heart that God would keep me from falling. Similarly, I believe she must have committed my going to London to the Lord in prayer. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Another thing about Mother was this. After my marriage, she respected my new role as a husband. Therefore she would not continue to "boss" over me like other Chinese mothers of the old school. Mother was very understanding. Mother was very steady, never getting excited or flabbergasted. Mother had much faith. Mother had good sound theology. Mother believed in a sovereign God from whose Hand I could never escape. Mother was a daughter of Calvin.

"Behind every man there is a woman." Now, Nancy. I told you this was a case of love at first sight. The Lord gave us seven children. Two of these were taken—Lilyn at seven months and Le Anne at eleven years. John, Lehia and Lily are married, all settled in America. John is a master-sergeant in the U.S. Airforce (Reservist). Lehia is married to Rev. Edward Paauwe and both have been missionaries of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, to Singapore, to Korea and to Adelaide. From November 1998 Lehia's husband, Rev. Edward Paauwe, became General

Secretary of the Board with headquarters in Philadelphia. Lily is happily married to a fine American young man she met at Bob Jones University who holds a Master's in Business Administration and lectures at a College. Lily is a registered nurse and she and her husband live in Akron, Ohio. Shen Pan works as a security guard and Shen Min, born handicapped, lives with me on the Church premises under my care.

How did these children grow up? John is Big Aunt's boy and has received most from his Aunt's hand. The burden of bringing up the other children had therefore rested heavily upon Nancy during the year I was in China and three years thereafter in America, and another year when I returned for my Master's.

Having read Wang Ming Tao's autobiography, *These Fifty Years*, and the English translation titled, *A Stone Made Smooth*, I am impressed by his candid discussion of his wifely problems. Here I would too in just this thing that somewhat soured our marriage, viz., the occasional quarrels that came between us, particularly during the years we stayed at Kim Pong Road.



Dr. Tow Siew Ai

There were the common ones one could enumerate, the first of which concerned money. I was sold to a frugal life and self-dependence with God, to the doctrine of carrying the cross for the Gospel's sake. In other words, she was married to a poor pastor. Though she was born again under Lim Puay Hian and had two years' Bible School under Miss Wu, she did not go the whole hog with me in my discipleship. At the time of her death, though she was a midwife having her own savings, she did not have more than three thousand dollars in the Post Office Savings Bank, and I had none.

Finance seems to be a common problem between husbands and wives.

But the root of our differences was our differences. Differences in our nature. She was always spick-and-span and took pleasure in sweeping and polishing and decorating. I am rather relaxed in my own house, though not in looking after God's House. So, it might flare off from a match-stick, but end up like a storm in a teacup.

When the new Church at Gilstead Road was completed, how we thanked the Lord for feeling like fishes in a bottle being let out into a pond. (In recognition of our labours, Life Church gave us a boat trip to Hong Kong in 1963.) We shifted into 9A Gilstead Road with the first FEBC students in September 1962. "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House: they will be still praising Thee. Selah" (Ps. 84:4).

Nancy loved Le Anne her youngest daughter most of all, though Lily was my girl. Mother and daughter would go out together hand in hand. Thus when the Lord took the mother, He would not leave the daughter after her own heart to pine here below. As if they were being prepared for heaven, the days before we left Singapore for Cameron Highlands were days of mysterious bliss. She returned to me twice in my dreams shortly after her departure, but no more ever since.

I was remarried on July 16, 1966, to Miss Ivy Tan, one year and three months after Nancy left me. This was the Lord's merciful provision, Jehovah Jireh. The Lord knew that with Nancy gone I would need another in the role of a pastor's wife. (It is my humble opinion that every pastor should be married according to Paul's injunction to Timothy in 1 Tim. 3:1-7.) "A



prudent wife is from the Lord”, so that in His own good time things began to click between me and Ivy.

When Ivy first joined FEBC she asked me this question, “Since I cannot be a pastor, what could I do when I graduate?” “Well,” said I, “If you are faithful to your day-to-day work, and are willing to scrub the floor and polish the church furniture, God will use you when you graduate.” How did I know I was to marry her? And what better choice when she was one preparing to serve the Lord full-time, young and healthy, though taller than me by an inch or two! Moreover, she comes from a family renowned in aquatic sports. And they are Christians from the Anglican and Phoa Hock Seng traditions.

To have a happy marriage, it must not only be one approved of the Lord but also of our parents. At a suitable time I brought Ivy to see my father, and was I not overjoyed to have his hearty blessings too.

Time flies! As I share with you these delicate mysteries of life, Ivy and I have been married for 34 happy years. The Lord has given us a daughter, Jemima, and Jonathan, a son, according to the outdated policy, “Two is enough”. While Jonathan, a reservist officer in the Army, is now graduated from NUS and is employed by Mindef, and married to Selina Ho, also of Mindef. Mima, as they call her, graduated from FEBC and proceeded to U.S. for another three years of theological studies. She and Jeffrey Khoo were married in U.S.A. in 1991 with our presence to bless. Incidentally, her Chinese name, “Li Mi” (pronounced “Lee Mee”), means “Beautiful Rice”. This reflects my acceptance of a lowly lot in this life for her. My desire is she should follow her parents’ footsteps. Both Mima and Jeffrey are on the Faculty of FEBC. Mima earned double masters and Jeffrey a Ph.D. in theology. They happily stay in the parsonage with May Ann and May Lynn. The greatest blessing to our family is May Ann’s nuzzling in my arms, requesting her Grandpa to pray that she would be a good Christian. May Lynn, though several years younger, wants Grandpa’s blessings no less.



Family Photo

During these mellow years of my life, Ivy has been most helpful in all my undertakings, in great and in small. Having studied four years at FEBC plus one year's pre-College classes conducted at Prinsep Street, she was FEBC's first B.Th. graduate. Under Rev. Grauley's Greek tutoring, she had obtained a firm grounding so that, when the missionary professor left FEBC, she ably took over his class in Elementary Greek. She has taught this subject most thoroughly all these years to the gratitude of her students. Secondly, but not the lesser, she has also been head of the culinary department all along, feeding 100 students today. Since it is said that an army marches on its stomach, the FEBC kitchen is as important as her Greek class, if not more. For this dual contribution to the College and supervision of students, I have promoted her to "Matron".

As a pastor's wife, she is able to take care of the ladies and girls where it is not convenient for me. And she likes to teach children; she has played her part by bringing up a Children's Choir and running a "Steps to Everlasting Life" Children's Bible Camp. Ivy also conducts a number of Bible classes with the womenfolk of the Church. She is loyal to the Twentieth Century Reformation Cause and supports the work of the ICCC in all the battles I have gone through. She is my close companion in all of my travels.

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." (Prov. 31:30)

17

A Dissentious Spirit 1968-1969

“When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissesion and disputation with them ...” (Acts 15:2)

Hitherto, the witness of separation from modernistic unbelief and ecumenical apostasy had received full support of the Church. However, when “evangelical” leaders like Dr. Billy Graham began to fraternise with the apostate ecclesiastical powers for the sake of “cooperative evangelism” and the pastor pointed out the unscripturalness of such a relationship (2 Cor. 6:14-18), one or two Session members who differed with the pastor introduced a dissentious spirit in the Church, the first time in eighteen years. On and off the problem of Dr. Billy Graham cropped up while the *Far Eastern Beacon* serialised J.A. Johnson’s book on Billy Graham - “the Jehoshaphat of our Generation”. The historic position of Life Church and of the Bible-Presbyterian Church movement in this respect was libelled even by the Taiwanese assistant of the Chinese Service. The opposition in Life Church Session against the pastor increased from one or two dissenters to several when the pastor published two newsreports in the *Far Eastern Beacon*, November and December 1968. These reports were written in the capacity of special correspondent of *New Life*, Australia’s Christian Newspaper, to the Billy Graham-sponsored Asia-South Pacific Congress of Evangelism, Singapore, November 5 to 13, 1968. These reports were made in a sincere spirit for fairness and accuracy and were well received by the *New Life*. The editor-in-chief thanked his correspondent in a letter enclosing a cheque, “Please accept my

grateful thanks for your helpful and informative reports of the Singapore Congress on Evangelism. I was most grateful to you for your kindness in undertaking this assignment on our behalf, and can assure you the reports aroused much interest. As may be expected, we had one or two letters from Congress delegates who were not in agreement with some of your comments at the conclusion of the second article, but in view of the difference of viewpoint amongst evangelicals on such issues as separation from apostasy, this is not surprising.”

The conclusion of the Australian correspondent's second article reads:

The paradox of the Congress, however, lies in the fact that whereas individual speakers were keen to warn against the destructive errors of liberal and ecumenical theology, the Congress as a whole would fraternise with the bosses of Ecumenism. Was it a diplomacy of mutual exploitation? And what is Cooperative Evangelism's honest position vis-a-vis Roman Catholicism? For in making reference to some Roman Catholic observer attending the Congress, Bishop Chandu Ray of West Pakistan, a co-chairman and member of the Executive Committee, called him 'our Roman Catholic brother'.

The line of separation from Ecumenical apostasy which the 20th Century Reformation Movement in Singapore and Malaysia has been maintaining during the last two decades in the spirit of John Sung has been all but wiped away, knowingly or unknowingly, by the Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism.

Let this be a warning to the Cooperative Evangelists that whereas thousands might be signed up into the fold through their all-inclusive campaigns, as many thousands might be signed off by the ravening Ecumenical wolves.

The spirit of dissension against the uncompromising, separatist stand of the Church manifested itself in the new building project. When plans for the three-storey Church-and-College extension incorporating a kindergarten were approved in February 1968, the

same Session members, who were unhappy over the Billy Graham issue, opposed the launching of building operations. This opposition was of no avail, for God's good hand was upon His own work. A sister of Life Church gave \$50,000 outright towards the cost of the building which totalled \$110,000. The three-storey Kindergarten Block was completed in exactly one year.



Church and College Extension, 1969

The brotherly love that once so sweetly prevailed over the Life Church tree like the sparkling dew of morning all but evaporated. The climax of dissension was reached when the Assistant Pastor was invited to preach at a Methodist Church in July 1969, for which campaign he appended his name to a letter cyclostyled on paper bearing the letterhead of the said Methodist Church. This gave the impression that he was in close fellowship with a Church in the Ecumenical Movement. Controversy over this matter flared up at Presbytery. There the question of whether a Bible-Presbyterian minister, when invited to preach by a Church in the modernist Ecumenical fold, had a duty to warn against the dangers of Ecumenism, was discussed. The opinion of the Presbyters was about

equally divided, resulting in a contention so sharp that they left in bitterness of spirit.

Since the relationship between the pastor and Assistant Pastor and certain Session members was stretched to breaking point, the pastor decided to take five and a half months' vacation leave away from Singapore. At this juncture a double invitation from Dr. Lynn Gray Gordon, General Secretary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions and Rev. Howard Carlson, missionary in Bethlehem, came to him to spend that vacation as a short-term missionary to Israel. This was gladly accepted and seen as an act of God's deliverance. Since this was a short-term arrangement, the pastor-missionary offered to pay the air fare of his family to and fro, while the Board pay for his living expenses on the field. A sister of Life Church, being deeply moved by the controversy, footed the bills. Accordingly, Ivy, I and little daughter Jemima left Singapore July 28, 1969 for the Holy Land. The love for the pastor and family, however, was manifested by a big turnout to wish them Godspeed.

18

Songs from the Holy Land 1969-1970

“My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.” (Ps. 45:1)

The five-and-a-half months' vacation Ivy and I spent in the Holy Land as short-term missionaries was the most inspirational period of our lives. While discharging our duties as missionaries to the Arabs in church services and speaking to youth groups and schools, I found time to join Rev. Howard Carlson in a five-month *Ulpan* Hebrew course at the American Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. The principal was Dr. Douglas Young, who had taught me Biblical Hebrew at Faith Seminary. He was so delighted to see a *Sinni* (Chinese) like me, a rare species in Israel, that he reduced my tuition fees by half.

Now, Hebrew, like Latin, had become a dead language to the common people in modern times, until Eliezar Ben Yehuda arose (1857-1922) and revived it. How did he revive it? By going back to the Bible, the Old Testament, to the Jewish commentaries on the sacred text such as the Talmud. He revived “the language that God spoke” by speaking Hebrew to his wife and children, absolutely prohibiting them to use any other language. From one family it miraculously spread to the whole nation. Jewish returnees who have little Hebrew usually go through the five-month *Ulpan* course we took, six hours a day, five days a week. They graduate after that. They are to build upon this foundation hereafter themselves. Studying Modern Hebrew therefore loosens up one's Biblical

Hebrew. That is why we run a Modern Hebrew class every now and then at FEBC, with specialist teachers from the Israeli Embassy or from the Jewish community in Singapore.

To live in Israel gave me the advantage of not only learning the language but also seeing the Land. And what a wonderful land it is since it is given by God to his chosen people, to Abraham and his children after Isaac, the son of promise, forever (Gen. 25:5,6; 26:2-5). The Land of Israel is not only called the Holy Land, but the Delightful Land (Mal. 3:12), the Pleasant Land (Zech. 7:14), the Glorious Land (Dan. 11:41), the Promised Land (Deut. 9:28), Beulah Land (Isa. 62:4) and the Land Flowing with Milk and Honey (Exod. 13:5). The Holy Land is a Good Land (Deut. 8:7), a land that yields seven holy fruits, viz., wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives and honey (Deut. 8:8). And the holy hill of Zion is Jerusalem, the City that every Jewish exile has aspired through two thousand years to re-enter. To return to the Land promised to their fathers like homing pigeons, has become their consuming passion. When they part with one another, they will say, "Next year in Jerusalem." Those who are now returned, and there are six million Jews in Israel today, needn't say that. Thanks to Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*, a great, wide door was opened to hundreds of thousands of former Soviet Jews to return to their homeland. How we thanked God that we His children by adoption could come to Jerusalem!

As we traversed holy ground, Bible in hand, often "walking today where Jesus walked", O what stirrings of soul and heart! As a result a white book titled *Songs and Verses from the Holy Land* was published upon our return. This book is a collection of the faithful recordings of those sublime feelings, and of further illumination from meditation upon His Word. In this connection sacred music had helped not a little to spark the spontaneity of thoughts and words (2 Kgs. 3:15). I am deeply indebted to Rev. Howard Carlson for the photographs and artwork from his treasury that illustrate our themes and to Mrs. Bonnie Carlson for her wise criticism of the stanzas.

Let me share with you how some of the songs the Lord gave had come by. "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked" is a famous American composition. Its tune moved me to write one also about walking with Jesus, not only upon the horizontal plane, but also on the vertical. This song is dedicated to Professor Fague Springmann, who sang it in our City in 1970 and whose voice has made this song a lasting testimony on tape:

*I want to walk where Jesus walks
Along life's narrow way.
He comes to our Emmaus road
And talks with us today!
He hears our sighs and all our woes,
He kneels with us to pray.
I want to walk where Jesus walks:
He wipes my tears away.*

*My path leads from the Empty Tomb
Where He rose from the dead!
It brings me to the Upper Room
Where all my friends are met.
With Thomas I shall worship Him,
And I'll call Him my Lord.
O won't you give your heart to Him?
Jesus the Son of God!*

*And from the lone Emmaus road
Christ leads His followers on:
He meets with us in Galilee,
And gives our hearts a song.
Returning to Mount Olivet,
We hear His last command:
Go ye, go into all the world,
Go ye, go into all the world,
Go ye, go into all the world,
And preach the Word of God!
I want to walk where Jesus walks,
And serve Him all the way...*

One day, Rev. Carlson said to me, "It is the fashion of poets writing about Israel not to miss Jerusalem. Now the Jewish poets write about Jerusalem for sentimental and political reasons. If you write, you must witness to the Jews about their Messiah." Hence, to the tune of "How Great Thou Art":

*Yerushalayim, thy sons and daughters love thee!
Two thousand years they've wandered in exile.
Now by God's grace, they're gathered to thee in peace,
By thy embrace, their weeping turns to smile.*

Chorus

*Yerushalayim, let peace and freedom ring,
To thee Shalom, to thee Shalom!
Yerushalayim, lift up thy voice and sing,
Messiah is come, Messiah is come!*

*Yerushalayim, behold Christ Jesus has come
To save thy sons, if they will turn to Him.
By death and pain, He has become their ransom,
Rising again, He has forgiven their sin.*

*Yerushalayim, behold Messiah shall come
To save thy Land, when thou shalt cry to Him.
He comes on clouds, with awesome loud trumpet sound
To judge the earth - peace a millennium.*

*Yerushalayim, God is thy 'ternal peace,
City of Zion, David's throne rise again!
City of Truth, resplendent in His glory
Till sun shall rise and moon no more shall wane.*

Since we stayed on the main highway that runs on the edge of the City and often walked to nearby Bethlehem along her streets so rich with history, the echoes from my heart to the sacred surroundings were put to these words:

*O Bethlehem, O Bethlehem,
Thou David's City Royal!
From days of yore thou art the same:
Thy olive hills and flowers;*

*Thy rolling fields of barley sweet,
Thy narrow lanes with busy feet,
Resound with wondrous tales of old
The sacred pages unfold.*

*O Bethlehem, O Bethlehem,
Thou City of Our Saviour!
Christ was born from the Virgin young,
So forlorn in a manger.
But angels rent the midnight sky,
With song of praise to the Most High,
While shepherds quaked in reverent fear,
To the first Christmas Noel.*

*O Bethlehem, O Bethlehem,
Thou City of the Pilgrims!
Two thousand years thou art the same:
Thy church tow'rs and bells pealing.
O that the angels' song of praise
Thy sons with one accord would raise:
The glad news of God's saving plan
Re-echo from land to land!*

*O Bethlehem, O Bethlehem,
Thou City of All Mankind!
From year to year be thou the same:
Jesus thy Saviour and mine.
Peal on the good tidings of Peace,
Peal forth the Divine Amnesty,
From Christmas Day to Christmas Day,
And Earth shall sing Emmanuel!*

(To the tune of "O Christmas Tree")

Christmas 1969 was just around the corner. Under the auspices of the Holy Land Mission of the Independent Board, a worship service was to be held at the Shepherd's Field, Christmas Eve. As I was "one wise man from the East" invited to speak on this most happy occasion of our Saviour's Birth, I was given an opportunity to survey the Field. It was a cold wintry night and the moon was

shining in all her resplendence in a blue cloudless sky. From that setting came "Winter Moon", to the tune of "White Christmas".

*Now as the winter moon sinks low,
And the poor shepherds all are gone,
There remains in the Manger stable
The Virgin Mother seated all alone.
Now as she caresses her Child
Under the flickering candle light,
O the thought that God's Son is born!
Sweeps o'er her soul this first Christmas night.*

*Thus Mary ponders in her heart,
While the winds howl over the sky,
And the cows low and asses bray,
And Baby Jesus wakes and starts to cry.
Again she caresses her Child
Under the flickering candle light,
O the thought that He's born to die!
Sweeps o'er her soul this first Christmas night.*

On the last day but one before our return to Singapore, the Carlsons took us to Ashkelon on the Mediterranean seashore for a family picnic. Lolling on the yellow sands before the waters so blue that transported me in spirit back to Singapore, these words began to flow from a patriotic heart. This anthem may be sung to the tune of "America".

*O Fairest Isle of southern seas,
Thy waters are so blue;
Waft by a balmy ocean breeze,
Thy land is decked with dew.
Singapura! Singapura!
Thou favoured Isle of ease.
God bless thee yet with thine increase
And peace from year to year.*

*Our fathers came to this green shore
From many climes and lands;
They found a richer life in store*

*Beneath just ruling hands.
Singapura! Singapura!
Thou haven of the free.
God bless thee yet with thine increase
And peace from year to year.*

*On thee we've built a new city -
First great port of the world.
Let Right prevail and Equity,
Not by might nor by power.
Singapura! Singapura!
So may thy sons serve thee.
God bless thee yet with thine increase
And peace from year to year.*

*Today we sail as one nation,
Our flag is flying high;
May our Captain by wise action
Steer us with Compass nigh.
Singapura! Singapura!
Lightship of liberty;
Sail on unto prosperity
And peace a thousand years!*

That same evening when we were returned to Bethlehem, I was overwhelmed by the sunset over Beit Jala, a small town on a hill across the olive plantations on the far side of Bethlehem. Of all the verses I've written, these came most naturally, all within a half hour. (To the tune of Ellers, 1010.1010.)

*The sun has set behind yon olive hill,
The twilight fades and all is quiet and still.
Hushed is my soul by Evening's perfect peace.
As one looks upwards, there's a sweet release.*

*Lord, I can feel Thy Holy Presence near.
Speak through Thy Word and let Thy servant hear.
Cleanse me from sin that mars a holy Day.
Restore my soul while 'gain to Thee I pray.*



The author before an ancient olive tree
in the Garden of Gethsemane.

*Help me draw nigh to Thee each sacred hour,
O th'joy of strength renewed and of Thy power!
As the hart pants for streams along the way,
So may I seek Thee seven times a day.*

*Lord, help me sing Thy praises every night,
With all my loved ones worship with delight!
The sun has set behind yon olive hill,
O Sun of Righteousness shine o'er us still.*

May the songs from the Holy Land “help us sing Thy praises every night, With all my loved ones worship with delight”. And may the Sun of Righteousness never set as long as we serve Him till He comes. Amen.

Pilgrimages to the Holy Land

One big sweet fruit from our self-exile to Israel is the expertise Ivy and I have gained from a knowledge of the Land, and the connection we have made with Mr. Gabriel Khano, founding director of the “Guiding Star”, a reputable Tourist Agency. This is on top of our close association with missionaries of the Holy Land Mission of the Independent Board of Foreign Missions. Hereafter Ivy became planner and organiser of every Pilgrimage. When we were in Israel we were comfortably quartered in one of two missionary flats at Bethlehem, living next door to Rev. and Mrs. Carlson.

On our way to ICCC Congress in U.S.A. in 1983 we therefore had a First Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the help of the missionaries in cooperation with Guiding Star. Since the former T.B. Sanatorium at Baraka, 10 miles south of Bethlehem on the Hebron Highway, was now turned into a Hospice for the reception of pilgrims, we gladly made use of this facility as our “Field Headquarters”. There was a double advantage in this arrangement. By staying here we brought some income to the Mission and enjoyed the freedom of conducting religious meetings every night for five nights. We have further fellowship with Palestinian Christians of the

Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church, the spiritual descendants of the missionaries.

Incidentally, the Pioneer Missionary from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions to found the Baraka T.B. Sanatorium and the BP Church at Bethlehem was Dr. Thomas Lambie. Dr. Lambie was also a devout Christian Tour Guide. When the ICCC visited the Holy Land in 1950, he enlightened us on many things we did not know. He was most delighted to speak on Golgotha and the Garden Tomb. The faith Dr. Lambie imparted to our Palestinian brethren is no different from our B-P Faith.

A reciprocal blessing to our Palestinian brethren is not only the love gifts we present them for their much-needed support but also a piece of land we bought for them in our 1987 Pilgrimage at Beit Sahour where most of the congregation stayed. How delighted they were at the prospect of building a little Church of their own, but being too close to the Greek Orthodox Church they were ousted, like the lamb drinking downstream was accused by the wolf upstream of muddling up the water.

Hitherto, our Pilgrimage was limited to Israel and Jordan, but from the Third to the Ninth Pilgrimage we extend our tour to include another country at little extra charge. So we have included Egypt, Greece, Rome, Switzerland, and London from 1992 to 1999. Egypt gives us a glimpse of the Pyramids, the mummies of the Pharaohs, but most exciting the Climb up Moses' Mountain where God gave the Ten Commandments. Greece shows us the Parthenon and Mars Hill where Paul preached and the ruins of Corinth. Rome has St. Peter's Church and Vatican City on the one hand and the Colosseum and Catacombs on the other. Geneva, Switzerland beckons us to the Reformation Monument and Calvin's Church, St. Peters. (We had the opportunity of worshipping here—I had the privilege of preaching from Calvin's pulpit.) The reason why we visited London, May 4, 1997 was to swell the congregation at the Dedication of the New Life B-P Church. We are avoiding the year 2,000 when 4 million will

invade Israel. If God be willing, we hope to go on a tenth Pilgrimage 2001, year after the Millennium Bug.



The Garden Tomb

In closing, the missionary who has served us most is Miss Joan Davenport. For her service we invited her to visit us in Singapore and Malaysia, 1998.

As we go to press, December 2000, good news has come from Baraka B-P Church on the land we had bought for them at Beit Sahour. And it is to be pastored by Rev. Danny Awad, the son of Rev. George Awad, graduate of a Presbyterian Seminary in the Philippines. A new day has dawned on Palestinian Christians. Our support of the Baraka B-P Church, Bethlehem, all these years is not in vain. Amen.

19

From Batu Pahat to the Muar River 1964-1972

*“Man’s goings are of the LORD;
how can a man then understand his own way?” (Prov. 20:24)*

Of all the places Abraham had sojourned in the Land of Canaan—Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, Beer Sheba—Hebron became his resting place. For here he and his wife Sarah were buried, and after them Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. Of all the places the Tow family had stayed in Malaysia—Senai, Kluang and Batu Pahat—the last became their “permanent” settlement from 1936, ten years after we came from China. It was here that Father established his practice and began to prosper and clear his debts. It was here that he was elected elder of a Church and during the Japanese regime, honorary preacher. Here I was married and here are the graves of Grandpa, Mother, and Mother-in-law.

After my return from U.S.A., I visited Father regularly because I was also involved in designing a new church for Batu Pahat, with columns like those of Life Church. In 1956, I was invited to launch an English Service, which involved me once a month, on a Saturday night. Lest we be mistaken for Seventh Day Adventists, may I explain that we worshipped on Saturday nights because Saturday was a free day after Friday, the Muslims’ holiday. On Sunday the young people had to go to school and the adults in Government service or commercial firms had to go to office. The Saturday arrangement worked well for me especially, for that released me in time to get back to Singapore to preach at Life Church, which worshipped

Sunday afternoon. This I did without fail for eight years until 1964, when B.P. (Batu Pahat) had found someone to take over.

I said goodbye to Batu Pahat for the last time on a Sunday morning, driving home alone with mixed emotions. After a few miles, I suddenly realised I had left my wallet in Nansun Dispensary, Father's clinic, for this was my "boarding house" whenever I came back to B.P. The house in 1964 was vacated and became "The Old Curiosity Shop" since Father had retired and was now living in Singapore. In so returning to retrieve my wallet, I had lost some precious minutes, so when I headed back to Singapore again, I broke the 30 m.p.h. speed limit while leaving the town. A traffic policeman darted from nowhere and signalled me to stop. He gave me a ticket stating I was travelling at 42 m.p.h. I was crestfallen: "So, this is what I get serving Batu Pahat all these years!"

A couple of months later I was summoned to attend court in Batu Pahat on a Sunday morning. Since Deacon Joshua Lim was serving in the law courts, I got him to come along for company. Mine was the first case to be called up, promptly at 9.00 a.m. When the charge was read to me that I had exceeded the speed limit by 12 miles per hour, I pleaded guilty, but disputed the figure given by the traffic policeman. I did not feel I was going so fast. The judge said, "I find you guilty of driving at 36 m.p.h. (good adjustment) and fine you \$20." I paid the sum without another word. The time: 9.25 a.m.

As it was too early to attend the Chinese Church in Batu Pahat, I suggested to Joshua, "Why don't we drive up to worship in Muar (32 miles north of B.P.) where in 1955 we broke away from the old Synod over ecumenism?" Muar was one Church that supported our overture. We got into Trinity Presbyterian Church when they were singing a hymn. After church service, we were welcomed by the old folks at home. Madam Lim Siew Guat, whose husband was elder and a leading light of Muar, and son-in-law Elder Koa Keng Woo invited us to lunch. Then she said, "Pastor Tow, we were just talking about you! Since you're no more in Batu Pahat, why won't you come and help us start an English service for our young people here?" Joshua

Lim nodded to the proposal with a broad smile. I had had it! So, this was how I was shunted from Batu Pahat to Muar, by that traffic cop! Romans 8:28! The Chinese have a saying, “Sai Weng Shih Ma,” (塞翁失马) i.e., “The old ranger lost his horse”. Yes, he lost one, but found another; and on top of that, the second horse saved his son from going to war. And if you like, there’s the story of Saul’s father losing his donkeys (1 Sam. 9). Batu Pahat’s loss became Muar’s gain, and more! “Man’s goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?” (Prov. 20:24).

No sooner had I launched out to Muar preaching at Trinity’s English service once a month than I was approached by Mrs. Chew Kia Song, a daughter of Rawang Church on the other side of the Muar River. “Since you’ve come up to Muar, why won’t you help us as well? Our Church has been without a pastor for twenty years! The old bungalow house where we worship is leaning to one side. We have been trying to rebuild, but so far without success.” Since Rawang is only five miles from Muar, and sensing it was the Lord who had led me here, I agreed to take on Rawang as well. To coordinate the work, I’d leave Life Church immediately after the morning service to make it 4 p.m. at Rawang. After Rawang I would end up at Trinity, Muar, when the evening English service began at eight. We put up for the night at Madam Lim’s villa.

For six years this was our monthly routine (for I was now remarried to Ivy), until the new Rawang Church was rebuilt in September 1972. Who are the Rawangites? Denizens of Sungei Mati (Dead Water) district, I had not heard of their existence until approached by Mrs. Chew. Now, Mr. Chew Kia Song had been my English teacher in ACS three decades back, counting from 1966.

Rawang is another story of Christian migration to Singapore and Malaya. Rawang is another of those Christian colonies we’ve read herein—Senai, Bukit Timah, Kluang. Here are the findings I have made concerning this isolated Christian community at Sungei Mati, the Dead Water district, which by God’s grace is resurrected and actively serving the Lord again!

Among the Chinese immigrants during the first decades of this century to Singapore and West Malaysia (then the Straits Settlements and British Malaya), there was a small band of Christians from Swatow who founded a colony at Rawang on the other side of the Muar River. Although they had left their homeland to eke out a new livelihood in a more prosperous southern country, they did not forsake their Faith. They united with other Christian compatriots who settled before them in the Muar district. They worshipped at the Living Water Presbyterian Church (founded 1892) on this side of the Muar River.

A century ago, the Muar River was a busier artery of communication than it is today. It made Muar a lively haven for local coasters and a port of call for Straits Steamship boats plying regularly between Singapore and Muar. You would make a trip to Muar more often by taking one of these from Johnson's Pier (now Clifford Pier) in the evening, and arrive there the next morning. (The distance from Singapore to Muar by road is 128 miles.)

The early Christian settlers at Rawang had no other means of communication between their "colony" and Muar than the Muar River. Every family owned at least one sampan. Going to the Living Water Church, situated right on the edge of the opposite river bank, was by means of rowing, rowing, rowing. The worshippers, instead of parking cars in the churchyard as today, had their sampans tied to the muddy banks below the church. Going to church was a whole-family and all-day affair. Sunday was spent morning and evening in worship, and the time in between for fellowship. The Church became a hive of activity the whole of the Lord's Day in the days of these early pioneers.

Now, rowing across the Muar River to church from some creek upstream was easier than rowing back. This strenuous procedure, week after week, soon yielded to a more sensible solution. Had not Christ promised in Matthew 18:20:

*Where two or three together meet
In Jesus' Name to sing God's praise,*

*And pray to Him with one accord,
There He'll visit them face to face.*

The decision to worship where they were settled, on the far side of the Muar River, was taken in 1922. A shophouse on the Muar-Segamat Road, at the 4½ milestone, was procured for the purpose. The settlers, though few, had strong spiritual leadership. And though they are now departed from this life, their names are lovingly remembered: Elder Ang Pang, the Low Kwang Kow and Kwang Boon brothers, Rev. Chiam Seng Por who later migrated to Senai and became Father's friend, and brother Boon Kee. The new Church remained, however, in fellowship with the Living Water Church, their mother church.

A couple of years after this new beginning, a bungalow standing on two acres of land on the Muar-Segamat Road was purchased from a Malay penghulu. About this time (1924-25), the Church also declared her independence. Seceding from Chinese Presbyterian Living Water Church, it became a member of the Independent China Jesus Church. A school was founded which gave instruction not only to the settlers' children but to the public as well. The Gospel light was brightly diffused through two Bible verses carved on two big wooden panels. They are John 3:16 and Acts 4:12, the Jachin and Boaz of Rawang Church—strong indeed, and outlasting the bungalow church house itself.

Groaning under four decades of continuous service, the wooden bungalow church house became so rickety in 1968 that it was pulled down for safety's sake. Using the old materials, a temporary shack was put up to house the worshippers. The Words of God carved on Malayan ebony, however, shine as brightly as of yore. The message of salvation continues to be proclaimed.

During the days of the great John Sung Revival of 1935, the Muar churches were mightily blessed. So were members of Rawang Church who crossed the river to hear the evangelist. But heresy crept in in the wake of the Revival. A Rev. Lim Hong Pin from Shanghai came to Rawang, and preached a new message of triple-immersion,



Old Rawang Christian Church, 1922-1968

without which the believers would not be saved. A baptismal tank was constructed whereby the believers together with the elders underwent this new rite.

Alas, the days of Japanese occupation soon swooped down on the little flock! Many were scattered. The congregation was cut off from fellowship with other churches. The first generation passed away, one by one. With no pastor to feed the flock and the elders gone, the situation grew from bad to worse. This state of affairs dragged on for years and years, indeed, for almost two decades!

A new spirit, however, began to kindle in the hearts of two daughters of Rawang, Mrs. Chew Kia Song and Mrs. Mok (whom Deacon Hsu and I met at Tampin, and at whose home we lodged for the night in 1951), both settled in Singapore. It was the spirit to rebuild Rawang Church.

With the guidance of the Singapore pastor, the contract to build was awarded to Mr. W.K. Tham, builder of Life B-P Church and Far Eastern Bible College. The cost was \$60,000 inclusive of piling for the construction of an auditorium (33 x 66 ft.), a parsonage and

kindergarten (22 x 103 ft.). Our architect was Miss Tay Siew Mui, and our structural engineer, Mr. Paul Phua.

On the Lord's Day, July 25, 1971, a ground-breaking service was held on the spacious earth-filled building site, Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang wielding the changkol. About 150 gathered from near and far, including four cars of visitors from the Bible-Presbyterian Churches of Singapore. Six thousand dollars was gathered in on this day, raising the building fund to \$26,000. Vivid memories of the good old days were brought back to the Rawangites as the service closed with the singing of "Living Faith", a hymn adapted for the occasion from "Faith of Our Fathers":

*Faith of our fathers, living still,
Though long decayed their House of Prayer;
And one by one they've gone above,
As oft is shed their children's tear.*

*Chorus
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
Live in our hearts from age to age!*

*Our fathers sailed from China's strand
To this new shore, promised of God;
A pilgrim band, they saw beyond
A City Fair above the cloud.*

*Faith of our fathers, living still,
A second House of Prayer we raise;
A Beacon beaming brighter far
From Muar's dark streams across the waves.*

After the Service the congregation and guests were treated to a sumptuous buffet dinner prepared by loving hands in Elder Lau's house, and to a feast of Muar-famous golden creamy durians.

But the rebuilding of Rawang Church was undertaken with a far wider vision than serving the descendants of the Christian colony. Rawang has become a new centre of evangelistic outreach to the backwaters of the Muar River, to Bukit Gambier, to Tangkak, and to

the regions beyond as we shall see. From Batu Pahat to the Muar River—and beyond!



New Rawang Bible-Presbyterian Church, 1972

20

Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria 1970-1977

*“. . . and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea, and in Samaria,
and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)*

For two decades, Life Church was engaged in building God’s Kingdom in Singapore our Jerusalem and across the Causeway in Johore State, Malaysia, our Judea. It was from 1970, as the growing church movement was stepping into the third decade, that God began to thrust us beyond and farther afield—to Indonesia, our Samaria.

As to our Jerusalem witness, 1970 began for Life Church with a bang. We opened our grounds to the convening of the Seventh General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, with the support of the whole B-P Church of Singapore and Malaysia. Prior to the Assembly, we held a Gospel Crusade at the National Theatre with Dr. Bob Wells of U.S.A. 300 souls were led to the Lord in this BP Gospel campaign. Praise the Lord!

A token of God’s approval and blessing upon our Church and upon the Bob Wells Crusade was the lease of 27,000 sq. ft. of land in Jurong by our Government through Dr. Tow Siang Hwa, chairman of the Crusade. A new Jurong Church and Kindergarten complex was envisioned to arise in the next fourteen months. Named “Calvary”, it was given a preview by Dr. Tow as follows:

Where There is no Vision . . . the People Perish! (Prov. 29:18)



Dr. S.H. Tow

Had it not been for the vision and foresight of our Government, Singapore today would be facing economic extinction. Two million people crowded into a little island with no natural resources and a host of problems! Yet within the short space of ten years, the picture has completely changed. With courage and determination, the Government has grappled with each problem and found solutions to most. Today the economy is booming and the people can look into the seventies with confidence.

One of the chief factors in the transformation of Singapore has been the rapid and remarkable programme of industrialisation, spearheaded by the Jurong Industrial Complex. Many a skeptic scoffed at the idea of building an industrial town in the barren, swampy and uninhabited wasteland at the southwest corner of the island. However, today Jurong Town boasts some 300 factories manufacturing a host of commodities from car tyres to carpets, from sugar to steel and ocean-going vessels. Jurong Town has become the industrial hub of Singapore, symbol of survival and proud monument to those who had caught the vision glorious. How true are the words of the wise King of the ancient times.

From Vision to Mission

What is it that makes Jurong tick? That's a good question. Of course there are many factors, but the decisive one is "people". Presently there are some 25,000 residents but the number is increasing rapidly and the population projection is 100,000 by 1975. These will be the people to keep the wheels of industry turning smoothly and make the factories hum. Their well-being is therefore of paramount importance. Hence the housing, shops, schools, parks, theatres, recreation centres,

clinics, etc. But these do not fully satisfy. In addition, the people need the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

During one of their weekly pastoral visitations, two members of Life Church Session made a trip through Jurong Town and saw this miracle of human endeavour and planning. It was truly an eye-opener. New roads and modern highways, earth-moving tractors and lorries hurrying about, shipyards by the sea, oil refineries, and factories, factories everywhere.



Then there were the highrise flats in the housing estates, mushrooming on every side with their teeming thousands. Human beehives, reminiscent of Queenstown and Toa Payoh. Fields ripe for harvest but workers—where are they? The need for a Gospel work and workers to go into Jurong cried out to the two on that visitation afternoon. They heard the call and beheld the vision—a Gospel church for Jurong Town. They returned and related the experience to the Session. With one accord the Session agreed to initiate a Gospel outreach in Jurong Town. A Jurong Gospel Mission with a three-man committee comprising Rev. Timothy Tow, Rev. Philip Heng and Dr. Tow Siang Hwa was formed.

Had there been no vision, there would have been no mission, no Gospel outreach. Without the Gospel the people would perish!

An Open Door

In March, an application for land was lodged by the Jurong Gospel Mission with the Jurong Town Corporation. By the grace of God and the kindness of the Authority, a piece of land has been granted for a “religious site.” Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! He has given us an open door for the Gospel to go into the industrial heartland of Singapore. What an exciting and wonderful opportunity for service, not only for Life Church, but for all our B-P Churches and Groups.

Since the grant of land, a Committee has been formed by action of Life Church Session to formulate plans for the establishment of an independent Gospel Work for Jurong Town. Our architect, Mrs. Cheryl Chan of Messrs. Chan Kui Chuan Architects and Planners, has drawn up plans for a 3-storey Christian Education Block and a 2-storey Church sanctuary cum Fellowship Hall. The name chosen after much prayerful deliberation is “Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church.” This name embodies our motive and purpose in going to Jurong.

As we present the Project to our members and friends through the pages of our official organ, *Calvary News*, would you please pray for this work in Jurong? It is my prayer that Calvary will, in the days ahead, become a symbol of friendship, service, and hope to the residents of Jurong. May many through the work of Calvary find the true meaning of life, indeed eternal life itself.

Consolidation of God’s Kingdom in our Jerusalem would be incomplete without recording the founding of Toa Payoh B-P Church (Chinese) by Mr. Koh Kiang Mia under care of Faith Church (Rev. K.C. Quek) in 1970. Toa Payoh Church worships on rented premises from the HDB and runs a kindergarten on weekdays.

One year after the founding of Toa Payoh Church (Chinese), an English Service was started by Rev. Peter Chua, with subsidy from Life Church. With the increase of numbers the English-speaking congregation shifted into Gilstead Road in 1977 and has since flourished in the “Garden of Fragrant Pine and Palm”. In 1984 Sharon Church reached out to Kuching, Sarawak, East Malaysia, and started the Sharon Rose Bible-Presbyterian Church (Kim Kah Teck and wife Pauline).

In 1975, my sister offered a three-storey mansion on 9,500 sq. ft. of land at No. 5, Jalan Haji Salam, Bedok, for the starting of another B-P Church. Named “Grace”, it was pioneered by Rev. Dr. Patrick Tan, with the help of his wife. When it was going well on course, another captain in the person of Rev. Tan Eng Boo, FEBCer, took over the helm in 1976. Out of Grace Church was developed a Chinese congregation by Rev. Lin Tah Mon. From Grace Church went forth Rev. Tan Choon Seng, Associate Pastor, to found a Shalom B-P Church on the premises of an old British Army Church in Changi. With drive and foresight, he left Changi to build a splendid two storey Church at Pasir Ris called “Shalom”.

Space does not permit me to describe the abundant goodness God had showered upon each of these younger churches. There were other endeavours, which though not persevering to this day, had borne fruit along the way. Among these was Sarimbun in the northeast corner of Singapore Island, near to the Scouts Camp. This was a camp site for many young Lifers over a decade, particularly those who were brought up by Goh Seng Fong, calling themselves GLTS, i.e., Gospel Letters and Tracts Society. The GLTS left Life Church to form the Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore under Lau Chin Kwee.

From the GLTS has descended what was known as Tanglin Bible Class (Jonathan Chan), which later adopted the new name Life Bible Class. These young people of Life Church are a group that came out of heathenism and have been particularly zealous in winning their parents to Christ. Through their zeal numerous Gospel campaigns in

Cantonese, Hokkien and Teochew were held. In 1999, 42 members of Life Bible Class seceded to form a Pilgrim Covenant Church under J.J. Lim, an FEBC graduate who among other doctrines rejects the College's doctrine of Israel in the millennial rule of Christ. Nevertheless, we wish him well.

Under Life Church's policy of decentralisation, about 60 members of Life Bible Class had earlier branched out to Tampines New Town, June 1987, to start the Tabernacle B-P Church. The timely leasing by Christian Life Book Centre of an HDB warehouse provided the premises. Elder Chia Kim Chwee went along as adviser. In less than two years, the first fruits of a dozen adults and five children were reaped by baptism.

While much effort was put into the Lord's work in our Jerusalem context, not much was done in our Judea after the building of Rawang's new Church except the founding of a Gospel Station at Kulai Besar in 1973. It is a corner terrace house in the centre and highest spot of a new housing estate, beautiful for situation. It was a real investment at the price of only \$14,700. David Wong Wee Tet, a convert from this Gospel station, is a Chin Lien and FEBC graduate who returns to shepherd a growing flock, while his wife, another Chin Lien graduate, takes care of the Kindergarten. Today, God has promoted them to a handsome two-storey property at the nearby town of Saleng with an auditorium seating 200.

Our evangelisation of Malaysia, in the first two decades, resulted in the starting of three churches, viz., Kelapa Sawit (1954); Rawang (1972); Kulai Besar (1973).

Now our thrust into Indonesia our Samaria: It all began in 1971. Mr. Lai, a graduate of Chin Lien Bible Seminary and my student, went preaching in West Kalimantan (Borneo). It was Christmas time, so all the churches were gathered to celebrate the Saviour's Birth. To his bewilderment, it was an ecumenical service at which both Protestants and Roman Catholics were joined in worship. This led Mr. Lai to remonstrate with a leading pastor of the Chinese Church

in Pontianak. He advised Rev. Philip Chung to write me if he was interested in the separatist stand of the ICCC.

From this contact, Rev. K.C. Quek and I made a special trip to Pontianak by the 500-ton M.V. Lakota of the Pelni Line, on March 16, 1971. I can remember the date because Jonathan my youngest son was born the next day. This voyage across the South China Sea took 30 hours. As we stepped onto dry land, it flashed across my mind that my Father in his early days had also come here to earn a living as a physician. How wonderful it was for me to come in the Name of the Great Physician, to bring healing to aching and crying souls of this new land.

Pontianak is the capital city of West Kalimantan. It has a population of a quarter million. Its economic power is in the hands of the Chinese, divided equally between the Teochews and the Hakkas. The City straddles the River Kapuas in the upper reaches of its estuary. The Kapuas is Indonesia's mightiest river, being over one thousand kilometres long. Ocean-going cargo vessels, river house-boats, motor boats and rowing sampans of all shapes and sizes and an old honking Dutch cross-harbour ferry made the undulating brown waterway a busy artery of communication.

We spent one week in West Kalimantan, preaching to the Chinese Churches located in the three major cities of Pontianak, Sinkawang and Pemangkat. We spoke at a refugee camp at Sinkawang, for these were still unsettled from the 1967 Dyak massacre of Chinese living in the rural areas. Thousands of these refugees fled to the coastal cities, particularly to Siantan, across the river from Pontianak. ICR (International Christian Relief) under Rev. K.C. Quek immediately went to work. It sent a monetary gift and five thousand changes of surplus clothing. Refugees are a major problem today that can erupt anywhere, anytime! Of all places from the silent hills of a forgotten people, the Dyaks!

It was through this visit to West Kalimantan that a two-prong mission was developed— one supported by Faith B-P Church and the other by Life B-P Church.

November 1972 saw Quek and Tow again on the Gospel trail into Indonesia, this time to North Sumatra. They went in response to an appeal by a separatist group at Pematang Siantar, who came out of the main Batak Church in 1927. The appeal was first made to Dr. J.C. Maris at the ICCC office in Holland but was redirected to us.

The Bataks are ethnically related to the Malays. Some trace their origins to Yunnan, China. They live in the highland regions of Lake Toba in North Sumatra. Among the first missionaries to the Bataks were two Americans who arrived in 1834. They were Henry Lyman, 24, and Samuel Munson, 29. Paying the price of pioneers, they were eaten by the people they were trying to save. A tablet in the city of Medan commemorates the heroism of these two men. At Silidung, the location where the missionaries fell, a monument is erected with the words of Tertullian, “The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

The Gospel was not firmly planted in Batak soil until 1861, when Nommensen (1834-1918) of the Rhenish Lutheran Missionary Society came. In 1865 Nommensen baptised the first group of 13 Batak converts. Six years later that little mustard seed grew into a tree of 1,200 believers. By the turn of the century there were 100,000 Batak Christians. Today the Batak Protestant Church, more tersely called the HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan) is the main body of Batak Christianity. They claim 60 percent of the total Batak population in Indonesia. Through Christianity, they are among the elite of the nation.

Though great in numbers, the faith of their fathers has but dwindled to a flicker. If you visit what once was truly a Christian country, you will be amazed to see churches dotting the countryside now gone to seed. One who has joined us was Wesly Siregar. He

recalled how, when the church he served in as an elder was blown down one stormy night, he decided to leave it the next morning!

The outcome of our visit to Medan and the surrounding country was the receiving of Dohar, son of Wesley Siregar, to Far Eastern Bible College. Through the study of God's Word, Dohar found Christ as his personal Saviour. From then on, he waxed stronger under the teaching of Calvin. He returned to start a children's work and then an adult service in a Government housing estate under support of Life Church. His father, whom he also brought to a sure saving knowledge of the Lord, became even more zealous. He opened up his house at Bentar Kersik in the mountain country for a Gospel station.

What brought us greater joy was the conversion of Dohar's younger brothers, Haposan and Agus. These two came also to train at FEBC. In the ensuing years, the pastor of Life Church visited Medan severally with three FEBC western students, Rev. Andrew Bo, Peter Clements and Mark Heath, making two crossings of the mountainous terrain to Kuta Bahru, an hour's hike from Bentar Kersik. Life Church increased her support to North Sumatra by building a simple chapel at Kuta Bahru where Bapa Wesley Siregar took charge.

The time came when it was felt that Mr. Wesley Siregar should be ordained. This was carried out at Galilee B-P Church. The time had also come for Life Church, with multitudinous responsibilities, to give over the North Sumatran field to Galilee.

Under Galilee's supervision, the work in Medan developed by leaps and bounds. A suitable property in the city was purchased and a regular Church service, Sunday School and Kindergarten established. From the Kindergarten, a primary school had sprung. The Youth Fellowship had an attendance of 120 and the Sunday School, 150.

With this rapid development by Galilee, I was invited April 1989 to Medan to counsel. After a night's discussion with the Siregar family, it was decided to acquire an adjoining property to establish a Bible School to be named Institut Alkitab Indonesia Barat, i.e., Bible

Institute of West Indonesia. A collection for the proposed Bible Institute taken the Sunday after the Life Church pastor returned from Medan totalled \$8,800.

That the Lord wanted us to turn our eyes on the white harvest fields of Indonesia was confirmed by both Faith and Life Churches holding an Indonesian Month in their missions programme, August 1973. It was during this time that Rev. Tan Peng Koen of the Riau Islands met me at a Saturday meeting of the Evangelistic League held at Chin Lien Seminary. Like an old friend, I brought him to Gilstead Road and put him up at the College. As we talked of our Indonesian Month at Life Church, Rev. Tan was overjoyed. He said we had to go with him to see for ourselves this ready harvest field. In answer to his appeal, Elder Joshua Lim came along as well.

As one stands on the southern shore of Singapore, one can see a string of bluish islands, looming in the distance over an emerald sea. These are the beginnings of the Riau Islands, the biggest of which is Pulau Bintan, over twice the size of Singapore. Forty-eight miles south of Singapore by motor launch, on the southern shores of the Island, is Tanjung Pinang. Here is a flourishing port with many local coasters and an echelon of cargo boats plying an inter-island trade. A passenger liner serving Medan and Jakarta also calls at Tanjung Pinang in the outer roads.

The local population of some ten-thousands is made up of Indonesians and Chinese in equal proportions. The Chinese are practically all Teochew-speaking.

Rev. Tan Peng Koen was a John Sung convert in his younger days in China and a staunch supporter of Lim Puay Hian, who had held revival meetings at his former Church in Palembang, South Sumatra. He retired from the Methodist Church at the maximum age of 65. But he was full of zeal to further God's Kingdom. When he passed through Tanjung Pinang en route to North Sumatra, he found several Indonesian Churches but no Chinese Church. He felt a heavy burden for this city teeming with his own people. In 1967 he came

and founded a Chinese service, using the premises of an old “cock brand” Dutch Church now occupied by Bataks. (Every Dutch Church has a weather cock on its steeple.)

As he looked around for a more permanent site, he discovered an old haunted house, abandoned for years at Jalan Bakar Batu, standing on high ground overlooking the inland sea. He bought it for a song. With the help of his two daughters and sons-in-law, he developed a Church and Sunday School and a Christian day school. Six years had flown when we made our first visit. When Rev. Tan retired in the next year or two to live in Taiwan, he committed his Church to our care. As moderator of Tanjung Pinang, it has been my duty since Rev. Tan's departure to visit every Christmas and Easter, to baptise and administer the Lord's Supper. Over the years, 250 have been baptised. Today the Chinese Church in Tanjung Pinang has built a new school that takes in 500 and a three-storey, handsome brick church. Meanwhile, with Life Church's assistance, they have built another at Kijang, 17 miles away on the other side of the Island.

An episode of our Tanjung Pinang ministry was the succour Life Church gave to a boatload of 136 Vietnamese refugees, mostly of Chinese origin, who found their way to this part of Indonesia. Among these wretched people was a noble-looking elderly man. A teacher and a scholar, he received the Lord through reading the Bible. Nine young men who came to church regularly while they sat for months at Tanjung Pinang waiting for rehabilitation in U.S.A. and Australia sent a Deacon specially to bring me over to baptise them. Most of these had studied in Christian schools in Vietnam before.

Today we have ordained Preacher Joseph Liu while Revs. Bob Phee and Koa Keng Woo of Muar have taken over my supervisory duties.

A third territory in Indonesia our Samaria claimed for God's Kingdom is our joint enterprise with Rev. Andreas Djunaidi or Hsiung Nan Fu, which is his Chinese name. Rev. Hsiung is prominently featured by Houlston of OMF in the book *Borneo*

Breakthrough. A man of many talents with a warm heart, he found Christ after spending a good number of years in various situations—as a fisherman, photographer, book seller and teacher. After he found the Lord, he waxed zealous for Him. He accompanied OMF missionaries in many an evangelistic outing. He felt called especially to the Dyaks.



Rev. Djunaidi

After serving in the Church for several years, he joined an Indonesian Bible School at Darit, in the mountainous interior. This school was run by Canadian missionaries of the Regions Beyond Mission. Being a married man with children, he had to earn his way through the four years they were there, subsisting on the barest essentials. Finally, after his graduation, when he still served in a wild country, he was caught in the Dyak Massacre of the Chinese in 1967. In the midst of the gravest danger, the Lord plucked him and his family to safety.

When we visited West Kalimantan in 1971 and introduced the Reformation Cause to the Chinese Churches, he was foremost in welcoming us. He joined the ICCC and published a paper in Chinese and Indonesian for the defence of the Faith. He was elected President of the Indonesian chapter of ICCC. We travelled together to the ICCC Congress at Cape May in 1973 and to Japan a couple of years following.

For five years, he cooperated with Rev. Quek to run a Bible School for the Dyaks at Sebetung. He also opened a day school and an orphanage. He went to live with the Dyaks with whom he developed a little colony at the edge of the jungle.

After five years, however, he felt called to Pontianak. Life Church took him under her wings. A piece of land at the edge of a Refugee Settlement of several hundred wooden shacks was purchased with the view of opening a kindergarten and a church. Owing to strong opposition from an Indonesian church, which was

involved in Sunday School work in this slum area, Djunaidi's project was thwarted. He came to see me crestfallen.

*God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.*

William Cowper

As Djunaidi prayed that night in conflict, a flash came across his mind. "If Satan hinders us on land," he said to me, "We'll preach the Gospel on water. Let us make a Gospel boat."

For a number of years from 1971, Life Church was the anchorage for the Gospel Boat *Logos*, not only for shelter but also for training. When the *Logos* first came to Singapore for docking, our "Land *Logos*" opened her "cabins" to 116 members of the crew. The unique experience of sheltering 116 crew members of the *Logos*, with forty of the Church-and-College Family under one roof, opened the eyes of Lifers to what great good they could do just as they were. The secret of an effective ministry is that we must be willing to surrender all to the Lord.

With the *Logos'* mobile ministry in mind, I heartily concurred with Djunaidi, considering Kalimantan is a land of countless waterways. A Gospel Boat would expedite the ministry of evangelism to a hundred remote riverine villages hitherto untouched. Dr. Tow Siang Hwa concurred, "A Gospel boat is better than ten churches!" With the unanimous decision of Life Church Session, a Gospel Boat, 55 feet long, that could sail the length of the Kapuas River, was designed. This vessel took one year to construct at a cost of S\$50,000. It was launched in early 1978 and with it Djunaidi and his family sailed up and down the Kapuas and into many dark streams to sow the Gospel seed. He made it to the headwaters at Putussibau abutting Jason Linn's erstwhile heartland parish. This he did for about three years.



The Gospel Boat comes calling.

Not only was our brother dexterous in steering the Boat, he was also eloquent in ministering to our people in Singapore and mission stations such as Tanjung Pinang and Kuching. A gifted evangelist, Rev. Djunaidi was used of the Lord to bring a goodly number of souls in three special campaigns.

We have seen thus far how the seventies was a decade wherein the Lord thrust us forth to Indonesia, our Samaria. And the three fields of our labours in cooperation with our foreign brethren are North Sumatra, the Riau Islands and West Kalimantan. Let us now proceed to another development in our endeavours for the Lord.

21

To Alma Mater Again 1978-1979

“Her children rise up and call her blessed” (Prov. 31:28)

It was in July 1978 that I had to make a special trip to Pemangkat, the northern port of West Kalimantan. I made it in good time by the Pelni cargo boat M.V. Enggano, the very morning the Gospel Boat was to be launched. There were gathered a big crowd from near and far, members not only from the Bible School and Orphanage at Sebetung but also from the various Chinese Churches around Pemangkat. It was a day of rejoicing for all and a red-letter day for Djunaidi who spent a whole year in its construction. The Boat was dedicated with Government officers and representatives from the Navy offering their felicitations. We named it “Kapuas Kourier” after Jason Linn’s “Courier”, a motor sampan of *Pioneering in Dyak Borneo*. With this launching and dedication to the Lord, Djunaidi was ready to sail the 60 h.p. vessel through 70 miles of open sea into the Kapuas. A Christian captain of the Pelni line steered him through this maiden voyage.

Now, I had to hurry back to another dedication, viz., the opening of the new Kelapa Sawit Church. For over two decades the Church was cooped in a two-storey wooden terrace house in the business district of the village. Efforts were made to procure land in better environs to build a proper House of Worship. “To everything there is a season”—before God’s appointed time, our labours were in vain.

Soon after the completion of Rawang’s new church and the acquisition of Kulai Besar, the Lord began to open a door for Kelapa Sawit. When we applied finally to the Government, a half acre of

prime land located at the highest point of the village was leased at only 60 cents per square foot. Immediately we proceeded with the architect's plans which were drawn by Miss Tay Siew Mui, who had earlier built Rawang Church. Out of these plans, a handsome quadrangle type of a church and kindergarten complex was built at a cost of RM130,000 under the supervision of Elder and Mrs. John Ling. All who attended the Dedication praised the Lord for such a beautiful sanctuary.



Newly completed Kelapa Sawit Church

It was during the days of these two dedications that a telegram and a phone call came from Dr. McIntire. This was further reinforced with a letter from Rev. Quek, who happened to be in the States. This triple request was for me to teach a year at my Alma Mater. Faith Seminary at this juncture needed just one more to complete the faculty, and she wanted me!

Being convinced that this was the Lord's Call after much prayer, I presented the matter to Life Church Session. This was met with opposition at first from certain elders. After further waiting upon the Lord, the decision to release the pastor for one year to America was granted, considering there was an Assistant Pastor in Rev. Tan Wai Choon. Life Church had a membership now of six hundred.

Now, what was promised from U.S.A. was only my passage. For me to travel alone and work alone from my family seemed an imposition on their part. This was the wise opinion of one member of Life Church, viz., my sister. Therefore an amended arrangement

came from her that my whole family should go together. To smoothen the way, she would add one more ticket and two half-tickets. At this time Jemima was ten and Jonathan, seven. This spontaneous offer from a loving sister all the more confirmed our westward journey was of the Lord. Sister's argument was that I definitely needed Ivy to cook and attend to my other needs. This was true sisterly concern as manifested through all the years.

Now, to get me over to teach, Faith had to show how I could qualify to enter America on a professional status as an "eminent person". I must have more than formal paper qualifications. The honorary Doctor of Divinity conferred upon me by Shelton College in 1964 had to be further substantiated. Fortunately, I had by this time written a number of books, such as *Calvin's Institutes Abridged*, *Songs and Verses from the Holy Land*, *In John Sung's Steps*, and translated Jason Linn's *Pioneering in Dyak Borneo* and *John Sung's Forty Sermons*. When photocopies of the covers of these books were submitted to the U.S. Immigration, the special working visa was approved without delay.

To kill two birds with one stone, our "migration" to U.S.A. coincided with a special convocation in Amsterdam to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the founding of ICCC. As Far Eastern President, my presence was all the more necessary. Fortunately, as we were travelling via Europe to America, there was no incurring of extra travelling expenses. This gave my family a built-in side trip to Holland, for which we were very thankful.

What interested me most in Amsterdam was revisiting the English Reformed Church in which the Pilgrim Fathers had worshipped during their days of self-exile from an England hostile to "Non-Conformists". These English Protestants and Puritans, who had moved to Holland, were unhappy again, but for another reason. While they had freedom of worship, they did not want to be assimilated by the Dutch. Besides, the deep guttural sounds of the Dutch language were hard to imitate. To have complete freedom in worship in their very English ways, they decided for the New World.

And so they left the land of their fathers and their land of adoption in the Mayflower, 1620. After many harrowing experiences in the Atlantic crossing, they landed at Cape Cod. This is how they came to be called “Pilgrim Fathers”.

*These pilgrims and these strangers have left their land
And they've forsaken them Ne'er more to return;
A better land above for them God's prepared -
The City of God is way beyond compare.*

I took trouble to tell the story of the Pilgrim Fathers to my two children and prayed they might have the faith of these who had gone before us. I showed them the stained glass window above the pulpit depicting the Pilgrims kneeling on the wharf to pray before they climbed on board the sail boat. This Church history etched on stained glass was the gift of American Christians who loved their Christian heritage.

Faith Seminary in 1978 was quite different from what it was in 1948 and 1958 when I studied there for my Bachelor's and Master's. All the professors who taught me before were gone—some elsewhere, some beyond the blue.

We found sweet fellowship especially with Dr. and Mrs. Howard Carlson, old friends from Bethlehem days. We made new friends with Dr. and Mrs. John Battle, Rev. and Mrs. Hanna, Dr. Dickie, and not the least, Mrs. Warren the secretary.

The subjects, amounting to eleven lecture hours per week assigned to me were: Church History, Systematic Theology, Calvin, Pastoral Theology and Hebrew. The hardest subject to teach was Church History, not only because it has such a wide range, but because I had taught this subject only once at FEBC. This meant I had to burn the midnight oil. But I didn't mind so long as I could keep one lesson ahead of the class.

As I was musing on the task before me, there came by post a twelve-page letter from C.T. Hsu in New York. Under separate cover was a super-size one volume *Columbia Encyclopaedia*. My dear

brother in the Lord congratulated me for having come to America to teach in such a high institution of learning. Then he gave me some sober advice: "If your students ask you something which you do not know, don't be afraid to tell them so." By keeping to his honest advice, I saved myself at least once from an embarrassing situation. "It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools" (Eccl. 7:5).

Besides sending me that brand-new encyclopaedia which gave me facts at my finger tips, Rev. Hsu had earlier mailed to me in Singapore a century-old *Sanford Religious Encyclopaedia* from which I could get information on Church History in a nutshell at a flip. This old bulky thing I had carried all the way from Singapore. It is worth its weight in gold. If antiques of art are priceless, old classics are even more. "The half of knowledge is to know where to find it." One lesson we try to instill in our students is to learn how to get to the source of knowledge in the shortest possible time, computers notwithstanding.

As for our staying, we were quartered in a wing of the main building which I've mentioned to be a "French" palace. There was one converted bedroom, by which you entered the "apartment". This bedroom led into a huge parlour with a bath attached. The relics of an "ancient" heritage, we had for our sitting the softest sofas, antique chairs, carpets and curtains of exquisite design. A refrigerator was installed in this sitting room, which also served as my study. But we had no kitchen. Fortunately there was a fireplace. This fireplace or hearth, so dear to the Englishman that we read of in English literature, served as our cooking area. Lily my daughter in Ohio mailed us an electric wok. With a rice cooker to team up, we were all set. When cooking, it was more convenient sometimes for Ivy to sit on the floor. Our dining table being positioned next to the fireplace, to serve food was most convenient. We were happy in whatever situation the Lord had placed us. Not only did this makeshift kitchenette serve our daily needs, it gave us an opportunity to invite some of our Far Eastern students to a curry or *chow fan* every now

and then. One Miss Park of Korea so fell in love with Ivy that when we returned to Singapore, she came to study at FEBC for a year!

There is a Teochew saying which amounts to this: “Change habitat for health.” (换水土) Literally, it is “Change water and earth”. It means that if you get chronically sick, one way of improving your health is to live in another country. We have always enjoyed improved health whenever we go to live in a temperate country. This is quite natural, for the habitat of the Chinese race is in the temperate zone, not the tropics.

When we arrived in America, it was the most delightful time of year as summer gave way to autumn. How exhilarating to draw into the lungs the first cool draught of onsetting autumn breezes, rustling through golden and soon orange and crimson bowers. How wonderful to watch the little denizens of our thirty-four acre estate, so busily preparing for the coming of winter. Birds of many feathers, wild ducks and geese, pheasants and quails, but most marvellous, the squirrels, rubbing their front paws as if to say, “Praise the Lord, Thank the Lord!”

When the first breath of winter came, that sent the snow flakes dancing down to earth, what a merry and cheery scene they made in the rays of the morning sun. Then when it snowed heavily, making the earth a big white sheet, how the children loved to play in the snow. For elderly people like me, winter could be very miserable when there was not enough heating. As it cost so much to heat a mansion of our size with soaring ceilings and towering windows, the room temperature in our apartment hovered between 61 and 63 degrees



Outside Faith Seminary

Fahrenheit. *Burrrr!* While the children enjoyed the cold, I had to put on my cloak with woollen scarf round my neck and felt hat on my head. But the cold I catch in warm Singapore never came to bother me. I guess the cold of an American winter had killed the cold of an equatorial Singapore. “Change habitat for health.”

That year in America was valuable in giving my children an opportunity to study in a Christian school. For this I must thank the Carlsons, who lived in an apartment in the Seminary compound some distance behind the main building. Our children joined their children, who gave them help and company. Every morning the school bus would come to take them to a Christian school run by a Baptist Church. Many of their teachers were graduates of Bob Jones University. In a Christian school where most Christians and even non-Christians send their children instead of the public school, the little ones learnt the things of God, and salvation in Jesus Christ, as much as they learnt the 3Rs. This added lesson on Righteousness, I'd call the fourth R. As Christian parents, our prayers were that our children would find Christ at an early age, and learn to love Him through the daily Christian teaching.

Another episode, sweet to the memory, was to receive a letter from Deacon Han Soon Juan. Having applied to Columbia University in New York, he needed my testimonial. The best I could think of was his having taught English at FEBC all those years in an honorary capacity. He was accepted, and was even awarded a scholarship. There is a Christian saying, “God is the best pay-master. He is never man's debtor.”

Soon after our arrival in the States, Dr. McIntire suddenly fell ill. One who had been blessed as the Chinese saying goes, “with a body of brass and bones of steel”, (**铜身铁骨**) was so sick that he was hospitalised for several months. He was suffering from pancreatitis. His pancreas swelled to eight times its normal size, so that it looked like a football. The doctors could not cure him with drugs. They just fed him through an alimentation machine that infused a liquid through his jugular vein. The whole Church prayed, and his radio

listeners also joined in prayer for his recovery. I wrote home to Life Church requesting also their prayers and we were grateful for some “floral offerings” received from the church to say “Get well” to Dr. McIntire. I added a Psalm to the Life Church offerings, viz., Psalm 41. Dr. McIntire was so strengthened by the words of this Psalm that he quoted it in a booklet he published after recovery in thankfulness to the Lord. For he said all the words of this psalm fitted him. What a balm of a Psalm for the healing of his body and soul.

In November 1978, the Ninth General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches was due to be held at Baguio, Philippines. As president of the FECCC, it was my duty to preside. As the International President Dr. McIntire would be present at such a meeting, but being tied down by illness, I was sent as his personal envoy. I was to read a message entrusted to me by his personal secretary, Miss Ruth Trato. Since my ticket to the Philippines took me halfway round the world, it included a free leg to Singapore which I claimed with delight.

Baguio is a hill resort and is to Manila what Cameron Highlands is to Singapore. Several hundred of the Filipino brethren came, including many young people, most conspicuous being the students of the Fundamental Baptist Bible Institute of Manila founded by Rev. Ormeo. Closely associated with this work were Rev. Dan Ebert III and his two missionary sons. Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Maris from our head office in Holland gave the Conference a fatherly touch now that Dr. McIntire could not be present. Quek and I had the pleasure of being roomed in the same bungalow. What sweetness was this Christian love to discover that while we were at the frontline fighting the Lord’s battle, on the home front Mrs. Maris took the initiative to wash our clothes.

Although not too many of our older leaders were present, it was a spirited Conference. The messages were of a high quality. The usual Resolutions and Statements that are the genius of our Council Meetings were brought up to date and sent to the news media. From the lighthouse high up the mountains of Baguio shone a bright light

of Truth again to a Church in the plains darkened by a growing apostasy. The climax of the Conference was to return to Manila where a public rally was held on the last night.

After the Conference which lasted a week, I suddenly descended on Gilstead Road to the pleasant surprise of some who were not aware of my announced return. How good it was to see the old Church alive and kicking. What this sudden return gave me was a last visit to my father. He was 91 and rather weak in the body, though fully alert in the mind. He was delighted to see me and took pride in my being called to teach in America. Did he recall how he would give me four thousand dollars to finish up my law in London? That I was now serving in God's kingdom and not man's must give him greater joy than ever. Father asked me to take his pulse. As usual he had a slow pulse which gave him a very steady nerve. When I "pronounced" him in the pink of health, he was delighted. It is true that unfamiliar eyes see more precisely. Nevertheless, it could not be avoided but that Father's days on earth were numbered. In a discussion with Sister and Siang Hwa, it was agreed that should the Lord take Father, it would not be necessary for me to fly back. The rest of the children in Singapore would be able to manage. In February 1979, while I was in the thick of my teaching at Faith Seminary, the Lord took Father to his heavenly home at the ripe old age of 92. His body was laid to rest at the Protestant Cemetery, Chua Chu Kang, in hope of the Resurrection. Father had done his duty in bringing us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Faithful to the Lord to the very end, he would hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

Our return to the Alma Mater was a fruitful year in many ways. Apart from two full semesters of teaching, the Lord gave me a goodly number of preaching appointments. I was honoured as speaker at the 42nd Graduation of Faith Seminary. An invitation to speak also at the Graduation Service of Shelton College, then at Cape Canaveral, Florida, gave Ivy and the children the opportunity of seeing the south. As Dr. McIntire had a Christian hotel at Cape

Canaveral linked to Shelton College, we were comfortably situated. Among the graduands was Eunice Tow, my adopted youngest sister. After this she entered Faith Seminary. She is happily married to an American B-P minister, Rev. Robert Beede, a Navy chaplain now stationed in California. They have one son and one daughter.

Then came the Ninth Plenary Congress of the ICCO, which was to convene at Cape May where Dr. McIntire runs the 350-room Christian Admiral Hotel. This gave us the opportunity of serving the Lord through two very busy weeks. The battle for the Truth must be fought without relenting. Reformation is an ever on-going battle, as Sun Yat-Sen, Father of the Chinese Republic, had said, "The Revolution is not yet finished. Let the Comrades struggle on." (**革命尚未成功, 同志仍须努力**) McIntire has laboured without flagging. So the Lord has blessed him. His favourite verse is 1 Cor. 15:58. It was at this Congress that Dr. Tow Siang Hwa was invited to deliver an address on the compromise of New Evangelicalism. He flew all the way from Singapore simply for this delivery.

The time came for us to leave after completing our assignments. To kill two birds with one stone, we proposed an overland trip by Greyhound from Philadelphia to Los Angeles, visiting our daughter Lily and her husband and son, and Dr. and Mrs. R.L. Harris en route. We halted at Akron, Ohio and from there another halt at the Harrises in St. Louis. Bob Phee, then studying with his wife at Covenant Seminary, showed us around. From St. Louis, we took the plunge to the West Coast, going through Red Indian and desert country which interested our children most. I must not forget to mention that Sister was all along in our company.

From Los Angeles we flew on to Tokyo. There we were wonderfully received by Rev. and Mrs. Timothy Pietsch of Tokyo Bible Centre, Meguroku. Alas, as I penned these words October 1992, my dear brother in the faith had departed this life for nearly two months. Rev. Pietsch had a unique ministry in Japan in that he had a Gospel broadcast over several stations which offered every listener John's Gospel upon request. He had a wide audience from

the amount of letters of inquiry that came in. He said the Japanese liked to hear him in his American-accented Japanese. Rev. Pietsch was a strict separatist and fought the idolatry in Shintoism and every other kind of image worship. When the Japanese argued that bowing to an image was all right since bowing is an Oriental custom, he replied, "If the image can bow back, then you can bow!"

From Japan we flew to Hong Kong where we halted for a night at the YMCA and on the next day, we were bound for home, sweet home. We arrived back in July, one year short of some days after that hurried exodus the August previous. We thanked the Lord for a wonderful year of service and travel and for a safe return.

From one alma mater, we found ourselves in another.

22

From Life Book Centre to FEBC Bookroom 1976-1996

*“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser:”
(Prov. 9:9)*

Life Book Centre

Two years and eight months before our going to teach in America, we reopened a Book shop at the L-corner of the FEBC Annexe, which was named Life Book Centre. This was January 1976.

The idea of operating a Church Bookshop was with us from the very beginning. Soon after pastoring the English Service, I became a self-appointed colporteur. I took both English and Chinese Bibles from the Bible Society and sold them with a view to spreading the Word. In fact we had a rubber stamp made with the name “Malaysia Christian Bookroom”, intending to use one of two small rooms at the entrance of the old Life Church at Prinsep Street for a start. The idea, however, did not materialise.

When the Church and College Complex at Gilstead Road was completed early 1963, we had the end room of the L-Annexe furnished for a proper bookroom, small though it was. It is now our Computer Room.

We stocked the Bookroom with Bibles and as many good Christian books as we could get. An FEBC student who was assigned this book-selling, on a small scale, could earn enough to pay for her board. Whenever the pastor went on his up-country preaching to

Batu Pahat, to Temerloh, he would bring along a box of Bibles and Christian books to sell. He got good sales, which helped the book business to carry on, while catering to the spiritual needs of the up-country brethren.

For a business enterprise to succeed, however, there must be one who is fully dedicated to it, like a soldier engaged in warfare. So, it is often seen in Chinese calligraphy, “May Your Business Thrive by that Martial Spirit”, (商战精神) etched on gift-mirrors for presentation at the inaugural of a trading company. This is a Chinese social custom. As we did not have a full-time manager, the little book business eventually folded up. For long years, it sat idle.

Now, I wanted a person who would be willing to work with me without any conditions, inasmuch as such a book business is sacred unto the Lord. I found such a man in the person of Stephen Kuan, who graduated with a diploma from FEBC. As our capital was small, we could pay him a humble salary for a start. This he gladly accepted. With the concurrence of the Session, we took over the L-Annexe corner, which has a three-room floor area of 660 sq. ft. While making orders abroad, we went out together to bring in whatever stocks we could get locally. We took a good lot from Operation Mobilisation and, of course, Bibles from the Bible Society. All the books published by me up to now also went up the shelves. The business was governed by a committee appointed by Session; the pastor, *ex-officio*.

Upon our return from the States, we were informed that Life Book Centre had come to the end of its tether, after three years and seven-and-a-half months. Stephen regretfully had to leave us, but we must acknowledge the part he played. Stephen was zealous, nevertheless, in tract distribution, so while he managed Life Book Centre, he imported free tracts from abroad on his own initiative for dissemination. He himself was saved by reading a Gospel tract. After Stephen left Life Book Centre, he joined the staff of Mount Carmel B-P Church. Alas, Stephen is no more, for the Lord took him in 1986.

After a fortnight's closure, Life Book Centre restarted as Christian Life Book Centre (CLBC). CLBC was given to Paul Wong and Yiew Pong Sen to run. The Church was to be reimbursed at an equitable sum agreed between the parties. Henceforth, the book business must be "privatised" in order to succeed. When Yiew Pong Sen left, the new book business was entrusted to Paul.

With a thorough renovation of the old bookstore and the incorporation of an adjoining room, the CLBC increased her floor space to 1,000 sq. ft. From September 1979, the Christian Book Business, "under new management", outwardly "prospered". It is not the objective of a Christian bookstore to get rich on her customers, but rather to carry on as a ministry. From book-selling CLBC has branched into manufacture of Christian gifts and publishing in order to make ends meet.

The making of Bible verse plaques and the Ten Commandments tablets, JESUS SAVES clocks, Bible verse clocks, in both Chinese and English, "Christ is the Lord of my House" (基督为我家之主) in Chinese calligraphy from my father's brush has filled a void in many Christian homes. By printing this calligraphy and its English variation, JESUS SAVES, on Chinese art calendars, thousands are sold every year. The making of Christian music cassettes and CDs has filled many an empty soul with peace and solace. A Christian bookstore should be handmaiden to the Church.

By publishing books ourselves, we are enabled to sell them more cheaply, and thus increase readership. CLBC not only serves the Church but also FEBC and other Bible Colleges. This is a facility not easily available to even well-established institutions. That the Bible-Presbyterians have their own book shop is taken notice of by Keith Hinton in *Growing Churches Singapore Style*, published by OMF.

I advised CLBC to hew a separatist line in the books they sell and publish. (1) Anything that is repugnant to the Truth should not appear on our shelves. (2) Service is our business, prompt, efficient and courteous. (3) "Owe no man anything" (Rom. 13:8) in all our

business transactions. Remember the Book business is a spiritual work. It cannot succeed without the power of the Spirit.

In view of the fact the CLBC was beginning to carry books and Bibles not hewing the separatist line, they agreed to return it to the Church. One important issue was their promotion of the NIV which is based on the corrupt Westcott and Hort Text which we reject. We are for the KJB only. So CLBC became FEBC Bookroom since May 1996. Now under the directorship of Deacon Yiew Pong Sen in conjunction with Dr. Jeffrey Khoo and the pastor, this Reformation Bookroom is beginning to prosper. Barnabas is assistant manager. "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Cor. 13:8).



23

Woodlands 1979-1983

“Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit.” (Zech. 4:6)

In June 1979, a group of young Lifers under Peter Eng went evangelising in the new housing estate at Woodlands, this side of the Johore Straits and a stone’s throw from the Causeway. In their zeal to extend God’s Kingdom, they came across in *The Straits Times* an HDB Notice inviting tenders for a piece of land opposite the business centre of the new town earmarked for the building of a church. The young people relayed this news to the Session with the earnest hope that the Church would act upon it.

In the midst of the ICCC Congress in Cape May, we received a phone call about this matter to which I gave hearty support. So we tendered for this piece of land in competition with several other churches. When the results were announced, however, we were near the bottom of the list! Nevertheless, every one of the bidders was disqualified because the highest offer was still below the target.

When we returned in August 1979, I was asked to lead this project, for a second Notice of Tender would be forthcoming. In order to succeed, the Church must go in the strength of the Lord. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zech. 4:6) is an ever guiding principle the pastor had learned from Dr. Chia Yu Ming, his teacher in Nanking.

While God is our mainstay, we must also play our part. Rallying the whole Church as one man, the pastor made a clarion call in the Life B-P Weekly, dated September 2, 1979, as follows:

Whether Life Church will enter Woodlands depends not on the pastor but on the Session and congregation. The situation facing us parallels Israel at Kadesh Barnea, about to receive the report of the twelve spies just returned from an inspection of the Promised Land. To enter or not to enter is the choice before us! If we mean business, then every intended expenditure on Life Church's renovation must be frozen! Session members who have earmarked certain gifts for Church improvement, if they regard Woodlands a priority, should be the first to channel theirs to the support of the project. Other Session members should follow suit with a substantial sum from their tithes to prove their sincerity in their original unanimous decision. Then let the congregation, especially those who have planted a foot in Woodlands, show their support with tangible action. If we mean business, we must show it not only in word but in deed.

Woodlands is a good land. With more land around than any other satellite town, it will become Singapore's biggest, with a projected population of 290,000. Woodlands, only five minutes' drive from Johore Bahru, stands at Malaysia's threshold. It is most strategic to our outreach to Johore and to the north. It affords us an opportunity, as no residential premises can, to raise a lighthouse for Truth in the northernmost part of Singapore.

With economic planning, Woodlands can become self-supporting, running a kindergarten, Christian bookstore, Christian hostel, much like Gilstead Road. Woodlands is a challenge to the whole Life Church congregation to extend the Gospel with our funds. If you cannot preach, here's an equal privilege to put your money into a project that preaches the Gospel! Who'll come out with the first \$10,000?

Now, it was Life Church Youth Fellowship that "discovered" Woodlands for the Church. To prove their zeal in this united enterprise, the YF presented a first collection from the young people, an envelope of \$1,472.70. An anonymous young Lifer added with

another envelope containing \$1,152. By September 30, 1979 the Building Fund totalled \$43,245.70!

When Session met the second time in early October, they were in high spirits. Total Mobilisation! All renovations hitherto planned for Life Church auditorium at Gilstead Road were suspended. A \$15,000 gift earmarked for a new organ was channelled to the New Church Building Fund. Plus \$35,000 surplus from the General Fund, we now transferred \$50,000 to the Woodlands project. With some sixty items now come in for Woodlands, the New Church Building Fund shot pass the \$100,000 mark! Meanwhile we had begun to earn interest at 8 per cent. And the rate of giving by the whole congregation, including the Chinese service, was \$1,000 per day! By mid-November we raced to \$125,000 or the 1/8 million mark. We talked of a million because that was the least this project would cost, but we did not know the price of land and building materials would escalate far beyond this to \$3 million!

From Woodlands to Kampuchea 1979-80

In the midst of building on the home front, a wail and a cry was heard from neighbouring Kampuchea. The “Killing Fields” under the Pol Pot regime whereby one to two million souls were crushed to death, no less hideous than Hitler’s exterminating six million Jews, are festering without end to this day. The B-P Church of Singapore and Malaysia, being closely linked to ICR (International Christian Relief) of which Rev. K.C. Quek is chairman for the Far East, responded immediately. Voicing Life Church’s support, the editor of the Church Weekly wrote:

Inasmuch as the Apostolic Church has set the example of relieving the hungry and suffering (Acts 11:27-30), leaders of the B-P Church are moved to play our part in the sending of Relief to the Kampuchean refugees.

The Lord put this holy desire first in Rev. K.C. Quek's heart. Early this week he consulted me over the telephone. I responded with a hearty yes, but with the stipulation that this relief work be done in Christ's Name by His Church, and that he must personally go to Bangkok to establish a reliable contact to ensure the proper distribution of our contributions.



Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang

At a prayer meeting of pastors Saturday morning, the decision to send relief to Kampuchea was unanimously taken. Everyone of our B-P Churches is appealed to help. One Sunday worship offering (November 25) is suggested for the relief of the dying race. This relief money is pooled through Elder Seow Chong Pin, BPC Treasurer. The collection of relief money closes November 30 so as to enable Rev. Quek to leave December 2 for Bangkok.

I am deeply thankful for this channel of relief from Singapore to Kampuchea, as I say it on behalf of many like-minded Christians. Incidentally, the first person who heard of this opening, Miss Ng Peck Loan of Chin Lien Bible Seminary, handed \$200 to Rev. Quek.

Isn't this wonderful confirmation from the Lord that when we are in His will He will bless with unanimity of action? And there's the eternal, royal commission, even to command men everywhere, to believe in His Son? Our relief is of far higher value than the world's because it will be dispensed together with the Word of God. But let us give thankfully as unto the Lord, "for except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble" (Ps. 41:1).

Further to the Appeal above, the pastor followed up with a second letter the next Lord's Day:

A Special Trip to Appeal to Six Malaysian Churches

Some people say, “What is the use? The amount we give is but a drop in the bucket.” If that is the case we must work ten times harder to make a stronger impact. Not only one offering from the Sunday Worship! We should encourage each department of the Church to take a collection too. From the Sunday School, YF, YAF, JF, WF, Junior Worship, to the Chinese Service. Individuals moved of the Holy Spirit can give direct to the respective treasurers, if they miss these collections.

Since I have a ministry in Malaysia to six churches, I have felt deeply constrained to visit each one to make an official appeal. By the time you read this letter, I shall have made the trip—setting out 6 a.m. and returning 9 p.m. This will be a 14-hour marathon. I believe the Lord is pleased with this effort inasmuch as it is done for the sake of increasing our relief goods, and sharing the blessing of giving with other Christians. As the Scottish saying goes, “Many a mickle makes a muckle.”

While the B-P Church was the first to launch this relief appeal, we were soon followed by the press. Under the caption, “Do Our Bit”, the editor of *The Straits Times* (November 19) said:

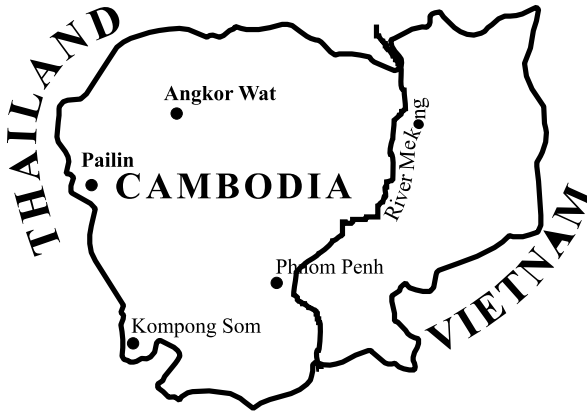
As the frontline state, Thailand has borne more than its share of the side effects of the bitter war in Kampuchea. It has had to suffer continuing intrusions by small bands of foreign troops and shellings by Vietnamese artillery and mortar. But the biggest spill-over is of course the refugees. Nothing underscores Thailand’s refugee burden more than the reported presence of over half-a-million Kampuchean hard pressed along its eastern border. In line with Prime Minister Kriangsak’s policy to again accept Indochinese refugees, extension work on refugee camps is feverishly underway to receive the new flood. The plan to move the hapless Kampuchean deeper inside Thai territory is as much for self-protection as for humanitarian reasons. It would remove a big temptation or ready excuse for the Vietnamese to intrude into or bombard Thai territory. Hanoi may have given its assurance

that it would not invade Thailand, but in the increasingly explosive border—where an estimated 75,000 Vietnamese troops are reportedly poised for the kill—it is all too easy for an accident to occur and war with Thailand to break out.

The Thai move is a prudent one to reduce the possibility of Vietnamese incursion. It is also perhaps the only practical move to save a people from the immediate threat of extinction. But it means that Thailand will have to bear a long-term responsibility for an even greater number of Kampuchean refugees. It is already housing up to 300,000 Laotians and Kampucheans. It will need all the help and support we can get to feed and care for the staggering number of refugees. Many in Thailand are already calling for a little less fact-finding and a little more action from the advanced countries. As a fellow ASEAN partner, Singapore should also do its bit in helping Thailand cope with this enormous human problem by contributing humanitarian help. The call by a university don to private organisations to take concrete steps in this direction deserves serious thought. While it is always a problem in relief efforts of such scale to ensure that aid reaches those for whom it is intended, the prospect of logistical problems or even some siphoning should not deter us from doing our share to alleviate the suffering of our fellow beings.

To the appeal in *The Straits Times*, there were several responses. As for our B-P efforts we raised a total sum of S\$54,194.00. This sum was used for purchasing 50,000 gift parcels in each of which were packed 2 packets of instant noodles, 1 toothbrush, 1 toothpaste, 1 soap and 1 Gospel letter in Kampuchean. Making four truck loads, these were delivered by Rev. K.C. Quek to the Thai Headquarters and the U.N. High Commission for Refugees. Of the total sum collected, almost one-third was given by Life Church despite our being heavily burdened for the New Church Building Fund. “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again” (Prov. 19:17).

As refugees kept pouring into Thailand, ICR (Singapore), under Rev. K.C. Quek, mounted two more missions to Thailand. In the



following two missions we were able to speak before great crowds and distribute the Four Gospels and Acts along with the relief goods.

To close this chapter of our part in the relief of the Kampuchean, here is an account given at Life Church Worship Service dated January 20, 1980 by Mr. Stephen Hyun. Stephen and his wife, Koreans, were regular worshippers with Life Church for 12 years before their relocation to Guam, 1978. They were representatives of Gideon Bible Distributors for the Pacific Region. They had just visited Thailand to distribute thousands of Gideon Testaments to the refugees. Here is his story:

A young Kampuchean pastor who had escaped with 20 Christian families to Thailand was instrumental in preaching the Gospel to thousands in the camp. With another pastor he organised many family groups for Christian fellowship. On Sundays between one and two thousand would gather to hear the Word and join in worship.

“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together” (John 4:36).

From Kampuchea Back to Woodlands 1980--1983

(The fervour for Woodlands is excerpted from the Life Church Weekly dated August 24, 1980, and following.)

At Last D-Day Has Come!

When Paul Wong showed me Monday morning, August 18, 1980, the long-awaited HDB Notice re Woodlands, the air around me was charged with excitement! The Notice reads: CHURCH SITE AVAILABLE IN WOODLANDS NEW TOWN. Tenders are invited from the public for the purchase of a church site at Admiralty Road / Marsiling Lane, estimated to contain an area of approximately 3,940.3 sq. m. for development into a church. Particulars and tender forms are obtainable during office hours from the Manager, Estates & Lands Division, Annexe Block, National Development Building, Maxwell Road, Singapore 0106, on payment of a tender form deposit of \$100/- which will be refunded if a bona fide tender is submitted. Completed tender forms are to be deposited under sealed cover marked "Tender for Church Site in Woodlands New Town" in the Tender Box in the Secretariat, Housing & Development Board, 20th floor, National Development Building, Maxwell Road, Singapore 0106 by 11.00 a.m. on September 17, 1980.

At last, D-Day has come! Let's take Woodlands "by force"!

Commissioned

Since I have been commissioned by Session to head an overall Woodlands committee and I deem my task to be a spiritual military one (we're launching into a great battle ahead), I've found a plan of strategy for victory from 1 Kings 20. In this chapter God tells the Israelite king how to order his troops. He is to call for the help of *the young men of the*

princes of the provinces. There are 232 of them who are heads of an army of 7,000. The king of Israel is commander-in-chief.

We are facing as crucial a spiritual battle as Israel faced the Syrians. With the HDB notice published, war is declared! We cannot go about the Lord's business in the usual fashion. We need everybody, every Lifer, and *you my Reader* wherever you are, to help.

Insofar as Life Church is concerned, our "young men of the princes of the provinces" are the chairmen or heads and superintendents of our various departments. Where are you, my young fellow helpers from the Sunday School, first of all? The S.S. is the biggest arm of the Church. Then, our many and varied departments which are roll-called as follows: WF, YAF, YF, JYF, JW, Beulah, Tanglin, Pistis, AMKF, LCBC, Tape Library, Church Choir, Children's Choir, Chinese Service, Chinese S.S., FEK, Sunday Lunch Com. Have I left any group out? Oh, yes, the Session! Which is the supreme command!

Dear Reader, won't you help us by praying for us? We need the 7,000, everyone of you. And wait for war news next week!

Yours for victory, T.T.

90 at Parsonage Prayer Meeting (August 31, 1980)

Every one of the 90 seats we pressed into the parsonage was taken last Tuesday night. Most Session members were present. There was a spontaneous spirit of prayer—for Woodlands. Rev. Jason Linn gave an enlightening message on the connection between the spiritual and physical in building God's House. He cited the prophets' rebuke to the Jews who left God's building high and dry, while they luxuriated in homes with floral ceilings.

That the Fund for building a new Life Church at Woodlands has shot up \$10,000 since the HDB Notice appeared August 18 (at the rate of \$1,000 a day) is an indicator to Lifers' will to win. Inclusive of a handsome earning of

\$1,680 interest, it is an incentive to economic-minded Lifers to offer a year's tithe in advance. "Money makes money". When given to the Lord, its returns are without reduction.

Why pay 12% interest when we can save it? (September 14, 1980)

Last week I told you how once our offer to buy Woodlands is accepted, we'd have to make full payment in two weeks! Will the results be auspiciously announced exactly one month after September 17 (closing date of tender), i.e. on October 17 or 18, eve of our 30th anniversary? Then we'd be required to make the full payment the latest by October 31 or November 1. With only 1½ months before us, it seems we'd have to take a loan running into hundreds of thousands. At 12% interest we'd have extra tens of thousands per annum to reckon with. Why pay this extra sum when we can save it?

How?

By each earning member giving to the Lord one year's tithe in advance! A goodly number have done so, the latest being an anonymous envelope of \$700 with a very encouraging note. This has helped to maintain our giving rate of \$10,000 per week for the third week.

In this connection all our superintendents and presidents of the groups I've mentioned can help. By your closer contacts you are the ones to help bring in the Lord's portion. Your loving spontaneous action will mean much to the Lord.

Interest Free Loans

Instead of paying income tax on your earned interest, why not just loan that big sum to the Lord free of interest? That would be one form of giving to the Lord. Such loans will be repaid by the Church on an instalment basis at 10% of total offerings received per month, after one year. How's that? "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that

which he hath given will He pay him again” (Prov. 19:17).
Who will help with a loan?

Sure, We’re Marching To Woodlands! (October 5, 1980)

The 730 items of offerings in one year amounting to \$325,000 surely reflect the faith of a sizeable section of our congregation. Those who have given have also earned interest, at the rate of \$2,000 a month! These are the vanguards of the Lord whom He has blessed and will bless with many tender mercies.

Now that it has been reported that ours was the highest tender, the air at Life Church is again charged with excitement. Thanksgiving and praise is heard on many a lip. A sister immediately responded with another \$10,000. A brother brought \$1,500 on Prayer Meeting night. The pastor of a sister B-P Church offered to loan \$30,000 from their unused B.F. The more forward we are to answer the Lord’s call, the more will the Lord be touched by our zealous response.

When Nanyang University was the sweet desire of the Chinese community in Singapore in the days of British rule, remember how even trishaw riders would give a month of their earnings to the Nanyang University Building Fund. Surely, it is not too much, as brother L.S. Pang has suggested, to give a month’s salary or earnings to the Lord’s House at Woodlands. Some of you have already responded, or better still with a year’s tithes in advance. Or, you may give an interest free loan. Does the Holy Spirit prompt you to do any of these?

Above ½ Million Mark? (October 12, 1980)

Since there is mounting concern to boost the Woodlands B.F. (several have phoned in) and I feel the urge to write this Monday night, October 6, let me share with you the joys and anxieties I have been going through these very crucial days! The latest financial report from Deacon William Teo says we

have \$322,950 in fixed deposits, \$45,000 with HDB, \$10,000 forthcoming and \$80,000 free loans from three B-P Churches.

On my part, I am deeply touched by a brother who brought a \$1,000-envelope to Church this afternoon. A presbyter who has been following our Woodlands outreach very closely gave \$3,000 last Sunday night. I spoke to a dear brother (not a member of our Church though he loves her). He responded with a \$6,000 loan, and all that he has in POSB. I spoke to another in Malaysia by phone and he gladly offered \$500. As funds are flowing in steadily, can we climb above the \$500,000 mark, Sunday morning?

You see, I have been doing a little personal work! "Ask, and it shall be given ..." (Matt. 7:1) is our Lord's teaching. When it is for a good cause, the more for God's Cause, we should not be ashamed to ask. Paul asked the Corinthian Church to take a weekly collection so that when he came he might have sufficient funds to send to the needy Jerusalem Church. By asking we have now gathered 50 bales of surplus clothing for Laos. By asking we have obtained several sizeable loans and gifts.

Dear Reader, do you want to serve the Lord by asking? By just lifting up the phone? But pray first and ask only those you respect because they love the Lord, and will not become offended. If they are those you sincerely look up to they will not be offended. They will feel honoured by your request.

When Jesus needed a donkey to ride into Jerusalem, He told His disciples to go and get it from a believer. When the disciples asked for the donkey, not for themselves but the Lord, the owner of the animal gladly gave. So, by the help of your asking, we should see more hands taking a part in building the new Church! With your help by asking, we have greater assurance to gather \$900,000 in the crucial weeks ahead. Remember, the period of grace is short, only two weeks.

January 11, 1981

When we dropped our sealed tender envelope for Woodlands into the box that fateful late morning of September 17, 1980, we were well assured the deal was won. From that day concerned and anxious hearts have inquired after the result.

Some weeks later, a first “wireless” message reported we were the highest. This was confirmed from another quarter. Yet some had qualms.

December 6, 1980 the eve of our trip to U.S., a second “wireless” message came. This said we were chosen by HDB, and the files were sent up to the Minister. This relieved the long lull that intervened. Another surge of excitement! Yet some would rather have it official in black and white.

Thursday, January 8, 1981. 4 p.m. the phone rang. Elder Dr. Teck Chye said, “Woodlands is ours. This is official. It is announced by the Minister!” “Woodlands at last, Woodlands, Ahoy!” I was overjoyed. I could jump up the ceiling! But the next minute was solemnised by that sombre thought: “Payment in two weeks—\$900,000!”

The latest figure of our offerings and loans totals \$778,332.87 (This includes several \$10,000 earned interest through the extended delay.) What we immediately need is \$122,000 plus legal fees and duty. An elder who has put sums of money into his children’s P.O. Savings Account is the first to rally to the Lord’s Cause. \$10,000!

My heart is full of praise and thanks to the Father Almighty for leading us all the way. Hitherto has the Lord helped us! Ebenezer! When we launched out into this Woodlands Project in earnest September 1979, we started with someone giving his whole month’s \$1,250/-. We rallied to \$150,000 by Christmas. When we went to tender in September that sum had struggled to \$300,000. In 3½ months since the die was cast that day, our fund has climbed to \$580,727.62. Plus \$196,000 loans, we were now heading for the \$800,000

mark! This is the Lord's doing. It is marvellous in our eyes. There is no more that sinking feeling in a financial ocean separating us from the promised land. We are now as near as standing on the shore of Johore Bahru. We can swim this distance with confidence. Woodlands, Ahoy!

January 18, 1981

The will of our Session and Congregation to build a second house of God at Woodlands was manifested in the rousing response of pledging \$101,000 in gifts and loans at one stroke last Sunday, so that the \$900,000 required of us to pay for Woodlands was exceeded by \$1,000! Hallelujah, praise, praise the Lord! Our faith thus exercised will now take us to greater heights.

At the entrance to Woodlands Town there stands a blue mosque with 100 ft. tower well-visible to Malaysians driving in from Johore Bahru. Can the Church of Jesus Christ be lesser in appearance? Let God's House that stands for the true Way of Salvation be built by a greater faith and love with the help of His mighty Spirit. Let it bring honour and majesty to Him who is forevermore exalted at the right hand of God the Father. Further, hear the Word of the Lord by Haggai the other prophet, "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts, The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Hag. 2:7-9).

To God Be the Glory Great Things He Hath Done! (October 30, 1983)

Woodlands has been on our lips for the last four years. And though many of you have given to God's House, only a minority have seen it. Tonight we shall behold His Glory as we appear before Him in holy convocation.

The New Life Church, decked like a bride to meet her groom, will be a shining tower beaming over its dark neighbourhood. She will be beckoning to an estimated 1000 who should gather from all corners of our island. For this will not only be a night for the Dedication of the Church but also for the installation of her pastor Rev. Dr. Tan Wai Choon and ordination of Burt Subramaniam and Thiam Fook Pin. And all these solemn acts of the Church to coincide with Reformation Sunday and the 33rd Anniversary of the founding of the BPC. Pray for good weather and for the anointing of the Lord's messenger to this gathering of the whole BPC family. May not the Dedication of this House of God be the end of a long sustained project, but rather the beginning of another, the entrance to a wider door of service while He tarries.

Since the launching of the building fund of the New Life Church at Woodlands on September 2, 1979, God's people have responded with \$2.3 million. Now the cost of the Woodlands property of 42,000+ sq. ft., is \$933,000. The construction bill, including professional fees, is \$1,930,203 (as certified by the architect to Government, dated October 21, 1983). This adds up to \$2,863,203. This sum, however, does not include a host of other items, such as the teak furnishing of the Church Hall, the Church Bell ordered from Holland (over \$5,000). Kindergarten, Fellowship Hall and office furniture, pianos, organs, clocks and many good used articles big and small brought in by loving hands. The whole project is \$3 million.

How then did we close the gap between the offerings received and the amount expended? By over \$.5 million in interest free loans! We want to express heartfelt thanks to our sister churches, even those in Malaysia, who have loaned and given on top of that. We want to thank our friends who have individually, spontaneously offered these loans and our own members as well. A six figure sum from Chin Lien Bible Seminary's B.F. came very timely to help in the hour of greatest need. Now, although these are free loans we should

not neglect to show our appreciation with an appropriate expression in return.

The building of Woodlands is not only for the evangelisation of Singapore's northern sector but also for the extension of the Gospel into Malaysia, since she stands at the gateway to the Mainland. This is engraved into the foundation stone as a reminder to the New Life Congregation. In confirmation of this holy aspiration, the Almighty has led us, on the eve of Dedication, to a 10,000 ft. property in a new housing estate at Bukit Batu, 33 miles north on the K.L. Highway. The story of this dramatic development was published last week. While the acquisition of Bukit Batu is still under legal process, we have received half of the \$10,000 price asked. "God's work, done in God's way, does not lack God's support." With the Woodlands Fund steadily being cleared, the Lord seems to say to us. "Continue with the good work by channelling a portion to the Bukit Batu Fund."

Why does Bukit Batu leap into the picture so soon? Because "the Lord's coming again is real soon," says my good friend Rev. C.T. Hsu now in New York. Are we not exhorted by Peter to hasten unto the coming of the day of God (2 Pet. 3:12)?

"We must not be bogged down by Woodlands" is one of our slogans during the last four years. While we're burdened with such a big project, we also developed greater muscles of faith to carry it, and not only Woodlands, we did not diminish in the support of over half a dozen mission projects in Indonesia and Malaysia. "For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance!" (Matt. 25:29).

This is a day of great rejoicing in what God has done through His beloved children. Let all glory and honour and power and majesty redound to Him who was and is and ever shall be, world without end. Let His blessings come to everyone of God's children who have had a part in the building of His House in Woodlands.

Wonderful Woodlands (November 6, 1983)

It was an overwhelming gathering as BPers, 1,000 strong, thronged the auditorium and balcony of the New Life Church last Lord's Day evening. This enthusiasm, with the support of friends and visitors, is reflected in the offerings collected in the bags:- \$5,709.76; RM78.50 Aust. \$20; cheque \$500, envelope \$200; 2 gold earrings. Sums handed me: \$500 from Tg. Pinang; cheque \$330 (+ \$410 for Bukit Batu); envelope \$30; envelope \$500; \$21; envelope \$65. **Total \$7,965.41** (not counting the earrings).

As if to confirm the five-fold purpose of the convocation, viz.; Dedication of the new church, installation of her pastor Rev. Dr. Tan Wai Choon, ordination of K. Subramaniam and Thiam Fook Ping, commemoration of 33 years of B-Pism and Celebration of 500th year of Luther's birth (November 10, 1483), the Lord gave us 5 choirs. They were Life Church Choir, LCYF Choir, LC Children's Choir, Combined Life and



New Life Bible-Presbyterian Church

New Life Choir (Chinese) and Faith Church Choir. Surely they kept us awake through the 2½ hour marathon.

We want to express our joy not only in the beauty of holiness from the architect's fine lines, but also bless that brother who furnished the whole church with 100 teak pews and the replica of Life Church's pulpit and holy communion furniture. We want to remember once again the brotherly support given by our branch churches all these years in gifts and loans.

We note with many praises to God that a Chinese congregation of over 30 is building up, side by side with the English congregation of 120 - 150. We were thrilled to see young people digging around the church compound, washing, up and mopping up.

From Woodlands to Bukit Batu (November 20, 1983)

From Woodlands, the Lord has now thrust us forth to Bukit Batu! This is His doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.

For the last 15 months, the Lord has opened a Sunday School at Bukit Batu, 7 miles north of Kelapa Sawit, 33 miles from J.B. This Sunday School is run in Loo Chin's home (an FEBC senior student) and has an attendance of 30. This work is under the care of Kelapa Sawit Church.

Hearing that we might one day build a Church at Bukit Batu, the owners of two lots of a housing estate in need of cash approached Elder John Ling of Kelapa Sawit. As the price finally arrived at was most agreeable, RM10,000 for 10,000 sq. ft. of prime land, we clinched the deal immediately. The sum was paid to the Solicitors at J.B. on Saturday October 29, the very eve of the Dedication of New Life Church October 30. Was such perfect timing by man's manipulation? Never could we have imagined buying Bukit Batu up to that day! Rather, the Lord was telling us, I've a greater work to do than paying up the Woodlands Bill.

Sure enough, the New Life Church has gladly arisen to the occasion to shoulder \$300,000 of the total Building costs. Their bearing 1/10 of the Church B.F. releases us immediately to take on Bukit Batu. “But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want: that there may be an equality” (2 Cor. 8:14). We’re all labourers for God. Thus what is supplied abundantly to one should be a help to the other in want. New Life belongs to God. So Bukit Batu belongs to God too. Whatever sum is given is given to God.

The Story of Bukit Batu

Bukit Batu 33m. north of J.B. was a barren hill 33 years ago. When the Communists were becoming a menace to the Malay Peninsula, General Sir Templer, the British C-in-C, known as the “Tiger of Malaya”, conceived a plan to isolate them. 600 new villages with barbed-wire fencing and sentry posts were erected. All scattered farm dwellers and rubber tappers were herded into these villages in order to cut off food supply to the Communists. One of these new villages was established at Bukit Batu, until then only a cluster of attap houses.

I knew Bukit Batu well since 33 years ago, because in the fifties I often drove back to Batu Pahat to visit my parents. Then one of those days I suddenly saw the tower of a big Catholic Church rise above the new village. The Roman Catholics had come in! How it pained my heart to see it towering above our own station at Kelapa Sawit, 7 miles south (Kelapa Sawit was founded 1952, taken over by Life Church 1954).

In the course of 30-odd years, the Lord has at last galvanised us to action—take Bukit Batu! It began 15 months ago when Kelapa Sawit Church started a Sunday School here in sister Loo Chin’s house (Loo Chin, a convert from Kulai Besar, is now a senior FEBC student). Then when two lots of prime land in a new housing estate were offered to Elder John Ling of Kelapa Sawit, and he asked us (the Mother Church) to

come in, we clinched the deal on October 29, eve of Woodlands Dedication. Now our Bukit Batu Church Building Fund has exceeded \$14,000 (of which RM10,000 is paid for the land).

Miss Tay Siew Mui of Muar Trinity Church, who designed Rawang and Kelapa Sawit, saw me last week. She gladly offered her services again to design our projected Bukit Batu Church and Kindergarten with built-in camping facilities. So, the Lord has relieved us of half of the Woodlands debt of \$600,000 in order to extend His Kingdom at Bukit Batu.

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First Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on to America 1983

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.”
(Ps. 122:1,2)

In June 1983 the pastor and Ivy led a first contingent on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on to America to attend the ICCC Congress at Cape May. To experience the adventures of the pilgrims, it is best for the reader to follow the pen of the pastor-reporter in his ISRAELETTERS. (June 3, 1983)

On behalf of the Pilgrims, may I extend our heartfelt thanks to each one of you who made it to the Airport to bid us Godspeed. Dr. Patrick Tan committed us to the Lord in prayer, which gave us further assurance of His good hand upon us (Ezra 8:18). Moreover we are accorded special attention by Royal Jordanian, our principal carrier. We have travelling with us all the way to Amman, even Israel, an escort.

We were delayed two-and-a-half hours at Bangkok. To keep us happy, the escort arranged for lunch at the Airport restaurant. There we were joined by Rev. Kalnin our ICCC delegate from North Thailand. Our party now numbers exactly 40. Flying time between Bangkok and Amman is 8½ hours at 31,000 ft. and in the 2nd stage at 39,000 ft. May these statistics give you some idea of the time and distance involved.

One interesting side light of this pilgrimage is the co-travelling of 10 Muslims, mostly women, also en route to

Jerusalem. After praying at their third holy place, they will retrieve their steps to Amman, thence to Mecca. Our pilgrimage is not to a site but rather to the living Christ who hallowed this Land by His life and works.

Amman, capital of Jordan with one million souls, has caught up with this age of superjets with a new airport, opened only a week ago. Immediately we emerged from the plane there was on hand our tour agent on this far side of Singapore. With his help there was no need of Customs examination. Perhaps the Singapore insignia sewn on our jackets had also helped. *Majulah Singapura!* Our agent reflected the respect Arabs have for little Singapore by telling how our nation has deeply impressed them. He was mightily pleased when I presented him our Singapore ensign. The ride to the city, to Hotel Cameo, took 45 minutes.

Travelling to the Promised Land via Amman is not only economical but logical. As I told you in the last letter, the East Bank of the River Jordan was part of the land apportioned to Israel under Moses viz., to the two-and-a-half tribes of Reuben, Gad and half Manasseh. Amman is the modern name for Ammon, son born between Lot and his younger daughter. Today this territory is ruled by King Hussein of the Kingdom of Jordan.

From Amman, we proceeded by former Moabite country to Allenby Bridge that spans the River Jordan. (Now you must recall that Moab was Lot's son by his elder daughter.) En route we could see Mt. Nebo in the hazy horizon where Moses ascended to view the Land before he died.

Allenby Bridge is named after the British general who built it in 1916 when he crossed the Jordan during World War I to liberate Palestine from the Turks. What surprised all of us was that the Bridge is no longer than ours that spans Singapore River at the G.P.O. The Jordan at this point is yellowish brown at a low ebb. No wonder Naaman complained, "Are not Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus better than the waters of Israel?" (2 Kgs. 5:12) The Jordan insofar as Naaman is

concerned reflects the offensiveness of the cross. The cross is an ugly one, made of wood and stained with blood. Not made of silver or gold as some hireling like Gehaza and Judas would make. The Jordan becomes today a natural boundary separating Israel from the Kingdom of Jordan.

After clearance by the Israeli Immigration and Customs we were received by Mr. Daryl Creamer, missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, head of Baraka Hostel. A Mount of Olives Tourist bus with an Arab guide started us on our way, first, to Jericho situated on the low-lying plain this side of Jordan, with a gushing stream identified as Elisha's fountain bringing life-giving water. Jericho is luxuriant with vegetation. Date palms abound. Ancient Jericho is discovered just outside modern Jericho where Elisha's fountain flows. It is one of the oldest cities in the world, dated 7,000 B.C.

Jericho is a stone's throw from the Dead Sea, 1291 ft. below sea level, lowest point of the earth! From such low-lying land our bus had to make a determined climb all the way to Jerusalem which is 2,800 ft. above sea level. We went through the Judean wilderness where in the distance is the Mt. of Temptation. Here Jesus fasted 40 days and nights. En route we stopped at the "Inn of the Good Samaritan," at one time a police post. This "Inn" illustrates the place and terrain Jesus mentioned in his parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). A Bedouin Arab plied his trade here with a smiling camel (for that is how a camel appears to be most of the time.) One ride, one dollar! Four of our FEBC girls patronised the animal as part of their study tour.

We made a brief stop at Bethany to visit the Tomb of Lazarus, which is over 20 steps below the open ground. Here we met a first group of pilgrims whose pastor was explaining to his flock from his Bible in French! From Bethany we skirted the old city of Jerusalem, rapidly passing by the Brook Kidron on one side and the Mount of Olives on the other. Then onwards to Bethlehem by Rachel's Tomb and then 10 miles south to Baraka where our headquarters are.

Baraka Hostel was built 1950 by Dr. Lambie as a T.B. Hospital with 100 beds. It is so named from the valley of **Berachah** where king Jehoshaphat blessed the Lord after victory over the combined forces of Ammon, Moab and Seir (Edom). **Berachah** in Hebrew means blessing. Though no more a hospital because the fight against T.B. is won Baraka continues to bless in her new role as a Christian hospice. It not only takes in pilgrims like us (we're the first big group from the Far East to come) but also serves as a Conference Centre for Arab Christian groups, mostly from the Holy Land itself.

What a blessed difference to settle down for this 14 day tour in a Christian Hostel where we have perfect freedom to sing, worship and pray. Also to participate in dishwashing and wiping tables, in appreciation of the wonderful meals our Christian hostesses are providing. This makes us so much more welcome. This is better than a four-star hotel, indeed, because there is so much warmth, cleanliness, friendliness, peace and tranquillity.

As we were overfed the previous day by the food served in the aircraft, I decided not to waste time and expense on a lunch coming down to Baraka. To compromise with some hungry stomachs we had tea served at 3 p.m. With such



Entrance to Baraka

hygienic regulation, dinner the first evening at Baraka was in eager anticipation.

Baraka Hostel is situated on 7½ acres of prime land on the Hebron Road. What was barren and brown 33 years ago when it first started is now a green and fruitful field. The whole compound is afforested with coniferous and pine trees, cypresses, fruit trees of all kinds. In our conducted tour of God's Garden in the Valley of Blessing, we learned many things of fruit trees—apples, pomegranates, grapes, plums, peaches, olives, figs, even strawberries. These brought to mind the seven holy fruits that are mentioned by Moses according to Deut. 8:8. Isn't Israel likened to the Olive, Fig and Vine? What passages of Scripture? Who is the True Vine? Who is the wild olive tree?

Today, the third day of our Holy Land Tour, takes us to Bethlehem and the surrounding country. Having rested up from two days of arduous travelling the Pilgrims should no more nod amen without understanding when we preach. Please pray for us as we preach two Sundays here to the Palestinians worshipping at Baraka Bible Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem.

Your fellow pilgrim, T.T.

June 7, 1983

The skyline of Jerusalem where the Jews are building a new city is totally transformed. Row upon row of four or five storey apartment houses straddle the many hills on the other side of the Old City. Were we accommodated in one of the new city apartments we would return to the din of urban living. Of course there are quieter quarters of Christian hospices such as one located on the Mount of Olives, but these are mostly Catholic or Orthodox. To be quartered at Baraka in the valley of Berachah (2 Chr. 20:30), which means **blessing**, in the stillness of the unspoilt Arab countryside, is most ideal.

Except for a few American Christian hostelites, we have the whole set-up to ourselves. The Dining Hall which seats 50

people fits our party most comfortably. Then there is a meeting hall where we gather morning and evening for worship and instruction with perfect freedom. This was denied us at the Amman hotel. O the joy of corporate worship, “for He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Ps. 107:9).

Pilgrims at the Baraka B-P Church, Bethlehem

The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions owns not only this 7½ acre property but also the Baraka Church and Mission Home on Hebron Road, Bethlehem, within walking distance from Rachel’s Tomb. At Rachel’s Tomb we found Jewish women mostly praying with devout tears, but why at the tomb? Isn’t this superstition and idolatry of another kind, though the Jews are delivered of idol-worship in the crude sense of the word.

At our Bethlehem Church, however, we have come to swell a congregation of our size, made up mostly of Palestinians and the dozen American community at this place. At both morning and evening services, the pulpit was chaired by Issa (who studied eight months at FEBC). I had the honour not only of preaching on both occasions but also administering the Lord’s Supper (for it seems they have not an ordained minister). The FEBC Choir sang “Jerusalem” and “Bethlehem” and was supported by a flute duet which deeply touched my heart.

Holocaust Museum

One of the places in Jerusalem you must visit is Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum. Here the whole story of the mass killing of 6,000,000 Jews by Hitler in World War II is told by authentic photos from beginning to end. Here you see a hell let loose on God’s chosen race, a literal hell where old and young, men and women, are herded like sheep to the slaughter. Their dead bodies are piled up and carted to a crematorium, or else they are buried in mass graves. Here you see them worked

to death to boost the German war effort, and end up in a furnace. And when they are to be disposed of like dung, their clothes are taken away, their wedding rings handed over, their gold teeth extracted.

Jews were confined to miserable ghettos, a rounding up before the kill. Here is a poem written by Eva Pickova, age 12, from a ghetto:

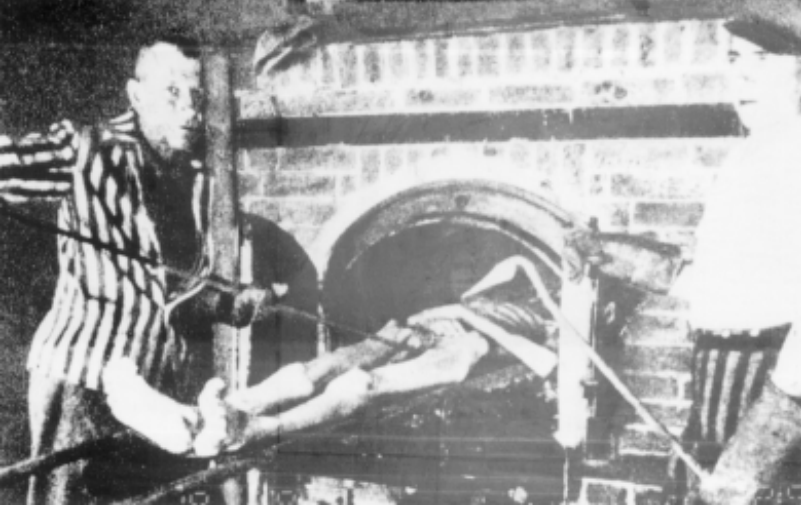
*Today the ghetto knows a different fear,
Close in its grip. Death wields an icy scythe,
And evil sickness spreads a terror in its wake,
The victims of its shadow weep and writhe.*

*Today a father's heartbeat tells his fright,
And mothers bend their heads into their hands.
Now, children choke and die with typhus here,
A bitter tax is taken from their bands.*

*My heart still beats within my breast
While friends depart for other worlds,
Perhaps it's better - who can say? -
Than watching this, to die today.*

*No, no, my God, we want to live!
Not watch our members melt away,
We want to have a better world,
We want to work—we must not die!*

The recent Hitler diary hoax has stirred up memories of the older generation. But Yad Vashem is a perennial reminder to not only the Jews but all mankind of what a dictator possessed by Satan can do. A grim reminder of similar pogroms that the Antichrist to come can unleash on subjugated peoples—not the least Christians. In Bible times, the Book of Hebrews tells us: “They were stoned, they were sawn assunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented ... they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. ...” (Heb. 11:37,38). How about the millions of suffering Christians in Russia and China today? Wang Ming-tao, China’s greatest



One of six million cruelly disposed

saint, got imprisoned for 23 years. So was Watchman Nee, who died just before he was to be released. But we “have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin” (Heb. 12:4). Should we not therefore double up in our witness and service while there is yet day?

Academic and Spiritual

In this marathon study tour, we have been sickened by the many extravagant claims of rivalling Roman and Greek churches as to who has the authentic site of this event or that. Images or icons, they are “Christian” idolatry. Worship of holy relics, even of Peter’s breath kept in a jar somewhere is no extravagant invention.

Our study rather is of the land, her people, customs, Bible history and Church history. But this would not be complete without spiritual application. Hence the morning and evening hours of worship, instruction and testimonies.

We made our “northern expedition” to Galilee yesterday, passing through Bethel, Shiloh, Dothan, Jacob’s well, situated

between Mts. Gerizim and Ebal. At Sebaste which is ancient Samaria where wicked Ahab and Jezebel ruled, we saw the ruins of the capital of the Northern Kingdom of 10 tribes. Despite the city being rebuilt by the Romans, it is crumbled to dust, because Samaria was man's choice. (Micah 1:6) But Jerusalem, the city founded by David, flourishes, waiting for the Messiah to come. History confirms prophecy. (Micah 4:1-4)

O Galilee!

Blue Galilee nestled by brown mountains is 600+ feet below sea level. She remains the same as she was in the time of Christ. We're put up at the Church of Scotland Hospice, a bigger establishment than Baraka. There's a church attached to the Hospice which holds services on Sunday and Wednesday. Immediately we arrived here yesterday, the young people



A ride on the Jesus Boat is a must for pilgrims.

plunged in to have a dip. What a big swimming pool, measuring 14 x 7 miles at her widest bounds.

At Tiberias, that is the town we're located, high rise hotels are going up. The rich build beautiful homes on the hill slopes overlooking the lake. Galilee was where Jesus exercised most

of His ministry, where in the serene surroundings of nature He communed with God. Galilee the beautiful was where eleven of the twelve disciples were called.

For the sake of the Gospel, they were uprooted from the country they loved. Hence this verse is composed for Peter and his friends, who said goodbye to Galilee one day:

*Fare thee well, sweet Galilee, Farewell, home sweet home,
There's a field white to harvest, Away and beyond.
He who hears the Master's call, Must go where'er He wills
Farewell home and Galilee, Farewell flowers and hills....*

The Five-fold Call of Peter

1. When Andrew brought him to the Lamb of God and he found life everlasting.
2. When he gave up his fishing profession to enter the Lord's Service.
3. When at Caesarea Philippi he realised the meaning of the cross.
4. When he consecrated himself again to leave the world to serve Christ after the Rich Young Ruler sorrowfully went away.
5. When the Risen Saviour asked him, "Lovest Thou Me more than these?"

This lesson was taught to the 39 disciples on a high verandah overlooking Galilee last night, with the lights of Golan heights on the distant shore glimmering. We who have found the Lord must be challenged again and again. Are you satisfied with the kind of life you are living? If you are a servant of Christ, can you say you have been faithful to His trust? Are you satisfied with the plane of service you are now on? Has God a greater work for you to do, to His glory? Are you prepared to move on like the disciples called to distant lands for the Gospel's sake? Some of our disciples were moved

by these challenges. May God use this study tour not only to expand the mind but also to deepen the heart.

Sojourn on Mt. Carmel

From Galilee we move on to Stella Carmel Hospice tonight. Wednesday, June 8, we go south to Baraka, to Hebron, Beer Sheba and the Dead Sea. June 13 we retrieve our steps to Amman. June 14 we fly again to U.S.A.

P.S. In God's providence, the hospice we're staying tonight is near the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Asher, our good friends. Mrs. Ben Asher while in Singapore had taught us Modern Hebrew. They are most appreciative of our Weekly and the message of comfort to Israel. We shall visit with our friends, most timely. May God use this opportunity to bless them through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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Beyond Bukit Batu

“Man’s goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?” (Prov. 20:24)

The acquisition of 25,000 sq. ft. of land at Bukit Batu had fired the imagination of the whole Church. In the Life Weekly of January 29, 1984, I wrote:

With the Bukit Batu Church and Camp project coming up the drawing board, we are planning facilities for at least 70 campers. This will be a boon for small groups, fulfilling in part our overall purpose. With our campsite only 1½ hours drive from Singapore, weekend camps can be planned more regularly, incorporating worship and witness with the country folks on the Lord’s Day. Campers can branch out to nearby Kelapa Sawit and Kulai Besar.

That the Bukit Batu Project has commended itself to our readers is seen in the overwhelming response in gifts. In three months you have brought to the Lord S\$150,000. Is the Lord hastening us to build within this year?

Man proposes, God disposes. On the eve of meeting with the architect to put our plans for Bukit Batu into blue print, there came the decision of the Far Eastern Bible College Board of Directors to launch a Far Eastern Bible Institute for Indonesia. The burden for an FEBI (Institute Alkitab Timur Jauh) had been felt since the early seventies when the Lord led us to the far flung islands of Indonesia. The decision to project our Bible training programme into Indonesia was precipitated by one of our Indonesian students having to leave FEBC for lack of English.

It was in the valley of making such a decision that Rev. Djunaidi came into our midst. Djunaidi, who had acquired 9,000 sq. metre of land at Siantan, Pontianak, West Kalimantan, and had developed a Church, Kindergarten, Secondary School and Orphanage welcomed us to establish our Institute on the same grounds. The proposition to be established at Siantan, Pontianak, had also received the spontaneous support of the President of the FEBC Board and the support of Rev. Tan Eng Boo, chairman, BP Missions.

As the King's Business required haste (1 Sam. 21:8) Djunaidi, Eng Boo and I flew on January 8, 1984 to West Kalimantan via Jakarta. This was to kill two birds by a simultaneous meeting with our workers there, viz. Dohar and Glorya his wife. Dohar had in the meantime written of his desire to work alongside Djunaidi. Both Dohar and Glorya were good students at FEBC and had recently graduated with the Bachelor of Theology.

The principal designate of course was Djunaidi, graduate of a Canadian Bible School in Darit, West Kalimantan. He was conversant both in Chinese and Indonesian. Djunaidi, taking a strong separatist stand, was President of the Indonesian Council of Christian Churches, an affiliate of the ICCC.

As FEBC was bearing the brunt of this new enterprise, she would call on our sister Bible-Presbyterian Churches to throw in their lot. This was also in line with Synod's prayer at Port Dickson for the hastening of B-P Missions. There was no better deserving ministry for their support than training preachers for a land of 150,000,000.

The acute lack of pastors for Indonesia was lately felt also by our young people from Calvary and Galilee visiting North Sumatra. To remedy this situation, we were rethinking the future ministry of Simon Tsai. Simon and his wife had been sent to Singkep Island for the last 1½ years. Simon, an Indonesian journalist, attached to Hong Kong before joining us, was conversant in Indonesian, Dutch and English. He had studied in Shanghai, under Dr. Chia Yu Ming and

also had a stint at FEBC. We decided to redeploy him to teach at FEBI. Kimiko Goto, another FEBC graduate, was serving with the Japanese Church in Singapore. She was the last to join the team.

On January 11, the day we flew back from West Kalimantan, we had decided to construct a two-storey complex 47½m x 10½m with a third storey prayer tower. Built of wood, it would take six months at a cost of S\$150,000. By July, Djunaidi assured us, the new FEBI Building would be ready for dedication. In no time Djunaidi had the architectural plans sent to us by express post, and the building of God's House proceeded with lightning speed. That was characteristic of Djunaidi.

Continuing to write in the Life Weekly January 29, 1984, I said,

Since there is a more urgent need than Bukit Batu, viz., the establishment of Far Eastern Bible Institute at Siantan, Pontianak, West Kalimantan by July 1984, may I suggest that your *ang pows* (red packets of money given at Chinese New Year) go to the building of the Bible School. This will be channelled through B-P Missions, as a means of encouraging younger B-P Churches to get involved in missions.

On February 12, I followed up with a timely commendation of Lifers, "Your hilarious giving of a total of S\$25,000 (including the Chinese Service) last Lord's Day in response to our *ang pow* appeal will supply the needs of missionary outreach in all fields, particularly for FEBI ... May the Lord bless you who have given out of a cheerful, worshipful heart." As we continue to sustain these good works, we who cannot battle at the frontline can pray. Remember the inauguration of the Bible Institute at Siantan, Pontianak, July 1984.

And so, Bukit Batu had to yield to a higher and more urgent need, in the immediate construction of FEBI. Meanwhile, in order to make quick use of our Bukit Batu property, Elder John Ling, with the help of some young people had an attap shed built thereon to shelter our Sunday School children. No sooner was God's attap tabernacle erected than it was burnt down to the ground. Satan was unhappy to see the Church of God invading his territory. And soon after the

incident, when I was inspecting the land with Chua Hung Choo of Sharon Church, on another day, hooligans stuck two giant nails in a front wheel of my VW station wagon. The moment I started to drive it, *psst-psst*, it became punctured. Fortunately there was my young friend to help me change the tyre. Satan really hated us.

At last the month of July arrived. Decked like a bride to meet the groom FEBI received our contingent from Singapore and Malaysia and all the local dignitaries, military and Government officers. With these in view I delivered a message beamed on a wide audience. Speaking on “A Global Commission” based on Mark 15:15-18 I said,

Ever since 1971 when we launched B-P Missions into Indonesia by coming first to Pontianak, the Lord has led us to newer fields in North Sumatra and the Riau Islands. Insofar as West Kalimantan is concerned I have lost count of the number of times I have been here. We love Indonesia.

Far Eastern Bible Institute is a crowning development of this 2½-acre site with support from Far Eastern Bible College, Life B-P Church and B-P Missions in Singapore. Not by the wisdom or strength of man, but by the Commission of the Lord. The idea of founding a Bible Institute here at Siantan, Pontianak was farthest from our thought or imagination. As principal of FEBC, Singapore for the last 22 years, I have been carrying as it were a big baby from year to year. For us, one is enough! It is the Lord who has caused us to bear the burden of this second one. For Him two is not enough! He would like to see more of such institutions founded, for His is a Global Commission: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

Now when Jesus commissioned the Church to go into all the world, did He have Kalimantan in mind? Not only Kalimantan but the whole of Indonesia.

God bless Indonesia, for you have put God first in your national constitution of **Pancasila**. You have the practice of freedom of religion. I have never felt any restraint to preach

the Gospel whenever I come to your great country with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Under orders of a Global Commission our feeble endeavours have also gained global recognition! “If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour” (John 12:26). Not only is Pontianak today taking notice of the founding of FEBI, the whole world is watching us! The news of FEBI’s founding is carried by global Christian newspapers. Christians in America, England, Japan, Australia, etc, not the least Singapore and Malaysia, are praying for us. The Father in heaven Himself is looking down upon us, for does not our Lord say that when a sinner comes to Him in repentance even the angels in heaven do rejoice. Our inauguration of FEBI is for no other purpose than the Great Commission to save sinners. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Not earth, but also heaven, take notice of the inauguration of FEBI today. But, do we live up to such great expectations?



“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” should remind us of our global outreach in the work of the Lord. Too many pastors cannot see beyond the four walls of their church. The Lord wants us to look out, and far beyond, to the ends of the earth. Someone here might look askance at the name of this Bible Institute. We are called Far Eastern as a son is surnamed from his father. Our parent body is the Far Eastern Bible College in Singapore. Secondly we name it Far Eastern to remind this school of what is just stated, viz., we should take a global view in the work of the Lord. Therefore it is not speaking beyond our capacity to call this School a Far Eastern Bible Institute. Insofar as Singapore is concerned, there are now 14 nations represented at Far Eastern Bible College. We have students coming from as far as U.S.A., England, Norway and Africa, beyond the horizon of our Eastern Hemisphere. Far Eastern Bible College has become

rather an International College. O Lord, grant that your servants, the teachers of FEBI, shall never settle in an ivory tower of learning. Make them soul winners, give them an evangelistic zeal that students trained by them might go into all the world.

Finally our work for the Lord under the Global Commission will bring extended blessings. The Word of God we teach will bring forth eternal results. While our graduates will go into many parts of the world, the results of their ministry, being the eternal salvation of souls, will last forever.

Together with the saving of souls will flow blessings of saving of the body. As the Lord has commissioned the disciples to cast out devils and to take hold of serpents, we see here the deliverance of the whole person. Many, by coming to the Lord, are also restored in mind and body. May I ask you in the audience here, are you saved?

God who saves the soul supplies the needs of the body. Someone has asked me, “Do I have rice to eat by believing Jesus?” My answer is, “If you don’t believe you have one bowl to eat. When you believe in Jesus you have two.” Not only the increase of wealth will come to every one delivered



FEBI

from sin, there's also an increase of health and appetite. The most effective way of saving a hungry world is to save the souls of men. The many buildings you see around you—the Church, Kindergarten, parsonage, teachers' quarters, three-storey secondary school building and orphanage, and now the FEBI new three-storey structure (47½m x 10½m) are a testimony to the promise of our Lord that if we seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness, all these things (the material) will be added unto us (Matt. 6:33). How many without a home, even the orphans here, have found a place of refuge in the House of the Lord. The horizontal blessings of the gospel complemented by the vertical of the saving of our soul, and the vertical blessings of the saving of the soul are complemented by the horizontal saving of the body. Global and eternal blessings!

So, under the orders of the Global Commission of our Lord, let us press on in the ministry of FEBI, and in every work of the Lord; till Jesus comes. Amen.

Testimony by Simon Tsai

A cold winter afternoon in 1952 in Peking. During secret prayer in a small room, I was suddenly reborn. After that afternoon, I became a very different person. In the spring of 1953 I received God's call to be an evangelist. After two months of praying, pondering and waiting, I resigned from my teaching job in Peking University, took the train to Shanghai and became a student at the Shanghai Spiritual Training Seminary, founded by the Rev. Chia Yu Ming D.D. I was pupil of this man of God for three years. One of my schoolmates was Sung Tien Ying, the eldest daughter of Dr. John Sung. She was like her father, full of spiritual power and burning zeal.

In 1961 I left China. Then Satan attacked me. I succumbed under Satan's fierce attacks, because I had neglected prayer and watchfulness. I backslided and became a reporter in the Hong Kong

Bureau of United Press International and later Associated Press (AP) for ten years. But I repented.

In 1975 I resigned from AP and started again my pilgrimage on the Calvary Road. Thereafter I graduated from Ecclesia Bible Institute in Hong Kong. Later I joined Chin Lien Bible Seminary in Singapore and in 1981 I studied at FEBC.

From August 1982 to May 1984, I worked on Singkep Island, Indonesia, taking charge of a small memberless church, which was founded by the Tanjung Pinang Presbyterian Church seven years ago. But Singkep is a Gospel-rejecting place such as the city in Luke 10:10-12. Therefore the work there is unproductive.

In June 1984 I was invited to teach at the newly established Far Eastern Bible Institute in West Kalimantan. I am convinced FEBC is vitally important for the future of the Church of Christ in Indonesia, so I am truly glad to be part of it for the glory of our Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

The opening day of FEBC is a great event for the Church of Christ in Indonesia. Thank and praise God. Amen.

Testimony by Kimiko Goto

When I was 18 years old, I became a Christian but I still indulged in earthly things. Gradually, the Lord taught me through 2 Cor. 5:15 that I should surrender my life to Him and live for Him. I felt called to be a missionary and I went to a seminary in Tokyo to equip myself.

In 1977, God opened a way by my studying in FEBC to work with the Japanese Christian Fellowship in Singapore. The Lord blessed these 7 years with my Japanese people.

From the very beginning since I was called, I had a desire to work with the local people. Since last year I kept on praying for the next step, because I felt time had come for me to leave the Japanese

Church. Answering my prayer, the Lord showed me His way to FEBC in West Kalimantan.

When Rev. Djunaidi came to FEBC in January 1984 and sang a song at Chapel Hour, I vividly recalled my mission trip to Kalimantan in 1981. One day Rev. Tow, Rev. Djunaidi, Elder Koa and some local workers and I went by the Gospel Boat to a remote Dyak village to have a gospel meeting . It was so late at night, but about 30 people came to hear us. At the end of the meeting, over half of them lifted up their hands to accept Christ. My heart was filled with joy. I asked someone, "When can they hear the Gospel again?" He answered, "Maybe six months later, or one year later." I was shocked to know that they had so few chances to hear the Word.

Rev. Djunaidi's song reminded me of the Dyak people. I felt He called me to work there. So I am going to serve at FEBC. Pray for me.

* * *

Insofar as offerings for Bukit Batu were concerned, we continued to receive gifts up to the day of completion of FEBC. The total receipts of Bukit Batu were S\$169,820.70. The power of this sum in fixed deposit will be seen in the years following!

Writing nostalgically on Bukit Batu in the Life Weekly of September 30, 1984, I said,

The land is now beautifully bull-dozed, but development was held in abeyance when the Lord called us out of the blue to build FEBC. So we have channelled about S\$110,000 to this urgent undertaking (which sum was later returned). Built at a cost of S\$150,000, with help from FEBC (Life Church) and B-P Missions, this Indonesian Bible Institute under Rev. Djunaidi was inaugurated July 19, 1984.

To compensate for Bukit Batu, I presented to the Readers the substitute procurement of Air Bemban, four miles south of Bukit Batu, as follows:

Meantime the Lord had opened a new avenue of development at Air Bemban, a 189-unit housing estate where

one terrace house was offered for only RM38,000, which is RM22,000 lower than towns nearer to J.B. Since Air Bemban is between Bukit Batu and Kelapa Sawit our main base of operations, we deemed it most profitable to acquire a double-unit corner house here. This we did without delay. To date, RM37,000 has come from your cheerful support for Air Bemban. (The total cost of the double-unit corner house is RM90,000).

Testimony by Mrs. John Ling on Air Bemban

I am very happy! Once again I would like to praise the Lord. In 1958, I was touched by the Lord to preach to young students at Air Bemban, a small village 3 miles from Kelapa Sawit. The people there had never heard the name of Jesus. The headmaster there was very kind. He lent me a classroom to hold meetings. Unfortunately, the work there only lasted slightly more than a year, because there was no proper means of transportation, and a lack of workers.

16 years later, on a Sunday, an old lady from Air Bemban came to our church with a letter from her daughter-in-law, who is a Christian in Singapore. She wanted us to help Mdm. Teng to know Christ. Later, Mdm. Teng brought her middle-aged daughter to worship the Lord together. Subsequently, they accepted Christ and were baptized by Rev. Tow.

I was again burdened to bring the Gospel to Air Bemban. But the idea was abandoned because no proper place was available. Two years ago, we went to Air Bemban to distribute tracts and found many villagers desiring to know more about God. With this in mind, we prayed that God would open a way for us to work there.

A few days ago, I came across an advertisement about a new housing project at Air Bemban. John and I had the same feeling of having a Gospel station there. On second thoughts, we felt that since the building of Bukit Batu Church has not begun, we should approach Rev. Tow with this request.

On June 24, 1984 we phoned Rev. Tow. I simply mentioned the new housing project to him. The next day, Rev. and Mrs. Tow came to inspect Air Bemban's new construction site. We went together to the Housing Development Office in Johor Bahru to see the site plan and get more information. We were satisfied with what we found out. Thus, Rev. Tow came to Johor again the next day, June 26, to place a deposit for a corner lot.

Praise the Lord, He has answered our prayers. Dear brothers and sisters, I feel that I owe Air Bemban a Gospel debt. God willing, I will be made strong and healthy again to continue the uncompleted work there. I believe that you will prayerfully support this work of soul-saving at Air Bemban. Amen.

Call to Korea for the Defence of the Faith

From FEBI West Kalimantan, and from Air Bemban, etc, the Lord's more urgent call came in respect of Korea. Writing in the Life Weekly of August 12, 1984 this is what I said, as President of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches.

How did our Church since we started out in October 1950 take this separatist stand from the Ecumenical Movement of the World Council of Churches? "Ecumenical" is defined by Webster (1979 Ed.) as "furthering the unification of the Christian Churches". But such a definition is already out of date! For when the WCC met in Vancouver last year, it included five human religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism and the raising of a totem pole, while the sacrifice of an animal to the American Indian gods was made. Not only the unification of all Protestant Churches, but with Rome as well, and the taking in of all human religions to form the Church of Antichrist. But "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19). For 36 years the Lord has used the International Council of Christian Churches, and we in the Far East are banded as the FECCC, to withstand this evil tide. By God's grace, our Church was led to take the separatist stand

through her pastor's association with the ICCC when he was a seminary student in U.S.A.

Now, it happens this year 1984 is the centenary of the coming of Protestantism to Korea. The WCC is taking advantage of this occasion to promote Ecumenism by gathering all the Churches in Korea to celebrate "the 100th Anniversary of the Church". But God is going to expose their nefarious schemes, for the FECCC and ICCC will also be there, meeting at Hanyang University and drawing equally great crowds. The beauty of the timing of such a confrontation between Truth and Error (read "Elijah vs Baal on Mt Carmel" 1 Kgs. 18), is that when the decision to meet in Korea 1984 was made in Singapore at FECCC's 10th Assembly 1981, we did not realise 1984 coincided with this 100th Anniversary. But the Lord knew. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him?" (Isa. 40:13). "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (2 Chr. 16:9). "For the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chr. 20:15).

Not only will thousands be gathered at Hanyang University every night to hear us for 6 nights (September 24-29), the Manifestoes and Declarations we issue will be published across the world and carried by many Christian newspapers and periodicals. The light that we shall light on a city that cannot be hid will shine far and wide, to keep the faithful from foundering. There is the global commission to preach the Word. There is included in the same commission to preserve the Word, for does not the Lord also command to teach believers "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20)? One of His commandments is, "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15).

Now, we have gladly spent thousands and ten-thousands to extend the Gospel in ASEAN. Can we spare a little to help the disciples along the way to Korea to the 11th Assembly of the FECCC, September 24-29, 1984? My heart is moved for

Rev. Djunaidi our Vice-President for Indonesia. To bring him out of Indonesia and send him to Korea takes only S\$2,000. It will be a great encouragement to the 20th Century Reformation Movement if we can also gather a gift to show our support for such a time as this. Pray for us! Amen.

The confrontation between the FECCC / ICCC and the WCC is reflected in my presidential address to the 11th General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, dated September 24, 1984.

On behalf of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches and our parent body the International Council of Christian Churches, may I return warmest felicitations to your illustrious Nation through the Honourable Minister Mr. Lee Jin Eui, whose official welcome has graced this memorable occasion.

This 11th General Assembly of the FECCC convened at Hanyang University is the second occasion of our coming to Korea. The first time we met here was 1960 at our 4th Assembly. Time flies! Personally, I can say how very at home I



Dr. McIntire, Dr. Timothy Tow, Korean Interpreter

feel to be here, for this is also my third visit. And I have many Korean friends, because the church I pastor in Singapore is where your Korean congregation several hundred strong has been worshipping the last four years. Therefore, I must greet you, *An-nyong ha-sim-nigga* (Good Evening).

Now when our Council met at its 10th Assembly in Singapore 1981, we decided to hold this 11th Assembly in Seoul. Little did we realise that this would coincide with your 100th Anniversary celebrations. The unseen Hand of God was guiding us to come for such a time as this, for His Name's sake. Our coming here, being oblivious of your 100th Anniversary, is like Elijah's chance meeting with Obadiah, King Ahab's governor. But, as to the purpose of this Council, it is to witness to the living and true God (1 Thess. 1:9) against Baal, both ancient and modern, and all other false gods, as long as God Almighty gives us breath.

Now in the days of King Ahab, the children of Israel were led to perdition by a substitute religion. It had an overwhelming clergy of 450 Baal prophets and 400 prophets of the groves under Jezebel. (In the letter to the Church of Thyatira, our Lord singles Jezebel out for condemnation as "that woman which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols" Rev. 2:20). The people of God who belonged to the true worship at Jerusalem had been overwhelmed by a new, syncretistic religion. But this new religion, in spite of its noisy extravagances, was dead cold, devoid of any fire from above. When challenged by Elijah, there was no Divine answer. The agonising and loud invocations of the 450 Baal prophets were of no avail.

Today we see a similar plight in the ecumenical church. Numbers, numbers, numbers! Rallies that run into thousands, ten-thousands and hundreds of thousands are held all over the world under the name of Billy Graham.

Insofar as Singapore is concerned, to get Dr. Graham ready to preach only five nights at the National Stadium 1978,

it required one year of preparation with an expenditure of a million dollars. 5,500 counsellors were trained and a choir of 4,500 voices was raised. These were augmented by 3,000 ushers and 1,800 follow-up leaders. 65,000 people came per night, with 75,000 for the last night. 11,883 supposedly received Christ as Saviour. Numbers, numbers, numbers. But where was the fire from above?

When Dr. Cho Yonggi came to Singapore in 1982, another million dollars was spent and some 40,000 were attracted per night. Numbers, numbers, numbers. But where was the fire from above?

By way of contrast, Singapore had a genuine Pentecostal Revival in 1935 when Dr. John Sung of China visited us. We who were converted at that time are eye-witnesses. There were no organising committees, no advertisements, no counsellors, no choirs, no ushers. Not one dollar was spent to lay the groundwork for his coming. He came alone, like Elijah out of nowhere. But the Island was taken by storm. Two thousand turned to the Lord in tears of repentance. From these converts over 100 preaching bands were organised who covenanted with the Lord to go out preaching every week. 100 gave their lives for fulltime service. The Bible Society was sold out of Bibles in a week. A dozen preaching stations were started which today have become established churches. Those who were dispersed by the Second World War went preaching and establishing churches in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. The revival fires started by John Sung's Campaign burnt on and on. It will interest you to know that the Preaching Bands John Sung had left behind remain a viable group to this day. "The God that answereth by fire, let Him be God."

The World Council of Churches which held her 6th Assembly in Vancouver, Canada July-August 1983 was also convened with much fanfare and ballyhoo. Five human religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam were invited to her opening sessions. These were preceded with the hoisting of an Indian totem pole, while an animal was sacrificed as part of the pagan rite. Now the World Council is

highly commended by Dr. Graham, No 1 spokesman for Protestantism but unashamedly in league with syncretism. Nor does he give Christ the preeminence when he fraternises with the Pope and speaks well of Communism. If there is any fire that he is bringing to the Church, it is the cursed fire of Korah.

Many messages have been preached at the big rallies during this 100th Anniversary of the coming of Protestantism to Korea. But has God answered by fire as He answered His servant Elijah? The message that will burn with the fire from above is that which exalts Jesus Christ, the only Saviour and the Living Word. The message that will light up this dark world is the message coming from a Holy Bible that is infallible and inerrant. The message that is sealed with Divine unction is that which comes forth from servants of God who take a militant, separatist stand with Elijah who challenges Israel, “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.” We follow the God of Elijah, and no other god. We have only one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We have no truck with Mary worship, nor with Buddha nor Krishna. We have no fellowship, no, not the least, with New Evangelicals, who rather than standing separate, have joined up with the Ecumenical Movement. We repudiate their new theology that limits the Bible’s inerrancy, and gives in to Marxism, calling it Liberation Theology. Do you know all these we repudiate as Elijah had repudiated—Baal and Jezebel—are the gods honoured by Billy Graham and his associates? Surely this present day syncretism that has swallowed up true Protestantism was not the faith of the first missionaries to Korea, of Presbyterian Dr. Horace Allen nor Methodist H.G. Appenzeller.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). Now the Voice of the Holy Spirit is warning us through this word from John’s Epistle of many false spirits. However, there are many other Scriptures that also speak against false Christs (Matt. 24:24),

false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13), false prophets (Matt. 24:11), false teachers (2 Pet. 2:1), false brethren (2 Cor. 11:16), false witnesses (1 Cor. 15:15). If Holy Scripture so constantly warns against Satan's multiple wiles and changing tactics, how is it we have so little heard of such warning from the pulpit today? Therefore it behoves us who are gathered here at the 11th Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches to speak out boldly by His grace against every form of falsehood and unbelief that is hiding in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Is what we have thus said the truth? If it is the truth, as Elijah on Mount Carmel had witnessed, then let fire come down from above upon the sacrifice of our lips during this Assembly. O Lord, breathe Thy fire upon us Thy unworthy servants, that each messenger to this Conference might speak with flaming tongues.

“The God that Answereth by Fire let Him be God”. Amen.

Beyond Bukit Batu the Lord led us finally to Korea in the defence of the faith, crowning our testimony for Jesus Christ for the year 1984.

26

Evangelising ASEAN Through FEBC Students to This Day 2 Timothy 2:2 1982-2000

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul instructs Timothy, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Herein lies the mandate to train the younger generation and they the generation after them in order that God’s Kingdom might be extended to the uttermost part of the earth. This mandate was given to Far Eastern Bible College in 1962.

During the first decade, FEBC received only a handful of students each year. As time went on, we began to see a stream of graduates. From this increasing onflow of graduates, there commenced the accelerated building of new B-P Churches through the support of Life Church, both at home and abroad. Yes, to the ten ASEAN countries and beyond.

The first one began two decades after FEBC’s founding, with the establishment of an Indonesian service (Kebaktian Indonesia) on the Church premises on February 7, 1982. This was the result of the Principal leading one Malaysian, one Australian and four from Indonesia to form a working committee after much prayer. Soon this Kebaktian was joined by Elder and Mrs. Charlie Chia, who have become their Uncle and Aunt. Today it has an attendance of 40 and as many have also been baptised. The attendance remains small because their numbers are mostly students and domestic helps who

leave Singapore after graduation or have fulfilled their terms of service. Over 600 worshippers, however, have attended its service throughout the years.

Here is the testimony of Joelle Yuliana, a converted domestic help.

Initially, I came from the religion of Islam. The very first time I came to this church, I was very frightened. But after I joined the service, as well as the Bible Study every Sunday, bit by bit I began to understand the Word of God.

By listening to the Word constantly, I know that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again from the dead. I began to understand how to become a Christian. I really want to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ wholeheartedly. My boss also tells me the story about the Lord Jesus. She helps me to understand the Bible. And now, full of joy, I come to church to listen to the Word of God.

Ever since I believed in the Lord Jesus, I have peace and calm in my heart. Now I pray more often to the Lord Jesus as never before. I want to be baptised. As a weak being, I feel that there are still many more things to learn about the Bible. May the Lord uphold me at all times because He is the One who knows every single thing we do in this world.

The pulpit has all along been manned by a succession of senior FEBC students. Twelve of these are now serving in Indonesia as pastors and missionaries, over half of whom are in B-P Churches. Outstanding among the B-Ps are Haposan who also has two Primary Schools numbering 600, in Medan; Kiantoro, pastor of Calvary B-P Church, Batam and Roska who heads two churches and two flourishing Kindergartens and Primary Schools, also in Batam.

Through the "Uncle" of Kebaktian Indonesia, two brick churches were built in Sarawak in conjunction with Tram Epoi, an FEBC Iban graduate.

In October 1982 a team of FEBC students led by Stephen Masila (Africa) and Wan Khwen Lam (Singapore) went out evangelising a

nearby kampong called Chia Heng. They found a Tamil community receptive to the Gospel.

One night, Wan (FEBC graduate) went to Chia Heng again to preach to a gathering of young Tamils. Standing around was a middle-aged man called George. He revealed to the preacher how he first heard the Gospel in prison. He invited Wan to his house to pray for his family.

From this encounter a Bible study was started in the kampong, which developed into a Sunday worship by January 1983. As this enlarged group attracted opposition, they shifted to worship at Life Church, meeting at the “Jerusalem Court”. From here the young congregation began to grow. After a year and a half when this number significantly increased, they were “promoted” upstairs to the open classroom. A committee headed by Rev. K. Subramaniam, Elder Mahadevan, Elder Jeva Joseph and Deacon Simon Nagarajan, Preacher Wan, etc. supervised the work. After three years the Lord blessed this Tamil service to branch out to Johore.

Today this Tamil service is incorporated as Adam Life B-P Church, worshipping at Rehoboth Centre of the Tamil congregations.

Simultaneously, October 1982, Prachan Rodruan, a Thai FEBC student was ministering to a group of ten worshippers. These he brought to worship at Life Church. In December, he baptised four workers, one man and three women.

When Prachan left FEBC 1984 for further studies in U.S.A. (where he is now lecturer in a College), Prasit, another FEBC student took over. Under his hand, eight more new believers were baptised. Dr. David Pickard of the OMF came to fill the pulpit.

After Prasit graduated in 1986, Sayan Kusawadee, another FEBC student, continued in this ministry. He baptised another eight.

And so the Thai service grew so that it became the biggest of all Thai services in Singapore.

In early 1999 the Thai congregation that had been worshipping at Beulah House, voted to move to more spacious premises at True Way Presbyterian Church. But in no time, there developed a split so that half of them, represented by Mr. Wun, asked to return to their old "haunt". Being an Open Door Church, Life Church welcomed our old friends with extended open arms. This was also good news to Sharon (worshipping at Gilstead Road) for as the Thai service is held Sunday afternoon, the non-Thai husbands and their children would attend Sharon Sunday School and worship. The Thai service consists mainly of Thai Christian women married to their Singapore husbands. Though Baptist in origin, this group of over 30 that have returned to the fold have voted to become Bible-Presbyterian. A dozen were baptized after their return, including infants.

In September 1983 the Life Church Pastor led a team to Bukit Gambier, Malaysia to inaugurate Bukit Gambier B-P Church. This was a four-year old offshoot from Rawang B-P Church. As Rawang grew in number, after building their Church in 1972, their youths went 13 miles inland to Bukit Gambier to found a Sunday School. They built an outhouse to a member's home for the Sunday School. As the work grew further it developed into a Sunday service. Pastor Tow coming to inaugurate the Church service happily coincided with the founding of yet another Church in the Malaysian Capital.

For the team to Bukit Gambier was also heading for Port Dickson to attend the all B-P Bible Camp at the Baptist Conference Centre at Golden Sands. Its theme was "Accelerating B-P Missions". True to its objective, a total of nine B-P pastors, attending the Missions Conference, headed northwards to Kuala Lumpur, and beyond to Taman Sri Melati, 8 miles Ipoh Road, near Batu Caves. Among them was Rev. Quek Kiok Chiang, moderator, B-P Synod.

Taman Sri Melati, 8 miles north of K.L. was a house church bought by Rev. Liew Hon Seng, an early graduate of FEBC. For a good number of years, he served in the Lutheran Church, but the time for him to leave had come. We recognised his ordination by the Lutherans since he now became strongly Calvinist, having started to

translate my *Calvin's Institutes (Abridged)* into Chinese. Since he owned the house, he needed no extra support than S\$500 a month. This Life Church gladly provided until he became self-supporting after nine years. So in quick succession to Bukit Gambier, Taman Sri Melati joined the growing B-P movement.

On August 9, 1984 Ivy and I flew to Kuching, capital of Sarawak, East Malaysia. Our purpose was to meet with Kim Kah Teck and Pauline his wife, with the view of founding a Christian Kindergarten. Both had recently graduated from FEBC. As Pauline was a native of Kuching with strong family connections there, and being a registered Government teacher, there was no better person to start our Kindergarten.

Meanwhile, Rev. Peter Chua, pastor of Sharon B-P Church, became interested in this project and “adopted” it as their missions outreach. To tie the Kindergarten to Sharon Church, we named it Sharon Rose.

The Kindergarten flourished with an enrolment of 45. Alongside the Kindergarten, a Church service was started. This newly established Gospel Station also became a half-way house between Singapore and Pontianak where Djunaidi and FEBC were located. This facilitated Djunaidi and his staff as a stopover, driving 200 miles from Pontianak, to fly out to Singapore. It saved them paying exit tax were they to fly from Pontianak direct. A reciprocal blessing to Kuching was the preaching of the Word rendered by the Indonesian visitors to the local congregation.

After six or seven years Kah Teck and Pauline moved on to Taiwan for further study. Their ministry was left to Bong Boon Chong who had studied three years in a Bible School founded by the OMF at Singkawang, West Kalimantan, where Djunaidi was a teacher. Bong Boon Chong struggled with the new work in the Chinese language. In view of Sharon being an English Church, which made communication with Sharon Rose the daughter church difficult, Kuching was handed back to Life.

Since Life Church took back this Gospel work, it has sprung to life again. Today they have not only a Chinese service of 25, but also an Indonesian service of the same number. They are also starting to pay half the rent on their premises, a step towards self support. They are now known as the Bible Presbyterian Church of Kuching.

From Kuching let us return to our base in Singapore. From here we shoot up to Chiang Mai, North Thailand. Jess Lim, a young Lifer who graduated from FEBC 1984 felt the Lord calling her at first to Yala, South Thailand. Through many paths straight or winding, she finally ended up North. Let Jess tell her own story.

“Go, and don’t come back.” That was the advice given by Rev. Tow when I was first commissioned to “the land of a million rice fields.” That is, “Lanna” the ancient name of Chiang Mai.

And so, the road to the mission field began. From Yala down south where I joined a family camp with fellow FEBCer Prachan (a Thai), I took a train to Chiang Mai. There I served with the Frontier Labourers for Christ (FLC) within the Golden Triangle for four years.

Serving among the rough and wild was never easy—especially for a single lady and practically alone manning the whole fort. But I thank God for His faithfulness in such hard-to-come-by experiences with the hill tribes. In fact, I must thank God for this opening which I had waited since FEBC days.

My first Thai contact was in 1981 at the Baptist Pattaya camp. The many temples and polygamous families that I witnessed lay a burden on my heart for Thailand. The burden increased on a mission trip to the Golden Triangle in May 1984. Then in October 1984 I shouldered the burden when asked to “hold the fort” for Rev. Daniel Kalnin, director of the FLC on furlough studies in U.S.A. That year, the Thai government stopped issuing new quotas for missionaries. The Lord helped me through the Korean Presbyterian Mission at a fee of US\$100. In 1987 it was increased to US\$500 but the

Lord provided me with a Thai husband which automatically gave me residence.

When Rev. Kalnin returned from the States in 1988, both Deeram and I went back to FEBC where Deeram continued his studies (disrupted in 1986) while I raised two children: Kittikhun Paul (1987) and Karuna Ann (1989). I also had the opportunity to train as a kindergarten teacher at the Far Eastern Kindergarten, took a Library Science course and got my piano certificate. We also served at the Thai service worshipping at Beulah House.

Commissioned to Chiang Mai again, the Tamees returned to start the Life B-P Students Centre. The first church service was held on June 2, 1991. Life BPSC celebrated her first anniversary on May 31, 1992 when Rev. Tow baptised four firstfruits.

'Tis true, mission work is never easy. But, "no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). To the mission field: Go, and don't come back.

From 1992 to 1999, Jess and her husband continued to serve on rented premises until it was felt we should buy a bigger property for them. With the economic crash that came on all the ASEAN countries, August 1997, and Thailand was one of the hardest hit, property prices tumbled. In the providence of God a beautifully located rectangular piece of land over 13,000 sq. ft. with three two-storey bungalows thereon was offered for sale at four million baht net. As 23 baht equals one Singapore dollar this worked out to be around S\$175,000. With B.F. savings of their own and a sum salvaged from Frontier Labourers for Christ, Life Church had to make good with S\$116,000. Thus Jess and husband were eminently promoted. The buildings were dedicated by Elder and Mrs. Lim Teck Chye at Christmas 1999.

From Chiang Mai, let us hop over to Burma the land of four million pagodas.

Through the International Council of Christian Churches, Rev. Robert Thawm Luai, leader of the newly-formed Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma was introduced to us. The Lord moved us to a closer fellowship with him because of his Calvinistic faith. This led to our giving him a scholarship to come and take one semester's refresher course at FEBC. (He had obtained his B.Th. already from a fundamental Bible College in India).

Having found a consensus of mind in the extension of God's Kingdom in Burma, in what we believed to be the fastest method of church growth, Life Church decided to support our Burmese brother to establish a Bible School. After completion of his refresher course at FEBC, this is what he reported upon returning to his homeland. This report on church growth was made, belatedly, in 1992:

After completion of my studies at the Far Eastern Bible College in Singapore, I returned to my country, Burma (now Myanmar) and arrived in Rangoon (now Yangon) safely on November 22, 1986. I was accompanied on my way home by Rev. Goh Seng Fong as a delegate of Life B-P Church, on a visit to my country.

On the Lord's day of November 23, 1986, we organised a new congregation at Yangon and thus the "Immanuel Evangelical Presbyterian Church" was born. We started with just two families. The Lord has blessed us richly in that we have 70 members now. Not less than 100 of God's people worship in our church every Sunday. I am the pastor of this church up to now.

When I was a student of Far Eastern Bible College, I had the opportunity of sharing my vision with the principal. That vision was to establish a fundamental Bible College in Myanmar, as there was no fundamental school in my country at that time. The FEFST was born as a result of sharing this burden on May 21, 1987.

It was named in honour of my Alma Mater, the Far Eastern Bible College of Singapore, because our school is the offspring of FEBC and Life B-P Church.

The Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology is founded on and bounded by the Word of God. It is the only fundamental and reformed theological Bible School in Myanmar. The FEFST offers B.Th., G.Th. and C.Th. diplomas. I am the founding principal-cum-president of FEFST in addition to being general secretary of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (EPCM) and pastor of the Immanuel E-P Church, Insein, Yangon.

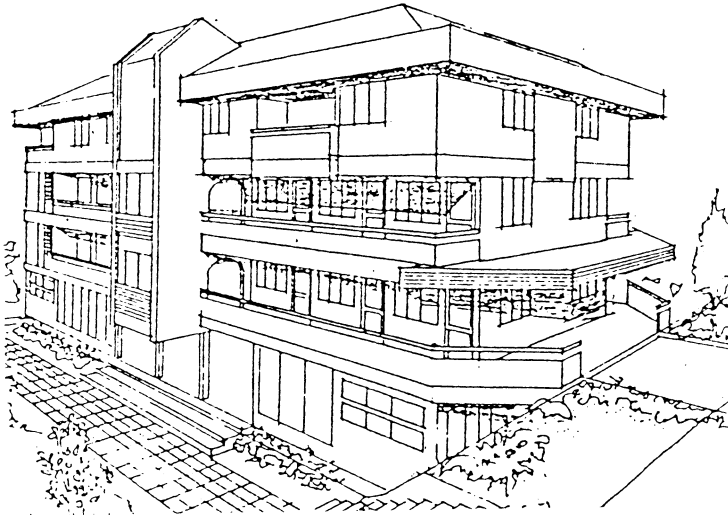
The Lord mightily blessed our school. In the beginning, we had only 17 students. Now we have 80 students with 13 teaching staff and three office workers.

During the 1990-91 summer holidays, the FEFST students returned to their respective native places to preach, to teach and to evangelise different churches covering six provinces or states. They restored 79 backsliders and saved 30 souls.

In conclusion, I wish to thank FEBC for the sound doctrine and reformed theology it has taught me and I would also like to say that all the above blessings were received through the prayers of the FEBC principal and Life Church.

Having read the above report, the reader will be amazed how this Bible School has grown so fast from 17 students to 80 in a matter of a few years. This growth is possible because Life Church increased her liberality of support from S\$20,000 to S\$25,000 per annum whereby a third house was rented to accommodate the physical increase. Moreover, we have also accorded their request to purchase the first house (College headquarters) at the price of S\$100,000. This ownership gives them stability and assurance of continued growth.

The story of how the S\$100,000 was raised must be told. In response to the need of the said sum, the pastor took upon himself to find S\$30,000. There was a lack of S\$70,000 which seemed to weigh heavily on the Session. The reason was Life Church was still substantially indebted over the purchase of Beulah House, an adjoining property to the main Church.



FEFST's 4-Storey Building

A lady member of Life Church who calls herself “Old Lifer” had given a free loan of S\$70,000 to the Beulah House Fund. Reading from the Church Weekly that there was need of a further S\$70,000 for Burma, she called the Pastor the next Monday morning, “Please transfer my loan as a gift to the Burma Fund.” Thus the burden was lifted. If ever there was a murmur, it was now turned into praise.

Life Church and Far Eastern Bible College have grown up together inseparable like Siamese twins. The work of Life Church is linked to FEBC and the outreach of FEBC is supported by Life Church. Both are here seen closely involved in a Bible College Movement.

We see from the above account on Burma how the Gospel is now greatly accelerated in this hermit country through the graduates of the Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology. (In September 1992, it had its first 15 graduates who are now scattered in the fields.)

In the ensuing years, Life Church purchased for FEFST adjacent land on which was built a four-storey extension for the School of

Theology. The new extension is of the same size as Life Church, short of its front porch. The whole project cost half a million Singapore dollars. A few years later we added with a Heidelberg printing press to earn income for the School. This is with the view to their self support.

Andrew Kam

Rev. Andrew Kam Lian Khup graduated with a diploma from FEBC in 1994. Since returning to Myanmar, he has founded an orphanage at North Dagon, which is in the eastern sector of Yangon city. The twenty orphaned boys (age 5-15) come from a malaria-infested area in Chin state where fatalities are frequent. Due to their good Christian upbringing at the orphanage, they are fervently devoted to the Lord and eagerly join in the worship service of Yangon B-P Church, which was established by Rev. Andrew Kam. Three of the older orphans have given their lives for full-time service and will begin preparations for the ministry when they are of age.

Yangon B-P Church now has two worship services every Sunday, 9:30 a.m. at the orphanage, and 1:30 p.m. at a rented premises at Padamyia. The second service is a mission outreach for about 45-65 people from the nearby Kone Tala Pong Village, about



Andrew's Orphanage

20 miles from Yangon city. The evangelising of this poor Buddhist village has not been an easy task. Rev. Kam and his co-labourer, elder Philip have faced much opposition there. But the Lord has blessed the work so that in the last two years fifty persons have come to know Christ out of the thousand families living there. Idols have been removed from thirteen households.

From Burma let us fly over to Manila where the Lord had sent me to minister annually for a number of years. My field of service was to teach at the Centre of Biblical Studies founded by Rev. Dan Ebert, III. As the School was in great need of teachers, we offered to send one of our eminent sons to colabour with them. Here is Charles Seet's own testimony on how he was called to Manila.

When I left FEBC in 1990, the Lord opened a door of service in the mission field. Through the close ties that our College has with Rev. Dan Ebert III, a missionary in the Philippines for over 30 years, I came to know about the need for Bible teachers in the Metro-Manila School of the Bible. My wife and I made a short trip so that the Mission there could assess our suitability as missionary candidates. On our return we shared with our church, our desire to serve the Lord in the Philippines, and after a year of preparation, we were commissioned and sent to this mission field.

Shortly after we arrived in Manila on June 3, 1991, I began teaching Greek I and Major Prophets at the Bible School. The Lord enabled us to find a suitable home and we moved in the middle of July. Our application for a 9-G visa was approved in November, and by the month of December when our boxes of books and household equipment arrived from Singapore, we were quite settled down. The second semester of the Bible School began, and by God's grace I was able to teach 3 courses—Greek II, Esther and Hebrews. The end of the school year saw the graduation of 9 with Bachelor of Theology and 7 with Bachelor of Religious Studies. The new academic year began in June 1992, and I am presently involved in the work of teaching 3 students in the Greek I course, 8 students in the Old Testament Survey I course, and

22 students in the Pentateuch course. Many of these students are already involved in full-time Christian ministry in the local churches.

Besides teaching, the Lord has also given me the opportunity to minister His Word a total of twelve times at the various churches, at the school's chapel hour, and at a Pastors' and Christian workers' conference held in May this year. I have also had the opportunity to help in the promotion of God's Kingdom through design work for letterheads, publicity posters, anniversary, graduation and conference programmes, and logos; and also through publication of Bible study material and newsletters for the Mission and for the Bible School. Some time is also spent being involved in preparations, for the Hilltop Project. God bless Singapore for helping us to build.

I am thankful to the Lord for keeping us in good health and strength, and for granting me good recovery from amoebic dysentery last year. By His grace we have been able to cope with power and water shortages, and with other contingencies. Through these things we have learnt precious lessons on trusting in God's faithfulness, providence and sufficiency for every need.

It is truly by the Lord's grace that we have been able to complete 15 months of missionary service in the Philippines, and we are very thankful for the encouragements we have received, and for the prayers that were made for us.

In 1998 we returned to Singapore, concluding our seven-year ministry in the Philippines. In the time that I taught there, I had the privilege of seeing over 100 students graduate and going forth to serve the Lord in various parts of the Philippines. Some of the best graduates have been invited to come back to join the faculty as lecturers. Thus the Lord has answered our prayers to provide sufficient good local workers to run the various ministries. This became one of the cues for us to leave the mission field. I was actually able to work myself out of a job and pass on all my responsibilities to others who were willing and qualified to bear them.

At the same time, my wife and I realised that the time had come for us to think about our children's education. We tried our older child out in the education system there and saw that it was not suitable. The children would not be able to return to the education system in Singapore if they continued there for too long. As we prayed about this, the Lord led us to consider coming back to Singapore. Many encouraged us to return. Thus we came back to Life B-P Church and I have been serving there as an assistant pastor since then.

After Charles Seet returned to Singapore, Life Church nevertheless continued to maintain the presence of her testimony in the Philippines by supporting a new Christian Drug Rehabilitation Centre in Cebu. Named the House of Hope, it is an extension of The Helping Hand ministry, of Rev. Robert Yeo, FEBCer (1983). We are pleased to part-support the House of Hope in Cebu because the two or three staff sent from Singapore are FEBCers, who have returned a good report. We are happy to be involved in drug rehabilitation as a contribution by Life Church to social service.

Another ministry to the leading ASEAN country is the sending every year of scores of all our publications, plus a *Willmington's Guide to the Bible*, to mostly young pastors or graduating theological students. Here is a typical letter of appreciation from Pastor Leo C. Dalmacio, Fundamental Baptist Church, Philippines:

Dear Pastor Tow:

First of all, I would like to give thanks to God, because of his unchanging love and his unending mercy to us. Pastor, I received the package that you have sent for me. Thank you for sending these materials, most especially Willmington's. It can help me to study more about the Word of God. Thank you for giving me these. It shows your love, concern for the ministry and generosity. Once again thank you, thank you, very, very much.

In Christ love,

Pastor Leo C. Dalmacio

Life Church Book Ministry is not limited to the Philippines but is extended to all ASEAN, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, even to Japan, Canada and the U.S.A. Recently we bulk-mailed all our publications to a newly established Bible College in Sri Lanka and on an earlier occasion, to Miss Kimiko Goto, now a lecturer at an Indonesian Bible College in Surabaya, Indonesia. While we concentrate on our first obligation to ASEAN, we will follow the Lord's leading to earth's end.

Berean BPC

Wee Eng Moh, FEBCer 1992, while a student had served with Shalom BPC under Rev. Tan Choon Seng 1988, and thereafter with Maranatha B-P Mission, 1990. He left Maranatha in December 1991.

He started a Bible Study group in his home every Saturday afternoon. He consulted Rev. Ronny Khoo, his friend and pastor of Tabernacle BPC, then worshipping at the warehouse belonging to Life Church Book Centre. Ronny invited him to use the "afternoon slot" of his premises, and so Berean BPC was born on March 1, 1992.

At the inauguration service preached by Rev. Khoo, 35 people gathered. The following week was crucial to Berean. How many would come to form the nucleus of the Church? 18 turned up. Since then, the young congregation did not look back. Eng Moh was ordained a B-P minister.

The Bereans have struggled through 8 years. They were registered with the Government on April 22, 1997. Today they have 40 regular worshippers using Changi Bethany Church. Berean has all along been a self-supporting, independent Church.

Maranatha BPC

Maranatha B-P Church was founded on October 28, 1990, Reformation Sunday, at St. George's Chapel, Changi from a nucleus of 25 Lifers. The protem committee chairman was Dn. Yiew Pong Sen and the preacher Wee Eng Moh. The initial formative years were rough and difficult. In March 1992, Wee Eng Moh left with a group to form Berean BPC.

Rev. Colin Wong, assistant pastor of Life Church, took over for eight months before he left for the States for further studies. Elder George Tan stood in the gap with the help of Anne Wong (FEBCer 1989) as staff worker. In July 1993 Jack Sin, while still a student at FEBC, took over the helm of the Church. He graduated from FEBC 1995, was ordained and has since become pastor.

Under his ministry, the Church grew by leaps and bounds. He had the Church, leased from the Military Christian Fellowship, renovated and a pondok built outside the Church. He publishes the *Maranatha Messenger*, which is emailed to 18 countries.



Maranatha BPC

Rev. Jack Sin is a missionary pastor. He has a regular outreach to Western Australia and West Malaysia. The Church has now an attendance of 100.

Vietnam

In 1995 Mr. Michael Lim, father of Seen Seen who served as my Church Secretary for eight years, made contact for me to visit Vietnam. As a result of a week's ministry there, we were able to bring out two outstanding young Vietnamese to study at FEBC. While Vietnam is hermetically sealed to the world, God's Kingdom must prevail over Man's Kingdom. Now Rev. Colin Wong succeeds me in our penetration of the Communist country. Through his contact, two more young men are enrolling at FEBC. May our Vietnamese FEBC graduates work out Vietnam's salvation from within.

Filipina Fellowship

Life Church Filipina Fellowship began to take shape in 1985 to cater to Filipina domestic helps worshipping at the 10.30 a.m. service. Tai Ji Choong, an FEBC student was particularly involved in this ministry.

Eduardo Morante, another FEBC student and his wife joined Life Church. Morante, being a Filipino and having served as a preacher before, was requested to join Ji Choong in this growing ministry. After Ji Choong left, the work fell naturally on his shoulders.

The Filipina Fellowship began at 12.30 p.m. after the 10.30 a.m. service. About ten of the young ladies would attend. Four were baptized in 1996 and three in 1997.

When it was observed there were others not attending the 10.30 a.m. service, it was suspected these were Roman Catholics. Through Deacon Ong Eng Lam, a Bible Class was started for them. This soon

became the new Fellowship Hour for the Filipinas. With increased attendance, more came to know the Lord. Out of ten who received the Lord, five were baptised.

In 1999 when Morante obtained his P.R., Rev. Tow offered him to serve full-time with the Filipina Fellowship. The same year, seven were baptised out of 13 who received the Lord. The attendance now is about 20.

Most of these who come to the Fellowship are Roman Catholics. Having known the difference between the Catholic and Protestant Faiths, they have stopped attending mass anymore. Others from Charismatic Churches have ceased from Charismatic services. By becoming born again Christians, they have also become better servants to their masters.

Our Filipina Fellowship has organised an evangelistic outreach once a month to Orchard Road where Filipinos get together. This has brought in some to attend our service. When they return to the Philippines, they will be ambassadors for Christ to their own people.

Tabernacle B-P Chapel

Tabernacle B-P Chapel was started with the launching out from Gilstead Road of the first batch of members from Life Bible Class in 1987. Elder Chia Kim Chwee went with them as “borrowed” elder. The name “Tabernacle” was given by Rev. Tow. Tabernacle found a home first at a warehouse at Tampines Industrial Estate, operated by Christian Life Book Centre. They stayed there for 9½ years. They went out evangelizing Tampines New Town every Lord’s Day. The Lord blessed them with some souls, who were turned from heathen darkness to the light of the Gospel. Rev. Ronny Khoo, FEBCer 1989, became their pastor.

After nine years they shifted to the Salvation Army (Eastern Zone). After four months, they moved on to Bethany Evangelical Free Church (Incidentally this church was registered 30 years ago with the help of Rev. Tow and the late Rev. C.T. Hsu). During the

years they have baptised more than 70. Some have graduated to glory, others have left them for other churches and a few have gone back to the world. Today they have forty in the congregation. Leong Kit Hoong is their new elder. They have begun to support missions by paying visits to Chiang Mai, Thailand and Cambodia.

Cambodia

In July 1997, Civil War broke out in Cambodia. Suddenly there came to shelter with us a Rev. Jimmy Rim with his wife and young daughter through Jonathan Lee Young Lyong, who happened to visit Phnom Penh. Jimmy Rim showed slides of his past involvement with the saving of Cambodian refugees on the Thai Border and appealed emotionally for the evangelisation of Cambodia, a land of blood and mass graves, today.

This was at our Tuesday night Prayer Meeting. The whole congregation was deeply touched. After the service, three graduate Korean students of FEBC simultaneously approached me. They were moved to offer their lives to Cambodia. First was Jonathan Lee who brought Jimmy and wife and daughter to find shelter at FEBC. Second was Moses Hahn Sung Ho and third was David Koo Kyen Hoe. Here was a challenge and a great one to Life Church to send three Korean families to Cambodia.

Fortunately, there was our Chinese service, willing to support Moses Hahn and wife and three children because they had attached themselves to the Chinese congregation all the years they were studying at FEBC. So the English Church took over the other two. Session ratified this sudden onerous undertaking. While Moses Hahn and Jonathan Lee were ordained here at Life Church, David returned to Korea to be ordained by his own church.

By September 1997, Moses and Jonathan were on their way to Cambodia. David Koo arrived with his family by December.

Jonathan felt called to Phnom Penh, the capital city while Moses and David were led to Kompong Som (Sihanoukville), Cambodia's



Ochamna BP Church

major sea port. Jonathan settled down to a ministry to slum children. Moses Hahn and David Koo were attracted to start Bible Schools and building rural churches. Moses had a special Chinese ministry while David opened a Computer School on the side. Travelling with the team to Cambodia was Monica Ong on a short term of three months.

For the last two-and-a-half years, Moses has built some seven rural churches around Kompong Som while David has twelve. A year ago, Surish, FEBCer (1999) joined David to help run his Bible School. Moses Hahn and wife, both FEBC graduates, run theirs. By training young people through a three-year course, they are suitable to be sent out as evangelists and resident preachers of their many newly built churches. Many of these churches are built of wood and not a few are of brick. Several hundreds have been baptised.

Jonathan Lee has a flourishing ministry with the slum children, who are growing up as fine Christian young people. He also visits regularly a Government Orphanage of 250 to teach them the Word and also feeds them with regular supply of bread and rice. As he lives with the people, he often falls sick because of contaminated water. But he soldiers on without complaint.

For the last two-and-a-half years, in the Name of Christ, we have despatched from Life Church 10 Containers, bringing to thousands of the poor good surplus clothing, children's clothing and toys, sardines,



biscuits and baked beans to the delight of the hungry and needy. Are fundamental Churches doing less social work than the so-called Social Gospellers?

Jimmy Rim's book, *With Christ in the Killing Fields* published by FEBC Press, is now translated into Cambodian by an FEBC student and printed locally with our support.



Jimmy Rim came to visit me in the New Year, 2000. He told me he had a new ministry. The Governor of Pailin, stronghold of Pol Pot, Butcher of Cambodia, is requesting him to start a Children's ministry

in their remote mountain hideout. It is a country of a million hidden landmines. But he cannot do it himself. He is asking for volunteers. "Who will go for us?"

Moses Hahn, who accompanied Jimmy to Pailin, has heard the call. With approval from Life Church he is sending his co-worker Phannith, student and translator, with his young wife to Pol Pot's stronghold. His support is US\$200 per month plus a second-hand motor bike costing \$700. They left for Pailin, in May 2000, 16 hours drive from Phnom Penh, via Battambang, centre for tourists going to Angkor Wat.

Brunei

Brunei is one of the earliest to join ASEAN. But here is a closed-up country on the right, no less absolute against Christianity than the Communists. By God's leading, Rev. Peter Wong the pastor of a Church in Brunei came for a refresher course at FEBC. He is now convinced of our B-P stand and doctrine. He is filled with the spirit to evangelise all Brunei and Sarawak. He has come under our part support.

Laos

The last ASEAN country to get us involved is Laos. One day, a medical doctor, most friendly to our Church and FEBC, handed me S\$4,000, designating it for Laos. I told him we had no contact yet, but he insisted we use it for Laos. Sure enough, there was a sister of Life Church going with a medical syndicate to Laos. As a nurse, she was greatly needed. When seven AFers of Life Church were paying her a visit, we handed them the designated fund, which our Nurse-sister used to buy a motor bike for the Evangelical Church of Laos.

Tangkak

Last but not least is Sim Peng Sin, a Nanyang University graduate now studying at FEBC. For the last two years he has been faithfully evangelising Tangkak, a big town twenty miles north of Muar. As a result of his efforts with support from Rawang (rebuilt by Rev. Tow, 1972) they have acquired a two-storey corner terrace house in Tangkak for a Church Service, July 2000. This work is helped out by other FEBCers from Singapore.

Saipan

One student sent by Life Church to even far off Saipan Island in the Pacific is Ho Heng Sau. For the last 3 years, she has been helping Rev. Pang Kok Hiong, another FEBCer, in his great work of winning and baptising 100 converts per year from among the Chinese women garment workers. A big church seating a thousand is now in the planning stage. Ho Heng Sau has acquitted herself most creditably. She deserves our every support. Amen.

27

Into All the World 1984-2000

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15)

From as early as 1951, our relationship with the Philippines through leaders of the FECCC, such as its President, Rev. Antonio Ormeo, has been sweet. But it was not until 1979 that we were introduced to Rev. Dan Ebert III, veteran missionary from America who had pioneered the Gospel into the jungles of Palawan for 12 long years to translate the Bible into the Palawano language.

After Rev. Ebert had completed translation of the New Testament into Palawano and left his jungle domain, he joined up with Rev. Ormeo's Fundamental Baptist Bible Institute in Metro-Manila as Dean of the Faculty. After many years of serving with Ormeo, the time came when his two sons, having returned from training in the States, became full-fledged missionaries to join their father.

Under the counsel of their father, the sons established a Centre for Biblical Studies to train pastors in the Biblical languages and Theology so as to better lead fundamental, separatist Churches in the Philippines. Rev. Dan Ebert of course became the head of the new school.

In the early eighties, Rev. Ebert began making annual visits to Singapore to minister to our Churches. He became a regular contributor to the RPG devotional work books, lectured at FEBC and spoke at several Bible Camps. In reciprocity, both Dr. S.H. Tow my brother and I returned visits to the Philippines from 1984 onwards.

In my case I followed up with several annual visits to teach one time at Ormeo's Bible Institute and thereafter at the Centre of Biblical Studies.

Rev. Ebert was not only involved in training a new generation of Filipino pastors but also concerned for their welfare. He tried to help his graduate students establish new churches. Since B-Ps in Singapore were calling for accelerated missions to all ASEAN countries, Life Church was moved to help them.

At the recommendation of Rev. Ebert, three of his most outstanding students came into our purview. For we would rather build fundamental, separatist Baptist Churches in the Philippines than have anything to do with unfaithful Bible-Presbyterians. This was in the spirit of Dr. J. Gresham Machen, Fundamental Presbyterian leader who fought modernist bosses in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. He said, "I'd rather work with an evangelical Arminian than with a modernist Calvinist."

The first Church we helped to build included purchasing 500 square metre of land from the Government. The second was a dilapidated old "Blood Bought" church which had to be torn down for a new three-storey edifice. (Elder Mahadevan was sent to the Dedication of this downtown Church). The third was building over a piece of land offered by a member. These three Churches built through a period of several years cost Life Church S\$300,000.

While Rev. Ebert was helping his three students to build their Churches, God was planning to build a College much bigger than all the three Churches put together. A Chinese *towkay* had five acres of hilltop land at Antipolo, in the outskirts of Manila. As he was getting old and he wanted his money, he offered the Eberts his hilltop for a song. This sale was hastened also from the fear of complications with the authorities. At the point of consummating the transaction, Calvary B-P Church under Dr. S.H. Tow's leadership, took over. Life Church gladly gave him the reins, since our hands were always full. Nevertheless, we continued to help on the side. We contributed over

US\$100,000. When completed with the erection of nine 'long' houses including the College Administration Hall and Church Auditorium, the total cost was S\$3 million. To the glory of God, the Hilltop project not only houses the College, but is a Conference Centre for hundreds of campers and visitors: For Hilltop is a Shangri-la away from the hustle-bustle of Metro-Manila.

Philippines is the first country in the Far East where the Lord repeatedly sent me and my wife. In 1999, they were still in close touch with us. I was invited to speak at their Graduation exercises.

Downunder

Mrs. Sitor, whom I had the pleasure of baptising because she was Cantonese and I Cantonese-speaking, was a member of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church Chinese Service. In 1985, she and her family migrated "downunder" to Perth, Western Australia. A zealous new convert marooned culturally and spiritually in a White Man's Land, she yearned for fellowship and worship with her own people. This led her to thrice write Dr. S.H. Tow, her pastor, to start a Bible-Presbyterian Church in Perth. As a result of this earnest petition, Dr. Tow, my brother, was moved to action. At Chinese New Year, 1986, an inaugural service was held at the Sitor home. This was declared to constitute the founding of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia.

The Lord blessed this epochal outreach from Singapore so that in no time the little congregation of 30 was able to rent a "lesser" town hall where the holding of Sunday services was more conducive. Robin Tan and wife Patricia, Lifers who migrated before the Sitors to Perth, rallied to the Lord. In those early days of yeoman service, Calvary in Singapore had a difficult time maintaining the Sunday pulpit. As Dr. S.H. Tow could not be there but on occasions, the Sunday pulpit was filled by video tapes of speakers mostly at Calvary's Sunset Gospel Hour. Here is a case where brothers, like Peter and his fellow disciples (John 21) went "fishing" for the Lord

together. Life Church's share in the founding of the first Church established "downunder" is recorded in the *Vision* magazine, 1986-87 as follows:

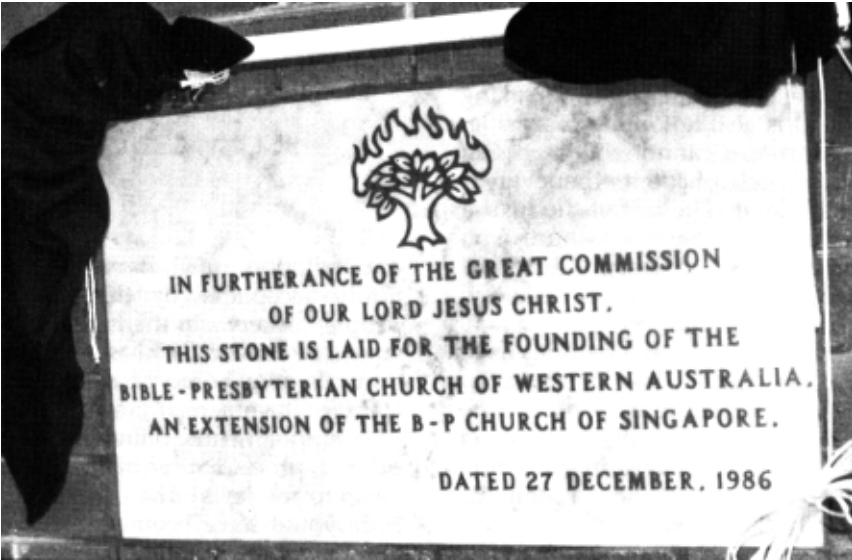
Perth is the first of three outreaches of Calvary B-P Church to Australia. The other two are Adelaide and Melbourne.

On February 23, 1986, in response to the Macedonian call of Mrs. Sitor who had migrated with her family to Perth, the pastor of Calvary BPC flew there to inaugurate what is now known as the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia (BPCWA). The B-P nucleus of this new Church included Sunny and Michael Kwong and Sitor nephews, and Mr. and Mrs. Robin Tan of Life Church. The Lord has used Robin and his wife in the running of the day-to-day affairs of the Church. The publication of a Church Weekly with good material and up-to-date news items has helped tremendously to bring the people together.

No sooner had the young Church been inaugurated in the Sitor home than an ideal sanctuary was found at the Lesser City Hall of Melville, a township of Perth. After a few months, negotiations were started to buy over a 30-year old Presbyterian Church at Mount Pleasant, three miles from Perth on the Canning Highway. This Church is 1½ times the FEBC Hall, with an adjoining social hall half its size. The land area is 1,887 square metre. Hearing of the good work in Perth, a sister of Life Church offered to buy it for the Lord. She gave to Perth a blank cheque.

When the Church first started, video tapes of Calvary worship services were used. Dr. Tow Siang Hwa flew in and out a number of times to keep the home fires burning. Rev. Paauwe also came over from Adelaide to help. There was once when the Life Church pastor flew downunder to preach just one sermon, returning the same Sunday afternoon! That sermon cost S\$900.

In May-June, Rev. and Mrs. Tow ministered in Perth for five Sundays. From September 18, 1986 to January 4, 1987,



they went again, ministering 16 Sundays. (It was during these four months that I felt urged to write my biography. I wrote from our roots in William Burns (1815-1868) to the year 1979 a total of 290 pages.)

Mr. Mark Heath, who was in Perth for three months between June and September, is now married in Singapore. He and wife Grace Lauw (both FEBC graduates) are waiting to go down to serve again in a month or two when their Permanent Resident status is obtained.

Meanwhile, Elder and Mrs. Khoo Peng Kiat have been invited by Calvary to stand in the gap. Friends of Robin, they will be a great help in many ways. In step almost with the Khoos, a young couple, Ong Eng Lam and his wife Shirleen, will be flying also to Perth, where Eng Lam will study at the University. Being zealous youth leaders in Singapore, their joining the BPCWA will no doubt add to the strength of the YF there.

From a weekly attendance of 35, the BPCWA has grown to 100-120 to date. It has become self-supporting after one year.

The founding of BPCWA in fact was the opening of a new chapter of B-Pism. It led, in quick succession, to the starting of two other B-P Churches, one in Adelaide (in conjunction with Rev. Edward Paauwe, missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, U.S.A.) and the other Melbourne (using the house of Loke Tat Luen). Both sprouted one after the other in the same year 1986, like bamboo shoots after the spring rains.

Now that I had served five-and-a-half months in Perth, it was logical that I should help out in Adelaide and Melbourne as well. Ivy and I gladly answered the call to pastoring the young Melbourne congregation in 1989 and 1990 for ten weeks each. During our stay there, we took off for a Sunday to minister in Adelaide. In those pioneering years, the Melbourne congregation was worshipping in borrowed premises of a Government Primary School while Hope B-P Church in Adelaide was located at an old Scout Hall.

During the early nineties, we were invited to speak at a Bible Camp in Adelaide whereby we got involved in going out with the Paauwes to shop for a Church. The Lord led us most wonderfully to a Stone Mansion with 28 rooms sitting on 46,000 square feet of prime land. "This is it," I said, like one falling in love at first sight.

In the providence of God, we procured the handsome property which was once a Roman Catholic Rehabilitation Centre for women for a song—A\$850,000. A sister of Life Church offered A\$200,000 to start the ball rolling.

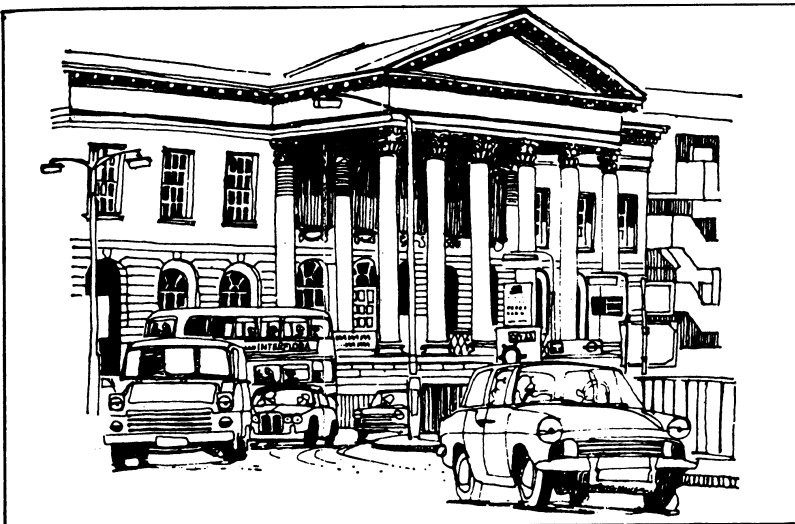
These were our ministries with the Bible Presbyterian Churches in Australia. When a Sydney B-P Church was the last to start in Australia (not realising more would come), we were invited to minister there also.

The B-P Churches in Australia are the beginnings of a global Movement. It spreads to Toronto, Canada, to London, and over two years ago to Vancouver. The call came to us again, and we spent nine weeks in Toronto with Elder Daniel Chew and another eight weeks with a good proportion of Lifers in Vancouver. As for London, we

purposely timed our 8th Pilgrimage to the Holy Land to coincide with the inauguration of New Life B-P Church, May 4, 1997, and to speak on the auspicious occasion.

Talking about London, I now recall the month of July 1986 when I was invited to minister for a week at Spurgeon's Tabernacle (Pastor Dr. Peter Masters). Dr. Masters had been speaker at our B-P Conference at Port Dickson. In coming into contact with us, he was given a copy of *John Sung My Teacher* newly come off the press. Being deeply touched by what he read of God's outpouring of His Spirit on Singapore in the 1935 Revival, he wished that the Church in London should have a firsthand report of "The Asian Awakening". He also ordered 300 copies of *John Sung* to sell in his Tabernacle Book Shop to further spread the knowledge of the Lord's mighty workings in the Far East.

Apart from preaching from Spurgeon's pulpit on Sunday morning, I also lectured four times on the man John Sung, his doctrinal emphasis and methods, (in contrast with the present day evangelists), the Spirit of John Sung in the B-P Movement and what Fundamental Churches lack today.



Spurgeon's Tabernacle

There were 380 who attended “The Summer School of Theology”. Those who came were mostly pastors and preachers and theological students. The lecture I gave them are now published in *The Asian Awakening*, obtainable at FEBC Bookroom.

Incidentally Elder and Mrs. Joshua Lim and daughter came to the Sunday Service. They surprised me and I surprised them. Among the books I gave away at The Tabernacle was the first book I had ever written *In John Sung’s Steps, The Story of Lim Puay Hian*. (Puay Hian was Joshua’s Evangelist father.)

Into all the world, Ivy and I most recently returned to Perth June-July, 1999, to serve seven weeks, and May-June 2000, another six weeks, completing one big circle since we first came here in 1986. Incidentally, it is during this visit in May-June 2000 that I wrote the last 50 pages of my biography.

28

Dissolution of Synod 1988

*“And every city or house divided against itself shall not stand”
(Matt. 12:25)*

Writing in the second edition of *In His Good Time: The story of the Church in Singapore, 1819-1992*, Dr. Bobby E.K. Sng commented:

One of the saddest episodes in the '80s must surely be the dissolution of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore. Begun in the '50s, this church played a historic role in battling liberal theology. Its crusading spirit and strong evangelistic stance ensured rapid growth in the '60s and '70s. By the late '80s, it had started 25 churches with a total membership in excess of 6,000. However, with growth, internal differences also arose. Its relentless call for believers to separate themselves from what it considered to be non-fundamental churches and new-evangelicals, brought a mixed response. Not all agreed on the rigid, narrow definition of 'separation'. In a statement issued on October 30, 1988 describing its voluntary dissolution, the B-P Church declared:

“The decision was arrived at after much prayerful consideration and discussion over certain protracted issues. These issues centred mainly on strong differences in interpreting the Doctrine of Biblical Separation, Fundamentalism, and Neo-Evangelicalism. Concerted attempts were made during the past two years at reconciliation through personal discussions and formal meetings. Even a moratorium

failed to resolve these differences and break the impasse. Dissolution is accepted as the last resort.”

Responding to the Dissolution in “Carmel Weekly” November 6, 1988, Rev. David W.F. Wong writes:

The Synod at its meeting last Sunday night accepted, by an overwhelming majority, the proposal to dissolve the Synod and the B-P Church of Singapore.

However, the individual B-P churches, being separately registered with the Government, will continue to exist with their respective names and autonomy. Because the B-P Church has, from its inception, practised a strict policy of decentralisation, the dissolution of the denominational body does not spell the end of the individual churches. Mt Carmel B-P Church and our congregations will go on without any structural disruption or change. In fact, the dissolution is seen as the breaking of a deadlock so that our churches can move ahead with the Lord’s work without being bogged down by controversy.

We have simply agreed to disagree, and to part in peace. The question has been raised as to whether dissolution is ever a biblical answer to a problem. Is dissolution like divorce a sin? The answer is No. While divorce is a violation of the marriage vows before God, dissolution is no breach of any such vows. The coming together of individuals or organisational bodies is so that we may serve God more effectively. If that purpose is lost, and we find we can serve God more effectively apart, then so be it.

In Scriptures we have examples of the parting of ways of people who are no longer able to work together: Abraham and Lot (Gen. 13:5-11), Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41). Even the two great apostles, Peter and Paul, agreed they should concentrate on different fields as the Lord had called them (Gal. 2:6-10). As one B-P minister rightly puts it, “It is no shame to tell our people that we have tried our best to resolve our differences, and we have failed.” . . .

Now, while the “decision was arrived at after much prayerful consideration and discussion over certain protracted issues, these issues centred mainly on strong differences in interpreting the Doctrine of Biblical Separation, Fundamentalism and Neo-Evangelicalism”. But there were other issues accumulated that must be recalled “for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Cor. 10:11).

The first of these accumulated issues was “tongues”. In the words of Dr. Tow Siang Hwa:

From May 1986 to December 1987 Synod committees studied, met, debated through a dozen or more meetings. The matter even became a major item on the agenda of the 7th Annual B-P Conference on Cameron Highlands September 7-11, 1987. For three days it was a ding-dong battle. The outcome of these long and tedious debates was this: The Zion-Carmel combination maintained that tongues had not ceased, and that these were “meaningful ecstatic utterances.”

Subsequent Synod meetings produced no satisfactory outcome. As it became increasingly clear that a liberal faction was firmly entrenched within the Synod, and no solution could be made, Calvary BPC decided to withdraw from Synod in March 1988. . . .

As for this writer, he was so moved by the Cameron Highlands ordeal that he wrote a 126-page book to refute tongues-speaking from the Autobiography of Wang Ming Tao. In the preface to this book, *Wang Ming Tao and Charismatism*, he says:

The tide of Charismatism is coming in so strong today that it has splashed into the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore. At its Annual Pastors and Leaders Conference on Cameron Highlands September 1987, certain younger leaders maintained that while the tongues of Pentecost (Acts 2) had ceased, those mentioned of the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. 12 and 14) have not. Today they continue in the Church as “meaningful ecstatic utterances”. Now, these tongues are required by Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Churches of their

members as evidence of baptism by the Holy Spirit, but are repudiated by Fundamental Churches that hold to the Reformed tradition.

Insofar as the writer is concerned, he and senior colleagues of the B-P Church had gone through the mighty revival meetings led by Dr. John Sung in Singapore 1935. The working of the Holy Spirit was so manifest that hundreds came to the Lord, confessing their sins in tears of repentance and restitution. Drunkards and opium smokers, cigarette chain-smokers, were delivered snap from their iron-clad shackles. Feuding elders and deacons were melted down in mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. The Church Hall at Telok Ayer Street, where John Sung preached, suddenly became a powerhouse of prayer and praise, of hearty singing and joyful release—but there was no speaking in tongues.

As the Almighty Father has favoured the Chinese Church with several such visitations of Holy Spirit Revival, the writer made a thorough search into the ministry of other mighty evangelists beginning from William Chalmers Burns to Jonathan Goforth, to Miss Dora Yu and to Ting Li Mei, known as the “Moody of China, With One Thousand Souls a Month”. In none of their Spirit-filled ministries was there any mention of tongues.

As he further researched into the life and work of Wang Ming Tao, China’s greatest saint and living martyr still going strong at 89, he was delighted to discover how though Wang Ming Tao was immersed by a Pentecostal preacher, he soon repudiated his teachings, especially visions and tongues. This he has testified in his autobiography, *These Fifty Years*, which is recently translated by Arthur Reynolds into English under the title *A Stone Made Smooth*, and published by Mayflower.

In making known Wang Ming Tao’s deliverance from Charismatism to the English world we have chosen Arthur Reynolds’ translation than making our own. Obviously, such third party witness adds credence to our report.

Indeed, the issue on tongues, unless restated here, would soon be forgotten. Alas, those younger leaders who spoke for tongues have not receded. One of them now sits in high council with them who are well known charismatic leaders (1995).

Other deviations from plain Bible truths taught by the same B-P minister in the name of “scholarship” (see *Focus*, 1974), that shook the faith of the Church are, to quote just a few, as follows:-

Quote A: “Some of the OT accounts have parallels in other literatures. These in no way detract from the truth of the OT account because it was most likely the true one.”

Comment: The Bible’s absolute inerrancy is destroyed by the words “most likely the true one.”

Quote B: “. . . there must be some other explanation for ‘years’ in Genesis. eg if years = months, then Noah’s 950 years were in fact 950 months.” If that is the case, let *Focus* explain Enoch’s begetting Methuselah at 65 years.

Comment: God’s Word said “years,” but FOCUS says “months.” Who is speaking the truth?

Quote C: “There are some matters which cannot be ascertained because we have no way of determining the facts of the case . . . was the Flood over the whole world or only on a part of it?”

Comment: Genesis Chapters 6, 7, 9 stated the “facts of the case” ten times and more, in words which even a child understands, allowing no room for doubt. Further, read 2 Pet 3:1-13 whose inspired commentary on the Flood, is it not in cosmic dimensions? *Focus* has undermined the clear record of God’s Word and evidently had not read 2 Pet. 3:1-13!

The Statement on Dissolution of the B-P Synod continues where Dr. Bobby Sng left off:

With the dissolution of the B-P Synod, each B-P Church nevertheless continues to retain its autonomy by virtue of its individual registration with the Government. Each B-P Church

is answerable to God Almighty and to the Lord Jesus Christ, Head of the Church Universal. May this parting of ways bring an end to a deadlock that has hindered the progress of the BPCS. And may God help each individual B-P Church hold fast to the precious Biblical Separatist and Fundamentalist position, till He comes. Amen.

29

Beulah House 1990

*“Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.”
(2 Sam. 7:11)*

When David desired to build God a House, God was so pleased that He promised to build him a house. He would establish his throne through Solomon to all generations. As a result of building New Life in Woodlands, the old Church at Gilstead Road was blessed beyond measure. All who rallied to the Lord's Cause were also individually blessed, but those who stood with folded arms aside to criticise, but gave nothing, “earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes” (Hag. 1:6).

First of all, Gilstead Road's giving continued liberally as evidenced by the response to the Bukit Batu appeal. The old faithfuls, on top of building New Life, went the extra mile of giving \$150,000 to Bukit Batu in three months.

More important were the spiritual blessings. Church attendance doubled, so much so that by July 1987, a second service was started to cater to the overflowing crowd. This is how our 8 a.m. service came into being. Membership had now pierced the thousand mark. In fact, the crowding began to be felt as early as 1984. To alleviate the situation, a Church-and-College Extension Fund was launched, which by July 1987 reached \$1.072 million.

As there was prospect of buying over 6 Gilstead Road, situated obliquely across the street, we incorporated the Bukit Batu Fund of a total of nearly \$170,000 into the Extension Building Fund. I

personally went to speak to Mr. Reshti, our Iranian neighbour, and he was willing to let go his house of 23,000 sq. ft. at \$110 per sq. ft. Alas, eagle-eyed developers swooped on the prey and carried it away at \$125 per sq. ft. For there is no friendship or moral obligation in business transactions “without consideration”. Whichever early bird, coming with the higher price, catches the worm.

Writing in the Church Weekly under the caption “Man proposes, God disposes”, I said to Lifers,

I have bad news for you! The property across the street that has been agreed upon at \$110 p.s.f. is snapped up by another buyer, “as the price offered by the other party was higher than our price” (as disclosed by our lawyer). Naturally, we were disappointed, but with God ruling and overruling, we can only submit. However, we do not believe this is the end of everything. We are persuaded God has a better plan than ours which He will make known in due time as we patiently wait upon Him.

Writing again on October 8, 1989, I stirred up the hearts of the congregation with high hopes myself.

For several years we have been perplexed how we might solve the congestion problem of our Church grounds. We tried to acquire No. 6 Gilstead Road, but it slipped through our fingers. Of late there was talk of adding another storey on the L-Block. Now we have approached the owners of the Eye Clinic, No. 10 Gilstead, exactly opposite our Church.

Through Elder Ang Kheng Leng, honorary architect of our Church-College-Kindergarten complex, contact is being maintained with the Eye Clinic. There are many bidders, but if the Lord wills we should get it, praises and hosannas to His Holy Name! Meanwhile we can all pray. Come to Tuesday night prayer meeting and pray as a united family.

Our financial position today is we have around \$2 million, 2/3 of which is loaned to sister churches to help them in their building projects. A greater part of these loans, however, are

retrievable in a short time. What we need in addition is at least \$5 million.

From D-Day to Total Attack! (October 15 1989)

D-Day refers to June 6, 1944, when the Allied Forces under General Eisenhower landed in N. France in the final stages of World War II. Last Sunday, when we were still negotiating for the property across the street, we re-launched the sluggish Extension Building Fund. This was our D-Day. Over \$10,000 came in for the EBF.

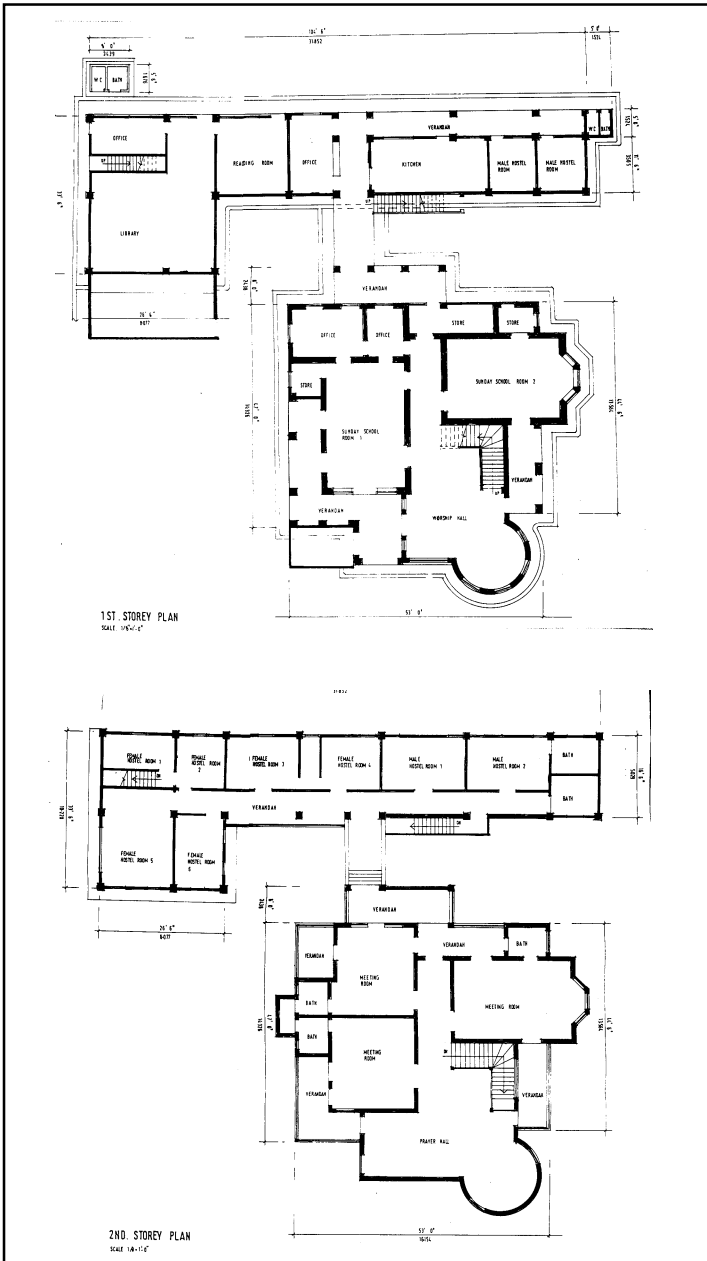
This week we report the meeting with the owner Mrs. Oh through Elder Ang Kheng Leng last Monday evening, October 9. The deal was happily closed for \$6.95 million. With 29,026 sq. ft., the price is slightly less than \$240 per ft. The deposit of 10% works out at \$695,000. The rest is to be paid by February 28, 1990. (Ms. Lim Li, who helped us in Woodlands, is our solicitor again.)

With 4½ months to go, we have little time to waste. Forward, total attack! As the news is spread to the whole Church, members are beginning to rally to the Lord. Be encouraged in the Lord by reading the Offerings column, back page!

“BEULAH LAND”

Since the land across the street has “marriage” value in the words of realtors, a brother suggested we should call it “Beulah Land”. “Beulah” in Hebrew means “married”. With this suggestion we heartily concur! According to David, “The [measuring] lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage” (Ps. 16:6).

The European castle-like structure with attached L-Hostel blends perfectly with our Six-column Church. The spacious lawns allow for Church outdoor functions. The same can be converted into a basketball court cum car park, etc., etc. (By October 29, the total of gifts and loans came to over ½ million.)



The Irresistible Power of God (November 5, 1989)

Let me tell you a little anecdote to encourage your heart!

Years ago, during the building of a bridge across a portion of New York harbour, the engineers were seeking a base for one of the buttresses. They struck upon an old scow (boat) full of bricks and stone that had sunk in the mud until practically buried. Divers were sent down to place great chains under the scow so that it could be raised, but every effort failed.

A young engineer assured them it could be done. He brought two barges and attached huge chains around the scow to beam on the barges. The chains were tightly fastened at low tide. As the tide swept up the harbour, raising the barges, the buried scow shook, shivered and let go. It was raised by the lift of the Atlantic Ocean!

The lethargy that hinders God's work cannot be removed but by God Himself. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

For Future Record! (December 31, 1989)

Upon receipt of an urgent communication from Ms. Lim Li, our solicitor, requesting action be taken on the Sales Agreement advanced by the Vendor, an emergency meeting of the Trustees was called by Dr. Tan to meet with her the same afternoon of December 28, 1989. Elder Chia also came along as Session representative.

The Sales Agreement was signed by pastor on behalf of Purchaser except Clause 11 for adjustment with Vendor. On Friday, December 29, 1989, a cheque for \$695,000 was delivered to our solicitor for transmission to Vendor, being the usual 10% deposit. What brought great relief was that the previous Date of Completion of Payment (28.2.90) is now extended to **April 30, 1990!** This extension is to allow us time to apply for Permission to Purchase and to obtain Change of Use of the said property. Praise the Lord for His Higher Hand in this transaction, for God is faithful, "who will not suffer you

to be tempted (tested) above that ye are able, but will with the temptation (testing) also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10: 13).

This extended date gives us a breather. With a little relenting in our uphill climb, we shall renew our strength, and shall mount up with wings like eagles. (By the end of 1989, the total of gifts and loans was \$2.602 million.)

A Parable from the Airport Travellator (January 21, 1990)

Those of you who have flown out of Changi Airport have experienced the accelerated speed of forward movement by walking on the Travellator. Suppose you do it the reverse way, you will find your progress from 3 cut down to 1.

Our interest-free loans thrust us forward like the travellator, but paying interest on bank loans, like walking in reverse, will retard our financial power from 3 to 1 (i.e., if the travellator's momentum is 1 and yours is 2).

In the event of our having to take a bank loan, say for \$1.5 million, at 6.5% interest, we will have to pay \$97,500 interest per year. Now, should our obligation on say \$2 million interest-free loans take us 3 years to clear, we would have to pay nearly \$300,000 on the bank loan, plus the interest to be paid while clearing the bank loan itself which might amount to \$200,000. That is to say, we will be burdened by \$½ million interest. If we will give and loan enough without taking a bank loan, this \$½ million can be saved for Missions around the world, yea, even hasten the coming of His Kingdom!

How can we avert this heavy burden that retards the Gospel? Let everyone who cares to come and pray Friday night meet at the Parsonage from 8.00 to 9.30 p.m., commencing February 2, 1990. Prayer changes things!

P.S. Although we have \$2.8 million on paper, many pledges have yet to be honoured. Then there is an average expenditure of \$25,000 for the running of the Church. This sum is taken from EBF, please note!

Pastoral Chat (April 1, 1990)

In my Chat with you on February 25, I said, "As you know, our EBF's increase has slowed down quite a bit after Chinese New Year. At the rate we are going, I estimated in the last Weekly we might have to take a \$1 million bank loan. Hopefully paying off the sum in 3 years, on top of an estimated \$2 million free loans, we would require expenditure of \$210,000 on bank interest alone. (But my grandfather taught me never to pay interest). . . ."

Last Lord's Day, you rallied as never before in gifts and big loans totalling over \$400,000. (Of this sum, a \$300,000 cheque was handed me by a Deacon after Tuesday night Prayer Meeting.) This lifted us out of the doldrums of the mid-three millions, so that, as we had earnestly prayed, the \$4 million mark was pierced before the crucial month of April was upon us.

Today we are on "the last lap of our grind, oh, let us take Beulah on time!" There is great incentive to give every dollar now, because it goes to offset the \$1 million bank loan that loomed large when for weeks our giving was sluggish. Can God deliver us out of the last last million before April 30?

"And there is not strength to bring forth"? (April 22, 1990)

Alas, we have only one more Lord's Day left, and the final hour is come! Are we hearing a cry from King Hezekiah, "This is a day of trouble ... for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth?" (Isa. 37:3) Shall God's people, giving so hilariously, be laid low in the final hour, like a woman drained dry of strength to give birth? Shall we fail our God because there are those who can and should give now are still withholding? Your vow, made before God, is now brushed aside?

As it is said, "Self help, with God's help, is the best help," may this be your pastor's last appeal in our struggle to take Beulah Land. And may your response to the Lord's call be made right now as you worship in His sanctuary. Can you not

afford to give all you have on your person this day of Trouble? Or, if you have not the amount the Lord is prompting within, use one of the blue prayer cards and state the amount you'd bring next week? Please put your card in the offering bag! And bring what you pledge next week in cash or cash cheque.

How Did We Cross Our Jordan Last Week? (April 24, 1990)

Last Lord's Day, of all the Days, was most crucial. This Day, the 22nd of April, was appointed of the Lord for the crossing of our Jordan. We had \$385,000 still to surmount (with one more week left), but this sum, though formidable like the waters overflowing Jordan, receded and the riverbed appeared when the Lord moved you in a final spurt to give as follows:

I. 8.00 AM SERVICE

1. Cash & Cheques	\$18,000.00
2. Pledges	\$16,160.00
3. Loan	\$10,000.00
	\$44,960.00

II. 10.30 AM SERVICE

1. Offering bags	\$ 35,010.00
2. Gifts	\$ 87,052.85
3. Loans	\$160,000.00
4. Pledges	\$ 67,820.00
5. Loans (pledged)	\$ 68,000.00
	\$417,882.85

*HALLELUJAH, THE LORD HAS DONE GREAT THINGS
FOR US, SO WE ARE GLAD!*

He has delivered us from Jordan's whelming flood.

Onward we march to Beulah Land

And into all Canaan, the fight is on!

Hallelujah, the Lord has done great things for us, so we are glad!

He has delivered us from Jordan's whelming flood.

Old Jericho comes tumbling down!

That load of bank interest sinks to the ground.

*Hallelujah, the Lord has done great things for us, so we are glad!
 He has delivered us from Jordan's whelming flood.
 From Jericho to Canaan's end,
 The fight is on, forward, till Jesus comes!*

Beulah House—House of Blessing (A Sanctuary for Sparrows and Swallows, Ps. 84)

With the full renovation of Beulah House including the incorporating of many cubicles for individuals, we were able to extend a hospitality ministry to worthy boarders with good recommendation. Through the hospitality ministry, accommodation is given also to many a Western missionary, Christian workers and sick members from our Indonesian and Malaysian churches who come to Singapore for treatment. We also consider young people who hail from China and Asean countries, and O at what a low rate, with such a central location! Beulah House is indeed a House of Blessing to scores who have come and gone, many with the sweetest memories.

Dr. Phil Myers, missionary to Indonesia, came to stay with wife and six children in order to apply for visa for readmission to Indonesia according to Immigration procedures. In appreciation he wrote:

The entire ministry here on Gilstead Road has been a blessing—the prayer services, the chapels, the meal times with the students, the much-needed rest, the new friends, the swimming pool nearby, the wonderful accommodations, the gifts of food (and chocolate), the refrigerator, the books by Dr. Tow, the beautiful breezes, the sightseeing and, of course, your generous gift of \$100. It is very much needed and will be spent with great care and deep thankfulness.

May God continue to bless each of you here in Singapore and expand your vision for His work worldwide.

In Him

-Phil Myers (for all of us).

A goodly number of boarders have come from China, the majority of them non-Christians. They are like the sparrows and swallows of Psalm 84. As a result of staying on holy ground so that they are drawn to our Lord's Day Services, both Chinese and English, they have gladly come to the Saviour. These have spontaneously requested baptism, and I have baptised at least ten of them. Here is one testimony from a China girl, Cai Houping by name

I come from China. Because of the method of school education in China, I was a free-thinker, and didn't believe in any God.

In April of 1994, I came to Singapore, after suffering from a lot of things. At the end of the year, I came to Life B-P Church and asked for a lodging place. At first, Pastor Tow refused. But later, knowing that I came from China, he agreed. I settled down and found peace, and more important, I had a chance to get to know God. Slowly, I also could feel the changing in my heart and mind. But still, I didn't want to be baptised.

God was patient, and He did not give up to save me. One year passed, and a thing changed my mind. In September of 1995, I lost my job. Since I was a foreigner, and I had to apply for Employment Pass to stay on, the situation was terrible for me. Fortunately all the people in Beulah House cared for me and helped me, especially Preacher Cai an FEBC student and his wife, and Deacon Yiew. Pastor Tow even prayed for me at the Tuesday Night prayer meeting.

Thank God, three weeks later, I found a much better job. During the intervening time, since I was quite free, I read the Bible very often. I was able also to help 3 Chinese Koreans stranded in Singapore but found shelter at Beulah House. From them, I could see God's almighty power and His arrangement, too.

I can't wait any longer. For having found Him to be true, I made up my mind to be baptised and become a member of Christ's family. Praise the Lord.

Ed. note: Latest statistics of Christians in China is 80 million! In 1949 when the Communists took over China there were only one million Protestants.

A Chinese couple, the wife a scholarship student at NUS, were in trouble with their Government. The husband, being an underground Christian leader, had been imprisoned for several months for his disobedience to conform. His visa to Singapore was running out. Had he to return to China, he would fall into the hands of the authorities again.

He managed in the nick of time to get a tourist visa to Australia. But how long could he stay in the new country? It happened that one FEBC student from Australia, Errol Stone, was a friend of the Premier of West Australia. So, we sent him to go along so he could plead for our China boarder with the highest-up for his 'refugee' status. Through this first step, our China friend and his wife finally found entrance to Australia. Now this couple are members of the B-P Church, Western Australia, and prospering.

Robert Gongga of Indonesia came to Singapore with his wife and three children. His purpose was to seek cure for his insomnia. No matter what was dispensed to him, he remained sleepless night after night. Robert was in fact a church worker, having graduated from Trinity College, Singapore. To kill two birds with one stone, he thought he might as well join FEBC while seeking medication here. To his utter surprise, after he shifted to stay in Beulah House, he found himself completely cured within a week. Staying in Jesus' House gave him such peace and poise of heart. Together with his family, he stayed on for three years until he graduated with the M.Div. He also found a position as Indonesian preacher with the Methodist Church, and with it permanent residence in Singapore. His eldest son has gone on to the 'A' level and University.

A Chinese-Indonesian lady, suffering from headache for three years, came to lodge at Beulah House with her husband. She spent \$500 for the X-ray. After staying in God's House for three nights she suddenly found relief. She stayed on for another few days and



Beulah House

obtained perfect peace and rest. She therefore came to join us at the FEBC Lunch Hour. She gave a wonderful testimony to the whole student body. She never came back again.

There are other testimonies of blessing I could relate, but suffice this the most wonderful of them all. A Mr. Su and his wife came to Singapore in search of cure for cancer. He stayed in a relative's house. Seeing their displeasure, they somehow found their way to Beulah House. Then it was pronounced by the specialist his life would not last another six months.

When I went to Beulah House to pray for him, he readily received Christ in a torrent of tears, for he was a temple warden at Tanjung Uban, Bintan Island, Indonesia. Soon after his return to Uban he sent word for me to go and baptise him. On the day of baptism, he had his wife and six children all lined up at the front

pews. His whole family believed except the eldest daughter, who was engaged to be married and therefore under the control of the husband's family. (Nevertheless, it was reported that she believed after her marriage, with her husband.) When I approached Mr. Su, he immediately fell to his knees as a sign of glad submission to the Lord. He and his wife and children were gloriously saved. Many of the Chinese temple worshippers witnessed his severance from the idols to serve the living and true God.

Mr. Su, according to the doctor's pronouncement, died in six months. Absent from the body, he is now with the Lord.

Beulah House—House of Blessing. A sanctuary for sparrows and swallows (Ps. 84). Amen.

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The Story of Kemaman and Kuantan 1992-2000

“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.” (Isa. 32:20)

After the death of Mrs. Ling, John felt called to serve the Lord full-time. So he enrolled to study at FEBC. He graduated in 1990 and got married again. We ordained him.

In July 1992, a call came to him and wife from faraway Kemaman, second largest town in Trengganu on the East Coast. He was to restart the defunct Chinese Presbyterian Church.



Rev. John Ling

Since their coming to Kemaman, they discovered a goodly number of the English-speaking. As Kemaman is near the offshore oil fields, there were the engineers, doctors, technicians, yea, the higher echelon of society, who also needed the Gospel. Once a Korean engineer came to their Chinese service. Rev. Ling also found Christians of other races as he went about the town.

Now the story of the Kemaman Church is this. About 50 years ago, an English expatriate who loved the Lord built a beautiful church with a big parsonage over a three room kindergarten. He stayed in the Parsonage himself for some years. When he left

Kemaman he bequeathed the whole property, the only church registered with the Government, to the Chinese Presbyterians. While the Kindergarten has always carried on, with an enrolment of 90 in 1992, the Church was left without a pastor for two long years.

The first thing that John did was to round up a half dozen of the old Faithfuls to start all over again. Being a Presbyterian Gospel Station without a name, he got the congregation to agree to be called "Life Presbyterian Church". Why did you call it "Life"? I asked. "Because, it was dead, and needed the Life of Jesus." When we visited in April 1994, there were 30 regularly worshipping.

Under Elder Sng Teck Leong, a VBS was held some months back where the Kindergarten children attended a four-day session. A second VBS was being planned in June with a group of Lifers going up this time. But what Rev. Ling requested us was to help him start the much needed English Service. The solution seemed to be the forming of a Life-FEBC Preaching Band. The team of preachers and student-singers would visit Kemaman three weeks of the month. They would not only supply the pulpit but also run a Youth Fellowship, and if need be, speak (with interpretation) at the Chinese Service. Friday is the day of worship, since Trengganu is a strict Muslim state, refusing to join the more liberal ones like Johor, to have Sunday a public holiday. This actually suited our purpose, because some FEBC lecturers, who would be involved, had to preach in Singapore on Sunday. The coordination and sending of preachers to Kemaman was entrusted to Dr. Jeffrey Khoo.

To accommodate the Gospel Team up there regularly, we found two rooms in the Kindergarten available, with adjacent bathroom and kitchen most convenient. We decided on the spot to have the two rooms renovated and repainted, including the kitchen and bathroom, at our own expense. Later the Men's Fellowship of Life Church installed a new refrigerator.

On July 1, 1994 the English Service in Kemaman was inaugurated. Here's a first hand report from Angelina Sin:

July 1, 1994 is a significant and memorable date for both the Kemaman Life Presbyterian Church and Life BP Church in Singapore. It was the day of dual blessings as the long-awaited English Worship Service and Youth Fellowship were both inaugurated.

A team of 10 led by our pastor, Rev. Timothy Tow, left Singapore at 8 p.m. on Thursday by night coach headed for Trengganu. We thank God for a safe and comfortable journey through the often dark, winding and bumpy roads on the east coast of the Malaysian peninsula. We were expected to arrive at Kemaman at 4.30 a.m. the next morning. Instead, we actually arrived at a record time of 3.45 a.m.! While waiting for Rev. John Ling to pick us up from the bus terminal, we were refreshed with hot drinks from a nearby coffee shop and even Korean sushi brought by an FEBCer. Rev. Ling came in good time and we were whisked to the church for a quick rest before the break of dawn.

The first English Worship Service of Kemaman Life Presbyterian Church at 10 a.m. that morning was attended by about 30 to 40 people. Except for some worshippers from the Chinese Service, most of them were new to the Church. Thank God for the timeliness of the English Service. Rev. Tow gave the keynote message on *The Great Commission* to challenge the worshippers to go and preach the Gospel to others and bring them to the saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Our Korean FEBCer, Kim Sung Moo, presented a solo item *O Jerusalem* which was warmly received when Pastor taught the congregation this beautiful song. The three preachers for the subsequent weeks, Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, Dn. Jack Sin and Dn. Yiew Pong Sen, were also introduced to the congregation. While the Worship Service was in progress, a Children's Sunday School was conducted by Mrs. Ling and Sister Ada. We had a wonderful time of fellowship together while having refreshments after the service.

The Kemaman Church treated us to a delectable dinner at a nearby restaurant. Thereafter, we returned to commence the Youth Fellowship meeting at 8 p.m. It was attended by slightly

more than 20 brethren. Dr. Jeffrey Khoo was the Lord's messenger and he spoke on God's love. Those at the meeting were also challenged through a hymn to bring one friend with them the following week. The meeting ended promptly at about 9.30 p.m. The team then prepared to catch the 10.30 p.m. Singapore-bound night coach. Our journey home was delayed and we arrived in Singapore at 7.45 on Saturday morning.

The weekly team to be sent from Life Church will have a full load of ministry in Kemaman, beginning with Worship Service and Sunday School at 10.00 a.m. and Youth Fellowship at 8.00 p.m. Is there any among us who would like to share this ministry and go with the team occasionally? Please pray for the safety and ministry of these weekly preaching teams to be sent from our midst.

Angelina Sin's report on the Inauguration of the English Service in Kemaman was quickly followed by mine in the Weekly dated July 31:

Kemaman, not too long ago a fishing village, has mushroomed into Trengganu's second city because of discovery of offshore oil wells. People of all nations gather here to work, also in the nearby refineries. The port of Kemaman has also gained new status.

A Mr. Roger Wee had been praying God would revive the English Service of Kemaman Presbyterian Church. When we launched out July 1, 1994, he was overjoyed. "God has answered my prayer," he exclaimed.

Together with the restarting of the English Service is also the revival of the Sunday School and the founding of a Youth Fellowship. That is the reason why we need a team of at least three to supply the pulpit and the other two meetings. (The Sunday School is held simultaneously with the Church Service).

Deacon Jack Sin reported meeting an Australian helicopter engineer in the night coach he was riding to

Kemaman. He is Dave Grant and comes from Cairns. He has a wife and two children. He was invited to our worship. Samuel of India went along, and he was delighted to testify for the Lord to three Indians at the Service. An American couple has started to come also to our Service. These from various nations now attending number 15. For who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zech. 4:10).

A new development: The worship service has now changed to 8 p.m. Friday to cater to more people. Friday morning many of them go shopping—to Kuantan 35 miles south. This change of schedule, however, does not affect the smoothness of our travel timetable. We leave Singapore Thursday 8 p.m. by *de luxe* night coach, arriving Kemaman 4 a.m. We return from Kemaman Friday 10.30 p.m. arriving back Singapore 7 a.m. Saturday. (We have clean and comfortable quarters on the premises of the church Kindergarten for our evangelistic teams.)

"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa. 6:8).

Seven months after our entrance to Kemaman (406 k.m. north of Singapore), we began to think of establishing a B-P work of our own. We decided on Kuantan, capital of Pahang State. Kuantan is a burgeoning city like Johor Bahru. It is Malaysia's chief seaport on the East Coast.

Having decided with John Ling to plant a foothold in Kuantan (56 k.m. south of Kemaman), he scoured the newspapers, and found a semi-detached house in an estate occupied predominantly by idol-worshipping Chinese. It is a two-storey building with 2444 sq. ft. floor space. It is freehold and sits on 6591 sq. ft. of prime land. Two years unoccupied and overgrown with shrubs and lallang, and therefore needing overall repairs, it was offered for sale by the bank for RM160,000. As this was to be a Kindergarten project, the bank gave us a discount of RM10,000.

With such a property, what could we do? Should it be renovated and extended for the said purpose of a Christian Kindergarten? When



Our Kuantan Kindergarten

we offer our services to the little ones, who are truly also in a rat race—to learn—we have good contact with their parents. (Isa. 11:6). From this mustard seed will grow a tree, a Church in days to come. As Rev. Ling was a Government certified teacher, we could apply for permission to open a Kindergarten in his name. In fact, he had experience as manager of Kelapa Sawit Kindergarten for two decades. He was our man on the spot.

When Session was called to a special meeting, the decision to acquire the property was unanimous. A confirming sign of the Lord's approval was the receipt of four offerings totalling \$9,265 in one day. When I phoned John Ling about this, he was overjoyed.

By Easter 1996, renovation of the property with extension of a 800 sq. ft. Kindergarten was completed. A note of thanks for the Lord was registered in that by the timely acquisition of the property, we were exempted from paying a levy of RM100,000, newly chargeable to Singapore buyers. At any rate we thanked the Lord that being registered in my brother Dr. Tow Siang Yeow's name, he being a Malaysian, we were free.

To dedicate the renovated building plus the new kindergarten extension, the date fixed was Easter Saturday, April 6. Two coaches with seating for 84 passengers were hired for this happy occasion. In order to make the trip in one day, we set out from Gilstead Road at 4.30 a.m. sharp. It took 7½ hours via the new Segamat Highway, so we could hold Dedication at 11.30 a.m. With lunch provided on the new premises, we could leave at 2.30 p.m. Our return trip by the Coastal Highway took us to Mersing where dinner was served. We returned safely by 9.30 p.m. The total cost of this exciting extended tour was \$50 per head, but the Church decided to make it free! (The distance between Singapore and Kuantan is 210 miles or 406 km.)

While the Church rejoiced in the finishing of a beautiful job in Kuantan, a purely Life Church enterprise, we must not fail to record with greater rejoicing the conversion of Dr. and Mrs. Wee Tiong Soon, daughter and two other sisters. Rev. John Ling baptised them back in Kemaman, May 3, 1996. Further to this record, Rev. Stephen Khoo wrote in the Weekly dated May 12, 1996:

Last Friday, May 3, Deacon Henry Tan together with his son Timothy and brother Caleb and sister Wendy (EBF) went to Kemaman to encourage the brethren there and to witness the baptism of Dr. and Mrs. Wee Tiong Soon and their daughter, and two other sisters, Mau Kim Leng and Christine Tan. Rev. John Ling baptized them. The Lord be praised for this outreach on the east coast of Peninsula Malaysia which is bearing fruit. Pray that the church will grow from strength to strength.

At last Tuesday's prayer meeting brother Caleb shared that Rev. John Ling's health is not good and we prayed for him. I spoke to Rev. John Ling this morning (May 9) and he praised God that he was feeling much better and he was very cheerful. He is scheduled to have another medical check-up in Kuala Lumpur on May 14. Do remember him and his wife in prayer that our loving Father will restore him with good health and strength to serve Him many more blessed years.

John Ling went to Kuala Lumpur to check up on his health, May 14 1996. Owing to heart failure, John reluctantly had to retire from

servicing with us and he and his wife returned to their home in Kelapa Sawit. Nevertheless, he continued to serve the Lord faithfully as he became better. He lived on for four more years till March 2, 2000, age 67 years. He had run the race. He had kept the faith. He had received a crown of righteousness. Amen.

Rev. and Mrs. Kim Kah Teck succeeded Rev. and Mrs. John Ling in the Kuantan ministry until they shifted to start a new work in their ancestral home in Malacca, June 2000.

When Rev. John Ling left the Kemaman Church to serve with us in Kuantan, the Chinese pulpit in Kemaman was filled by Rev. Wong while the English congregation carried on with speakers from Life Church. Dr. Wee Tiong Soon, now heading the English congregation, chose to become Bible-Presbyterian. On June 5, 1998, they moved out to worship in his own house. When they moved out, a few members of the Chinese congregation also went with them.

From Dr. Wee's house, the young Church now known as Life Bible-Presbyterian Church shifted to an upstairs shophouse in town, which also belongs to him. Now it is a growing congregation worshipping at Tingkat 2, Lot 573, Jalan Che Teng, 24000 Kemaman, Trengganu, Malaysia. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters" (Isa. 32:20). We have now two B-P Churches on the East Coast, Kemaman and Kuantan.

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Mersing, Ahoy! 1996-2000

*“The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places;
yea, I have a goodly heritage.” (Ps. 16:6)*

In my journeyings to Kuantan and Kemaman, I began to develop a burden for founding a seaside resort to cater to the holding of annual Conferences or “Bible Camps”. Such facility shall be open to all our B-P Churches. Such a Centre should double as a Church with regular services on the Lord’s Day. Where should such a resort be built? Mersing! Why? It is strategically situated mid-point between Singapore and Kuantan. Mersing is 100 miles north of Singapore and 110 miles south of Kuantan.

Having held three Bible Camps in Mersing in days gone by, I am quite conversant with the lie of the land and where the white sands are. I know of a spot on the far side of the shore after crossing the Mersing Bridge, towards Endau. O Lord, I prayed, give us this land and the open sea.

One day, I phoned John Ling for no special reason. But Mersing came up in our conversation. I casually asked if he knew of any seaside land available in the market. “Oh yes”, he replied, “I have a brother-in-law who is a broker. I hear he has some contact in Mersing.”

The sequel to this casual conversation was an urgent letter faxed to Session members, dated August 1, 1996:

I HAD A DREAM

I had a dream—the dream of an Ocean Resort for our members. This came to me after the completion of the Kuantan Kindergarten Project. I told it to John Ling. I felt an urge to develop a campsite on the Mersing seaside doubling for a mission outreach.

This dream seemed to be materialising when John phoned me a week ago. I planned to go with Jeffrey Khoo on an early morning last week. But the night before this, John Ling phoned to say the seaside land was sold. We were disappointed.

Early this week John phoned to say another piece of land nearby was available, but costing RM1.50 more per sq. ft. This time I arranged for Elder Khoo and Deacon Pong Sen to come along. We prayed for this venture at the Tuesday night prayer meeting. Deacon Wee Hian Kok showed interest after the meeting.

We set out from J.B. this morning (Thursday, August 1) at 10 a.m. with the broker at the wheel. In 2½ hours we arrived at our destination. The broker told us that the first piece of seaside land that was supposed to be sold was now open to us, because the cheque received was two weeks postdated. Whoever pays the deposit first gets it!

Moreover, the owner was willing to reduce 50 cents per sq. ft. Instead of RM10.50 per sq. ft. it was now RM10 net. The area of the land for sale is 65,580 sq. ft. at RM655,800 or roughly S\$367,000, price of a four-room HDB flat.

The price is insignificant. The land whether it is abutting the sea is the crux of the matter. On the way I prayed, “Lord, give us one that stands on the sea with good view and plenty of cool breezes.” Lo, and behold, when we came on the site it was exactly what I had dreamed. Moreover access to the land on the seafront is served by an excellent metal road right to the doorstep, (The broker told us our land is in an area now blueprinted for tourism by the Government.)

Both Elder Khoo and Deacon Yiew fully concurred—this is our land!

Brethren, this golden opportunity must not slip through our hand. The Lord give you the faith and foresight. In order that you may see the Promised Land as “the three spies” have seen we will take a special trip to Mersing this Lord’s Day immediately after the 10.30 a.m. Service. Bring your wives along, and your passports. ‘The King’s Business requires haste.’ We stop on the way to enjoy a bowl of famous Jemaluang Won Ton Meen. Equally famous is their Towhuay. And let the decision be made on the spot. Seeing is believing! And herewith a first glimpse through enclosed maps and photo.

To accommodate all of us, we’ll charter a coach through Transglobe. On receipt of this Epistle please indicate whether you’re coming by phoning the office, 2569256.

God bless.

Yours obediently,
TIMOTHY TOW
Pastor

Writing in our Church Weekly, August 11, 1996, I commented under the caption “Another Goodly Heritage”:

This is our “Mersing Ocean Resort” at first sight!, the fulfilling of a dream so soon, a happiest surprise package from the Lord—another goodly heritage. So we can sing with David:

*The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup:
Thou maintainest my lot.
The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places,
Yea, I have a goodly heritage. (Ps. 16:5-6)*

To tell the story, let me begin with the letter extraordinary that was faxed to Session members or sent by express mail, August 1, 1996 (reread above).



The Sequel

As less than half the Session members could view the Mersing seaside land, we were obliged to meet immediately after the 10.30 a.m. Service. We had the quorum with Elder Mahadevan phoning in his strong support because he was on duty elsewhere. The matter was discussed which took half an hour to decide. It was unanimous. The dozen who could come including their wives totalled 19. In our Church van and Maranatha's we left at 12.50. Our stop at Jemaluang was most refreshing.

But more refreshing was our arrival on the sea front of the property. As it was low tide it showed a white sandbank most suitable for swimming. Under the casuarinas that sheltered us like giant umbrellas, with a cool breeze stealing from the ocean, we were held on the beach almost spellbound. That's it!

Now the 15% deposit payment of RM105,000 requested by the vendor. By Monday morning, before noon, the Treasurer's wife, Mrs. Chia, delivered it by hand to me, We arranged to meet the broker at 2 p.m. Deacon Yiew drove and Rev. Peter Chua came along. The sum by cheque was paid to our Lawyers, Lam and Lim, at the Pelangi.

The BPs have 20 churches and stations in Malaysia. This project is open to BPs on either side of the Causeway. We

propose to call it “B-P Youth Camp,” for it will be for our young people, particularly.

The remainder of the land price must be paid in 3-4 months. How and when our Church should develop this Promised Land comes on the agenda of Session Meeting, August 21, 1996. Deacon Victor Loo of Ang Kheng Leng is our Church architect.

The benefits of acquiring this BP Youth Campsite are limitless! Apart from saving the heavy subsidies usually needed for our Annual Bible Conference, more retreats can be held on our own property any time, all the time. Souls will be saved, edified and consecrated. Also, the meeting hall will be available for weekly worship and related meetings, a built-in Chapel. The resident preacher (pastor) will double as warden. The Camp will be run by free-will offerings. Mersing is 3 hours drive from Gilstead Road (100 miles, exact) and only 2½ if you set out early to avoid heavy traffic on the J.B.-Ulu Tiram sector. With the refreshing stop at Jemaluang, 87th mile, the journey is made “in no time.” Here is an instant resort whenever you can make it. Even after office at 5 p.m. on a Friday, by 8 p.m. you’re there! Stay till Sunday to join the worship and return Monday morning. If you leave 5.30 a.m., you’re home in time to go to office. This is one of the benefits from our B-P camp and resort.

Now, the crucial factor before we can see all this is money! I am not afraid to mention the Tiger (as the Chinese saying goes) nor will your face be flushed! If we could take Beulah House in 6 months at that high price, what is Mersing in comparison? Personally speaking, I would launch out after full payment on the land is made, and complete the Project by August 1997. But we need everybody’s support, every Fellowship’s support, the S.S.’s support, the Chinese Service’s support, the Indonesian Service’s support, and our Readers’, not the least. “Self help, with God’s help is the best help.”

* * *

At the time we closed the deal for our Mersing seaside land, the prevailing price was RM12 p.s.f. We got it at RM10 because the Vendor was in need of immediate cash. Praise the Lord, we had just enough to pay him the 15% he required.

Having paid the deposit, we had the land surveyed for RM3750 or S\$1,800 by October 1996. On October 29, full payment of RM675,180 was made, including RM26,021 for lawyer's fees, in the name of Dato Dr. Tow Siang Yeow, a Malaysian, as Trustee of Life Church. He is my younger brother and a former Government servant of Johor.



Dr. Tow Siang Yeow

With the first flush of enthusiasm and only theoretical knowledge, we asked our architect to plan a campsite to cater for 300. When the plan was drawn, I was overwhelmed by its mammoth size. Just as I was in this predicament, I received an enlightening letter from Paul Cheong of the Adult Fellowship. As it is said that two are a confirmation, I totally agreed with him to size it down to more practical proportions. I was delivered from being a hotelier.

When the architect delivered the revised plan, we had a compact campsite to cater to one hundred and fifty.

Entangled by much red tape, our building plans were not approved even after one year. Now we know why! The Currency Crisis, which struck ASEAN beginning with Thailand in August 1997, put us in a more favourable position to the ringgit. A blessing in disguise. This gave us a better deal in our contract.

Praise the Lord, we also found the right contractor, an experienced and well-established builder to do the job. The price was around S\$2 million. The same in Singapore would be over S\$4 million. We came to an agreement with Practech Development Sdn. Berhad of Klang, West Malaysia (Mr. Ong Hook Kee) early January 1998 at the venue of Life Church, Gilstead Road. Our final papers

were submitted to the Malaysian Government. Once this final approval was given, we would build immediately.

Mersing, Ahoy! D-Day for Ground-breaking was timed for Easter, 1999. Here is the impression of the Ground-breaking ceremony by Elder Geoffrey Tan in the Life Weekly, April 11, 1999:

On a bright Easter morning after the breakfast in church, 52 Lifers led by Pastor and Mrs. Tow, four Elders and a Deacon boarded an airconditioned coach for the ground-breaking ceremony of our Mersing Land. By the grace of God, we went through the Malaysian Customs without any difficulty except that one of our members brought the wrong passport. The time duration of three hours was all it took for the pleasant journey of the coach from the causeway to our destination.

How wonderful it was when we reached the bustling town of Mersing, the landmark of the Timotel and the boats which were moored for Tioman Island. We came to our journey's end half an hour after noon. We were surprised to see an enchanting piece of land facing the sandy beach and greenish blue sea where in the distance we could see the shadows of Tioman Island.

Half an hour later, Revs. John Ling, David Wong and Kim Kah Teck together with their church members, and Deacon Henry Tan carrying additional Lifers in our church van joined us. A group photograph was taken before the official ground breaking ceremony. Pastor then gave the exhortation from God's Word in relation to the guidance from the Lord to acquire the precious piece of land for a BP Youth centre and a Gospel witness in that region of the East Coast of the Malayan Peninsula.

Our contractor, Mr. Ong, prepared two changkols for our Pastor and Elder (Dr.) Tow Siang Yeow to break the ground as a symbol for the development of the land to commence. "The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Ps 16:5,6).

At about two in the afternoon, we proceeded to have our delicious lunch at the Timotel before we left for home.

Four months after the Ground-breaking, we made the first payment to the Contractor, which amounted to S\$323,407. This sum included RM110,000 being conversion fee from Agriculture to Tourism. Earth filling is RM180,000, piling RM200,000.

After this big payment, our Treasury ran dry. Happily we had \$500,000 owing by B-P Churches which would be returned to us in the months ahead. For the first time I appealed to the Lord's people to bring in their tithes at a Tuesday night Prayer Meeting. The next morning, a brother responded with \$5,000. And many more items came into God's Storehouse.

Several more payments were made to the Contractor with substantial sums from FEBC. When we came to the second last installment of \$200,000 due May 31, 2000, and we had only ten more days to go, the Treasurer reported we were \$90,000 short. Thanks to e-mail's lightning speed and coverage, Rev. Charles Seet sent an S.O.S. to Session Members, Saturday, May 27. Subject: Urgent prayer for Semi-final Mersing Payment:

Please pray that tomorrow's offering (May 28,2000 from the worship services will reach \$90,000, so that we will be able to meet the payment (\$200,000) for the Mersing Youth Camp which is due by Wednesday (May 31, 2000). According to our Treasurer, our church account balance is now only \$110,000. This is because \$60,000 was just paid for air-conditioning and about \$7,000 was sent to Rev. David Koo in Kompong Som, Cambodia.

Then came the lightning e-mail reply to Session members, dated Sunday, May 28, 2000, 15:20:

Thank God for mercifully answering our prayer for today's offering! I think that this is unprecedented for the offerings of this year. The sum of \$90,000 we prayed for has been exceeded by nearly \$63,000. We can therefore meet the end of the month payment for Mersing.

The following is Deacon Tan Yew Chong's detailed report:

I am pleased to inform you of this Sunday's receipts. Individuals and fellowship groups, S\$121,220 especially 3 significant amounts of \$10,000, \$40,000 and \$50,000. 8 a.m. Service \$11,240 (including designated receipts) 10.30 a.m. Service \$20,250 (including designated receipts). Total \$152,710. Praise the Lord, Treasurer.

E-mail from Joel and Audrey, May 28, 2000, 6.08 p.m.:

All glory to God. May this be an encouragement to us as we launch into the Beulah Project! G.L.

Now, what was supposed to be the Semi-final payment turned out not to be so. And what was supposed to be the date of completion was delayed by another six months. This means more money to be dished out. The only consolation is the Contractor has all along been doing a very fine job. The final date of completion and handover is now fixed for December 31, 2000. The total bill will come to S\$2.6 million.



Mersing Youth Camp

32

Death in the Pot

“So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.” (2 Kgs. 4:40,41)

“Death in the Pot” (Weekly, July 26, 1998)

For 300 years the King James Bible (Authorised Version) reigned supreme until two Cambridge Greek scholars, Westcott and Hort, arose to challenge it in 1870. As a result of their machinations, they got it revised in 1881. So a new version, the Revised Version was produced, which changed ten thousand of the sacred text. (But the Revised Version, while it enjoyed a good sale at first, has for long died a diseased death.) Nevertheless, Westcott and Hort enjoyed the full confidence of the Church and their word was law. They took away the account of Jesus pardoning the woman taken in adultery (John 7:53-8:11) as no part of John's Gospel but a later interpolation (insertion by another hand). They cut away the last 12 verses of Mark and the Johannine Comma, where the Trinity is taught (1 John 5:7,8). These are three glaring examples.

When I was a student in Faith Seminary 1948, we were taught to accept everything Westcott and Hort had taught. When Dr. D.A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D. was in Dallas Seminary, 1948, he also was taught to receive everything that Westcott and Hort had given. But truth will out! God raised up a theological student, Edward F. Hills

(1912-81), a classmate of Dr. Carl McIntire at Westminster Seminary, to research into Westcott and Hort. Edward F. Hills, B.Th., Th.M., and Th.D. (Harvard Divinity School), having studied for over 15 years, raised the alarm, "Death in the pot." The teaching of Westcott and Hort is poison to our souls!

With this alarm raised, other eminent theologians who are on the Lord's side have joined his ranks, one by one, namely Dr. Otis Fuller, Dr. D.A. Waite, David W. Cloud, G.A. Riplinger (author of *New Age Bible Versions*), Dr. S.H. Tow and now the whole faculty of Far Eastern Bible College, not forgetting the venerable Trinitarian Bible Society of Great Britain.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully" (Ps. 24:3,4).

Hitherto, we have been hoodwinked by a conspiracy of silence on the evil character of Westcott and Hort, these two angels of light in textual criticism, until the recent exposure of their true colours. The records of the sons of Westcott and Hort, above all others, testify to their shame.

Westcott was founder of the Hermes Club in Cambridge, a Club that was reputed to be a homosexual club. Three years later, together with Hort and others, he branched into the Ghost Club, which scoffers called the Bogey Club. Bogey means devil. They delved into necromancy, which is communicating with the dead. This is an abomination to the Lord (Deut. 18:11). Both Westcott and Hort were secret worshippers of Mary. They were friends of Darwin, Freud (called a Fraud in *The Straits Times*) and of Carl Jung, all enemies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They denied the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture, the Virgin Birth of Christ, His blood atonement and resurrection. The Creation and Temptation that led to the Fall, they derisively declared to be myths.

With impure hearts of rebellion against God and unclean, unconverted hands, how dared they touch the sacred Text of Holy Scripture? The ten thousand alterations and deletions they had made on the basis of Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus versus the thousands of the Majority Text resulted in the scissoring of the equivalent of 1 and 2 Peter. In so doing, they had cut themselves from the Lord who bought them (2 Pet. 2:1). Those who follow Westcott and Hort in taking away Scripture beware, "God shall take away his part out of the book of life..." (Rev. 22:19). What more can we say of the hundred "perversions" that are based on Westcott and Hort? They are already corrupted at the source.

As to judging between KJB and the one hundred "perversions", the unanimous testimony of believers throughout Church history, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, suffices. Says the Apostle John, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things ... But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:20, 27).

Let us take, for example, John 3:16, the most repeated verse in the Bible. The KJB renders *monogenes* as *only begotten*, but the NIV as *one and only*, clipping out the *begotten*. The doctrine of eternal generation of the Son, held time immemorial by the universal Church, is forever struck out by the NIV. By the anointing of the Holy Spirit, you can judge between the KJB and NIV. You have the answer. (The KJB is based on the time-honoured Textus Receptus and the NIV on Westcott and Hort.)

Although there is death in the pot, Elisha says, "Then bring meal," And he cast it into the pot, and he said, "Pour out for the people that they may eat ... And there was no harm in the pot." God is powerful over all evil. God gives Elisha the power to neutralise the poison in the pot. God has now raised an international witness for His Truth. The King James Bible is the most accurate, devout English translation of the Bible and is now being restored against the

100 “perversions” of the English Bible—through fundamental scholars whom God has raised, men of integrity and men who love the Lord.

Today is a day of Victory for the Truth. My brother, Dr. S.H. Tow, told me he had spent two years in research before he produced his 152-page book *Beyond Versions* to expose what is concealed in deceptive darkness. Please read it carefully and if you have been

The King James Bible vs. The Hundred Versions

UXBRIDGE L. M.

T. Tow

Lowell Mason

1. The Bi - ble is the Word of God, In - er - rant and in - fal - li - ble,
 2. God has pre - served it in the Text Re - ceived by His Church ev - ery - where.
 3. Three hun - dred years it reigned su - preme, Un - til West - cott and Hort crept in,
 4. When our foe comes in like a flood, God's Spi - rit will with - stand his wiles.

Pre - served for us from age to age. It stands God's Rock un - move - a - ble.
 Through good and faith - ful men of God, The King James Bi - ble with - out peer.
 And sowed the tares a - mongst the wheat, And for a time they seemed to win.
 He tears a - way his 'ho - ly' mask, That veils the Dead - ly Du - o's guiles.

5. Westcott started the Hermes Club,
 Reputed Homosexuals Den.
 He branched to delve into the dead,
 A Ghost Club and Bogey by name.
6. With Hort his closest Siamese Twin,
 He worshipped Mary in secret.
 They found in Darwin and in Freud
 Good friends so sincere and so sweet.
7. But they called Christians fanatics.
 They denied Jesus' Virgin Birth,
 His Blood and His Resurrection,
 Creation and Fall but a myth.

8. Who shall ascend my holy hill?
 He that has clean hands and pure heart.
 With unclean hands and heart impure,
 Can Westcott and Hort have a part?
9. An influx of hundred versions
 By Westcott and Hort's corrupt text,
 Shall never stand up to the test,
 That makes King James Bible the best.
10. The Bible is the Word of God,
 Inerrant and infallible.
 Preserved for us from age to age,
 It stands God's Rock unmoveable.

using the NIV or RSV, etc., cease taking their poison and be delivered from death in the pot. Use the KJB and rejoice in *the* Truth.

* * *

... The proliferation of the One Hundred New Versions began in 1952 with the publication of the RSV (Revised Standard Version). Dr. Carl McIntire, President of the International Council of Christian Churches, was quick to challenge it. This modernist version based on Westcott and Hort, attacked the KJB point after point. The “virgin” of Isaiah 7:14 is changed to “young woman”. This is a frontal attack on the Virgin Birth of Christ.. The RSV suffered a setback in its sales by the ICCC’s quick response.

When the NIV appeared in 1973, Dr. McIntire wanted to expose its dastardly character, but being surrounded by “fifth columnists” in the ICCC, his voice was stifled. The KJB’s supremacy was snatched by the NIV within one generation.

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ... A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak” (Eccl. 3:1-7). In August 1998, the ICCC held its 50th Anniversary in Amsterdam. I was invited to speak at the Conference. What was the greatest good that the 50th Anniversary Conference could do? It was the publication of messages and resolutions on problems of the Church and relevant to the times which were disseminated throughout the world.

The Resolution on the Bible with full exposure of the Westcott and Hort poison hidden in the Hundred Versions was adopted. It was worth all the time and expense of our coming to Holland, from the four corners of the earth. Where Dr. McIntire was blocked by NIV “fifth columnists” before, here in Amsterdam, the birthplace of the ICCC, he reached the crowning of his life-long struggle against Satan’s wiles to falsify God’s Word. The father of lies masquerading as an angel of light in the NIV is totally unmasked. (Incidentally, through the ICCC Conference, I was appointed Far Eastern Correspondent of a Dutch Reformation Newspaper whereby I can

witness against the lies of our enemy, the World Council of Churches.)

The Bible Resolution

WHEREAS despite the fact that there are over 150 so-called “versions” of the Bible extant around the world today, there have been no new discoveries of ancient texts to legitimize this plethora of modern “versions” pouring off the presses and being sold as the “latest” Bible, and

WHEREAS a single exception to this has been the discovery of the now-famous Dead Sea Scrolls in the 1940’s in caves on the Judean mountain range and contained in clay jars with the texts written on leather and papyrus, and

WHEREAS fragments of all the books of the Hebrew Bible (except Esther) confirm almost to the letter the accuracy of the Authorized King James Version of the Old Testament, and

WHEREAS most of the modern versions are based upon the discredited and perverted Westcott and Hort transcription and not on the Textus Receptus (The Received Text) attested to by scholars for over 300 years, from which the Authorized King James Version was translated by the greatest theologians and textual critics of 17th Century England, who were academic experts, indeed, in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, and

WHEREAS self-styled theologians who reject the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scriptures have gone so far as to make a looseleaf notebook and tear out those passages they do not accept, even organizing what they designate as “Jesus Seminars” across the United States in which they declare that Jesus never did and said the things recorded in the four Gospels; and that the Gospel of John is the worst and is 90 percent fiction, and the obedient secular press quotes them from coast-to-coast, and

WHEREAS this same KING JAMES VERSION has been used around the world by an overwhelming majority of Christian Clergymen, Evangelists, Bible Teachers,

Missionaries and Youth Leaders to bring millions of people to have a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ for more than three centuries,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the International Council of Christian Churches, assembled in the historic English Reformed Church in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, observing its 50th Anniversary, August 11-15, 1998, urge all Bible-believing churches worldwide to use only the Authorized KING JAMES VERSION in their services and in their teaching ministry, and warn the followers of Christ against these innumerable “new” bibles which are not translations at all, but revisions conforming to the personal bias and views of those who have originated them and who are profiting by commercial sales of such.

* * *

In support of the KJB, we have the FEBC Bookroom fully stocked with the good Bible in all sizes, and **approved** KJV Study Bibles, for there are some KJB Study Bibles that are wolves in sheep's clothing, e.g., the KJV Evangelical Study Bible edited by Harold Lindsell.

Commenting on Isaiah 7:14 in the Evangelical KJV Study Bible, Harold Lindsell the Double Talker says:

7:14 a virgin shall conceive and bear a son. Before we can understand this verse, we need to consider two Hebrew words. One is *bethulah* and the other *almah*. The former means virgin, and the latter an unmarried female. *Almah* is used here. Its use in this context covers two cases. One has to do with the wife of Isaiah and her newborn son (Isa. 8:1-4). Isaiah's wife was a virgin until she was married. She was no longer a virgin when married. Of course, one supposes that an unmarried female is a virgin. The second case covers that of the virgin Mary. She was a virgin before the conception of Jesus. And she remained a virgin then, because Joseph was not the father of Jesus. The Holy Spirit was. Stated another way, Isaiah's wife was no longer a virgin when she conceived; Mary was

still a virgin after she conceived, for she had not yet known a male. Interestingly, the Septuagint translates *almah* by the use of the Greek word *parthenos* which means virgin. And Matthew uses the word *parthenos* for Mary's case. The word *almah* thus covers both births involved in this prophecy and we learn that Maher-shalal-hash-baz, the son of Isaiah, had a human mother and father and his birth was a natural one. Jesus, on the other hand, had a human mother but not a human father. His birth was supernatural. *Almah* allows for both prophetic words.

Our Rebuttal. This double talk, bringing Isaiah's prophecy to fit his son, and then forcibly dovetail it with the Virgin Birth of our Lord is treacherously confounding to say the least. The Isaiah 7:14 prophecy refers only to our Saviour's Birth and none other as Matthew says it in Matt. 1:22,23. Matthew's commentary is the commentary of the Holy Spirit for Matthew writes under Inspiration of God. Jesus says, "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt. 6:37). Any double talk comes from the evil of the Devil.

Another grave error: "... Joseph was not the father of Jesus. The Holy Spirit was." If the Holy Spirit was, as Lindsell says, the father of Jesus, and God is Father of our Lord, this makes Jesus having two Fathers. What blind blasphemy!

And we can go on, and on, ferreting these coiled double-headed snakes out of their "Evangelical" nests. We need that reviving Spirit from above to fight the good fight of faith. Revival is the work of the Holy Spirit. So is Reformation. We are moved to carry on the work of the 20th Century Reformation into the 21st Century.

"Death in the pot" is hidden not only in the Hundred New Perversions but also in a so-called Evangelical KJV Study Bible edited by Harold Lindsell! Beware of such a false teacher, and every other false teacher!

33

Lively Sayings

Abel, who offered a better sacrifice than Cain, though dead, yet speaketh. As we approach the end of this book, I would like to present you the lively sayings I have gleaned from both ancients and moderns, some well known, some unknown. May I also present you some of my own for mutual encouragement, with a translation of Wang Ming Tao's *Proverbs for Christian Living*.

Part I

Lively Sayings by Ancients & Moderns

1. The Revolution is not finished, let comrades struggle on! – Sun Yat Sen.
2. Many sons starve a father – Chinese proverb.
3. Who knows a son better than a father, and who knows a father better than a son – Chinese proverb.
4. He who has no guest at home can neither find a host abroad – Chinese proverb.
5. They also serve, who only stand and wait – Milton.
6. If the image can bow back, then you can bow – Timothy Pietsch.
7. A thousand gold cannot buy next door land – Chinese proverb.
8. The greatest ability is dependability – Bob Jones.
9. There is no such thing as presenting truth without attacking error – Machen.
10. Liberalism is not Christianity, but another religion – Machen.

11. The trend is toward the trained – College in San Francisco.
12. What the Bible says God says, what God says the Bible says – Augustine.
13. No Cross, No crown – William Burns.
14. The triple philosophy of man under the sun, observes Solomon, are fatalism, hedonism and materialism – David Yan.
15. Man's life is birth, age, sickness, death – Chinese proverb.
16. The four Confucian ethics: Courtesy, Righteousness, Incorruption and Sense of Shame.
17. The half of knowledge is to know where to find it – Miami University.
18. John Sung on baptism, "More faith less water, less faith more water."
19. The four Freedoms for which WWII was fought are freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from hunger and freedom from fear – President Franklin Roosevelt.
20. No church can grow and prosper without a succession of good and strong leaders for future generations – S.H. Tow.
21. Church growth comes not but by sowing the good seed of the Word of God – S.H. Tow.
22. The rules of rhetoric are three: the first rule is pronunciation. The second rule is pronunciation and the third rule is pronunciation – Augustine.
23. If I hear the truth in the morning, I'm prepared to die in the evening – Confucius.
24. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man – Francis Bacon.
25. On pedagogy: Exchange sons to teach – Confucius.
26. Let us pray that we might stand on God's side and not God on our side – King George VI.

27. The fullness of the Spirit is not tongues-speaking; but rather the living water springing like a fountain from within every born again believer – John Sung.
28. O Lord, Thou has made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in thee – Augustine.
29. O give us hardy soldiers today and not tardy scholars – Paul Hoole.
30. Keep an army a thousand days to use it in one hour – Chinese proverb.
31. Don't mention the tiger (money). The mention of it changes the colour of your countenance – Chinese proverb.
32. As the Chinese saying goes, he is an all-rounder, a scholar and a soldier.
33. A pastor who tries to make money will go bankrupt – John Sung.
34. Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can – John Wesley, quoted by Margaret Thatcher.
35. The Bible is a book of power – McIntire.
36. The devil is the one who has always played with the pride of man – McIntire.
37. What men believe determines what they do and where they stand – McIntire.
38. If the Church will let her pastor off for a season each year the situation will be quite different – Jason Linn.
39. Economy succeeds through “income first before expenditure” – Jason Linn.
40. Man is not afraid of poverty. Poverty adapts and adaptation resolves – Jason Linn.
41. The Dean of the Faculty of Theology of a University in England was an atheist – *The Straits Times*.
42. From a tombstone in an English Churchyard, “What I gave I have, What I spent I had, What I left I lost by not giving it.”

43. The sin of the spirit is ten times greater than the sin of the flesh – Chia Yu Ming.
44. Inexperienced faith, experienced faith and faith that needs no experience – Chia Yu Ming.
45. When a word is uttered, four horses cannot retrieve it – Chinese proverb.
46. Freedom is everybody’s business—your business, my business, the church’s business, and a man who will not use his freedom to defend his freedom does not deserve his freedom – McIntire.
47. The beginning of greatness is to be little, the increase of greatness is to be less, and the perfection of greatness is to be nothing – Moody.
48. Sufficient for all, efficient for the elect – Augustine.
49. The Gospel is no Gospel until it comes into motion. Put the Go to the Gospel and put the “Gospel into the Go” – Egyptian Pastor at ICCC.
50. The Son of God became the Son of Man that the sons of men might become the sons of God – Calvin.

Part II

Sayings from the Gilstead Road Manse

1. The pastor is enhanced ten times in his work when he has a good helpmeet.
2. We are not saved by a complacent faith but by a consuming faith.
3. Truth must subdue error. Truth is one sided. Truth is exclusive, not inclusive.
4. To the Amillennialists the thousand years of Revelation 20 is measured not horizontally but vertically.
5. The Great Commission I have called, “The First Commandment to the Church”.
6. The Missionary Society comes into being when the Church ceases to be a Missionary Society.
7. Marriage is a multi-mysterious mystery.

8. God will judge not only our life, but also the abundance He has blessed our life with.
9. The Great Commission is an Unfinished Commission.
10. Parents who have eaten more salt than children eat rice can discern more clearly between right and wrong.
11. I have no retirement. To retire means to go home and wait to die.
12. Do something good for Jesus every day. Do something good for Jesus out of the way.
13. How you dress tells what you are.
14. Theology is to be studied by putting on the eye-glasses of faith.
15. The symbol of Church growth is the mustard, not the mushroom.
16. He who is afraid to die will die a hundred times.
17. Not vertical but horizontal is the Divine pattern for Church growth.
18. The four walls of my church cannot contain me.
19. John 3:16 is taught by lopsided Calvinists to offer salvation only to the elect and not generally to all. The door to heaven is one leaf shut.
20. Owe no man anything is the other side of the coin of love.
21. A College that is called a Bible College is called to defend the Bible.
22. Head knowledge that puffs up without heart knowledge is a dangerous thing.
23. The ministry of theological training accelerates church growth by geometrical progression.
24. Faith without seeing is more blessed than faith after seeing.
25. Without courtesy, one becomes a bull in a China shop.
26. Self help with God's help is the best help.
27. Let us bring our gifts to the Lord worshipfully, willingly and not wearily.
28. To make the bomb after war is declared is too late.
29. In God we trust or in gold we bust?

30. Those who give of a worshipful heart bring gold. Those who give out of custom bring brass.
31. Is your docility comparable to that of the elephant with big listening ears?
32. When you speak, speak like a man, not like a clergyman.
33. Monologue not dialogue, we believe in dogmatic teaching.
34. Satan's three prong attack on God's Word, Yea=Yes; Hath God?=Question; No=No.
35. No sermon is dull that cuts the conscience.
36. The Hydra has nine heads. When one is cut off, it becomes two.
37. Cost-effective missions is Divine economy.
38. If you are a second or third generation Christian, all the more you need to examine your faith (2 Cor. 13:5).
39. Economy is the mother of prosperity.
40. Many who claim to have the Holy Spirit end up having an unholy Spirit. Instead of being filled by the Spirit, they are felled by the Spirit.
41. A pound of help in time is worth a ton.
42. If every member will do his best, God will take care of the rest.
43. As the young man's hair gets longer, the young lady's skirt gets shorter.
44. John Sung's ministry brought no tongues in confusion but tears of confession.
45. The Church has every jot and tittle in the traditional text best represented by the Textus Receptus on which the KJB is based.
46. Knowledge is power, knowledge of God is Divine power.
47. What we disagree with sons of Calvin who out-Calvin Calvin is their exegeting Scripture like riding a bicycle on a tight rope.
48. Only a snake that has a forked tongue can double talk.

49. The holy law of God springs not only from His holiness but also from His love. Thus the Ten Commandments, positively stated, is to love God and man.
50. Old people's words are like medicine. You need to wrap them up – My Grandfather.
51. Right-is-might must prevail over Might-is-right.
52. Deeds of daring are born of danger.
53. Truth is qualitative, not quantitative. One with God is majority.
54. In standing for Christ, in-laws often become out-laws.
55. Not centralisation, but decentralisation, is one genius of B-Pism.
56. Jesus Saves. Can anyone compose a sentence of two words more powerful than this?
57. Christmas is the time when God universally reconciles men unto Himself.
58. Every Church is a missionary society.
59. My grandfather taught me never to borrow, never to pay interest, and I have applied this principle to the running of the Church.
60. Perspiration without inspiration becomes exasperation.
61. I am training you my students to be lions for Christ.
62. But a king lion could sleep seventeen hours a day.
63. The higher factor of God in our favour that the world knows not.
64. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. This means the Sabbath is adjustable to human needs, not contrary.
65. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Restated: religion is the key to science.
66. In the history of salvation, God has not used councils and committees, but always a man (Isa. 59:16) to accomplish His purpose.
67. To be a pastor is not taking on a profession, much less a vacation, but a vocation.

68. The pastor is a pattern and not a power over the congregation.
69. If John 3:16 is a restricted offer only to the elect, then it is like holding a sale confined to “Only Buyers Can Enter”.
70. The covenant of works is invisibly inscribed upon the human heart, which is our conscience.
71. A higher law overrides a lower law.
72. Against such there is no law.

Proverbs for Christian Living **By Wang Ming-tao**

Fearing God is the foundation of life.
Loving neighbour is the way of living.

Be very sincere in dealing with others.
Be very severe in regulating yourself.

When in poverty, do not cringe.
When in prosperity, be not proud.

Never harbour a spirit of jealousy.
Rejoice with them in prosperity.

Rejoice not at the misfortunes of others.
When others are down, share their troubles.

Don't overtake your neighbour where profit lies ahead.
Don't step backwards in the face of common danger.

When you're indebted to others, be ready to confess and redress.
When others are indebted to you, be indulgent and forgiving.

When doing good to others, regard that your duty.
When others do good to you, recognise it is by their grace.

Let not any wealth that goes through you,
whether big or small, soil your palm.

In making friends with members of either sex,
be proper and open.

Do not promise easily.
Having promised, be diligent to fulfil.

Do not borrow at random.
Pay back quickly any loan.

Respect your elders, and elders of others.
Love your children, and children of others.

Let the strong points in others become a pattern to you.
Let the weak points in others be a warning.

Control your temper: be not easily provoked to anger.
Guard your lips; and be slow to speak.

Do not spread any unfounded report.
Do not do anything that fears exposure.

Do not covet the wealth you see in others.
Do not look on with folded arms when others fall.

Bow not nor fawn before people.
Speak no evil behind others' backs.

Be diligent and loyal in serving others,
True and straightforward in your transactions.

Hate evil like snakes and scorpions.
Love neighbours like rare treasures.

Rather lose money than trustworthiness.
Rather lose your life than self-control.

Do not cover up your mistakes,
Nor boast at all of your virtues.

Be always courteous in speech and conduct.
Be always neat and tidy in apparel.

Do not provoke others to hate you,
Nor speak words that irk your hearers.

Absolutely no smoking, no drinking, no gambling,
Taboo to all seductive make-up.

Think always for the good of others.
Wherever you go, seek God's glory.

34

Occupy Till I Come 2000-

“And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.” (Luke 19:13)

“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:7,8)

One sparkling doctrine of B-Pism is the Premillennial Return of Christ. Our Lord will come again to put down all rebellion and restore the throne of David in Jerusalem and rule the earth a thousand years of peace. This thousand years is mentioned six times in Revelation 20.

This doctrine is a breakaway from encrusted Hypercalvinism and Amillennialism that has stifled the Reformed Faith. The proof of the cake is in the tasting. Premillennialism has put renewed consciousness to His Second Coming and accelerated missions. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matt. 24:14). The growth of B-P Churches is acknowledged as one of the fastest in Singapore by *Operation World*. Fifty years after its founding in 1950, there are sixty B-P congregations in Singapore and 20 in Malaysia and unnumbered others in the ten ASEAN countries, Australia, unto the uttermost part of the earth. God has blessed Premillennialism.

Historically speaking, I had received the Premillennial doctrine from Dora Yu, China's first woman evangelist who converted Watchman Nee in the nineteen twenties. I received this even as a little child from my parents, singing such hymns as "When Jesus comes to reward His Servants" from Dora Yu Revival Hymnal.

The next person I received the Premillennial teaching is John Sung, through his exposition of Daniel and Revelation at the Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church.

After this, it was from Dr. Chia Yu Ming when I studied under him in Nanking, China, 1946-47.

Last of all, I learned it from Faith Seminary under Dr. Allan MacRae and Dr. J.O. Buswell. And I have been imparting this doctrine since I became your pastor and since I became principal, Far Eastern Bible College, 1962.

At the turn of the Millennium, I preached a series of seven messages, "From the Millennium Bug to the Millennium Bomb". I added a remark after the title, "Can Christ come again within the Next Decade?" There is a probability, but I may be wrong. At any rate, whether He will come by 2010 or later, we must not make the mistake of putting on white robes like some and going up a mountain at a certain date hoping to be raptured. This is not what Christ said to His disciples. Our service of the Lord must be the same, in prayerful watchfulness. Business must be as usual for He says, "Occupy Till I Come!"

As I come to the end of fifty years of my pastorate at Life Church, neither can I throw in the towel and call it a day. Since the Lord has given me radiant health despite my diabetic condition and the loss of my left eye, I must pursue the courses he has mapped out for me. There is no retirement for me. And if the Lord will let me live till 95, my plane is not coming down to its journey's end but taking off again into the blue sky.

When Dr. Buswell, moderator of my ordination in Geneva asked me to what ministry the Lord had called me, I answered, "To be a

pastor as my mother had vowed, and to teach theology.” The Lord has honoured my holy aspirations, so that I am your pastor and principal all these years. This double ministry has bound Life Church and FEBC as one. This unique relationship has doubly blessed both Church and College and no one is able to put asunder what God has put together.

When I started out as your pastor, my first month’s salary was \$110, and I had no house to stay. The Lord helped me to leap over a wall a queue of 50,000 applying for an SIT (HDB) flat. With His encouragement, I phoned Mr. Carter, Manager of SIT and he gave me a three-room flat at 10A Kim Pong Road. “Ask and it shall be given you” (Matt. 7:7). He has been my Provider and Protector, to this day.

We started out with 30 adult members transferred from *Say Mia Tng* (Prinsep Street Life Church) with their 20 children, and now we have grown to 1,700 communicant members.

When I founded Far Eastern Bible College, I had three students—Eddy Chan and Ng Sang Chiew from Batu Pahat and Ivy Tan from Pasir Panjang. At the end of the first academic year the first two left us. A member of the faculty added to my hurt by advising Ivy also to leave, saying when a ship is sinking, even the rats will jump out. But Ivy stayed. I remember how I burst into tears when climbing the steps to my parsonage. As the Chinese saying goes, “In any enterprise, the beginning is difficult.”

But the Lord sent me three new students the next year: James Chan Lay Seng, who is now pastor of Calvary B-P Church (Jurong), Peggy Yeo who has a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Oxford and Mrs. Jeanette Packer, wife of an officer of the Australian High Commission. Mrs. Packer’s joining FEBC the second year boosted the image of our infant College.

At the 25th Graduation in May 2000, we had 33 graduands out of an enrolment of 102 full-time students from 18 countries. (The latest enrolment is 108.) When our students and their next of kin came to

the graduation, they filled half the Church auditorium which awakened me to the mounting congestion facing both Church and College.

Although I have gone through many crushing situations these fifty years, I thank God that every burden was turned into a blessing. About the time of the first graduation of the College, 1966, I was on my way to K.L. on business for the Church. As the train chugged up the steep Seremban gradient, it seemed to sympathise with the struggles in my heart. Out of the echo of mutual pantings, the lines began to flow for the composition of an anthem for FEBC. There was no one to turn to but Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts.

*O Father, Thou Almighty art,
Who made the heav'ns and earth and seas.
And deign to dwell in contrite hearts,
And visit with Thy grace and peace
Today hear us who call on Thee,
And bless us still with Thine increase.
O Father, Thou Almighty art!
Forever bless with Thine increase!*

*O Jesus Christ, Thou Son of God,
Who came to save the world from sin,
And have redeemed us by Thy blood,
That we may live and others win
Today restore our love for Thee,
That we may serve Thee not in vain.
O Jesus Christ, Thou Son of God!
So help us serve Thee not in vain!*

*O Holy Spirit from on high,
Whom God the Father, Son, did send,
To touch our lips and tongues with fire,
That we might speak and men repent
Today descend and breathe anew,
A zeal to preach our Saviour's Name.
O Holy Spirit from on High!
Revive our zeal for Jesus' Name!*

*Ye sons and daughters of the East,
Within these Halls have learned My Word.
In Christ's domain are not the least,
If you unflinching wield the Sword
With loyal heart join in the fray,
And fight till dawning of the day!
O Lord grant us Thy truth and grace,
And lead us on till break of Day!*

Sung at the commencement of every graduation service to the tune of Faith Seminary Anthem, it has stirred the hearts of both students and audience. FEBC has her own identity. She is a school of prophets who looks only to her God to fight the battle of faith.

In the beginning of FEBC, I had to teach 13 hours every week. I was like a halfback dashing all over the field and sometimes I shot my own goal. Today the Lord has given us a full faculty. For teaching ability, they are not behind other Colleges. We are a united body in faith and doctrine for which we thank the Lord. We pray the Lord will preserve us from any deviation of doctrine.

We thank God for the books published not only by the principal but also from other members of the faculty. Several of these and *The Burning Bush* are acknowledged by the West. I am very satisfied with the performance of each faculty member whose efficiency depends not on mere degrees, though we are pleased with such added attainments. Here is "A Tribute to My Alma Mater" by Rev. Jack Sin, B.A., M.Div., pastor of Maranatha B-P Church: (January 2001, he and his wife will be going to Pensacola, U.S.A. to begin studying for his doctorate.)

Tonight at 8 p.m. is the 21st FEBC Graduation Ceremony at Life Church with Dr. Howard Carlson, pastor, theologian, archaeologist speaking (1996). Founded in 1962 by the Principal, Rev. Timothy Tow, FEBC has graduated over 300 from 15 countries in the last 34 years. With a humble beginning of 3 students who sat on stools and the Principal lecturing, today by the mercies of God, it has increased to 90 students in the new semester in July this year. A Reformed and

Premillennial, Separatist School in this part of the world, one of the ideals of the college is its theological and pastoral approach in training students, with a strong emphasis on original languages, both Hebrew and Greek. The strength of the college is further enhanced by many publications authored by the Principal and workbooks on Bible themes and subjects written by the lecturers. There will be 25 graduands this evening in the different academic levels (Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor, Master). From Maranatha, brother George, Bessy and Emmy and I will receive our credentials tonight. In reminiscence, I thank God for the opportunity to be equipped for the ministry in FEBC. The three gruelling years of language training and pastoral internship had helped me in my discharge of ministerial duties today. I remembered those fruitful nights of useful study, delving deeply into the Scriptures to hone practical, exegetical and hermeneutical skills for use in due time. The lecturers were forthright in encouraging and enabling the students to learn and grow in a conducive pedagogic environment. The interaction with foreign students was another enriching experience in college life in FEBC. Often the Principal would give practical tips during chapel hour for Christian living and the ministry ahead. Informal lunch time fellowship among lecturers and students is also invaluable coupled with the palatable and nutritious food cooked by the Matron. Particularly in my final semester, I am grateful to Rev. Tow and Dr. Jeffrey Khoo for their advice and interaction during the writing of my thesis. The subject of the Judgment Seat of Christ is a sadly neglected theme today from pulpits and Bible classes. Resources and reference materials on the subject were conspicuously scarce. Both advisors supplemented this scarcity with their keen insights and contributions to render the paper a richer content and a smoother read. (Special mention must also go to Dn. Lim J.J. for his assistance in the formatting of the paper.) Personally, I derived great joy and learned much in the research and writing of this paper. Thank God for all who have helped and prayed in one way or another.

For 34 years under the visionary leadership of her Principal, FEBC has followed one unwavering course, that of equipping men and women called into the full-time ministry to defend the faith (Jude 3,4), build up the saints and propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. In a decadent age of failing vision and compromising spiritual values, thank God for preserving this institution of the Reformed tradition. FEBC has stood foursquare on the inerrant and infallible, plenarily inspired Word of God. It has survived the insidious liberal scholarship that has infiltrated many western theological seminaries and colleges today.

I will always cherish fond memories of a pleasant stay in FEBC for 3 years of theological training, the camaraderie developed among fellow students and the kind tutelage from the Principal and lecturers. The Principal forecasts a good intake this coming Semester, especially foreign students. But where are the local students except for one from Calvary so far? Is there anyone who felt a burden in the heart to give up their lives for the cause of the gospel? Seek the Lord prayerfully in obedience and do not hesitate to join this college for sound Reformed scholarship in preparation for the pastoral ministry or the mission field. Take up the cross daily, deny self and follow Christ (Luke 9:23).

Amen.

The Faculty of FEBC comprises the following including the tutorial staff. The clerical staff that serve Life Church serve the College as well.

The Faculty:

- Rev. (Dr.) Timothy Tow, M.Div., S.T.M., D.D. (Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology)
- Mrs. Ivy Tow, B.Th. (Matron, and Lecturer in Greek)
- Rev. Bob Phee, B.A.(Hons.), B.Th., M.Div., Th.M., D.Min., D.Phil. (Registrar, and Lecturer in Apologetics)

- Rev. Jeffrey Khoo, B.Th., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D. (Academic Dean, and Lecturer in New Testament)
- Rev. Goh Seng Fong, M.A., M.Div., D.Min. (Dean of Students, and Lecturer in Pastoral Ministry)
- Rev. Koa Keng Woo, B.Th. (Lecturer in Bible Geography and Church Music)
- Rev. Quek Suan Yew, B.Arch., B.Th., M.Div., S.T.M. (Lecturer in Old Testament)
- Rev. Stephen Khoo, B.Th., M.Div., M.A. (Lecturer in Biblical Studies)
- Rev. Prabhudas Koshy, B.Sc., B.Th., M.Div., Th.M.(c) (Lecturer in Hebrew)
- Rev. Jack Sin, B.Th., M.Div., Th.M.(c) (Lecturer in Church History)
- Rev. Colin Wong, B.Th., M.Div., Th.M. (Lecturer in Pastoral Ministry)
- Rev. Charles Seet, B.Th., M.Div. (Lecturer in Biblical Studies)
- Mrs. Jemima Khoo, B.Th., M.A., M.R.E. (Lecturer in Christian Education)
- Ms. Carol Lee, B.B.A., M.Ed., M.Div. (Lecturer in Christian Education)

Tutorial Staff:

- Mrs. Koa Keng Woo (Tutor in Music)
- Elder Edmund Tay, Cert.Ed. (Tutor in English)
- Elder Han Soon Juan, Cert.Ed., Cert.TESL, Dip.TESL, M.A. (Tutor in English)
- Elder Geoffrey Tan, B.Sc., B.A.(Hons.), Dip.Ed. (Tutor in English)

Board of Directors:

- Datuk (Dr.) Tow Siang Yeow
- Rev. (Dr.) Timothy Tow
- Elder Heng Yow Tong

- Elder Eric Mahadevan
- Elder (Dr.) George Foong
- Elder Han Soon Juan
- Elder Khoo Peng Kiat
- Rev. Stephen Khoo Hong Guan
- Rev. Koa Keng Woo
- Rev. (Dr.) Bob Phee Eng Soon
- Elder Siow Chai Sheng
- Elder Sng Teck Leong
- Dn. Wee Hian Kok
- Rev. (Dr.) Jeffrey Khoo Eng Teck

Coming to Life Church, I can say I have never been happier in my working relation with the Session, while the Lord has blessed us with a staff that works in perfect harmony with me. We have an internal arrangement for a five-day week, but there is always someone on duty during office hours six days of the week to answer any calls. Mrs. Tan Yin Chan is my overall manageress.

For special citation is Loi Huey Ching, our webmaster. Through her devotion serving at home as her office, she has brought our website to the forefront of the first 50 out of 30,000 websites in Asia. The citation reads:

Dear Webmaster,

Congratulations! Your web site has been selected as the “Asiaco Asia Top 50” web site. This is a competition among 30,000 Asian web sites!

Only the best Asian web sites will be selected and qualified to be nominated for this award. You can find your site at: <http://www.asiaco.com/top50/college/>

Keep it up and we hope to see you in the next winning list!

Yours truly,
 H.E. Mah (Asiaco.com Asia Top 50 Awards Committee)
<http://www.asiaco.com/top50/>

Now the Session and Clerical Staff:

Assistant Pastors:

- Rev. Charles Seet Chim Seng
- Rev. Colin Wong Tuck Chuen

Elders:

- Elder Han Soon Juan
- Elder Khoo Peng Kiat
- Elder Koh Kim Song
- Elder (Dr.) Lim Teck Chye
- Elder Eric Mahadevan
- Elder Sherman Ong Eng Lam
- Elder Sng Teck Leong
- Elder George Tan Chin Peng
- Elder Geoffrey Tan Hock Jin (Clerk of Session)
- Elder Tan Nee Keng

Deacons:

- Dn. Charlie Chan Weng Keong
- Dn. (Dr.) Chin Hoong Chor
- Dn. Benny Chng Seck Kherng
- Dn. John Hoe Koo Cheng
- Dn. Lim Ching Wah
- Dn. Victor Loo Lam Hua
- Dn. Pang Leong Siang
- Dn. Joel Seah Geok Leng
- Dn. Seow Cheong Kiong
- Dn. David Tan Boon Keong
- Dn. Henry Tan Kiat Siong
- Dn. George Tan Kok Eng

- Dn. Tan Yew Chong (Treasurer)
- Dn. Wee Chin Kam
- Dn. Wee Hian Kok
- Dn. Yiew Pong Sen

Secretary: Mrs. Tan Yin Chan

Webmaster: Mrs. Quek Huey Ching

Clerks: Miss Janet Lim, Mrs. Janet Chung

Library Assistant: Mrs. Ruth Yap Ling Ling

EDP Officer: Mr. Roger Kok

Church Warden: Deacon Yiew Pong Sen

I am very pleased to note that every Session member is a contributor to some area in the Lord's Vineyard. There are the preaching elders and deacon, and one who is roving ambassador for Calvary's worldwide branches. We thank God for a Treasurer by whose expert handling of the funds is mightily blessed with increasing contributors. There are those who are impelled by God's love to regularly minister to the mission fields. There are others who head the many Fellowships, NBC, VBS, BASC, the Children's Ministry, the Kindergarten, the Sunday School and the Choir. I must not forget Elder Charlie Chia. Though he is no more in our Session for health reasons, he and his wife continue to head the Indonesian Service.

I have full cooperation in the pastoral team. While Rev. Colin Wong has the external ministry of visiting the sick, Rev. Charles Seet is the nerve centre to receive communications from everywhere and issuing the Weekly Prayer Requests. They take turns with me to conduct the Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting. We wish more Session members would come to the Prayer Meeting, but we understand the reasons of some who cannot come, especially the frequent fliers.

I am also pastor of the Chinese Service which was founded October 1965.

The Church Committee are as follows:

- Rev. (Dr.) Timothy Tow
- Preacher Calvin Loh
- Elder Sng Teck Leong
- Mr. Tsao See
- Mr. Chan Weng Kit
- Mr. Roland Wong
- Mdm. Chua Poh Geok
- Mdm. Ng Ping
- Mrs. Lee Meng
- Mrs. Patricia Kang
- Miss Tan Joo Eng

The FEBC Bookroom is a non-profit organisation. Every cent earned goes to the College. It is directed by the Pastor, Dr. Jeffrey Khoo and Deacon Yiew, Barnabas Yap assisting. The FEBC Bookroom is a Reformation ministry where we sell at fairest prices, absorbing the G.S.T.

A word must be spoken for FEBC students. Though we have our gardener and sweeper, the bulk of maintenance work is assigned to students who clean up the premises and grounds in lieu of paying for room. This is a tradition inherited from Faith Seminary where I had to do the same while a student there.

The Kindergarten, after many years of “rock and roll”, by God’s grace is now keeping an even keel. While in earlier years it had contributed to the upkeep of the Church, now it is the other way round. Times have changed. Nevertheless, under Elder Mahadevan, she is determined to do her part in the big Life Church family.

The latest improvement to our Church is its Air-conditioning. Originally I opposed it, partly for economy’s sake. Standing on the pulpit where I got a full supply of cool air from direct whirring fans, I felt no pressure from the heat. On one occasion, however, during a Gospel Campaign of FEBC, I sat in the last rows next to the front door. There I experienced a heat wave swirling all around. I got

converted. So I brought it up to Session to their delight. Now the aircon is in full swing. And now there are complaints the draught is hitting some heads. It is too cold! (This will be remedied.) But we have the red porch in semi-open air. (We cannot air-condition this porch or else there is no space for the holding of Wedding receptions.) Nevertheless, here is a natural refuge from the cold air inside. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28)

But I hear that both the Korean Church and Sharon BPC are the more pleased to have the cool air because they worship in the early and late afternoons when the sun becomes hottest. Thus we have an overwhelming majority who vote for the cool air.

A last word on “Occupy Till I Come” is my sudden change of mind in respect of Beulah House. All along I have declared the rebuilding of Beulah is not under my hands but under the next pastor. But complaints have been heard from here and there about the mounting congestions in the Church, including the car parks. One apprehension comes from the Chinese Service, which now has an attendance often near 200. Some think of knocking down some wall which can be none other than next to the Kitchen!

Change of Mind to Rebuild Beulah House

The holding of FEBC’s 25th Graduation in May 2000 with half the Church hall taken by students and their next of kin so that the rest of the congregation overflowed, and some had to stand, awoke me to reconsider my previous decision on Beulah. Reading from some back numbers of our Church Weekly, I did say I would not rebuild Beulah House in the next decade after her acquisition. Since we took over Beulah on April 30, 1990, I realised the first ten years had already passed.

And considering what I must answer the Congregation in this autobiography, I felt I had an obligation. The thought of rebuilding

was suddenly precipitated by the congestion at the 25th Graduation. This made me appeal to the 33 graduands to give a first contribution to the proposed new College premises under the name of Beulah Tower. Wonderfully, the graduating students responded with over \$4,000. One Korean student who loved FEBC very much gave \$500. On second thoughts, he gave another \$500, all he now had, because he was overjoyed with the new college project. He said, "Now the Lord must provide the second \$500 which is to pay for my ticket back to Korea." I'm sure he had no lack. Together with \$4100 that constituted the collection that night and another \$4000 from an FEBCer we gathered \$12,000. With the addition of \$3,000 from others living in the College premises, it soared to \$15,000. The next day an elder brought \$5,000 in thanksgiving for a successful operation on her daughter. So our first offering for Beulah Tower exceeded \$20,000.

When the proposal by the pastor to the Session to rebuild Beulah House was made, there was cheerful unanimity. Since this decision was made in May 2000, big and small sums have come in. "Many a mickle makes a muckle".

The first hurdle we must clear is Government's levy of \$2.85 million on prime land such as ours. Whereas before this, developers on the Beulah House side of Gilstead Road could build 20 storeys, now it is increased to 36. An elder when told this jovially remarked, "So you will build 36 storeys." In fact there were tycoons who offered to develop 10 Gilstead Road with us but we politely declined. This land that God has given us is "sacred unto the Lord". It must not be contaminated by Gentile hands but handled by clean hands and pure heart (Ps. 24:3,4) for the sole extension of God's Kingdom, to His glory.

We must not build for the sake of building. To build higher than necessary is to exalt our gate unto destruction. (Prov. 17:19). Nevertheless, we must find underground parking space for 150 cars, for the present census of cars is 200. For the moment, we are

favoured with the Nursing Home carpark next door, but we must make sure we will not be caught by future contingencies.

We need another big auditorium, and in the name of FEBC, not Life Church, we can build it. We also need a big dining hall and cafeteria, many S.S. rooms, a library, a resource centre, living quarters, many dorms for men and women FEBC students, married quarters, guest rooms, warden's quarters, 15 Fellowship rooms, offices, storage, lounges, lecture theatres, space for children's ministries, lesser halls for extra meetings, etc. The castle type roof top, resembling the Wall of Jerusalem is a revelation from above and will be the only of its kind in Singapore, most suitable for a Bible College facade. To provide for all these facilities, will we need to put up a 12-storey tower?

When we first built our Church and College Annex at Gilstead Road in 1963, the numerical strength of our members was 250. When we launched out to Woodlands (1979), the membership had risen to 600. When we acquired Beulah House (1990), our strength was 1,200. In this new millennium when we are to rebuild Beulah we have 1,700. We have utmost confidence we will succeed if every Lifer is a regular tither.

Another source of great power to stand in the gap, as we had discovered in taking over Beulah House, is interest-free loans from members and friends. Those who have surplus funds can loan freely to the Church. You who loan to the Lord will be blessed with better dividends for sure.

“The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts” (Hag. 2:8). “Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ... and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes” (Hag. 1:5,6).

“Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD” (Hag. 1:8).

Now, while every Lifer will bend all his or her energy to build God's House, to His pleasure, we must not reduce our support for worthwhile missions. In this hour of great crisis, however we have asked our missionaries to support the mother church by returning their tithes and the tithes of all employed staff. This is a practice of Dr. Andrew Gih's Evangelise China Fellowship in caring for one another. Will our Church staff and FEBC staff offer to do the same as an expression of loyalty? Yes, they have responded with a hearty yes, and to set an example to the whole Session and congregation.

As we go to press, our thermometer for New Beulah House is \$2 million. Praise the Lord.

Application to build a Beulah Tower Altered by the Authorities

By October 2000, our Architect applied to the Authorities to build a 13-storey Beulah Tower as a Civic and Community Institution. This was rejected because being a Bible College extension from across Gilstead Road, we come under Educational Zoning. The plot ratio for an Educational Institution is reduced from 3 to 1!

Rev. Charles Seet's Report On Our Meeting With URA (November 12, 2000)

We thank God for granting us a good meeting at 11:45 a.m., November 2, with the two URA officers, Mr. Chin [Head of Dev. Control (West)] and Ms. Smita Choudhuri. Six of us (the three pastors, and Dns. Yiew, Chin and Loo) together with brother Benjamin Heng (partner of Dn. Victor Loo at Ang Kheng Leng & Partners) had a discussion with them for about an hour.

Mr. Chin explained to us that since our intended use was that of a Bible College with hostel facilities, the property would have to be zoned for Educational use. It will not qualify for zoning as Civic and Community Institution. The normal

plot ratio for Educational use is 1.0. This has been applied to schools and even tertiary institutions in Singapore. Our application for a plot ratio of 3.0 was therefore much too high. Any proposal higher than 1.0 can only be approved by the intervention of the Minister subject to a successful appeal made to him by us.

On the positive side: There was no mention at all of conservation of the existing building.

Comment: After the meeting with URA the six of us discussed the matter over lunch. It was felt that making the appeal to the minister would be too difficult to do and involve more time and effort. If we apply for the plot ratio of 1.0 we do not have to pay the levy at all. Building costs will also be much reduced. It was suggested that we build a 4 storey square-shaped building with two car park basements.

Pastor's Comments. With a levy of \$2.85 million on our Beulah House property, it was natural for the Architect to build to the limit allowable by that levy. Ang Kheng Leng's impressive, soaring tower was immediately rejected by URA. Fortunately, we were called to a quick meeting without any mention of "preservation", but allowed under "Educational Zoning" at the plot ratio of 1.0. Since Beulah House has 29,026 sq. ft., the floor area we can build is the same, about 30,000 sq. ft. Now since Life Church Auditorium floor area, minus the front porch, is $50 \times 100 = 5000$ sq. ft., we can build almost 6 times this. This is able to accommodate all the expanded areas we need. Praise the Lord. This also saves us the \$2.85 million levy if we build under Educational Zoning. At any rate, an architect friend calculates we still need \$10 million for the Beulah House Project in view of the construction of two underground storeys of car park.



Our New Beulah House

Nevertheless this is half of what we originally were informed: \$20 million. God knows our exact needs and He will provide accordingly. With \$2 million in hand, we still have a long, long way to go. Therefore, let us press on, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:1). Amen.

Out of six competing architects, the above drawing by Ang Kheng Leng is chosen. Ang Kheng Leng received 360 against 171 votes by the runner-up, SEP Partnership.

Climax of 50 Years of the B-P Movement

Dr. Tow Siang Hwa, a founding member of Life B-P Church, October 20, 1950, was moved to celebrate 50 years of B-Pism. So he took great pains to rally all loyal B-Ps to a Convocation at Calvary Pandan B-P Church at the Sunset Gospel Hour, October 15, 2000.

The whole service lasted two-and-a-half hours. It was attended by two thousand. It was a Revival Meeting to my own soul. The

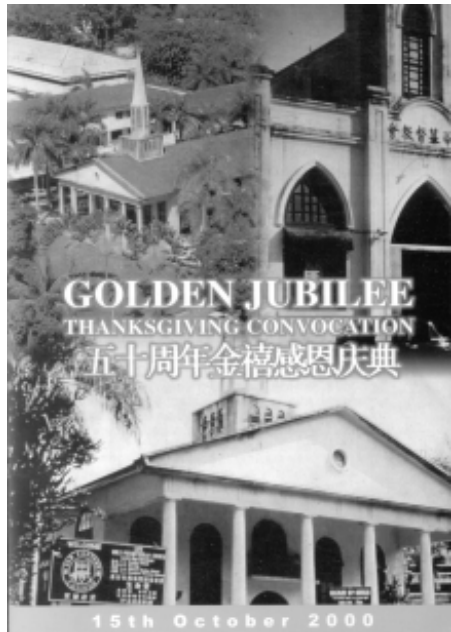
message was necessarily a historical one. It was delivered by the founding pastor as follows:

Reformation Is An Ever On-Going Battle

The B-P Movement in Singapore is not a one man's show but the concerted effort of a relay team. In the swimming relay event at the recent Olympics in Sydney, there was the battle between U.S.A. and Australia. The finishing swimmer was the most important. Australia had a secret weapon in a young man called Thorpe. When Thorpe beat his American counterpart, the newspapers reported him to have torpedoed the Americans.

The Singapore B-P Church is what she is today because we have a winning relay team. This is from Paul's commission to Timothy. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

I. Upon my arrival in U.S.A. to study at Faith Seminary in January 1948 there came a distinguished speaker to our Chapel Hour, Dr. Carl McIntire. He spoke impassionately on the need of a 20th Century Reformation to challenge the Ecumenical Movement led by liberal and modernist churchmen. They were going to form a World Church by joining back the Roman Catholic Church and then to unite together all human religions. To fight this great apostasy, he stressed we needed to uphold the 16th Century Reformation brought by our



spiritual father, Martin Luther. He appealed to young seminarians like us to join a separatist Church Council, the International Council of Christian Churches. This was in defence of our Protestant Faith in what he called “The 20th Century Reformation.”

In the words of John Wesley, my heart was strangely warmed. I was so gripped by that chapel message that I became Carl McIntire’s disciple from that day. I relayed the message I received back to Singapore to Elder Quek Kiok Chiang. He too received Dr. McIntire’s word and so we were two.

II. It happened to be the year 1950 and the ICCC was holding a Second World congress in Geneva. I was returning to Singapore upon graduation from Faith Seminary, so I was invited to Geneva en route. Quek, in order not to be left out, sold a small piece of land in order to pay his way to Geneva.

III. We returned from Geneva full of fire to fight the Lord’s battle against the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Singapore. After we returned, we found another comrade in Deacon C.T. Hsu. He, Quek and I now became the Three Musketeers. If two will put 10,000 to flight, three will make 20,000 “*larry kuat-kuat.*” We were a thorn in the flesh of the Ecumenicals by exposing their betrayal of Protestantism. For this we were taken to task by the Bishop of Singapore.

In 1951 we were called to Manila to set up the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches (FECCC) as an extension of the ICCC. Deacon C.T. Hsu paid his way to Manila, like Quek to Geneva. He joined the ICCC not for gain but for the Truth.

We broke away from our Chinese Presbyterian Synod because of its involvement in the WCC and we established the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church in 1955. The next year we hosted the Third General Assembly of the FECCC in Singapore. At this council, both Quek and Hsu were ordained. This greatly increased the fire power of our new B-P Church.

IV. The fourth leader to be gripped by the spirit of our fight for the faith was Dr. Tow Siang Hwa. He waxed eloquent

against Billy Graham when he held a city-wide campaign in Singapore in 1978. Billy included the Roman Catholics in his campaign, which showed his true colours. To fight for the faith Dr. Tow edited the *Banner* for the B-P Church. He was invited by Dr. McIntire to speak at the ICCC in U.S.A. in 1979.

V. In 1962 we founded the Far Eastern Bible College. Being aligned with the ICCC we exposed the Ecumenical Movement. Out of FEBC a goodly number of young graduates, now the Faculty, are standing with the leaders of the B-P Church. They are the last of the relay team for the Faith up to now. Not only they, but our elders and deacons, are also convinced of the position of the B-P Church and they too will defend the Faith.

Though our B-P Synod was dissolved in 1988 through the defection of some younger leaders, the great majority, as evidenced by the overwhelming crowd of 2,000 tonight, shows the fight for the faith is still on. The latest to join our B-P Church Movement is Rev. Peter Wong, my interpreter from Brunei.

VI. Now, as we enter the 21st Century, the Battle for the Faith has shifted to the Bible, the KJB vs. the 100 “Perversions,” new Bibles based on the corrupt text of Westcott and Hort. Reformation is an ever on-going battle. “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. ...” (Jude 3,4). Amen.

The founding pastor, having attained 80 years, was appropriately given \$80,000 by the Calvary group of Churches to be used for building the New Beulah House. This was augmented by \$58,000 collected the same night. Sharon B-P Church added a further \$30,000 while Calvary Tengah had earlier offered \$7,000 through a Musical they had held at Life Church. This totalled \$177,000 for which Lifers are ever grateful. Amen.

Epilogue

FULFILLING A FATHER'S VOW Testimony by Elder Tow Siang Yeow in Life Church Weekly March 2, 1997

Undergoing surgery a fourth time in as many years is apt to make one introspective. And so I was in pensive mood when I underwent an operation for hernia at the Sultanah Aminah Hospital recently. Although it was not life-threatening, yet when compounded with three earlier surgeries, it focused my thoughts on the frailty of the human body—sadly, and all too soon, it is subject to the ravages of time and decay! The Bible in 1 Peter 1:24 expresses it succinctly: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.”

Lying quietly on a hospital bed gave me an opportunity to review my life's journey from the innocence of childhood, the growing pains of adolescence, the aspirations of youth to that fateful occasion when my father vowed a vow consecrating me to the Lord's service. Unfortunately, this was sequestered in a corner of my mind and I did not give it any further thought. Father himself never reminded me of his vow, but others had on occasion questioned me on its non-fulfillment for which I could find no ready answer!

Then followed the years in furthering my career and raising a family of four, leading inevitably to retirement and onset of a number of infirmities associated with the ageing process. How time has flown! How transient and frail life is! Let us hear what the Psalmist says in summing-up man's

existence on earth: “The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, Yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away” (Ps. 90: 10).

I had in fact looked forward to a time of carefree retirement, but it came as an anticlimax when I stopped working and suddenly felt ‘lost,’ having always been active in the past! Some friends thought that I should overcome the boredom of retirement by doing locum (part-time work as a doctor). Others concerned about my health, cautioned me to take it easy and not strain myself. But, surprisingly, the doctors at the Hospital gave me a clean bill of health! They assured me that all the tests done on me were normal, and once I recover from the hernia operation, I should be “as fit as a fiddle”! That was a relief, and I thanked God for giving me this new lease of life and health.

What then? Should I not, on balance, take this opportunity to relax and enjoy life while there is yet time? The answer is “No!” for my options are clear—I must needs pay my father’s vow which has remained unfulfilled until now! I have also realized that vows made before God are of grave importance and should not be taken lightly. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 gives a stern warning: “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.”

And so we come to the conclusion of the matter: I must not fail to pay my father’s vow, for the Lord has graciously granted me life and health. There is work to be done, and I have to “work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work” (John 9:4).

May God grant me grace and strength to redeem the time and to serve Him faithfully to the end, fulfilling my father’s vow. Amen.

This Epilogue which introduces my fourth younger brother Elder Dr. Tow Siang Yeow's testimony rounds up the story of my life. While I am Son of a Mother's Vow, he is Son of a Father's.

When my Father consecrated Siang Yeow in Batu Pahat one solemn evening, I was there. My father got hold of Elder Phoa Tian Un, a fellow elder of the Batu Pahat Chinese Presbyterian Church, and called a meeting of the whole family and some Church members to witness this consecration. He explained that Second brother Siang Yew (now deceased) who gave his life to serve the Lord full-time at the John Sung Revival, 1935, had now changed course to study medicine, so he must find a substitute to make good that vow. The choice fell on Siang Yeow, No. 4. This sudden action made an indelible impression on my heart.

When my Mother died in March 1946, her last words to her children were, "Let them every one serve the Lord with utmost fervency." That would be the same words Father would be saying to his children too.

I repented from going to London after my Mother's death. I paid the vow she made for me. From 1946, when I returned to China to study theology, to becoming pastor of Life Church, 1950 to this day, I have kept the faith. What of my brothers and sisters?

Being brought up by devout parents and were saved at the John Sung Revival, let me testify also to their devotion to the Lord, most assuredly in response to my Father's wishes for Siang Yeow, for we were a closely-knit family. In the spirit of Siang Yeow's yielding to Father's vow we have eldest Sister Siew Ai serving the Lord with her substance. In her lifetime, she had offered two houses to the Lord to be converted into Churches, one in Singapore, the other in Malaysia. She gave a blank cheque to buy a church in Perth. She sold her home at Queen Astrid Park before death at \$8.08 million and all the proceeds went to building B-P Churches in various countries.

Siang Hwa stands in line after her. He is leader of the Calvary group of Churches and is helped by our Sister's legacy.

Siew Mui, third youngest sister, is married to Rev. Dr. Peter Ng, founder of Jesus Saves Mission. She has helped her husband through thick and thin.

Second younger Sister Siew Yong is married to Elder Lim Kim Hee of New Life. They had started a Gospel work at St. John's Island, winning several converts. Now she supports her husband in the running of a Boy's Brigade on behalf of New Life BPC.

By the mercies of God, the conversion of the Tow Clan runs down to my children. Lehia my eldest daughter has served as a missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. She is married to Rev. Edward Paauwe, who is now General Secretary of the Board. My eldest son, John, whilst serving in the U.S. Airforce (Reservist) as a master sergeant, is a devout Christian keenly evangelising on the theme of the soon Return of Jesus Christ. He will retire from active service at the end of this year. He has expressed his desire to serve the Lord fulltime to my delight.



John Tow

My daughter by Ivy, Jemima, is married to Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Khoo and lectures also at FEBC. She is newly elected Superintendent of the Sunday School Primary Department. Last but not least is Jonathan, who rings the Sunday 10.30 a.m. Church Bell all these years, and now he is serving as Sunday School Superintendent of the Young Teens.

Coming back to my Father's vow for Siang Yeow, Father would rejoice in his other children and their children who are now labouring earnestly for God's Kingdom, the last of whom is the son bound by his mother's vow. Amen.

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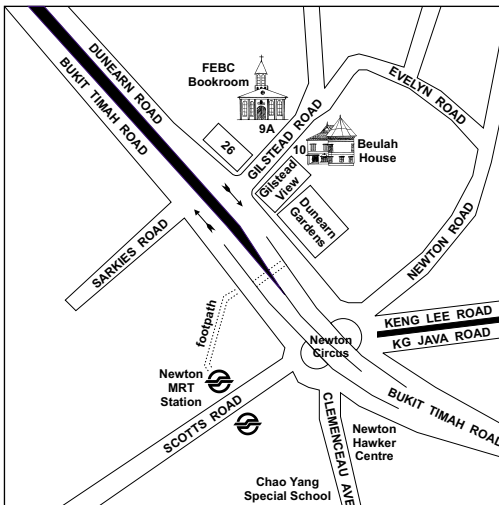
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WHY OF ALL her children did Mother offer me to the Lord? Three years after Mother was married she gave birth to Sister. This did not fulfil the hopes of the Tow Clan, as everyone in the old Chinese tradition expected a boy, and that usually within the first year. When it took another three years before my arrival, Mother had become anxious. Like Hannah in bitterness vowing to the Lord, Mother vowed the same vow, that should He grant His handmaid a man-child, “then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life” (I Sam. 1:10,11).

During the Great Depression of 1929-30, I remember another occasion when we returned home from Singapore for the school vacation. I was alone with Mother. When I told her how small Grandpa's stipend was (he was pastor of the English Presbyterian Mission Church in Upper Serangoon), being thirty dollars a month, she was dumbfounded by that remark. (A school-leaver starting out as a junior clerk was paid forty-five dollars a month.) Looking very serene, she must be praying in her heart for the son of her vow.

“So, I will be a pastor when I grow up,” responded I within, to her wishes. I loved Mother very much. I was the son of my Mother's vow. When Mother spoke again, she comforted me with these words, “When you grow up, I will send you to America!” (Now, America which is *Meikuo* in Chinese, means the Beautiful Country, a heaven-on-earth to me even at that young age).



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