

The soon coming of the Lord is attested to in the chaos and unrest of this age. Tsunamis, revolutionary movements, mutual distrust, wars and rumours of war, unemployment, hunger, collapse of infrastructure and large scale corruption are the order of the day. The hope of the Church is that Jesus will soon come to reign as King of kings.

This hope of Jesus' intervention brings a bright outlook along every avenue of life, and comfort to weary hearts.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him (1 John 2: 28, 29).

The return of our Lord Jesus is the hope of the Church. It was an issue taken seriously by the Apostles. They treated it under varied aspects, as the reward of godly living; the destruction of evil; meeting with loved ones gone before; and the inexpressible delight of the Lord's

The Purifying Hope



presence. It was for this hope that Paul the Apostle admonished the Church, *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8: 18).*

The Apostle was excited with this hope of the Church - the sudden appearance of Jesus.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10: 19, 20, 22).

There is no doubt therefore that Jesus is coming, and in the wisdom of God, the date of His return has been absolutely hidden from man. How soberly should we live as those to whom God has given

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Charity Day: A lesson in sharing

A recent event at the West and Central Africa Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith churches revealed there is joy in giving and sharing.

Date was April 25, 2011, and the event was the maiden "Charity Day" anchored by the Welfare Directorate of the Church. It was an opportunity for the "haves" to share of their God-given blessings with the "have-nots," that all may be happy in the service of the Lord.

Weeks earlier, the Directorate had mobilised the Church members across the Lagos Region to donate clothing and other wares to the needy. The move was in line with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

The large turnout for the event showed the grandeur in letting the

blessings of God trickle down for the glory of God. At the last count, more than 1,700 thronged the Charity Centre, venue of the event. Surprisingly, none went home empty-handed.

The joy of it all was that participants filed in, in teams, made a survey and selected an item that most met their desire. The happiness on the faces of participants made every donation and effort by the organisers worth it all.

This singular event is an eye-opener to how useful we could sometimes be to a brother or sister in need, when done to the glory of God.

What great comfort and joy often come to us when we understand that God is rich in grace and mercy! It is good pleasure to know that it is out of God's mercy that He forgives, restores and redeems us into His fold.

How often do we consider the Good Samaritan? Does it occur to us that while Jesus is the One Who cares for us when the whole-wide world rejects us and mends the crooked parts of our lives, career and all? We need to do likewise for our fellow men and women.

This world is worse than the dreaded Jericho road. It is full of sorrow and heartache, yet Jesus walks along with us and gives us good pleasure. He has blessed us that we might be blessings to others.

When our hearts are filled with these thoughts, we cannot but be happy, praise the Lord and seek to make others happy. After all, it is God that lifts us up from our personal pits of despair and puts us in right standing with Him.

A random survey of the young and

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Editorial Comment

Emmanuel A. Adeniran

District Superintendent
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West and Central Africa

People have lost hope
in the ephemeral
things of this world.

Riches have failed to satisfy,
children have proven they are
not beyond reproach, husbands

and wives have realised that anything called human
can disappoint at any time. But there is a hope for the
Christian.

This edition of **Gospel News in Africa** focuses on
hope as revealed in the Word of God. There is a hope for
a glorious time, when the redeemed of the Lord will be
harvested home. It will be the best of all times for all
who lived their lives to please God.

It is interesting to know that we can brighten one
another's hope while living, through charity. One of the
reports in this edition captures the mood of brethren
who took part in activities marking Charity Day in our
WECA headquarters recently.

We prayerfully hope that the messages in this
edition would boost your hope of meeting with the
Lord at the end of time.

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The Purifying Hope

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that coming as the supreme hope of our life!

Thanks be to God that ours is a purifying hope because it
regulates the attitude of the believer's life towards Christ.
Christ cautioned that Christians should wait and watch in
the Parables of the Wheat and Tares and that of the Ten
Virgins.

Jesus Christ emphasised that the Christian should live
true, expecting that at any moment, above the din and strife
of earth, we may hear His call. This is the purifying hope!

The waiting Christian cannot wait and watch and still
cherish the sordid ambitions of the world, such as wealth or
fame. Even within the Gospel, we cannot have a glorious
hope and still seek position for ourselves. The will of God
for our life is that Christ holds full and absolute possession
of our hearts.

As long as we remain human, the Christian life may be so
occupied with things good in themselves but are not
pleasing to God. For the Christian in the absolute will of
God, there is but one attitude that of the pilgrim, with loins
girt and staff in hand, waiting for the break of day.

If we are truly waiting for Jesus, we shall not be careless
concerning those for whom He died, and we shall not dare
disobey His word, which bids us preach the Gospel to every
creature. But as far as individual life is concerned, the
Coming Christ should fill the heart's vision through all the
days and moments.

How should this hope affect our behaviour? Since this is a
hope that makes not ashamed, there is no uncertainty about
it. It will therefore influence the way we live our lives,
knowing that the trumpet may sound at any moment.

How do we comport ourselves in the vineyard of God or
within our neighbourhood? The purifying hope signifies
that we are to serve our generation, live in our homes, do
our businesses and serve the Lord, in readiness to leave all
at any moment.

The Christian should be busy about his appointed task of
influencing his day and generation by living a Christ-like
life through the power of the Spirit. Even then, waiting and
listening for the Master's call, and the yearning that the
Master would welcome Him when He comes, becomes his
priority. ***Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when
he cometh shall find watching.***

This hope also lights up circumstances. Are you entrusted
with the responsibility of riches? Use that wealth for Him if
you are expecting the Lord's return.

Are you a worker in the Lord's vineyard? You can only
find comfort in your assigned task if you believe in Christ's
soon coming and the blessed dispensation which lies
beyond. Truth is, the society is fast multiplying in a ratio far
exceeding the number of converts made. The proportion of
Christians to the mass of mankind is far smaller today than
it was a century ago.

The King is rounding off the preparatory work to His
coming. He is gathering out His Church, and missionaries
are making straight His paths by the proclamation of the
Gospel in all lands.

***And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He
shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be
ashamed before him at his coming (1 John 2: 28).***

The phrase, "when he shall appear," is indicative of His
coming at any time. In this is the challenge, in that
alternatives appear possible. There are two sides to His
coming: Those who are prepared will go with Him, while
those who are not will be left behind.

The challenge is: The Christian may have 'confidence' or
'be ashamed.' With regard to the first, the word 'confidence'
has the inherent weight of boldness. The righteous is as
bold as a lion. The righteous, like the wise virgins, are ready
to meet with the Lord. They will meet Him with joy. Their
proclamation will be, "We have known Him by faith, thank
God, now we see Him!"

Then the other possibility, "be ashamed," conjures up the
picture of men and women who are conscious of their
unreadiness. They dare not face Him. Be not deceived,
these are not men out of religion!

What are we to do as Christian men and women? "Abide
in Him, watch and pray!" □

Charity Day

(Continued from Page 1)

old who collected cards, went round the Charity Centre and came out smiling, showed their satisfaction.

Consider it, a youngster who had always been dreaming of wearing a suit someday but who heard the clarion call to partake in the Charity event hearkened and got blessed. Can any imagine his excitement?

Many of the people who came for the occasion might have been longing for beautiful hats and shoes, and might have been thinking well, somehow on a glorious day, far in the future, the dream would be realised. But now Charity Day has brought the dream home, for God has made everything possible at His own time!



Brethren making selection at the cloth section

Giving should be part of our worship. The Lord said, He would someday thank us for the time He was thirsty and we gave Him water; when He was hungry

and we gave Him bread and when He was homeless and we gave Him shelter.

He reckoned we would be quick to ask, "Lord, when did we do all these?" and that the response would be, "Once you have done it for one of these my brethren, you have done it for me."

It is the will of God that Christians be different. He wants us to see the world from God's perspective and relate to people in a godly fashion.

The concept of give and it shall be given unto you should engage our attention. The good Lord will restore to us the years that the locusts, the cankerworms and other insects have eaten. □

Newsline

Echoes of Revival from Cotonou, Republic of Benin

The Spirit-filled touch of revival literally enveloped PK 14 at the 6th annual convention of The Apostolic Faith held in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, between April 17 and May 1, 2011.

Delegates came from all the districts of Benin Republic, Niger Republic, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana and Nigeria. The delegation from Nigeria was led by Reverend Aaron Olamijulo.

The Workers and Ministers' Conference was held on Thursday, April 14 with 489 in attendance. The Ministers' Conference was held a day after, with 134 in attendance.

On Sunday, April 17, the Elementary Sunday School children from Cotonou opened the convention with a sketch titled, "The Rapture and the Reward of the Saints." Brother Olamijulo preached on "Behold, he Cometh" at the devotional service. The choir and orchestra thrilled the congregation with music concert in the evening. A total of 3,887 persons were in attendance at the concert.

On Easter Sunday, the Elementary Sunday School children from Porto-Novo re-enacted the "Zion

Train," with a caution that we need to do the will of God perfectly, if we want to get to Heaven. Sister Rachel Fakorede took the devotional service and spoke on, "Atonement for Sin."

On Easter Monday, there were seminars for pastors and ministers' wives and women ministers, first aiders, and the youth. The youths later presented a drama titled, "Parable of the Talents." The presentation inspired the



A cross-section of worshippers praying

congregation to seek God's help in regard to the talents God had endowed them with.

Bible teachings were given on Sanctification, the second work of grace; The Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire; Holiness in Communication; Willing Service; The Coming of Christ; and Consecration and Prayer. The Lord used the youth services mightily as well as the revival and evangelistic

services to draw many souls to Himself.

On Friday, April 29, 114 persons took part in the water baptism. In the evening of the same day, 520 gathered to observe the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Saints' Feet. After the ordinances, Brother Kayode Oje explained to the members the present restructuring in the administration of the Church.

On the last day of the convention, the Elementary Sunday School children from Calavi presented "Christ's Revelation and the Battle of Armageddon" as a drama sketch. The District Superintendent for West and Central Africa, Rev 'Bayo Adeniran, used the occasion to exhort the Church to get prepared for the second coming of Christ, which is imminent. He charged the congregation to strive to make Heaven and avoid the wrath of God which will soon be poured out on the inhabitants of the world who fail to make the Rapture.

God blessed the meeting mightily. The record of blessings showed that 204 persons were saved, 133 sanctified and 78 endowed with the Holy Ghost. Twenty others were healed and 24 re-anointed. □

There is Yet Hope

**From a sermon by
Reverend Adebayo Adeniran**

There is yet hope. It is a season for encouragement.

“And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.”

“And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.”

“And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all” (1 Samuel 30:6-8).

Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them. In other words, there is yet hope; move ahead, your victory is not complete, you will have more victory.

Beware of “Ziklag.” Ziklag was the place that was given to David by the king of Gath. If you move out of the plan of God for you, you may collect a lot, but like David in Ziklag, you may lose everything.

David, the man of God, was anointed by God to be king in Israel but the day of his crowning was yet to come. Between the day you are separated unto God and the day of your crowning, expect the devil to fight you. The day you are saved is the day you are separated for crowning in Heaven. One day, this first salvation will give way to the last salvation. May God deliver you from the snare of the fowler.

I am praying that if you have not been delivered from your life of sin, the great God of Heaven deliver you this morning. Sin in your life is not supposed to be the end of your story. God can save you and deliver you from the curse of sin that is bringing distress into your life. If you are ready for salvation, there is yet hope.

Are you a backslider? You know it and God knows it. There is

yet hope. The prodigal son said, “I will arise.” That was when he came to himself that he had messed up everything. But there was help somewhere, there was help with God. ‘I will arise, I have sinned against heaven and I have sinned against the earth but there is hope for me, I know God will help me.’ So, for every backslider, there is yet hope. You must take the step of faith and return to God.

One thing about God is that when you are in trouble, He is there for you. Psalm 46:1 says, **“GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”** In the time of trouble, you must remember that God is your refuge, a very present help in time of trouble, a help that does not move away from you. Sometimes, when we fail men, men fail us; but when we fail God, many times, He is just by our side waiting. “Though he fails me, I will still raise him up. I will make sure I prove to him that I am faithful. Even though he fails me, I, God, will not fail. I will help him to stand.” Our God is a merciful God. Our God is gracious. May we make ourselves available to Him today.

“And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes” (Judges 16:28).

O Lord GOD, remember me. The One you have just called on, is a very present help. He will remember you today. When He says there is yet hope, in other words, there is yet another chance for you, a chance to pursue and recover all that you have lost. God will not only save you, but will help to recover all that you have lost when you went to your Ziklag; that is, when you went astray.

When David was running away from Saul, many people joined him. They struggled and wandered about until one day David became afraid and said, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.” May the devil not plant a wrong thing in your heart. He will not catch you because you are invincible. David acted in fear and ran to where he should not go. “The

just shall live by faith.” I don't know where the devil, fear and distress have driven you to. The Philistines said, “We are going to battle,” and David could have followed the enemies of God to battle with Israel. We are favoured in this Gospel. When you move out of the Gospel, you move to where you will fight the people of God, fight against yourself, and lose all that you have ever gained. Don't go to “Ziklag.” In case you are there, and all have disappeared, there is yet hope.

“And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.”

“Jesus wept.”

“Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!”

“And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?”

“Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.”

“Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he

hath been dead four days.

“Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?” (John 11:34-40).

Lazarus, when he was sick, believed in Jesus Christ and trusted the Lord. His sisters called for Jesus Christ. I don't know what sickness is in your body and you have been praying and it seems as if there were no hope. Your case is not worse than that of Lazarus because you are still alive. It is only sickness that is your challenge. Lazarus died and was buried. Was there yet hope? Yes! There is yet hope for you and me. God has not finished with you and don't let the devil tell you that God has finished with you. He will give you a new beginning, a new life, and a new possession in the Lord. May God increase your faith.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.' Do you know that? Yes, Jesus is alive still. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. What He did for David, He can do for you.

What the prodigal son experienced

ced, He can give you and what Lazarus experienced, you can experience.

God told David to pursue and that if he did, he would overtake and recover all! You will recover ALL.

What is it to come to the house of God and pursue? It is to pray. You will pray with the hope that you are going to receive. You will pray with the hope that God Who said He is not a man that He should lie will answer you. You will pray and knock the doors of Heaven and compel Heaven to hear. If you do, you will recover all. Today is the day of prayer, the prayer of faith, the prayer that you will pray until you receive an answer.

Obedience brings blessings.

“So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.”

“But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.”

“And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water” (1 Samuel 30:9-11).

As you begin to pursue, there will be help for you. At the beginning, David encouraged himself in the Lord and as he went, God encouraged David. If you encourage yourself in the Lord by faith, God will increase your faith.

This Church is a fountain of hope. Many people who have lost hope that their marriage could be repaired found hope here. A marriage broken for 37 years with the husband living overseas and the wife in Nigeria, was repaired by God in this Gospel. The man came all the way from abroad to reconcile with his wife. A couple did not have a child for 17 years, but the God of heaven repaired the womb of the woman and she had a child. Some weeks ago, that child was brought to my office. God did not only give the child, but He sustained the child. God will give you a new testimony that the devil cannot shut down. God will

give it to you today. It is a day of new testimony; a day of victory and God will help you to believe Him.

“And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.”

“And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives” (1 Samuel 30:17, 18).

Pray until you and God connect together and that is what we call, “Praying through to victory.” When you pray and God comes to meet you, He will change your name from sinner to saint, from supplanter to victor. He will move you away from failure to success, from defeat to victory, from the sick to the healthy, from the powerless to a powerful man of God. It is possible and God will do it today. Something good is going to happen to you.

I want to end this sermon with the testimony of David because I know you will have a new testimony. Don't forget where we started from. There is yet hope for choristers, for women, for young men, for the bachelors, for the spinsters, and for the jobless. But there is a greater hope, the hope of Heaven. God can renew it in your heart and you will have it.

“I WILL bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

“My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.”

“O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.”

“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears” (Psalm 34:1-4).

Come and seek the Lord. Having sought the Lord, the Lord delivered David from all his fears. The Lord gave him victory. He pursued, he overtook and recovered all. May God help you to recover all as you pray.

Bro. Adeniran is the District Superintendent of Apostolic Faith churches in West and Central Africa.



Gone Before Us... Jimi Osho disappears on the wings of hope

Brother Jimi Osho was born on June 2, 1941, at Uro quarters, Ajowa, Ondo State. He was introduced to The Apostolic Faith Church, where he prayed through to the Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost in 1964.

Having been converted, he joined the daily team work. He was later privileged to work with the late Africa Overseer, Rev. T. Gbadebo Oshokoya between 1973 and 1976 as a stenographer/typist.

He joined the choir and orchestra in 1972. He played cello in the orchestra and sang bass in the choir. He was also a faithful member of the Protocol department and backbone to the Welfare department. Brother Osho was a welfarist to the core and ever a silent worker who was instrumental

to strategic innovations in the choir and in the church in general.

He was a banker in secular life, working at the Standard Bank for West Africa (SBWA), which later became known as Standard Bank of Nigeria Limited (now First Bank of Nigeria PLC). He retired



in 1997.

He was married in June 1978 to Sister Adeola Omotayo Osho (nee Sowole). Their marriage was blessed with two boys and a girl.

Last Days

Brother Jimi Osho arrived early in the prayer room on Sunday, April 10, 2011, took part in all the services of the day, participated in the altar service and was one of the few that left the Church late on that day.

On Monday, April 11, he rose up early, had his normal morning prayer, received calls from some members of the Welfare Committee for a meeting that would hold at 2.00 pm on that day. He promised to attend and prepared to dress up. He entered his room and shortly after, his phones were ringing unanswered. This prompted his wife to go in to ask why he was not attending to his calls, only to discover to her dismay that he had gone to be with the Lord.

We thank God for his life. □

... Also Brother Kunle Ogunsona

Brother Edward Olukunle Ogunsona was born on November 21, 1946 in Offa, in Kwara State. He attended Oro Grammar School, Oro. He was the head prefect. He proceeded to Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo for his Higher School Certificate in 1968. He bagged his first degree in Chemistry in 1973 from the University of Ibadan.

He worked as a teacher in Ilora Baptist Grammar School in Oyo State. He taught at Methodist High School, Igede between 1973 and 1974 as well as many other schools across the country. He was a science editor at Onibonoje Publishers, Ibadan between 1978 and 1980. He was editorial manager at Ilesanmi Publishers, Ilesa, before joining Ogun State Teaching Service Commission in Abeokuta.

Brother Ogunsona got married to Sister Deborah Oludolapo Ogunsona (nee Omotosho) in 1979. God blessed the union with children and grandchildren.

He gave his life to Jesus by salvation in 1971 but came into The Apostolic Faith in 1973 where he was sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.



He joined full-time work in 1992 and later became the personal secretary to two District Overseers in Oyo State and also the state secretary to the Association of Visiting Secretaries. He was an interpreter who had a consistent choice of words and a retentive memory. He was highly committed to the Lord's service. He was ordained a minister in 1999. In year 2001, he was transferred

to The Apostolic Faith Church, Akinfenwa, Ibadan, as pioneer pastor and later, the Iwo branch church, where he served for seven years. In November 2010, he was transferred to Ilesa, the headquarters of Osun District of The Apostolic Faith work, as the Head of Mission for the district, a position he occupied till death.

Last Days

Brother Ogunsona was ill but he later told his family of his recovery. With the premonition that he had got to the end of the race, he passionately pleaded with his family to find time to rest and be careful about their health conditions.

In the early morning of April 14, 2011, he became very weak but he began to talk about the Gospel work. After a while, began to repeat the word, "accomplished." He crossed over gently to meet the Lord and his Saviour. He is survived by his wife, children and grand-children. □

God Did It for Me - Jesus is Sweeter Than Honey

There is power in the Blood of Jesus. I never knew there could be anything sweeter than honey. Jesus is sweeter than honey and tastier than salt. I had been worshipping in a church, where I was acclaimed a messenger of God and an evangelist. I held crusades in many locations. I founded branches of the church, prayed for the sick and delivered pregnant women, among other wonders.

At a time, I became gravely unhappy as a result of the things I observed in that church: different spirits and sins, fornication, among the elders and members alike. God took me deeper in prayers and spoke to me that all my labour would be in vain if I did not leave the place. He showed me in a dream the church He wanted me to join in true worship. I knew not the location or name of the church, hence, I hungered. Three months later, the same Voice spoke to me repeatedly.

On a glorious Friday, I planned to visit my children, and as I went, the Spirit kept pleading with me. I

missed my way and I got to a house to ask for directions. Then the Voice came again and asked me to look to my left and said that was where He wanted me to worship. The place was beautiful and as I pondered, a young man came out and I asked him if it was a house or a church. He answered me pleasantly that it was a church and he invited me in. Then the Voice of God confirmed that I had arrived at the place He was leading me to. That day, I prayed to my satisfaction and I was glad. I asked about the church and I was told it was The Apostolic Faith Church. They gave me the order of service and I determined that this would be my church.

On Sunday, I came back and was received with so much love. The people asked me to pray for salvation but I was offended. I said, "What? Salvation? With all the wonders I had performed in my former place of worship, could all these have been done without salvation?" I told them that if salvation was the only thing they

had to tell me, I would rather stay at home. As the days went by, they pleaded with me with so much love and affection that I realised I was full of emptiness and vanity. Later, I humbled myself and prayed through to salvation. God later sanctified and filled me with the Holy Spirit.

Soon, the people from my former church saw me and were utterly surprised. They pleaded with me to return to their fold and my post, but I told them that I had no post there anymore, I am now heaven-bound. They rose up in battle against me. I was sick till I could not use my two legs anymore. It was very serious but God raised up a standard for me. He healed me and restored the use of my legs. Since then, He has been my all in all. He has helped me to enjoy so much love among the children of God and to put in my little experience to work with the midwives. I give Him the balance of my life.

Victoria A. Kolade (*Iya Adura*)
AFM, Ile Oluji, Ondo State

Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo

A team of four, comprising of the District Superintendent for West and Central Africa, Brother Bayo Adeniran, Brother Kayode Oje, Sisters Rachel Fakorede and Mabel Odunsi, visited the Democratic Republic of Congo between November 5 and 15, 2010.

The leader of the work in Congo, Rev. Kaludandiko M'Bengani, expressed his joy when welcoming the team from Nigeria. The entire congregation touched the throne of Heaven with their joyful noise and ululation in their ecstasy at the arrival of the visitors.

Their young and old, male and female, showed a good understanding of the Gospel by their comportment and worship.

The team had series of meetings with the management of the Church, the pastors, the ministers, and the other workers. Each meeting explored the way forward for the spread of the Gospel in the country. Individuals were encouraged to find ways of getting self-employed, so

as to better their lots and improve the Gospel work in the country, thereby promoting the beginning of a "New Congo."

It was discovered that the Church needed a bigger area to accommodate the crowd that spilled out unto the road.



Republic of Congo

They proposed to acquire the land adjacent to the church building but were

hampered by financial considerations. After much encouragement by Rev. Bayo Adeniran, the entire saints rose up as a body to mould blocks in the hope of extending the church in Kimbanseke. The missionary team also enthusiastically joined in the block making.

Brother Adeniran was highly impressed that evangelism has been carried on in Congo for almost thirty years inspite of all constraints. The pastor and his workers had always done the work on foot, traversing many kilometres across the country. Despite this, The Apostolic Faith had been established in nine out of the 11 regions of the country and has 14 branches in Kinshasa.

Through the grace of God, the WECA headquarters visited Congo twice this year, 2011. Recently, God provided the brethren with a vehicle for the spread of the Gospel in that country. The parcel of land adjacent to the Church in Kimbanseke was also acquired. The Gospel is forging on in the Democratic Republic of Congo. □

Caring for aged Parents: a lesson from Joseph

In several parts of the Bible, God referred to the love between parents and their children to illustrate His divine love for humanity. Parents care for their children through infancy, childhood and the teenage years. In many African settings, children seldom get absolute freedom from their parents. This is because, even when young people reach adulthood or have started rearing their own families, their own fathers and mothers continue to give them loving attention and support.

There is a limit however, to what our earthly parents can do to assist when the storm of life rages. But Jesus Christ is always there to give His children loving attention and support. His promise is, ***“Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you” (Isaiah 46:4).***

For the elderly Christians, the thought that God will never leave one is a reassuring one. No wonder the Psalmist exclaims, ***“For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death” (Psalms 48:14).***

Even when there is no doubt that God will take care of young and elderly Christians, yet, there is a responsibility for children to cater for the needs of their parents.

Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth (Ephesians 6: 2,3).

It is germane here to ask who a parent is. In Christendom, the word 'parent' is weightier than the filial relationship of birth and upbringing. It encompasses elders by whose sweat or prayer, the Christian is nurtured physically and spiritually. It is a responsibility that God never overlooks.

Joseph, Jacob's 11th son gave us a heart warming example of how to cater for our

parents' needs. For more than 20 years, Joseph had no contact with his aged father, the patriarch Jacob. Notwithstanding, he never lost his filial love for his father. When Joseph revealed his true identity to his brothers, he was quick to ask: ***“Is your father yet alive?” (Genesis 43:7).***

At that time, the land of Canaan was experiencing serious famine. Joseph quickly sent word to his father, saying,

“Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

“And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

“And there will I nourish thee; for there are five years of famine, lest thou and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty” (Genesis 45: 9 - 11).

Honouring aged parents includes protecting them and providing for them materially when they are not in a position to care for themselves. Joseph gladly accepted this responsibility. Needless to say that by this time, Joseph had become one of Egypt's richest men and the prime minister, still, he did not consider himself too important or too busy to honour his 130-year-old father.

On learning that Jacob was approaching,

“Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die” (Genesis 46:29,30).

Joseph's reception for his father was more than a formal show of respect, it was a confirmation that he truly loved his aged father and was not ashamed to demonstrate this love. The challenge is, do we have similar unstinting expressions of affection for our parents?

Jacob's devotion to God remained strong to the end of his life. On his last lap on earth, he required that his bone be buried in Canaan. Joseph honoured his father's wish by complying with this request in spite of the constraints and high cost.

It is very wrong and even unchristian to abandon our parents in their old age. It would never preach the Gospel; rather, it would give us a very bad image.

“But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God” (1 Timothy 5: 4).

Paul, the Apostle enjoins, ***“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).*** Apart from the regular meetings, special occasions such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas and Easter seasons, afford us the opportunity for interchange of encouragement with the aged in this pilgrimage. Even the aged Christian who can no longer attend the services should be kept in remembrance. □

