

NEW CREATION TEACHING MINISTRY

# **THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS**

*by*

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## **STUDY ONE**

# **COMMISSION, COMMUNICATION AND CONVERSION THE NEW TESTAMENT ERA OF MISSION**

### **1. INTRODUCTION: GOD ALWAYS ON MISSION**

On two scores God's true missionary is Jesus Christ. A missionary is primarily one who is sent, and sent to bring the message of reconciliation to an area where it has not been heard. As a result of the proclamation of the Gospel it is intended that a response should result and churches come into being, which themselves will proclaim the Gospel to yet more people. Christ made it clear, especially in John's Gospel, that he had been sent as Son by the Father, to proclaim the nature and love of God, and so to redeem man. In order to do this fully he himself had to die for the sins of the world, and the defeat of all evil.

In the passages where he commissions the disciples to go into all the world he also promises to be with them, as well as enduing them with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of power. One of his statements was, "As the Father has sent me, so send I you." This means that the missionary operation has continuity with that of his own.

God has always been on mission. Many passages of Scripture inform us that before creation God planned the ultimate for redeemed man, namely glorification and inclusion as sons in the family or people of God (e.g. Ephes. 1:4, 14, I Cor. 2:6-10, II Tim. 1:9, etc.). It does not always appear, in the O.T., that God has ever been on mission, but the facts are that God was preparing redemption for man in Christ. This necessitated the formation of His covenant people Israel, through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the training of them in their approach to God, through the sacrificial and worship cultus. They, too, were the cradle of Christ, the background of the Gospel of grace.

When Christ cried on the Cross, "It is finished!", he meant man's salvation was-now effected by his death, and this was proved to be so by his resurrection. On the basis of this he could give the Commission to preach .

## **2. THE GOSPEL COMMISSION**

The following passages give the commission to preach the Gospel:- Matt. 28: 18-20, Mark 16:14-19, Luke 24:44f, John 20:19-23, Acts 1:8, cf. 10:42. Summarised they give instructions to go into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every person, to make disciples of nations, to baptise those who repent and believe, and to teach them the things Christ has taught the disciples themselves. The aim of Gospel-proclamation is to bring men and women to repentance towards God and faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour, and so to have men receive the gift of forgiveness, eternal life, and reconciliation with God. In addition, such persons will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The wider aim is to cover Jerusalem and all Judea (Jews), Samaria (Samaritans), and “the uttermost parts of the earth” (the Gentiles). The broadest concept is “the obedience to the faith by the nations” or “the obedience of faith of the nations” (cf. Romans 1:5, 15:18, 16:26).

Behind this broad concept lies the teaching of the people of God, the household of God, the elect redeemed. It begins with the sons of God of whom Abel is nominated one (I John 3:10ff), and then Seth (Gen. 4:25 - 5:4). In general the Covenant people of the Abrahamic Covenant are the children of God, and Israel is nominated as God’s special people (Deut. 7:6, Exodus 19:5-6). In the Gospels and Acts it is seen that not all Israel believes in the prophetically promised Messiah, and at Pentecost the new people of God, whilst having continuity with the old, also have some discontinuity, in that the new supersedes and outmodes the old. The inclusion eventually of the Samaritans and then the Gentiles means that old Israel as such will not accept the new believers. Thus the church becomes a body including Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles, but a body which insists that there is neither Jew nor Gentile, (Gal. 3:28, I Cor. 12:12-13). Paul speaks of a Gospel which he preaches to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:2), and whilst this Gospel is not different from that preached by other Apostles who spoke mainly to Jews, yet it is that Gospel which says Gentiles are included in the redeeming grace of God in and through Christ Jesus.

## **3. MISSION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TIMES**

### **(i) The Principles of Mission**

The principles of mission were as follows:-

- (a) The word of the Cross as given by men in the power of the Holy Spirit was the means by which men heard the truth, believed, repented, and received forgiveness, new life, and the Holy Spirit. This is evident from such Scriptures as Acts 1:8, I Cor. 2:1-5, I Thess. 1:15, I Peter 1:10-12 - amongst others.
- (b) Those gripped by the love of God were themselves motivated to proclaim the Gospel. This is seen by such passages as II Cor. 5:14-15, I Peter 1:8, I John 4:19, John 14:15, I John 5:1-3. The principle is that men who are redeemed by love will want to obey the will of God, and in this will share the love of God with those who as yet do not know it.
- (c) The coming into being of the church and so local churches provided a corporate sharing of the commission, and people were encouraged within their groups to share the Gospel with others .

An examination of the commission passages will show that they were not so much a command as directives for those who would want to preach the Gospel. The “Go!” of Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15 are really participles, i.e. ‘going’. *It is assumed they will go.* Luke simply says, “Repentance and remission of sins will be preached among all nations”, whilst John 20:21 says, “As the Father has sent me...”, meaning that they relate to him as does he to the Father, and consequently in love will preach. Acts 1:8 speaks of the power which will come to them with the Holy Spirit and that this will issue in mission.

### **(ii) The Action of Mission**

The action of mission was as follows:- The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and on the first day three thousand people were converted. With the happenings of miracles, signs and wonders and the preaching of the Gospel many more thousands were led into the fellowship of the new church. The Jewish Parliament, known as the Sanhedrin, forbade the preaching of the Gospel, but were unable to stop it. Finally one of the new Christian controversialists, Stephen, was so hated for his success as a speaker that he was arraigned before the Sanhedrin. When speaking to them, and giving his defence, Stephen was judged worthy of death and stoned. The immediate effect of this stoning was to trigger off severe persecution of the Christians, and as a result many of them fled from Jerusalem. At least two results are recorded: (a) The going of Philip the evangelist to Samaria, where a large scale conversion took place (Acts 8), and (b) Other Jews to Syria, where it is said “they gossiped the Gospel” (Acts 11:19-26). At Antioch in Syria the first church of Jews and Gentiles was formed. In turn it was investigated by the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, and pronounced to be valid. It was from this church that the outward movement of the Gospel began, as we shall see.

### **(iii) All Apostles Had Proclamation Ministry in Many Countries**

We must understand that the Book of the Acts is primarily concerned with the ministry of Paul. Doubtless it sets out its main thesis in 1:8, i.e. Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles will be included in the Kingdom of God through the Gospel. However, it mainly emphasises the Gentile situation. Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria was the prelude to the Gentiles. At the same time we must realise that Paul was by no means the only missionary. We have evidence from the first letter of Peter that he had preached to ‘the dispersion’ over a large area. History can trace some of the work of the apostles, although not always under the name of any special apostle. It is said that Thomas went to India. We simply know that Christianity made its way eastward by way of Damascus and Edessa into Mesopotamia, southward through Bostra and Petra into Arabia, westward through Alexandria and Carthage into North Africa, and northward through Antioch into Armenia, Pontus and Bithynia. Later still it reached Spain, Gaul, and Britain before crossing the borders of the empire into the remoter parts of Ireland, Ethiopia and China.

We conclude then that the apostles other than Paul and Peter also had rich and effective ministries, and that the first flush of missionary activity after Pentecost was quite powerful.

### **(iv) The Ministry of Paul**

Saul of Tarsus was a man set against the church of Christ Jesus, and he attempted to persecute them and destroy the sect as we would have called it. Having authority to do this in Damascus he set out from Jerusalem and moved to-wards

that city in which there were already Christians. On the road he was met in a vision by Christ, and was converted. He immediately began to preach the Gospel. However this aroused opposition and he finally returned to Jerusalem and related to the church there and the churches throughout Judea (Acts 9:26-31). He returned to his home city of Tarsus and was eventually called by Barnabas to the church at Antioch. After a period of time there the church heard the call of the Holy Spirit to send out both Paul and Barnabas. They then began what is called 'the first missionary journey'.

Paul undertook a number of missionary journeys, and those can be traced upon the maps provided in Bible atlases. Paul sums up the extent of his journeys in Romans 15:17-21. He says, "from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum". Illyricum was Dalmatia. It may well have been that Paul ultimately went further than this. He did of course go to Rome. However his prime intention was to preach where the Gospel had not previously been proclaimed.

#### **(v) Other Indications in the New Testament**

We know that when Paul reached Rome there was already a church there. This, anyway, is evident from the fact that he wrote a letter to that church. It is traditional that Peter reached that city with the Gospel. When we read Acts 2:5, "devout men out of every nation", and see them nominated in 2:9-10, "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, Rome ...Cretans and Arabians", amongst others, and realise that many of these must have become Christians at Pentecost we can understand how the Gospel must have spread to their lands. Again in I Peter 1:1 we read of those in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Perhaps the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8 - converted through Philip - was but one person, yet that nevertheless indicates a probability of scattering the seed of the Word.

We can conclude then that 'mission' would have been immensely dynamic at the inception of the faith, powerful before it was to be institutionalised. However, until we understand its dynamic it is useless for us to seek to trace its growth and development. At the same time we need to understand that dynamic so that our study is not merely academic. We need to know with a view to the constant renewal of the mission ministry.

### **4. THE INNATE DYNAMIC OF CHRISTIAN MISSION**

In the Old Testament the great thrust was "God is King of all the earth". This too is repeated in the N.T. (Matt. 11:25, Acts 4:24, 17:24). Man was to be a lord under God to subdue the earth (Gen. 1:28ff, Psalm 8:3ff). However, in the N.T. if men believed in God they must also believe in Jesus (John 14:1). They were to believe in him as Lord (Acts 2:36, 10:36, Romans 10:9, etc.). Such belief was saving. God in the O.T. was judge of all the earth (Gen. 18:26). In the N.T. it is Jesus who is judge of all (John 5:22, Acts 10:42, 17:31). In the O.T. God gives the promise of the New Covenant and in the N.T. it is Jesus who mediates this. By him it is made effective (Matt. 26:28, Hebrews 10:10ff).

The N.T. brings us the person who is Messiah, King, Son of God, Son of Man, Suffering Servant, the true Lord. On the one hand he meets the need of humanity in clearing of its guilt, and liberating it from the powers of evil. On the other hand he sets up a new programme for creation. Being liberated it moves towards its final destiny as the true household of God, expecting to inherit the earth, especially when that earth is liberated from its bondage to corruption (Romans 8: 18-25, cf. I Cor. 2:6ff, I John 3:1-3, Romans 8:28-30)

The eschatological discourses of Jesus, his claims to Lordship, and his command to capture the nations for Christ as well as his gift of the chrism of the Spirit all show the inner dynamic of the faith. With that chrism went also the gifts and weapons of the Spirit. Nothing would be able to stand before a combination of these, especially as they were motivated by love, and actuated love in this present world. The Book of Revelation revealed what Christians knew even prior to its writing, namely that the Lamb of the Cross was the triumphant Lion of the Universe. He alone can and does control history.

Summarising then we see that:

- (i) The Gospel was the personal dynamic which released men from their guilt and shame, and renewed them to be true new creations, and so active in their world.
- (ii) The Gospel was oriented to winning the nations of the world. It did not really have a ghetto complex. It saw men in the grip of death and evil and wished to release them.
- (iii) It was the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, i.e. of the Reign of God the Father and His Christ.
- (iv) Its primary dynamic was love which alone could transcend the enormous difficulties under which any faith operates.
- (v) The dynamic of love and victory derive from the person of the Holy Spirit who is the Agent of Father and Lord, making the Gospel real to men through the Word, through gift and by spiritual weapons which are mighty to the pulling down of many strongholds of evil.

Persecution did not, therefore, dismay the early believers. Many of them were like troubadours, singing their songs of release in a world of darkness and bringing light as they went.



## **STUDY TWO**

### **THE FIRST FIVE HUNDRED YEARS**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY OF APOSTOLIC MISSIONS—A.D. 35 to 100**

In our previous study we saw what happened in the apostolic period. It was the aim of the early proclaimers to preach Christ to the ends of the earth. All Christians knew they had responsibility for this task. In spite of elements of persecution they pressed on to do so. The Christians possessed remarkable powers which they used to propagate the Gospel, namely the intense love and loyalty to one another, a persistence in proclamation that must be unequalled in ancient history, and certain powers such as healing and exorcism which must have impressed even their enemies. Their own concern for one another, especially in provision for the widows, the poor and those imprisoned for their faith was a dynamic which was irresistible.

Documents began to appear such as the Gospels, the Epistles, Acts and the Revelation, and although mere fragments of these were often only circulated, yet they had power. Gradually the churches which were largely composed of slaves and menials began to make their impression upon society. By the time of the death of the Apostles churches were in many places. The communication system of the Roman Empire with its arterial roads, the passage of commerce, and the trade language of Greek, all aided in the spread of the Gospel. Doubtless, after the fashion of Paul, other apostles ministered the Word to strategic and basic centres such as large towns and cities, so that the fermentation spread itself out into the surrounding districts.

The centres into which the Gospel had reached by the end of the first century were Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth and Alexandria. It is estimated that by the close of the Apostolic period about a half-million people had come into the Christian faith. Whilst this number was composed of various levels of dedication and loyalty, it is nevertheless true that the fountainhead of the faith flowed freely, and a half-million of people was destined to make its mark on the world.

Finally we have to add that certain materials are available which help us to trace the outreach of the Gospel, but for the most part much of the outward movement is not traceable.

#### **2. THE PERIOD OF EARLY CHURCH MISSIONS—A.D. 100 to 313**

This is the period which we roughly estimate as the time from John the apostle to Emperor Constantine. This age was not led by the apostles who had now died, but it had a fine leadership of many, so much so that it has been named as “The Age of the Nameless Ones”. They certainly needed good leadership for this was a strange age. Christianity had in some cases been regarded as part of Judaism or a rather freakish offshoot of that faith, and so was regarded as fairly harmless. Judaism, as it met the successive defeats at the hands of vespasian, Titus and Hardian, finally withdrew into itself, filling up its own culture and traditions, and ceasing to seek proselytes amongst the Gentiles

Christianity on the other hand, flourished. It was now fairly launched into the stream of Hellenistic (Greek cultural) life. Hellenism seemed to make some impact as the two streams met, but the dynamic of the Christian faith was such that it passed through and beyond its Hellenistic influences. Geographically it began to take up its positions in the Mediterranean world. Because of the instability of the Empire and the cultural insecurity that existed amongst conquered peoples, it began to make its impact, since what it offered was moral soundness, and a hope for life in this world and beyond death. There are references to Christianity in non-Christian writings, but then they are few, and offer little to build upon.

By 180 A.D. Christians were in all of the provinces of the Empire and Mesopotamia. The organisational patterns were beginning to form which Christians so often presented, namely that of an inclusive community. Whilst the second century presented reasonable stability and prosperity under strong Emperors, yet in the latter half of that century strife and disintegration began. As often happened, many sought refuge in religion. Changes in society seemed to make for insecurity and cuts and faiths sprang up and spread, including the mystery cults. One of these was Mithraism, which was often mistaken for Christianity. Neoplatonism was also growing. Christianity took advantage of the times and pressed the claims of Christ. Although it was a minor religion it began to catch the eye of the Roman leaders. It was then that strong persecution began, and the church suffered deeply.

Geographically Palestine was never strongly Christian. In fact most of its Christians had Greek background. In Phoenicia the faith was much stronger than in Palestine. There was a strong church in Tyre, and of course in Antioch. The latter remained a strong Christian centre for many years. Another strong centre was Edessa, east of Antioch. Syria was a region in which the Gospel flourished. By the time of Constantine there was a strong Christian cause in Cyprus. The southern portions of Asia Minor had been captured for the faith. Gregory Thaumaturgos, a disciple of the Alexandrian Origen, changed Pontus into a Christian population. Greece was affected to some degree, and there were communities in Corinth, Athens and Thessalonica. The faith spread into Peloponnesus, Byzantium, Pannonia, Dalmatia and Media. There appear to have been Christians also in some of the Roman legions in the Danubian provinces.

Christianity had also moved into North Africa. Centres are found in Egypt, especially of course Alexandria, where it was predominantly Greek in emphasis. The faith was found in Upper as well as in Lower Egypt, and the foundations of the Coptic Church had been laid. By the time of Constantine Christianity was found west of Egypt, especially in and around Carthage in the present Tunis and Algeria. North Africa has a great history of Christian scholars. The language was mainly Latin and writers such as Tertullian and Cyprian were prominent for their writings. Much of the Scriptures was put into Latin, and this helped Christianity to enter the Latin world. Rome naturally enough became one of the leading centres of Christianity since travellers from all over the world would have been brought there, Paul and Peter included. The faith spread to parts of Italy and Spain, tradition having it that James laboured there. The Gospel spread to Gaul (France) although it only made slow progress through the third century. A number of bishops are known by the beginning of the fourth century. Christianity was also found in England before the fourth century.

Eastwards the faith had spread into Mesopotamia, and to Persia itself, even to the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf. Northwards was Armenia, and the faith had penetrated this country by the third century, it being the first country of any size in which Christianity became the official religion. North of Armenia in

the Caucasus and on the northern shores of the Black Sea, Christianity found its way. Across the Jordan and southwards into Arabia the faith had spread, and then further east into India itself, all by the end of the third century. In fact it is impossible to trace the entire propagation of the Gospel, so vast was it, and so undocumented is much of it. What is very clear, however, is that the faith was dynamic and spread widely.

### **Elements of the First Three Hundred Years**

It is easy to trace the facts and effects of persecution, for in the first three centuries the Christians were often subjected to such, especially by Rome itself, who saw the Christians as disloyal in their refusal to worship the Emperor. They even looked upon the Christians as atheists because they had no visible God. However, persecution only served to expand the church.

At the same time the Christian church suffered from internal problems. The current climate of gnosticism, donatism, and other views made it difficult to pronounce fully on matters of faith. There was controversy within the church, and then controversy outside the church, so that apologists were needed, and of course they arose. We have appended some notes from former lectures on Church history (Term One, 1978), and these are appended at the conclusion of this term's notes. They indicate the problems.<sup>1</sup>

### **3. THE PERIOD OF EARLY CHURCH MISSIONS —A.D. 313 to 500**

The period of Constantine, of course, was significant for the Christian faith. Some see Constantine's conversion to Christianity and his making of the faith a legitimate religion as a disaster. This was because it became identified as a State religion, and the use of its leaders - bishops and the like - made them in some sense the servants of the State. It posed problems that were to bedevil the church for many centuries, particularly the one of politics and power-struggle. It is true that there was a temporary setback in the reign of Julian the Apostate (Emperor), but from that point onwards paganism was virtually stamped out.

Christianity began to be identified with the Graeco-Roman civilisation. Elements of syncretism were inevitable. Nevertheless the old cults hung on tenaciously, and even in some cases affected the church or those within it. Augustine was deeply affected first by Manichaeism and then by Neoplatonism, until finally he returned to the church, and a whole new understanding of the faith. Constantine extended to the church the privilege that all religions had, including the exemption of clergy from contribution to the State. He placed certain restriction upon pagans, but not excessively. However, it was soon clear that Christianity provided the best means of ensuring State acceptance, especially in the years following Constantine's reign.

When Constantine died there was a battle for the sole rulership amongst his three successor sons, Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius. Constantius emerged as the sole ruler, and proved a stalwart - with some exceptions - for the Christian faith. His cousin Julian who succeeded him, eventually spurned Christianity. It is suggested he had been shown the Arian view which was an arid and

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<sup>1</sup> For helpful reading, K. S. Latourette's "*A History of The Expansion of Christianity*", Vol. 1 (The Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1970) should be read. This covers the first 500 years .

intellectualistic view, lacking dynamic. In any case, Julian set out to discredit Christianity and espouse paganism. This gave opportunity to pagan mobs to act against Christians.

Julian was succeeded by Jovian (of German descent), who called to account officials who had destroyed churches under Julian, and he aided the restoration of churches and the faith. Valentinian I, who succeeded him, favoured the church (364-375), but at the same time exercised tolerance towards pagans. Gratian, the next successor, was in fact the ruler in his teens. He dropped the title Pontifex Maximus, a term used formerly to mark the head of the state paganism. He brought restrictions upon paganism. From his time onwards the history of rulers is primarily of those who espoused Christianity and yet had a certain tolerance of the old religions. Gradually the old religions died. If anything, concern was felt far more for Christian heresies which were arising, than for the old pagan religions.

Up until A.D. 500 there was a period of extension and consolidation. The names of great theologians, apologists and leaders begin to appear in Europe, North Africa, and the East. Augustine, Martin of Tours, Ambrose of Milan, Vigilantius of Trent, John Chrysostom, Philaster (later Bishop of Brixia) dubbed a "second Paul", and apologists such as Eusebius (also author of "Ecclesiastical History") and others. During this period there was a struggle between Christianity and the paganism of the day, and the latter did not easily surrender. Nevertheless most of the countries and provinces mentioned in our former section had enlarged and consolidated many gains for the Christian faith. Gradually paganism was strangled, many of the great temples being closed, either by being proscribed, or because Christianity had gained many of their adherents. One needs to read detailed histories on the European, Asian and North African countries to see that in fact much evangelisation was done at the sword, in the name of the Roman Empire and for political reasons. Much of it could not justly be said to be the evangelisation of love. Doubtless this brought many of the problems which are still with us. In some cases bishops were heads of armies, or strong political leaders, officers of the Roman Empire.

Finally, consolidation brought in the Goths from the North, extended the areas of Christianity in Great Britain and Ireland, the latter with the ministry of St. Patrick. Central Asia, from Persia to India, knew of Christian communities. Likewise Arabia. The coming of Islam decimated many great churches. However, the problem of Christian growth, survival and decimation relates much to the types of Christianity espoused, but the problem is too complicated to deal with in this study.

#### **4. CONCLUSION: CHRISTIANITY A MISSIONARY FAITH**

Given in all the problems of the period from 35 to 500 A.D., Christianity without doubt proved itself to be a dynamic missionary faith. Although many situations became extremely complicated through heresies, controversies, politics, and methods of evangelism which did not accord with the truth of the Gospel, yet the Gospel did spread. Inherent weaknesses in certain doctrinal approaches such as Arianism, Nestorianism and the like, all combined to produce weakened forms of the true faith. The political use of the church by rulers, and the identification of the Western Church for the most part with the Holy Roman Empire, all served to develop elements which could not prove creditable to the faith. Yet, all this being said, the Gospel proved itself to be the dynamic force in the civilisations of this era of five centuries.



## STUDY THREE

### THE CHRISTIANISATION OF EUROPE; A.D. 500 to 1200

J. Herbert Kanen in his volume “*A Global View of Christian Missions*” (Baker Book House, Michigan, 1971, p.37) says, ‘During the Dark Age Ireland stood out as a beacon in the gathering gloom. From the sixth to the eighth centuries it was the most advanced country in western Europe. Free from the disastrous invasions of the barbarians, the church there kept the lamp of learning burning when the lights all over Europe were going out. Attracting scholars from England and the Continent, she received them all with boundless hospitality, sharing with them the highest education available in that day. Had it not been for the great monastic schools of Ireland, learning would almost certainly have perished from western Europe.’

The Irish church was noted for its missionary zeal. From the time of St. Patrick it had been this way. In an unusual way these missionaries knew the Scriptures and a personal experience of the Holy Spirit, and gave themselves unstintingly to the evangelisation of foreign peoples; the fierce Picts of Scotland, the savage Angles and Saxons of England, the Frisians of the Low Countries. They did not find easy acceptance as they pressed on through Gaul, Holland, Germany, Switzerland and northern Italy. In their going they founded monasteries which became centres of Christian culture and from which they went forth to evangelise, returning to them to find rest, renewal and new power.

This movement is spoken of as the salvation of Europe at a time when it was pressed by barbarian hordes and might well have lost its Christian heritage thus far established. The following record gives a very superficial sketch of the progress of Christianity, especially in Europe.

#### (i) BRITAIN

We have already seen that some elements of Christianity had come to Britain by the third century. Three bishops from London, York, and Lincoln were present at the Council of Arles in 314. With the coming of the Saxon and Angle invaders in the fifth century, much of this earlier Christianity was swept away. However, in the sixth century the faith took root as the result of a Christian invasion from Ireland in the north (563) and from the south by Rome in 596.

As Scotland had given St. Patrick to Ireland, so now Ireland gave Columba to Scotland. Iona is famous as the Island where he established a monastery which was to become one of the most famous missionary centres of all times. The nature of this monastery is itself most interesting. Columba was a man of remarkable zeal and he and his monks left their imprint on the whole of Scotland. Columba died in 596, but the monastery at Iona continued to send missionaries to all parts of the British Isles and Europe for two hundred years more.

Irish missionaries continued to evangelise the savage Angles and Saxons of Northumbria. Their cruelties had struck fear and hatred into the hearts of the Britons. Aidan for seventeen years preached to these Angles and Saxons with great effect. He had established a monastery on the Island of Lindisfarne. Oswald the king of Northumbria on embracing the faith, powerfully supported the

Christian faith and so monasteries sprang up everywhere, and great impact was made upon the people. Aidan was succeeded by Cuthbert, who as a godly man completed the evangelisation of the Angles.

The other thrust of which we have spoken was from Rome. Pope Gregory the Great had sent Augustine with forty monks to England. Hearing of the cruelties of the Anglo-Saxons Augustine was disposed to turn back, but eventually arrived in England with only seven monks. Wonderfully enough, King Ethelbert received them well and aided them and himself finally embraced the faith, ten thousand persons being baptised in one day. Canterbury Cathedral was founded, Augustine becoming its first Archbishop.

The two streams met and were in conflict, for the Celtic and Roman forms of Christianity differed somewhat. Eventually the matter was settled, in fact England settling for the Roman form. With the evangelisation of the Saxons in Sussex by Wilfred towards the end of the seventh century, the conversion of England may be said to have been completed. The outcome of these two streams of evangelism was that England sent out a steady stream of missionaries into the pagan and difficult part of Europe. The effects of these missionary endeavours were most significant.

#### **(ii) GAUL**

Although Gaul had been under the impact of the Gospel a number of times, yet the effects had been negated by the waves of paganism that followed. Columban, a Celtic monk who had trained under Congall at Bangor, set out in the sixth century to preach in Germany, but stopped short of that country and established a monastery at Luxeuil in Burgundy. For twenty years he laboured with effect until expelled for his outspoken preaching against immorality in high places. He then crossed the Rhine and preached the Gospel to the wild people, the ancestors of the modern Swiss people. His attacks on idols, his burning of pagan temples and the like at last caused him to flee, until he became established in another monastery in North Italy at Bobbio.

#### **(iii) HOLLAND**

There is a long history here, and a broad one of English missionaries who evangelised Holland. The people of the countries known as Frisians were visited by Bishop Wilfrid when he stopped off on his way to Rome. Preaching with great power he baptised many of the leading men and thousands of the masses. In 692 a Northumbrian monk Wiliibrord with eleven companions crossed the North Sea to become the first missionaries to the Frisians. Even though the missionaries were suspect politically, they were able to accomplish much, including the establishment of a strong church.

#### **(iv) GERMANY**

Again it was the ministry of English and Irish monks which brought the Gospel with impact to Germany. Boniface (680-754) had a brilliant ministry of sane forty years. He came to be known as the Apostle to Germany. In 722 he was consecrated as Bishop of the German frontier, although he had no fixed diocese. He challenged the old paganism by chopping down an ancient oak sacred to Thor, and when nothing happened to him the masses responded to the Gospel. He had other far-reaching ministries and was finally made Archbishop of Mainz.

**(v) THE SAXONS**

The conversion of the Saxons was in the reign of Charlemagne (771-814), but it was rather by military persuasion than voluntary acceptance of the Gospel. The Saxons were a savage people desiring neither Christianity nor civilisation. Many atrocities were committed in the process of persuading them to submit. Missionaries were identified with the pressures of Charlemagne and often cruelly treated, but ultimately the work and witness of the missionaries prevailed and the Saxons accepted Christianity.

**(vi) SCANDINAVIA**

The Vikings are famous in history for their valour and conquests. They threatened to finish the outreach of the missionary church, and only in 878, when Alfred the Great won a victory and forced some thirty leading Vikings to accept Christianity, was the pressure stemmed. It was about this time brave missionaries began to penetrate Denmark, Norway and Sweden, although with small success. The Scandinavian people clung to their gods and their ways of life, but eventually, though after hundreds of years, there was a movement towards Christianity. In Norway it came not by choice but by force. One person famous in the work of the Gospel was Anskar (801-865), who was a French monk. He suffered many setbacks but finally was consecrated Archbishop of Hamburg and set about creating a network of missionary activity. He finally managed to achieve the acceptance of King Horic of Denmark, who had been a strong enemy of the faith. Today he (Anskar) is revered as the Apostle of the North, i.e. the Scandinavian countries.

**(a) Denmark**

Anskar, in Hamburg, just over the border from Denmark, had a disciple Rimbert who carried on his work in Denmark. However, in the tenth century King Gorm, who opposed Christianity, took steps to banish the faith from the land and in doing so destroyed churches and priests. However, when Henry the Fowler, King of Germany, subjugated the Danes in 934 he forced one of their rulers to embrace Christianity, and the current Archbishop of Hamburg set about restoring the fortunes of the church in Denmark. After some changes in fortune, Canute, Christian King of Denmark and England, finally established the faith. By 1104 Christianisation was completed.

**(b) Norway**

As we suggested before, the introduction of Christianity was attended with some violence. King Haakon, reared in England, sought to introduce the Gospel to Norway, but met such opposition that he died without achieving his aim. In the reign of Olaf Trygvason (963-1000) Christianity took root. This fine man used both grace and force to pursue his ends, and his successor, Olaf Haraldsson, completed the task.

**(c) Sweden**

Anskar by no means succeeded in his attempts. It was by the efforts of missionaries, first from England and then from Denmark, that the Gospel was introduced. By the tenth century many English missionaries were working. Olof Skötkonung (993-1024) was the first monarch to accept and extend the Christian faith. He refused to use force, and his son Anund Jakob (1024-1066) helped the faith to spread to all of Sweden. By 1164 the bishopric of Uppsala had been created and Sweden was a Christian country.

## **(vii) EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

We need to study church history (as also history) to see- that *Christianity* had two great streams - the Eastern and the Western. The Eastern has often been called Byzantine after the first name of the city of Constantinople, i.e. Byzantium. Constantine later named it after himself. Thus the Eastern stream flowed from this city, and a great Empire grew around it, enough to be a bulwark against the Islamic invasion of Eastern Europe. It was said; of Constantinople that “it was by far the greatest and most civilised city of the Christian world.”

### **(a) Moravia**

The Eastern church in the tenth century began to take an interest in the nonChristians to the north. The first missionaries to the Slavs were Constantine and Methodius. These two brothers were sent to Moravia at the request of Rastislav, who was a prince of Moravia and who had requested this of the patriarch of Constantinople. Constantine reduced the language to writing and translated the Gospels and liturgy. Against Rome they used the vernacular, but were encouraged by Constantinople. Jealousy of the German clergy and opposition from Rome was unhelpful, but the Gospel had been brought to Moravia.

### **(b) The Bulgars**

In 865 King Boris was baptised and the acceptance of the Gospel was accelerated. Disciples of Methodius had penetrated to the Bulgars. The king established a monastery and from this radiated out Slavic Christian culture. His son, King Simeon, persuaded his bishops to declare the church self-governing and to elect a patriarch as its head, a thing hitherto unheard of. From Bulgaria the faith spread to what is now Yugoslavia and Russia. It is said that Constantine and Methodius rank amongst the greatest in Christian history.

### **(c) Russia**

Two attempts were made to bring Christianity to Russia but both proved futile. The first was in the ninth century when the patriarch Photius sent a mission to Kiev, which proved unsuccessful. A century later Princess Olga, after being baptised in Constantinople, tried to introduce Christianity into her Kingdom. Her nobles strongly opposed her. Under her grandson Vladimir (980-1015) Christianity took hold of Russia. Vladimir was deeply interested in Islam, but after examining various religions decided for Christianity. He married the sister of the Greek empire and this fortified him in the faith, and also provided technical legal grounds for Russia to claim to be the rightful successor to the Byzantine Empire.

### **(d) Poland**

It is not known when Christianity first reached Poland, but it is certain that it came by those Christians who were Slavs and Germans. Christianity began with the conversion of Duke Mieszka, who was baptised in 966, probably because of his Christian wife Dobrawa, who was the sister of the King of Bohemia. His son Boleslaw (992-1025) reigned over what became in his time the largest kingdom in Eastern Europe. Both church and state prospered together. However, after the King's death the political and ecclesiastical structures fell apart and a period of severe persecution set in. Churches and monasteries were destroyed and clergy

heavily persecuted. Under Boleslaw III (1102-1139) some stability was restored and to a degree the order of the church. There was a resurgence of evangelism and a large number of Pomeranians embraced the faith.

## **CONCLUSION: EUROPE IS EVANGELISED**

K. S. Latourette's second volume in his "*A History of the Expansion of Christianity*" should be read to gather up the enormous detail of missionary activity. Tribes and peoples were embraced during the seven hundred years under discussion. A certain principle always seems to be at work such as the primary incursion of missionaries and with that partial acceptance or savage rejection. Even partial acceptance is generally followed by persecution, and in this sense 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church' so that penetration is made, and finally, for the most part, full acceptance follows.

By 1200 A.D. most of Europe can be said to be evangelised .



## **NOTE ON ISLAM**

### **INTRODUCTION: ISLAM AND HISTORY**

Although we can only devote a note to this most significant movement of Islam, most text-books on the subject are expansive and detailed, primarily because Islam was not only a force in its day, but is a powerful force today in the world of commerce, politics and religion. Kenneth Latourette in his second volume devotes 56 pages to the subject. Only because we are trying to cover the whole history of missions must we be extremely brief. Students should search out material and read it thoroughly. Failure to do this will mean failure to understand the bitterness Islam holds towards Christianity because of the barbaric Crusades. Much of the basic Christian teaching on love fails to impress the Islamic nations who are aware of what happened during the time of the Crusades. Islam, which means 'submission', i.e. to God's will, was itself intensely cruel, but then it had no particular love ethic such as the Christians claimed for themselves.

### **ISLAM: ITS ORIGINS AND NATURE**

It was in the eighth century that Islam had its birth and success. It was, and is, one of Christianity's most powerful antagonists. At this time the Western Christian Church was just maintaining the light, but the Eastern was at its lowest ebb, and with the rise of Islam the church was in no condition to withstand its advance.

Mohammed, born in Mecca, A.D. 570, had 28 years of obscurity, married a wealthy widow, and so was relieved of temporal cares. He observed the degraded paganism of Arabia; also Judaism and Christianity, which had entered Arabia in a very poor form of doctrine. At 40 years of age he began to have 'visions'; these he was persuaded to interpret as revelations from God, and so began his preaching that "there is one God and Mohammed is His Prophet". He named his doctrine "Islam", meaning "*resignation to the divine will*", and this is recorded in the Koran. He gradually secured military and political power, conquering by the sword. "His Arabian armies were possessed by a wild fanaticism and a thirst for plunder and conquest. The prophet's *injunction* to them was to exterminate all heathen and apostates, and to offer to Jews and Christians the choice of the Koran, tribute or death". His armies swept through the lands east and south of the Mediterranean, and westward through Europe, into Spain, and the Moslem power threatened to encircle Christianity and wipe out the Church. The calamity was averted by the victory of Charles Martel in 732 at Tours, with his Frankish soldiers. The terrible blight of Islam remained, however, and steadily extended over the Levant, North Africa and Western Asia.

"No system could have been devised with more consummate skill for shutting out the nations over which it has sway from the Christian faith" (Sir William Muir).

During these centuries the picture is of the church tainted with worldliness and increasingly full of heathen corruption and lack of spirituality. Where she carried the Gospel she also carried the lowered standards of Christianity, and, without stressing the importance of individual conversion, she concentrated on mass movement. A subtle change took place in that the rite of baptism was substituted for heart conversion and spiritual experience. In spite of this, the knowledge of the Gospel to a greater or lesser degree was spread, and it appears that at the end of the eighth century the Name of Christ was known throughout the world from Ireland in the West, through Scotland, England, South-West Europe, Italy, the Eastern Mediterranean, Asia Minor, Persia, Central Asia to China, India and Ceylon.

### **ISLAM AND THE CRUSADES**

The Crusades were not strictly a missionary movement. They had, however, a tremendous influence upon the religious, intellectual and social life of the whole civilized world.

Seven Crusades are usually reckoned, occurring between 1095 and 1272: Their immediate object was to avenge the oppression and cruelties practised by the fanatical Moslems against the Christians of Syria and pilgrims to Jerusalem, and to deliver the Holy Land from the power of Islam.

Under Peter the Hermit, a flame of fanatical zeal spread over all Western Christendom. Kings, nobles, peasants, clergy, laity, old and young, became bound together under this new *inspiration*, and sacrificing home, possessions, and even life, flung themselves into the holy war. The Pope offered absolution from all sins; debtors were made immune from the law; those who died in action were assured of eternal blessedness and reward.

The sufferings and losses sustained by the Crusades were terrible indeed. The military successes were few and short-lived. Jerusalem was taken in 1099, but recaptured by the Moslems in 1187.

Some of the effects of the Crusades were:-

1. A better understanding came about between the people of the West and East a change distinctly favourable to missionary progress.
2. The Crusades contacted the older and more advanced civilisations of the Greeks and Saracens, and Eastern art, sciences and inventions were introduced into Europe.
3. Commerce, especially maritime, greatly expanded, bringing new wealth to Europe and causing great cities to spring up.
4. Clergy and laity were brought into closer contact, giving the latter a truer knowledge of the former. This was a factor in preparing the way for the Reformation.
5. The Crusades contributed to the spread of Christianity in regions where it was little known. There were a few souls who had a genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of Mohammedans. Some studied the Moslem creed with sympathy and prepared translations of the Scriptures. The outstanding name in this connection is Raymond Lull, the first and still the greatest missionary to the Moslems. He seemed to be raised up to show what the Crusades might have accomplished, if spiritual weapons had been used.

### **RAYMOND LULL (1235 - 1315)**

Born of a Spanish family on the Island of Majorca, he was a brilliant student, a skilled musician, and a gay courtier. In the midst of a profligate career, he was arrested by a vision of Christ on the Cross, experienced an agony of repentance, and then, turning his back on all his former life and associates, gave himself in full consecration to Christ and to preparations and plans for the conversion of the Saracens. He mastered Arabic and used his wealth to establish schools in which others might study various languages, and fit themselves for missionary work.

Neither Church nor state would help, and failing to induce others to join him, he went alone to the fanatical Moslem centre of Tunis in North Africa. Successful in his arguments with the Moslem doctors, he was thrown into prison, and shortly afterwards sent from the country. He returned and was again imprisoned. When a third time he insisted on going to Africa in spite of threats to his life, he was set upon at Bugia and stoned to death at the age of eighty.

He is the connecting link in missions between the Apostles of Northern Europe and the leaders who, following the Reformation, carried the Gospel to every part of the rapidly increasing world.

### **CONCLUSION: CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM**

A detailed study of Mahomet's life will show that both Christians and Jews kept much from the leader, especially the substance of their Scriptures. The forms of Christianity which Mahomet met do not appear to be of a high order. Mahomet seems also to have had access to apocryphal rather than canonical writings. It is claimed that Mahomet was in fact illiterate, but that is not certain. In any case he could have studied with the aid of literates.

Mahomet finally seemed determined to spare neither Jew nor Christian, although he called them 'the people of the Book'. It did not really require the Crusades to incite Islam to implacable enmity, but in any case they cemented Islam in its attitude to Europe, and the West generally. It is certain that sad heritage is still with us .



## STUDY FOUR

### ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS: AD, 1300 to 1700

The Reformation brought a reaction to the work of the Roman Catholic Church and the tendency to play down any of its activities as unacceptable. For this reason - amongst others - the place of missions has not been accorded to it by Protestants. Yet the 400 years or so that Rome evangelised is amongst some of the most amazing records of church history.

The Roman Catholic Church is by far the oldest, largest and most influential organisation in the world. Its history needs to be studied from before this period we examine to see its links with State, and its powerful politics.

The beginnings of Roman Catholic missions are closely connected with the explorations of the sixteenth century. The great exploring countries then were Spain and Portugal.. Spain had sponsored Columbus' venture to discover a western passage to India. Portugal's interests had been directed toward finding a passage by sailing around Africa. Thus Pope Alexander divided the world between these two nations, Spain to be granted all to the west of Europe, and Portugal all to the east!

#### 1. THE WEST — or MISSIONS IN AMERICA

The first missions followed the earliest explorations, and were in the west Indies, Central America, Mexico and Peru. Friars, chiefly Franciscans and Dominicans, were included in every exploring party. Outstanding among them was LAS CASAS, who laboured in Haiti, Cuba, Central America, Mexico and Peru. In an effort to correct the injustices perpetrated by the colonists against the Indians, he proposed that Negro slaves be allowed them; but later regretted this, as it led to introduction of Negro slavery in the Americas. The king of Spain appointed him protector of the Indians in 1516 - no easy task, for it brought him into continual conflict with his own countrymen. He finally returned to Spain in 1547, where he continued to plead the cause of the Indians for another score of years until his death.

“There were others, both statesmen and missionaries, who made repeated efforts to improve the lot of the Indians and to mitigate their oppression by the Spaniards, but the name of Las Casas occupies a unique position among them. He did and suffered more on their behalf than any others of his contemporaries, and his life helps to light up one of the darkest pages of history, which is filled with records of cruelty and crime” (Robinson).

The labours of various missionary orders among Indians in North America left no permanent results. Force was used as a means of conversion, and while many cruel practices were abolished, much was left to be desired in the manner of Christianising the Indians. Today an entirely new approach is being used.

## 2. MISSIONS IN THE ORIENT

These owe their beginning directly to the Jesuit Order.

**FRANCIS XAVIER** (1506-1552): One of the greatest of missionaries. A Spaniard, he became the first missionary in modern times to India. In 1540 he was sent by the Pope to Goa, the Portuguese colony on the west coast; then to the pearl fisheries from Cape Comorin to Madras along the east coast. Later he laboured at Travancore, where he baptised thousands. After three years in Southern India he journeyed onwards to the Malay Peninsula and adjoining islands for another three years. Here he contacted an escaped Japanese murderer, who was converted, and from him Xavier heard of Japan and desired to visit and evangelise it. With Hanjiro as his guide, he landed in Japan in 1549. The picture is drawn of him trudging barefooted, carrying his box containing everything necessary for celebrating the Holy Sacrament, up and down the hills and shores of Japan for 2~ years. The nation alternatively gave him welcome and rebuff, and although unable to speak the language and depending on interpreters or just signs, he claimed and baptised many thousands of converts.

His last efforts, after revisiting Goa, were to enter China, but they were in vain, and in 1552 he died of fever on the island of Sancian (St. John) off the south-east coast of China. His body was brought back to Goa, where he was buried and where his body is still exposed periodically and is believed to work miracles!

In Francis Xavier we have an example of that strange and paradoxical combination of genuine love and devotion to Christ and holy passion for souls, along with doctrines woefully unsound and policies of work utterly unworthy. During his brief but intense missionary career of only ten years, this remarkable man is said to have planted the cross “in fifty-two different kingdoms, preached through nine thousand miles of territory, and baptised one million persons”. His methods of approach varied from poverty in India to pomp in Japan.

**The MADURA MISSION:** One of the most interesting of Jesuit missions in those early times in India is known as the “Madura Mission”. It was started by *ROBERT DE NOBILI* (1577-1656). He and his successors aimed to evangelise South India by adopting the methods of scholarly Hindu devotees. They adopted not only the dress but even the sacred thread which is always worn by the caste known as the “twiceborn” in India. They kept themselves ceremonially pure against defilement by untouchables, and engaged in long vigils and other austerities. The Pope sanctioned these concessions to Hindu customs, even though it was said to be “out of compassion for human weakness”. By following these methods, they succeeded in gaining numerous converts from among the higher castes.

*MATTEO RICCI* (1552-1610): Turning from India to China, we find the same characteristics in the work there. An Italian by birth, Matteo Ricci so identified himself with the Chinese literate - the most honoured class in China - in dress, style of living, and method of writing and teaching, that he was received

by the cultured Chinese and was able to move about all the way from Macao in the south to Peking in the north, while China was still closed to foreigners. He also made large concessions to the Chinese cult, rendering homage to heaven, to Confucius and to ancestors.

Other orders entered China and there arose friction among them, chiefly over the concessions introduced by Ricci. This controversy ("The Rites Controversy") was carried to the highest courts of the church and took over a century before it was finally settled. The decision was against Ricci's practices in regard to Confucius and ancestors. This led to persecution by the government authorities.

**JAPAN:** The real founder of the missions in this country was *JUAN FERNANDEZ*, who began work in 1549. By 1614 the Jesuits are said to have gathered 600,000 into the church, chiefly in the southern island, Kyushu, with Nagasaki as the centre. From then until 1660 they were frequently persecuted, and finally expelled, presumably because the Japanese feared that they were preparing the way for subjugation by Portugal. (The "*Catholic Encyclopaedia*" says that the captain of a Portuguese vessel jokingly remarked that "missionaries had been sent to prepare the country for conquest".) This resulted in Japan closing her doors to missions for nearly three centuries. It is said that when the ban against missions was revoked in 1873, there were still 8,000 Roman Catholics in Japan.

### 3. MISSIONS IN AFRICA

In 1484, a mission supported by the Portuguese Government was established at the mouth of the Congo. The Africans held the Portuguese in great respect and were ready to embrace their faith and also their social order. Portugal, however, was in search of wealth, and all that undeveloped Africa had to offer was "souls of men". West Africa became the source of supply for the slave markets of Europe and America. From 1575-91, 52,000 slaves were transported from Angola to South America. The chief mission stations were Loanda and Benguella. When Livingstone in 1854 made his famous journey from the Zambesi to Loanda, he was delighted to find some Christians still in those parts, and many of them able to read. Unfortunately, however, they had not been given the Bible, but amulets and crucifixes.

A mission was also carried on along the East Coast of Africa. The Jesuits, in the seventeenth century, also attempted to bring the Church in Abyssinia under the sway of Rome.

### 4. METHODS OF MISSION WORK AMONG CATHOLICS

Aberly - the coordinating and directing board for all the various orders since 1622, when it was established - is the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda. The chief source of revenue is the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, founded in Lyons in 1822. It is international in character; its organisation is simple - "To become a member of it, it is necessary to recite a daily prayer for missions and contribute at least five cents a month to the general fund". Methods of work do not differ largely from those in Christian lands. The policy of Propaganda adopted in 1659 reads - "Do not make any effort toward and do not for any reason persuade the people to change their customs, unless they should be patently opposed to religion and morality. Do not impart these, but Faith, which does not despise the uses and customs of any people, provided they be not immoral; it desires on the contrary to see these preserved with all respect".

### **CONCLUSION: CONTEMPORARY ROMAN MISSIONS**

An enormous change has taken place since Vatican II. A theological and liturgical change has taken place on a large scale. There has been a liberalisation of attitudes towards other branches and denominations of the churches. Just how basic and real this is can only be judged by time as it passes, but certainly in South America a revolution of thinking has taken place. This is partly due to the dynamic forms of Protestant faith which are receiving countless numbers of converts from the Roman church. It is also due to the political climate. The Roman Church is now showing itself to be in the forefront of political change, and is certainly concerned for the social welfare of its members as well as for the oppressed classes of the continent. Throughout the world there have been many changes, some of them liturgical, and the Mass may now be said in the vernacular. The charismatic movement within the Roman Church has liberalised many, and some pursue a thorough policy of evangelisation.

There is therefore every reason to believe that the already extensive missionary arm of the church will continue to show and exercise power .



## **STUDY FIVE**

### **THE ORIGINS OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS**

#### **I. THE ORIGIN OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN EUROPE - A.D. 1600-1800**

The Reformation, so far as the missionary enterprise is concerned, can be viewed from a number of points of view:-

- (i) The Reformers were discovering true Biblical doctrine, and had to work it out to its true conclusion. In doing so they were not primarily concerned with missionary outreach.
- (ii) Evangelically Europe was proving itself to be an actual mission field, even if not thought of under that title.
- (iii) The Reformers made a genuine mistake in insisting that the commission of Christ had been given primarily to the apostles, and not to others, and that it had been fulfilled in the apostolic age.
- (iv) The Reformers in their emphasis upon certain matters, e.g. predestination, election, justification, the work of the Spirit, were themselves at deep variance and paid the price in internal strife amongst churches, groups and sects. Often, it seems, hyper-Calvinism stultified the thrust to evangelise. God was supposed to do this, sovereignly, not requiring the aid of men.

Many of these things served to hold back the missionary movement. A few desultory efforts are recorded, but they proved abortive.

It is also to be noted that with what we might call ‘the losses’ of those who rejected Roman Catholicism, Rome itself gained more converts by missionary endeavour than it lost by the Reformation during the period of 1500 to 1700 A.D. Without doubt the world saw colonisation, not only by Roman Catholic countries such as Spain and Portugal, but also by Dutch, English and Danes, and without doubt a certain influence of the chaplain-clergy was made upon local populations, but this was very gradual, and only blossomed to any degree in the 18th and 19th centuries. It needed, in fact, the impetus of the Pietist movement to initiate the missionary thrust. The Pietist movement was partly a protest against a legal justification, an intellectual understanding of redemption which did not issue in holiness and obedience of life.

### **The Initiative of Pietism and Puritanism**

Baron Justinianus Von Welze was an Austrian noble who made a strong appeal by two publications issued in 1664, arguing for evangelical Christianity to be extended to the heathen. He had three questions:-

- (i) Is it right that we evangelical Christians hold the Gospel for ourselves alone, and do not seek to spread it?
- (ii) Is it right that in all places we have so many students of theology and do not induce them to labour elsewhere in the spiritual vineyard of Jesus Christ?
- (iii) Is it right that we spend so much on all sorts of dress, delicacies in eating and drinking, etc., but have not thought hitherto of means for the spread of the Gospel?

His appeals brought no response, and finally he despaired of a response, going off himself as a missionary to Dutch Guinea.

It was about this time that the Pietist movement had begun. Philip Spener, and August Francke taught that saving faith involves a complete transformation of the whole being through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. He sought to raise the spiritual life and level of the clergy as well as giving it theological substance. The concept of personal conversion was not absent from Reformation thinking but it had not been developed. The doctrine of the new birth, and the demand for an evidence of regeneration arose, as also a demand to live consistently with the new birth. The state churches were not seen as the centres of spiritual life, so much as the *conventicles*, which took over the prerogatives of the church as such. In these fellowship groups pietism flourished, and institutionalism was superseded. The missionary thrust was undoubtedly born through these groups, which accounts for the establishment of societies by groups of Christians, rather than by denominations.

The English puritan, William Perkins, influenced the Dutch Reform movement, which also gave emphasis to the idea of the “church within the church”. Such an emphasis constituted an attack upon nominalism in state churches, jolted formalism and complacency, and set a new fire burning. Francke’s influence in Halle

became powerful because he also accompanied his work with social and philanthropic work - schools for the poor, orphanages, a Bible School, a pharmacy and the Danish-Halle mission to India. This kind of pietism was confirmed by good works, and its movement of directly exhorting repentance and holiness of life gave a power to ministry which had not been evident under the preaching of grace and justification. Receiving new life consciously, others began to exhort to repentance and faith in Christ. The impetus for missionary activity became a solid fact. Francke's influence spread across Europe, into England and across to America. The Archbishop of Canterbury accepted two students from Halle who were to establish a Halle type school in London; several students went to study at Halle. Anton Bohme came to England, set up social programmes and translated letters from the Halle missionaries into English, and these were read by the mother of John Wesley - Susanna, and this kindled the first missionary interest in John Wesley.

### **Herrnhut and Zinzendorf**

The seventeenth century passed, and the early eighteenth century saw an increase in pietism. Count Zinzendorf, a student of Francke, gathered together Moravian brethren who had come out of the old Bohemian fellowship, and other refugees, and founded the Herrnhut colony and in 1727 the Moravian brethren. Zinzendorf's idea was "walking together in company" or "fellowship is the foundation of religion". His people shared in preaching campaigns. Most of all this group emphasised the commission to preach the Gospel throughout the world. Missionaries began to go throughout the world. Two missionaries went to the Danish West Indies, working at their trades to support themselves. They moved into Greenland, Dutch Guinea, South America, then South Africa. They worked amongst the North American Indians and later in Labrador. They ministered in England, and later in South Africa, Australia, and on the borders of Tibet.

For many, the problem of Reformed doctrine remained. It is not that such doctrine was necessarily unbiblical, but the insistence that men should not undertake evangelism 'to the heathen' was a common view. Also it must be admitted, much of Western society viewed the races of the East, Africa, and South America as inferior human material. Sadly enough they did not recognise the need to share the Gospel of the grace of God. It took certain elements to change this view. One happening was that of the significant ministry of Jonathan Edwards, and the other the Evangelical Awakening which took Britain by storm, and spread to North America, and Europe. In Europe, in fact, the Moravians had for many years lived in dynamic experience of the grace of God, showing how Reformed doctrine, when applied personally to life, could transform men and women and give them compassion for the lost.

### **Jonathan Edwards**

Edwards early in the eighteenth century began preaching sermons on justification by faith. His grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, had been a minister in this New England (Northampton) church and had seen numerous revivals. In his "Strange Narrative of Conversions" he tells how the whole city became thoughtful and wherever people gathered it was on the basis of spiritual and eternal things. In six months some 300 real conversions took place, and the movement spread. Later revivals also took place, but the significant thing was Edwards' writings on conversion. His "A Treatise on the Religious Affections" was published, and this seemed to break through the old Calvinistic view which did not give much emphasis to regeneration in the sense of direct preaching for direct results. Edwards was a great scholar, and today he is being more and more studied. He became President of Princeton College. Someone has said, "It was work amongst American

Indians which drew forth from him a re-interpretation and a development of Calvin which brought out *Calvinism's latent missionary impulse.*” What also was significant was that a young protege of his - David Brainerd - worked for five glorious years amongst the Indians, and he too, saw wonderful revival. Edwards' biography of Brainerd (Brainerd died young of disease) greatly influenced Carey, Henry Martyn and others.

### **The Evangelical Awakening**

Jonathan Edwards, following in the train of his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, was a product of that ministry rather than the Evangelical Awakening from Britain. Nevertheless he shared with that movement. Around that time Wesley had been affected by the Moravians. John Wesley had spent several years in Georgia under the auspices of the S.P.G. (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel), with the intention of doing Missionary work amongst the Indians. Wesley was a rigid, legalistic person, bent on holiness, and he caused a revolt against his own ministry. The good side of this venture was his linking up with Moravians and he was impressed by their piety, but saw they lived in a holiness which was not like his severe brand of the same. They were simple, quiet, peaceful and joyous. Returning on a ship he was terrified in a storm, but saw the peace and calm of the Moravians. His contacts with these people eventually brought him to peace in the assurance of salvation, and at that time others such as George Whitefield and Charles Wesley also had come to share the same faith. Whitefield was a Calvinist and like Edwards, whose friend he became, this man preached with enormous power. Within the Church of England a fine group of evangelicals emerged who expounded Scripture clearly, and who were used to bring life to an apathetic church. Such were William Grimshaw, William Romaine, Daniel Rowland, John Berridge, Henry Venn, William Fletcher, and others.

This Evangelical Awakening was directly concerned with missionary outreach and enterprise, and indeed laid the foundation for the “Great Century” (i.e. the nineteenth), which was to prove the century of all centuries, at least in Protestant Missionary endeavour.

## **II. THE ORIGIN OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN ENGLAND AND THE U.S.A. - 1750-1910**

### **1. ORIGINS IN GREAT BRITAIN**

#### **William Carey**

William Carey was deeply affected by Jonathan Edwards. He himself was a particular (Calvinistic) Baptist, and had to re-think his traditional theological position, and his writings can be best understood in the light of this. It was this that he questioned in the first and more theological part of his now famous *“Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen”*. He rightly saw it as one of the foremost obstacles to missionary outreach in his day, and in challenging it, he was to eventually change the whole attitude of the Protestant churches.

There is no doubt that the attitude of many had been changed by the Great Evangelical Awakening, and there was a better climate. A new philanthropy grew and concern for souls needed a clear outlet and opportunity, and this Carey helped to provide as he worked to form in 1792, “The Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen.” More than this, Carey had got across to the Protestant world that the Great Commission was still binding upon

it, and that failure to engage in mission was nothing short of disobedience to the Lord Christ. At that time leader after leader was saying the same thing as Carey. Melville Horn, addressing ministers at this time, said words which were to lead to the formation of the London Missionary Society -- failure to engage in foreign missions he said was "the habitual open violation of Christ's command... without shame, and almost without effort to the contrary."

### **The Establishment of Missions**

The formation of a Society scarcely raises a thought in our minds, certainly not an objection. We have to go back to Pietism, however, to see the ecclesiology which allowed societies to do the work which, perhaps, churches ought to have done. In 1698 "The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge" had been formed; in 1701 "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel", and these were to assist in the winning to the faith of Indians and Negro slaves in the British Colonies. America, in fact, formed the first missionary society in 1649 -- "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England". Carey's Society was formed in 1792 and he and Dr. John Thomas went to India in 1793. The L.M.S. was formed in 1795, and the Church Missionary Society in 1799. The British and Foreign Bible Society was formed in 1798, and the American Board of Missions in

## **2. ORIGINS IN THE U.S.A.**

In 1802 Samuel Mills believed he had a call from God to missionary service and entered Williams College at Williamstown, Massachusetts to prepare for ministry. Out of his enthusiasm what has been called "the Haystack Group" was formed. They prayed in a haystack during a storm and resolved to become America's first foreign missionaries. After graduation some of them entered Andover Seminary, which had a tradition and an inheritance from New England Puritanism, as also Jonathan Edwards' evangelical tradition. They were joined by Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell and Samuel Nott, and formed "The Society for Inquiry on the Subject of Missions". Their influence upon the General Association of Congregational ministers (of Massachusetts) was such that the Congregational Union formed a Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. As a result missions began to be conducted to the American Indians, whilst the B.C.F.M. in consultation with the London Missionary Society arranged to send out missionaries. Their first batch was eight, and soon the field of Burma was one amongst many including Ceylon, the Near East, China, and Madura.

Judson, before he reached the field, changed his views on baptism and was immersed in Serampore by one of Carey's colleagues, and this led to the formation of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society in 1814. Following this other Societies were formed by The Methodist Episcopal Church (1819), The Protestant Episcopal Church (1821), The Presbyterian Church (1831), The Evangelical Lutheran Church (1837), and others, later on. By 1973 the operating budget of North American Ministries Overseas - some 485 sending and supporting bodies - totalled \$400,000,000, for a total of 35,000 full-time missionaries is supported throughout the world, constituting 70% of all Protestant missionaries in the world.

### **CONCLUSION: "THE GREAT CENTURY"**

The work of the pietists - inspired by the puritans - found its fruits in the Great Evangelical Awakening, and thus in Carey's ministry. By the dawn of the new century the machinery was being well set up for a forward missionary drive.

The principle of “mission” had been generally accepted.

Professor Latourette has called the nineteenth century (1814-1914) the “Great Century”. In this period Protestant missions flowered amazingly and virtually covered the whole earth. A number of elements combined to make such an expansion:-

- (i) The re-discovery of the Great Commission. This was of course coupled with the experience of regeneration and holiness of life which demanded obedience.
- (ii) The ecclesiology of the pietists often made them reject just the ministry of state-controlled churches, and they sought outlets in countries where their governments had not colonised.
- (iii) The colonisation movement around the world also brought with it missionary ministry which took the opportunities afforded them.
- (iv) Explorers like Livingstone opened up new areas for ministry, and pioneers like Hudson Taylor discovered the potential of a life of faith.
- (v) The acceptance by many denominations of the Westminster Confession’s interpretation of the Bible as itself being the Word of God.
- (vi) Much of the German impetus came from the thought that Christ’s coming would be brought in with the preaching of the Gospel to all nations.
- (vii) Further evangelistic ministry such as that of Moody with its emphasis upon outward response helped the tides to rise, and with it came the formation of the Student Christian Movement, and the Student Volunteer Movement with its watchword, “The evangelisation of the world in this generation.” This profoundly affected the last quarter of the century.

At the beginning of the Student Volunteer Movement there was a meeting at Mount Hendon, Mass., at which 251 students from 87 colleges attended. Also present was Dr. William Ashmore of China, and in one of his addresses he said, “Show if you can why you should not obey the last command of Jesus Christ.” No less than 100 students found that the only realistic response that they could give to such a challenge was to volunteer for missionary service. They became the first fruits of an unprecedented harvest of lives from the universities, and missionary societies found that their numbers of missionaries had doubled before the end of the century.

So by the year 1900 the Protestant denominations had accepted the principle of the Commission, of missionary responsibility, and the several hundreds of missionaries of 1815 had swelled to some 22,000 by 1914, and the Protestant churches were represented amongst almost every people. By 1910 the Bible had been translated into 500 languages, and this process has continued even more vigorously in the twentieth century. Many countries coming under literacy found the Bible was the first thing they read, especially translated Gospel portions. The famous Edinburgh Conference brought delegates from many places of the world. It was the festival day of missionary thrust, and the fulfilment gloriously of William Carey’s vision and hope. This “Great Century” closed on a note of triumph. The principle of missionary ministry had been accepted.

## STUDY SIX

# BACKGROUND TO PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN THE GREAT CENTURY - I

### 1. INTRODUCTION: THE MEN AND THE MOVEMENT

In our very sketchy introduction to the missionary movement in the Great Century as it is called by Kenneth Latourette, we saw the origin of missions in the continent (to some degree), Great Britain and North America. The history of missions, is, however, to a great degree the history of men and women who pioneered the preaching of the Gospel to various nations.

Were we to move on directly to the history of the spread of the Gospel in the great continents of the world we would be deluged with a vast number of statistics and so we would miss the truth that the Gospel was proclaimed by persons. Doubtless they were enabled and supported by their societies, who also were supported by wider constituencies of dedicated Christians. Often they were soundly supported by denominations and church bodies. To miss the contribution these men made is to miss not only the ‘adventure and romance’ of dedicated lives, but the fact that the Holy Spirit uses persons.

Whilst we present the following persons who in many ways represented mountain-peaks in the history of missions, yet with them were others equally as famous, and many more whose fame has not been recorded but who were humble and unseen pioneers in the work of missions.

The following three sets of studies cover the period of the nineteenth and overlap into the twentieth centuries. The actual history of the various countries and missionary activity within them must be left to our later series which cover the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. JOHN WILLIAMS (1796-1839) AND THE SOUTH SEAS

Born in the same year as the L.M.S., this man exercised a profound influence over the whole of Polynesia and became the Apostle to the South Seas. He arrived at Tahiti in 1817. The sight of innumerable islands languishing in heathenism moved him to take as his motto: ‘For my own part I cannot content myself within the narrow limits of a single reef.’

It was on the island of Rarotonga, cut off from communication with sister islands, that Williams determined to build, with his own hands and the help of

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<sup>2</sup> Those who wish better to understand the periods and places in which these missionary biographies took place should read the following volumes:- “A History of the *Expansion* of Christianity” by Kenneth Latourette (Paternoster Press, England, 1971), Volumes 5 and 6. “A *Global View* of Christian Mission”, by J. Herbert Kane (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, USA, 1977). These volumes are richly detailed, and contain the basic statistics needed.

natives, a missionary ship. In fifteen weeks, in the face of every difficulty, "*The Messenger of Peace*" (60' long and 18' broad) was built. In this vessel, for many years, John Williams sailed, bearing the Gospel from island to island.

Mr. Williams was in England during 1836-37 publishing the Bible in Tahitian and many portions in other dialects of the South Seas. At this time, a vessel, the "*Camden*" was bought, in which he returned. He took up residence in the Samoan islands. However, he still felt the call to visit other peoples that they might be freed from idolatry and cruelty and superstition. Having preached to his Samoan flock from the text, 'Sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more', he sailed for the New Hebrides. The struggle here between the Gospel and the old heathenism had been as terrible as anywhere. Most of the islands are stained with the blood of some Christian missionary, native or foreign. On 20th November, 1839, the "*Camden*" anchored off Erromanga. Mr. Williams, with two others, went on shore and seemed to have been accepted by the savages. Mr. Williams and Mr. Harris walked towards the native hut. Mr. Cunningham soon heard an ominous yell and before his eyes saw the other two cruelly murdered. A 'humble stone' marks the place where the remains of the great missionary were laid, but his true monument is in the islands round about, where he first carried the Gospel of peace.

### **3. ROBERT MOFFAT (1795-1883) AND SOUTH AFRICA**

The pioneer L.M.S. missionary to South Africa was Dr. John Vanderkemp, who went out in 1798. A man of great gifts and remarkable character, he spent many years of great hardship in seeking to evangelize and help the ill-treated Africans. He worked among the Hottentots. Other missionaries went to the Kaffirs and Bushmen.

To the north of the Orange River, there lived a famous chief, Africaner, who, with his people, had been forced back by the European settlers. Two missionaries bravely settled within a hundred miles of his country. Africaner was wanted by the colonial government for murder and there was a price upon his head. No one, however, dared to attack him. Africaner, however, was favourably disposed towards the newcomers, as they represented an English society. Some of his children he sent to be taught at the Mission Station. However, due to troubles from various sources and misunderstandings, Africaner destroyed the mission station, the missionaries only just escaping in time.

It was at this stage that Robert Moffat set out from Cape Town to Africaner's kraal. On his way the farmers warned him of what a dreadful fate awaited him. On arrival at his destination, he found that bitter hatred existed among the Africans for a missionary who had preceded him. However, a house was built for him of poles and native mats, in which he lived for six months. Soon Africaner and his brothers showed a change for the better. The chief became interested in the Bible and all forms of Christian work. He would sit and talk with Moffat about the truths of the Bible. During an illness of Moffat, the once dread outlaw nursed him with all the tenderness of a woman.

In 1818 Moffat persuaded Africaner to accompany him to Cape Town. The expeditions had its risks. Africaner was still an outlaw; a price was still upon his head, and the farmers had not forgotten old injuries. But Moffat calculated rightly on the effect that would be produced on the colony in favour of missions by the very sight of this notorious chief, now animated by a new spirit of friendship and peace. Disguised as a servant, Africaner followed the missionary. On arrival in Cape Town, the Governor was greatly astonished at being introduced to one whom he had regarded as the prime rebel against the colony.

Moffat was married in 1819 to Miss Mary Smith. In 1820 they started for Bechuanaland beyond the Orange River. The people among whom they laboured were most difficult. It was impossible to make them grasp any conception of God. They ridiculed the thought of the resurrection. They were inveterate-thieves, robbing the missionaries of the very necessities of life. They took a savage delight in destroying all the efforts of the Moffatts to improve the condition of this sterile and inhospitable region. They disturbed the worship by shouting, singing, and snoring. They were quite sure the missionaries had done something wrong in their own country and were afraid to go back, otherwise they would never endure such a life as they were made to lead. Then they proposed to make the missionaries withdraw. The chief and some of his followers with raised spears, warned them to depart at once. Mrs. Moffat stood by her husband's side, holding a baby in her arms. The missionaries said: 'If you are resolved to rid yourselves of us, you must resort to stronger methods, for our hearts are with you.' The chief, staggered by their courage, said to his men, 'These men must have ten lives when they are so fearless of death; there must be something in immortality.' They went away and the mission continued.

The mission was moved in 1823 to a place on the Kuruman River, eight miles distant. This is where Kuruman village arose, a place always associated with these missionary pioneers. Here they lived midst terrible tribal feuds. At times Mary Moffat was alone when the others were out on their missionary journeys. More than once the missionaries had to leave the station, and retire to where there were other white settlers, with a view to better defence.

In 1827, Moffat determined on a bold and characteristic step. He was conscious that living in a separate house prevented a perfect mastery of the Bechuana tongue. He determined to go out and live as one of the people, to perfect himself in their speech. This, of course, involved a prolonged absence from home, and submission to all kinds of discomfort, and even danger. But it seemed to him a necessary preliminary to the great work of making a complete translation of the Bible. He carried out his purpose, and not only learned far more of the speech, but also of the habits of the people, than he had known before.

The long struggle of the mission against opposition of so many kinds was nearly over. A last band of marauders under two renegade Christians was put down, and there ensued a time of peace. The time of reaping had come. In 1829 a wonderful change came. The people who had boasted that the missionaries would never make one convert, began to throng to the services. Six candidates for baptism were selected. On the Sunday following, they sat down to the Lord's Table together. The very day before, a communion service, ordered nearly three years previously, arrived.

The next few years were years of quiet, constant growth of the mission. The schools were well attended, and the tone and character of the people steadily improved. A large new church was built.

Journeys such as that which Moffat made to the Matabele king, Mosilikatse, proved to be arduous and perilous. On one occasion he walked right up to a lion, thinking it to be part of a rock, and barely escaped with his life. On another occasion, looking up, he saw a tiger-cat preparing to spring at him. Stepping hastily back, he trod on a cobra, which instantly wrapped itself around him. He had the presence of mind to raise his gun, and just as the enormous beast was preparing to strike its fangs into him, he shot it over his shoulder, and it fell dead.

In 1838, the translation of the New Testament being complete, Moffat and his wife went to Cape Town to see it through the press. Finding difficulty there, they resolved to return to England and have it printed in London. When in England

Moffat wrote his book on "*Missionary Labours in South Africa*", and travelled over the land, rousing great enthusiasm for the missionary cause.

The Moffats returned to the Kuruman to serve faithfully until 1870. Mary Moffat died in 1871 and Robert in 1883.

#### **4. DAVID LIVINGSTONE (1813-1873) AND AFRICA**

While Robert Moffat was in England, a young medical man, in training for missionary work, came to ask whether he thought Africa was a possible sphere for a medical missionary. Moffat's answer was: 'Yes, if you push on to the vast unoccupied districts, where no missionary has ever been.' The young man was David Livingstone, and these words became a key note of his life work.

He was attracted to the L.M.S. by the catholicity of its basis.

Livingstone's first journey up country filled him with enthusiasm for African travel and impressed him profoundly with the benefit of missions. His medical skill soon won for him a great reputation. He adopted Moffat's plan of living with the natives for six months to master their language and get to know their customs. At this time the Directors of the L.M.S. were considering the question of sanctioning a forward move. A large number of missionaries was now at work in South Africa, whilst north of the Kuruman, there was practically no station. Livingstone was eager to move forward, but was cautioned by the Directors and Dr. Philip (a veteran missionary). He said: 'If we wait till we run no risk, the Gospel will never be introduced to the interior.' So a forward movement was sanctioned. Livingstone hailed with a 'feeling of inexpressible delight the decision of the Directors that we go forward into the dark interior. May the Lord enable me to consecrate my whole being to the glorious work.' He now proposed to confine medical work to severe cases. He was afraid of becoming 'a very good doctor, but a useless drone of a missionary. The spiritual amelioration of the people 'is the object for which I came, but I cannot expect God to advance this by my instrumentality if much of my time is spent in mere temporal amelioration.'

In 1843 Livingstone settled down for three years' work at Mabotsa. This year his work was very nearly ended. Going with natives to break up a troop of lions, one of the beasts which had been wounded, sprang at him, seized him by the shoulder, and shook him. 'For thirty years afterwards all his labours were undertaken with a limb so maimed that it was painful to place the left arm in any position above the level of the shoulder.'

In 1844, Livingstone was married to Mary Moffat. In 1846, they moved northward to Chonuana. Here the celebrated chief, Sechele, lived - one of Livingstone's best friends and most remarkable converts. This chief at first wanted to convert all his people by thrashing them! Livingstone taught him the more excellent way, and Sechele was an apt scholar. At this time, a terrible drought brought the people to the verge of starvation. The tribe moved northward to the Kolobeng River, but the drought continued. Then Livingstone proposed that they go further north to the great chief, Sebituane, King of the Makololo. It meant crossing the Kalabari desert. So, on June 1st, 1849, Livingstone and Oswell, a famous hunter, set out. This first great exploration journey ended in their striking the Zouga River, and discovering Lake Ngami. After another unsuccessful attempt to reach Sebituane in 1851, Livingstone, with wife and children and Oswell, again set out. Despite all obstacles, their goal was attained, and they were warmly welcomed by the great chief. Sebituane, however, soon died. Livingstone stayed on only to make some further explorations. He discovered the Zambesi at the time. Then he determined to take his wife and children to Cape Town and send them to England, while he himself would return alone, and force his way into the interior,

and from thence to the east or west coast.

So, after a stay at Cape Town, he turned north again on June 8th, 1852. Some have criticised Livingstone for his pioneering explorations and have said that he was a poor missionary. However, his missions did not collapse when he went on to other fields. He now worked among the Makololo, Where Sebituane once reigned. He was repeatedly saddened by the raids of the slave hunters. He was convinced that the only way to stop this inhuman trade was to open up the interior to Christian and civilized influences. Thus he determined to find a route to the West Coast. So he calmly made a final disposition of all his earthly effects, thus:- 'May Christ accept my children for His service, and sanctify them for it. My blessing on my wife! May God comfort her. If my watch comes back after I am cut off, it belongs to Agnes; if my sextant, it is Robert's. The Paris medal to Thomas. Double-barrelled gun to Zouga!' Then he disappeared, and when next heard of, six months and a half later, had forced his way to the West Coast, and arrived at Loanda. After returning to his starting point, a journey which occupied a year, he rested for eight weeks (doctoring, preaching and writing). On Nov. 3rd, 1858, he set out again, this time to follow the Zambesi to its mouth. On this journey he discovered the Victoria Falls. At this point the party was seriously threatened by savage tribes. Then that evening when necessity of retreated seemed forced upon him, Livingstone records these words: 'But Jesus came and said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations... and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'" It is a word of a gentleman of the most sacred and strictest honour, and there is an end of it.' So, going on, he safely passed on his way. On Dec. 12th, 1856, the explorer rejoined his wife at Southampton amid the enthusiastic acclamations of the whole nation.

At this point, Livingstone's formal connection with the L.M.S. ceased, in consequence of his appointment as Consul for the East Coast of Africa. However, out of one fourth of his salary, he supported a missionary. His memorable words ere he left England were: 'I go to open the door to Central Africa. It is probable I may die there; but brethren, I pray uou, see to it that the door is never closed again.'

The remainder of his life was spent in his famous exploration of the Zambesi and its tributaries and his circuits among the great lakes which are the sources of the Nile. He died at **Ilala**, worn by fever and dysentery. His remains were embalmed and carried to the coast by his black bodyguard, and today lie in Westminster Abbey.

## **5. ROBERT MORRISON (1782-1834) AND CHINA**

Born in the north of England in 1782, this pioneer missionary was sent to China by the L.M.S. in 1807. Three hundred million people awaited him. They were bitterly hostile to the Western religion and singularly unapproachable, owing to their complacent satisfaction with the traditions and superstitions of their ancestors. Morrison journeyed to China via America. He was anxious to secure the protection of the American Consul at Canton, so that he would be permitted to remain in China. Ere he left England, Morrison had commenced the study of Chinese. The hope of the Directors was that he would master the ordinary speech of the people, and so be able to compile a dictionary, and perhaps make a translation of the Scriptures for the benefit of all future missionaries. Thus he must get a footing on Chinese soil. At this time, intercourse of foreigners with the people, except for purposes of trade, was absolutely forbidden. Every foreigner was questioned on landing as to what his business might be; and if he had not a reasonable answer to give, he was sent back by the next vessel. Morrison, on arrival in Canton on 7th September, 1807, presented his letters of introduction

to some leading Englishmen and Americans in Macao and Canton. These men warned him of the hopelessness of the task. Firstly, Chinamen were forbidden to teach the language to any one, under penalty of death. Secondly, no one could remain in China except for trade. Thirdly, the Roman Catholic missionaries at Macao, who were protected by the Portuguese, would be bitterly hostile, and stir up the people against a Protestant missionary.

During his early months, trials and discouragements were great. He had to live in almost complete retirement. His Chinese servants cheated him. The man who undertook to teach him demanded extortionate sums. His utter loneliness depressed him. The city was full of idolatries; the people were corrupt and hostile. At first he conformed to Chinese manners, eating Chinese foods and wearing Chinese dress. This only excited more suspicion, so he resumed European manners.

Morrison became very much a recluse because of his fear of being ordered away by the Chinese. He has been criticised for timidity, but we probably cannot realize on *how* delicate a thread his whole mission was dependent. Jealousy for his great work made him guarded in all his movements.

In 1809 Morrison was married and in the same year engaged by the East India Company as Chinese translator with a salary of 500 pound a year. This post afforded him real security; also the daily work of translation helped him in becoming familiar with the language.

For years he laboured on amid tremendous difficulties at his grammar and dictionary. In 1812 the grammar was finished and sent to Bengal for printing and heard no more of for three years. At last it came forth and gained approval in many quarters. Morrison also printed a tract and catechism and the Acts of the Apostles; then Luke's Gospel.

This brought about an edict declaring that to print and publish Christian books in Chinese was a capital crime. Morrison determined to go on and sent a translation of the edict to England. At this time the Directors were sending out the Rev. Robert Milne and his wife. On the arrival of these new missionaries, they were not allowed to stay in Macao but had to go on to Canton.

By the end of 1813, the whole of the New Testament had been translated and printed. A scheme had to be devised for its distribution. They planned to establish a station somewhere in South East Asia from which Chinese missionaries could be sent into their homeland. Firstly Milne travelled around, surveying these areas and distributing tracts and Testaments.

It was determined then that Milne should settle in Malacca in Malaya. This was in 1814, in which year also Morrison baptised his first convert. At the same time the East India Company undertook the great task of printing Morrison's Chinese dictionary.

On settling at Malacca the name Ultra-Ganges Mission was assumed, as their two stations represented the extreme eastern outpost of Protestant missions. Together Morrison and Milne translated the Old Testament. The press was kept steadily at work. Tracts of various kinds were issued. Morrison wrote a little book called "*A Tour Around the World*", to acquaint Chinese readers with European ideas and customs and the benefits that had flowed from Christianity. Morrison, at this time, was sent by the Company to Peking to the Emperor. This gave him a much better knowledge of China and revived his health and missionary zeal.

Morrison was stirred by the misery, poverty and unnecessary suffering of the Chinese poor. These people were constantly persuaded to expend their all on drugs and herbs that were absolutely useless. Dr. Morrison sought out an intelligent

and skilful Chinese practitioner, and placed him in charge of a dispensary. Morrison also established an 'Anglo-Chinese College' in Malacca. Its object was to introduce East to West and West to East, and to prepare the way for the dissemination of Christian thought to China. The college was open to all Chinese students of English literature, and European students of Chinese. Here also the missionaries learned the Chinese language.

Many new missionaries were soon sent out and the Ultra-Ganges Mission extended to Penang, Java, Singapore, Amboyna and other places. Much printing work was done in these days. Schools were founded for the teaching of the children, so that the Christian literature could be read. A great deal of hard work was done in these days, but converts were still few. Then trials came; Mrs. Morrison, who had been in England, returned and died; Mrs. Milne had died already. In 1822 Dr. Milne died. Reviewing fifteen years of missionary work, we see an amazing amount accomplished. The gigantic English-Chinese dictionary, done single-handed; the entire Bible translated into Chinese, almost all done by Morrison. Morrison had sent out tracts, pamphlets, catechism; founded a dispensary; established the Anglo-Chinese College; superintended the formation of the various branches of the Ultra-Ganges Mission; and also discharged the heavy duties of translator to the East India Company, as well as preaching and teaching nearly every day. Returning to England in 1824-25, Morrison re-married. On his return, fresh trials awaited him. Particularly troublesome were the difficulties connected with the forcing a trade in opium on the Chinese by the English. In 1834 Morrison entered into his rest .



## STUDY SEVEN

### BACKGROUND TO PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN THE GREAT CENTURY—II

#### 1. JAMES GILMOUR (1843-1891) AND MONGOLIA

This man was commissioned by the London Missionary Society to re-open the Mongolian Mission, which had been stamped out thirty years before by the Czar. Gilmour commenced work from the side of China. He found many difficulties right from the beginning. In 1870 in Peking, the Chinese were talking of the extermination of the Christians. Gilmour had faced the question whether he was prepared to make the last sacrifice. Meanwhile, he made plans for his journey northward. He left Peking on August 5th, 1870, and began the first of his famous journeys through a country then almost entirely unknown. The goal of his journey was Kiarchta, north of the great Gobi desert. Buddhism was the religion of the country; 'lamas', or priests, formed more than half of the male population. The majority of the Mongols lived a roving life, inhabiting tents, and wandering in search of pasture or engaged in trade. Missionary work was consequently a peculiarly difficult task among them.

As Gilmour penetrated the interior of the country, he was overwhelmed by the sense of remoteness from human fellowship. The Mongols could not understand this strange visitor, in fact, they became suspicious. Gilmour wrote in his diary, 'Oh, the intense loneliness of Christ's life! No one understood Him! He bore it. O Jesus, let me follow in Thy steps, and have in me the same spirit that Thou hast!'

Having crossed the desert, Gilmour determined to go back and persuade some Mongol to allow him to share his tent. Taking a stout stick in his hand to defend himself against the fierce Mongolian dogs which were set to protect the encampments, he set back into the desert. He arranged to stay in the tent of a lama, where he would be lodged, fed and taught. He soon picked up the colloquial Mongolian, and got to know Mongolian ways. He spent many hours discussing the mysteries of religion with his host. Gilmour won his way into the hearts of the people to such a degree that they called him 'Our Gilmour'.

During 1871-72, he made further extensive tours. He now began to urge upon the L.M.S. Directorate the need for a colleague in the work. Owing to a remarkable series of circumstances, however, Gilmour never had a colleague.

Having learnt some elementary medicine, Gilmour again made several journeys in 1873. On one occasion, he witnessed the spectacle of a condemned prisoner being exposed in a cage to the public view, and slowly starved to death. He wrote in this year: 'In the shape of converts, I have seen no results; I have not, as far as I am aware, seen anyone who even wanted to be a Christian; but by healing their diseases I have had opportunity to tell many of Jesus, the Great Physician.'

In 1874, Gilmour was married. He had only previously seen his wife-to-be's portrait and heard of her from her sister. He prayed that God would direct in the

matter and then proposed to her. She accepted and volunteered to go with him into Mongolia on his journeys. The Gilmours found privacy was impossible amongst the Mongols. 'At our meals, our devotions, our ablutions, there they were - much amused and interested, of course!' They experienced all kinds of-weather, extreme cold to extreme heat, with violent tempests: and they were living in tents. They lived on millet and mutton, the Mongolian diet. With the seemingly unproductive nature of the work, serious question arose as to whether it should be continued. To Gilmour, the question was not so much whether great results were likely to appear, as whether it was a duty to 'preach the gospel to every creature.'

When working amongst the Mongols, Gilmour found he had to give up retiring to some quiet spot in the early morning for meditation. The Mongols suspected that he was trying to take away the luck of the land. He also had to abandon taking notes, for they thought he was making a map of the country, so that he might lead an army against the inhabitants.

After 10 years' labours, Gilmour was unable to report that he had led one Mongol to Christ. In 1880, he was compelled to bring his wife to England. Here he wrote his book, "Among *the* Mongols".

In 1882, on his return, Gilmour learned of one Mongol who had at last become a convinced believer. Visiting the desert again in this year, he visited a priest and spiritual matters were discussed. Presently a layman entered who, when the matter was explained to him, spoke up and said he was determined to become a Christian. Gilmour said: 'The place was beautiful to me as the gate of heaven.'

In 1885 Mrs. Gilmour passed away, and the two boys had to be sent away, and Gilmour was again alone.

In 1886-7 Gilmour went to north-east Mongolia, where the agricultural Mongols lived a more settled life. He suffered much from the intense cold. He said cheerily: 'I met with some spiritual response, though, and with that, I can stand cold.' He wore the dress of an ordinary Mongolian shopman, living as a vegetarian and conforming, as far as possible, to Mongolian habits of life. At times he was so busy that there was no time to eat.

In March 1888, it appeared that Gilmour would at last gain a qualified medical colleague. Dr. Roberts and Gilmour spent a month in discussing plans, carefully surveying the field of operations. Suddenly all their proposals were shattered; Dr. Roberts was called to Tientsin to replace a doctor who had suddenly died.

In the next year Gilmour found the professing Christians anything but satisfactory. One robbed Gilmour of money; another insisted that he had become a Christian because he had been promised work.

The arrival of Dr. Smith in a year's time meant that Gilmour was sent off to England in a very low state of health. When he returned, he hoped to continue with Dr. Smith as colleague. Before long, Mrs. Smith and the doctor, broken down by grief and overwork, returned to England. He sent out to Gilmour a Mr. Parker who was able to be of great assistance to him.

Towards the end of his days, Gilmour said: 'What is wanted in China is ... good, honest, quiet, earnest, persistent work.'

He died in Tientsin in 1891. As he lay dying, he said: 'We are not spending the time as we should; we ought to be waiting on God in prayer for blessing on the work He has given us to do.'

## 2. JAMES CHALMERS (1841-1901), RAROTONGA AND NEW GUINEA

Born in Scotland in 1841, James Chalmers, at the age of fifteen, heard the call of God to missionary service. However, this was forgotten for some time until 1859, when he found true peace of heart. After training, Chalmers, now married, embarked on the "*John Williams*" on 4th January, 1866'. After many adventures they reached Rarotonga (Society Islands, Polynesia) on 20th May, 1867. Here ten years were spent in arduous missionary endeavour. Two devastating hurricanes shortly before their arrival had left many of the mission buildings in a deplorable condition. The difficulties were increased because the "*John Williams*" had been wrecked shortly before, with the loss of all their gear.

One of Chalmers' first duties here was to make the native trainee teachers self-supporting. This necessitated the clearing of land for this purpose. Chalmers conducted classes for the men, while his wife taught their wives. He sought to make the native Churches independent of his control, even impressing upon them the need to send some of them elsewhere as missionaries.

Although mission work had gone on in Rarotonga for years, the people still clung to many of their old practices. Chalmers found that the young men were given to spending much time in going off into the bush and brewing intoxicating drinks. There would be drunken orgies and fighting. Chalmers was able to win many from their evil ways and lead them back to the settlements to live orderly lives and work on their land. Part of the trouble had been that the natives had no public games to interest them in leisure hours. The native teachers who first came to the island did away with them all, good and bad alike. The situation was remedied by some of the natives, who, having seen natives in Tahiti performing a form of drill, introduced it on their own island.

As well as the training institution for native teachers, a boys' boarding school was also successfully conducted by Chalmers and his wife. Chalmers also gave time to superintending printing work.

Mr. & Mrs. Chalmers left for New Guinea in May 1877, arriving in September. The Rev. W. G. Lawes had preceded them in labour in this land, but the arrival of Chalmers with a band of Rarotongan teachers gave an impulse to the work.

During all his adventurous journeys among the cannibals of New Guinea, Chalmers made it his invariable rule to go unarmed. 'Tamate', his native name, was a passport among the tribes all along the coast and in many of the inland regions.

One of the first results of Chalmers' arrival was the planning of a new pioneering expedition to the more easterly parts of the peninsula, in hope of finding healthier settlements there. Two stations were formed there, but were found hopelessly unhealthy. Mortality among teachers sent there was very great. Mrs. Chalmers had to retire to Sydney in October, 1878, and died there from the effects of her sufferings in New Guinea.

Chalmers' exploration journeys added considerably to European knowledge of the geography of New Guinea, and of the character and customs of the inhabitants. Despite the fact that he won a place in the affection of the people, in the Directors' Report in 1881, it was frankly confessed that there were few who had given up heathenism and become Christians. However, in this year, the first native Church had been established at Port Moresby.

Later in his life, Mr. Chalmers did extensive investigation of the Fly River region. In 1893 he was supplied with a steam launch for use in this work.

Chalmers' health began to fail in 1898, but he continued working and *planning* for the future. However, on 22nd April, 1901, news reached London by cable that Mr. Chalmers, Mr. Tomkins and twelve natives had been murdered some fifty miles north of the mouth of the Fly River. Apparently Chalmers was attempting to settle some tribal dispute *when he* met his violent death.

### 3. ADONIRAM JUDSON (1788-1850) AND BURMA

As previously mentioned, Judson's views on baptism were changed on the voyage to India under the American Board, and this led to the formation of the American Baptist Missionary Union in 1814. He arrived in Calcutta only to be ordered out by the East India Company. His efforts to be allowed to labour at Madras proving in vain, as the only resort he took passage in a vessel for Burma and landed at Rangoon in July, 1813. Thus did the opposition of man work out God's higher purpose, as subsequent events proved. 'Judson was forbidden by the Spirit to enter India because God would have him in Burma. There among its wild tribes was a people prepared for the Lord. The Karens had for centuries nourished the tradition of white teachers ere long to appear among them, bring the Book of God. When such a teacher came, they gave ready ear to his message.' It had been said of the Karen mission that 'in intensity of interest and measure of success it has scarcely been equalled by any other in modern times. When Judson died, hundreds of baptised Burmese and Karens were sleeping in Jesus, and over 7,000 survived in 63 churches, under oversight of 163 missionaries, native pastors and helpers. Judson had finished his Bible translation, compiled a Burmese dictionary, and laid the basis of Christian character deep down in the Burmese heart.' (*"The New Acts of the Apostles"*)

But these results were not achieved without the keenest suffering, in addition to arduous toil. When war broke out in 1824 between Burma and England, Judson, suspected of being a spy, was thrown into prison. The story of his confinement, and the brutal treatment and physical agony he endured for nearly two years in filthy native gaols, and of the heroic devotion of his gifted and consecrated first wife, Ann Hasseltine Judson, who laboured to support him and effect his release, is among the most heart-moving of missionary anecdotes.

It was during the tedious early period of waiting in vain for permission to begin active preaching work, and while occupied with language study and translating the Scriptures, the awful powers of *dominant Buddhism* among the Burmese, and gross devil-worship among the Karens meanwhile mockingly challenging his faith, that Judson was asked as to the outlook, and replied: 'It is as bright as the promises of God'. Such words under such circumstances are a fitting commentary upon this great missionary's character and service. Dr. George Smith calls him 'The greatest of all American missionaries.'

### 4. HENRY MARTYN (1781-1812), INDIA AND PERSIA

Henry Martyn was born in February, 1781, in Truro, Cornwall. He entered St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1797. He found the Saviour through the reading of the New Testament while at Cambridge, although he had been brought up in a devout home. Charles Simeon, now in the midst of his career as leader in Evangelicalism in Cambridge, became Martyn's spiritual guide. When results of his degree examination were published, his ambition was realised - he was Senior Wrangler (first place in the first class). Martyn's life was tremendously influenced by the reading of the life of David Brainerd. He wrote: 'I thought of David Brainerd and ardently desired his devotedness to God and holy breathings of soul.'

It was Simeon who suggested the path by which Martyn was to follow Brainerd. He spoke eagerly to him about the good done 'by *one* missionary in India', Dr. Carey. In the autumn of 1802, Martyn was 'at length fixed in a resolution to imitate Brainerd's example.' He proposed to offer himself to the (Church Missionary) Society for Missions to Africa and the East.

Henry Martyn's step was regarded both in Cambridge and Cornwall as fantastic and absurd. He was ordained in October, 1803; he then became Simeon's curate in a little parish outside of Cambridge. He found the work distasteful and difficult. He would far rather have spent his time over his books than visiting the sick, but the terrible responsibility of his position drove him to earnest endeavours for the souls of men. Martyn arrived in Calcutta after a long and trying voyage on 16th May, 1806. He was welcomed by William Carey. At first his duty was to minister to the English residents of Calcutta, but with this he was greatly dissatisfied, for he longed to get among the people of India. He was glad when transferred to Dinapore, north of Calcutta. He made it his business, not simply to conduct services, but to evangelize all about him, soldiers, camp women, Indians, and officials.

In June 1807, a proposal came to Martyn that he should translate the New Testament into Hindustani and supervise translations into Persian and Arabic. Hindustani in these days was not yet standardized by any universal work of literature, although it was the tongue of 60 millions. His translation was esteemed 'as a work of excellent skill and learning and rigid fidelity.'

The Persian work, however, stood in need of polishing. This had been done by an Arab, Sabat, under the direction of Martyn. The latter now determined to go to Persia, that this translation might be perfected. In Bombay he met with a Britisher who had great influence in Persia, and who was able to give him letters of introduction. On arrival in Persia, he set out for Shiraz, clad in baggy blue trousers and red boots, a conical cap of Astrakhan, and a flowing coat. The heat of the journey was indescribable, with temperatures over 120°F. Martyn's health was very poor. He had suffered for some time now with tuberculosis and as he journeyed, he was 'gasping for life under the double pressure of an inward fire and an outward burning sun.'

For a year he laboured at his translation in Shiraz, fearlessly witnessing for Christ in this Moslem stronghold. His witness was such that one of the learned doctors of Islam, a young man, confessed his faith in Christ to Martyn shortly before the latter finally left Shiraz.

He hoped to present his New Testament to the Shah of Persia, for, if it could gain his favour, its success was assured. He was unable to do this personally, but it was achieved by the British Ambassador, who also presented copies to eminent Persians. The Shah gave his approval to the work. The British Ambassador also took the New Testament to St. Petersburg and had it published by the Bible Society.

The last days of Martyn's life were spent in an incredible journey through Persia and Armenia. His travelling companions had no sympathy for his physical state and virtually rode him to death. He passed away on 16th October, 1812, and was given burial by the Armenian clergy.

### **5.ALEXANDER MACKAY (1849-1890) AND UGANDA**

Alexander Mackay was born in Scotland in 1849. Purposing to be an engineer, after completing his education in Edinburgh, he went to Germany to study. He became a designer in a great work near Berlin. One night in his lodgings he read

Stanley's "*How I Found Livingstone*". Past midnight he picked up a newspaper and read how the C.M.S. was taking up the challenge of Stanley to send missionaries to the shores of Lake Victoria. They were calling for volunteers and there and then Mackay volunteered.

On returning to Britain he found that several others had also volunteered and that a steam yacht was being provided for journeying in Africa. He left England in 1876 for Aden and from thence sailed to Zanzibar.

Twice Mackay attempted to sail "*Daisy*", the steam yacht, up rivers from the coast, but these attempts failed. A third attempt was made, this time to journey overland, but Mackay went down with fever and had to return. After an interval of rest and recuperation, Mackay determined to cut a road through the jungle into the interior. Two hundred and thirty miles of track were cut, then Mackay went back to Zanzibar to get wagons and oxen and goods to take to the lake.

Of the eight men who had set out for Uganda, only one had reached the lake. Some had died and some had been killed. Mackay determined to press on rapidly, and join his lone comrade. He reached the lake and at the south end found the "*Daisy*" there, but not fit to sail on the lake. He set to work to repair the vessel, but before he finished, his friend had come to meet him. They journeyed to Uganda together to the capital of King Mtesa. Mackay gained the favour of the king, who was glad to have a man-of-all-work to make and mend for him. Mackay fearlessly taught the truths of the Bible to this heathen monarch, who, however, vacillated between Christ and devil worship. The missionary taught many of the boys of the chiefs to read and write. He had a printing press on which he turned out reading sheets for them.

Great opposition came to the work from the "*Lubare*" of the lake. Lubare was a spirit or devil. Mukasa was the ambassador of evil spirits, and in Mackay's time was a shrivelled old woman living on an island in the lake. She determined to be rid of the white man and did all in her power to influence the king against him. All the chiefs were on her side against Mackay. Mtesa made his decision against the missionary and his life from then on gave evidence of it, as he urged his armies to plunder and murder and to catching people to sell as slaves.

In 1886 Mtesa died, and was succeeded by an 18-year old youth, Mwanga, who was in the power of an old servant of the previous king. He hated the missionaries and the African Christians and soon laid an ambush for them and captured a number of boys. Several of the boys were ransomed, but three were led outside the capital and fearlessly witnessed, as their arms were chopped off, and they were thrown into the fire. This new king was in the grip of a powerful drug and went steadily downhill. One of his worst acts was to have murdered Bishop Hannington and his party as they journeyed to Uganda.

In these days Mackay had eventually to retreat from Uganda to the south of the lake. Arab slave-traders were a great cause of trouble, for they planned to make Uganda Moslem and influenced the king against the missionaries.

Things had fared so ill with the Nyanza Mission that there was talk in England of abandoning it. Mackay, who had spent long years in the work, wrote home: 'Tell me, ye faint hearts, who are they to whom ye mean to give up the Nyanza Mission? ... Is it to murderous raiders like Mwanga, or to slave traders from Zanzibar, or to English and Belgian dealers in rifles and gunpowder, or to German spirit-sellers? All these are in the field, and they make no talk of giving up their respective missions.'

Eventually all the Christians had to leave the capital of Uganda, for the Arabs gained control. Mackay had a group whom he planned to train as missionaries, so that they could eventually return to their own people.

Mwanga, who had been exiled by the Arabs, eventually wrote to Mackay asking for forgiveness, promising protection to Christians if he would help him to regain his kingdom. He did return; two of the missionaries went back also and mission work was recommenced.

Mackay remained behind to complete the building of a boat. He never finished the task, but in February 1890, after fourteen years of arduous labour, was called to his rest .



## **STUDY EIGHT**

### **BACKGROUND TO PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN THE GREAT CENTURY —III**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

We come now to the last of our biographical studies covering much of the nineteenth, and some of the twentieth century. We saw that in the early centuries the Gospel spread by ‘the nameless ones’. Great names do stand out in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However there seems to be little or no desire for these leaders to draw attention to themselves. They were fired with the thought of the Great Commission. In any case, they wished to show their obedience to Christ. They were appalled by the extent of ignorance of the Gospel, and at the same time were fired to proclaim that message where it was not known.

As we have said, the spread of the Gospel to countries where religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, the ancient (Chinese) Tao and Japanese Shintoism flourish has been a major task. Also in lands where animism (worship of spirits) obtains. In almost all cases entrance into these lands has been done by pioneers of single-minded character. It is not just that their biographies fire the imagination - which of course they do - but it is their spearheading of the Gospel which is so remarkable. To understand their life-work is also to understand the impact they made on the parts of the world they invaded.

This study includes men who have been called ‘missionary statesmen, for although they were missionaries, they had an eye to the wider issues of the outworking of the principles and dynamic of the Gospel in those lands to which they went. They saw the full implications of the Gospel for nations, as well as for the conclusion of the end-time.

## 2. SAMUEL ADJAI CROWTHER (1802-1891) AND NIGERIA

Crowther was born early in the nineteenth century amongst the Yoruba people south of the River Niger in Africa. His name 'Adjai' meant 'the lucky one', for a heathen priest had prophesied a remarkable future for the child. As a lad, he was leader among his fellows.

When he was thirteen, the slave-traders raided his little town and Adjai, his mother, sister and brother were taken. His father was killed. Adjai was separated from his mother and in three months had been sold and resold many times. He was finally sold to a Portuguese slave dealer, to be taken to South America. One evening, two British men-of-war appeared, and discovering the slave-ship on which Adjai was a captive, soon captured it, and the slaves were free.

Eventually the slaves were put ashore at Sierra Leone. Here Adjai was taken care of by the C.M.S. schoolmaster. He made rapid progress in his studies. Here he also learned of the Saviour, and on Dec. 11, 1825, was baptised and took as his new name, Samuel Adjai Crowther. The C.M.S. schoolmaster visited England in 1826, and they took Crowther with them. On his return to Sierra Leone, he became a schoolmaster. He soon, however, entered Fourah Bay College, where again he made great progress at his studies. He was married shortly after this time and was appointed to another school where his wife was associated with him as schoolmistress. Eventually Crowther came back as tutor to Fourah Bay College.

In 1841 he and an experienced missionary were sent up the River Niger to enquire into opening up Nigeria for missionary enterprise. The journey was backed up by constant prayer on the ships and at home. Out of 150 Europeans, in two months, 42 were dead as a result of fever. The journey, however, equipped Crowther to bear heavy burdens and be a comforter of many in later days.

It was becoming evident that Africa must be won for Christ by Africans. Crowther was recommended for ordination. For this he had to journey to England. On his journey he compiled a grammar and vocabulary. He was ordained in October, 1843. He received a tremendous welcome on his return to Sierra Leone. Soon Crowther was on his first missionary journey. He ministered first to his own tribe who had been scattered by the slave traders. He and another two European missionary couples were sent to Abcokuta, a town which the scattered tribe had built for themselves.

The journey to Abcokuta was extremely difficult, and it was eighteen months before they reached their destination. When in Abcokuta a short time, Crowther learned that his mother was living in a nearby town. His sister and brother also were there and when they heard of their brother, disbelieved, but the mother came to Abcokuta and was re-united with her son. Crowther saw her become a Christian and later baptised her, one of the first Christians in Abcokuta.

On another journey to England Crowther was received by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, to whom he explained the situation in West Africa. Also on this visit he met the captain of the vessel which had rescued him as a boy from the slave ship, thirty years before. In 1852, he made another expedition up the Niger. This voyage was a complete success. This led to the opening of missionary work in the interior of the land. The success of the mission demonstrated that Africans were well able to be missionaries to their own people. Several Africans had been ordained now, and the need arose for a Bishop to oversee the work. Samuel Crowther was recommended for

the position. He was consecrated in Canterbury Cathedral in June, 1864. Previously the honorary degree of D.D. was conferred on him by Oxford University.

As Bishop, Crowther's chief task was to build up the new Christians in the Faith by training them in the new life. But his pioneering days were not over. Not long after his consecration, he had the joy of founding the first mission station in the Niger Delta at Bonny. This was a place where darkest superstition reigned; it was a slave market; cruelty abounded, cannibalism was common, and the town was infested with huge crawling lizards, which were regarded as indwelt by the spirits of the departed, and therefore must not be destroyed. Three years after Crowther's coming, the chief of Bonny publicly renounced lizard worship.

In 1867, the Bishop, while on a journey up the Niger, was kidnapped. The chief of the village considered he had been slighted by the British, because they did not give him large enough presents. He blamed Crowther, believing he had supreme power over European traders. For a week the Bishop and his party were kept in vile captivity until released through the British consul. The release, however, cost the life of one of the party who came to deliver them, for the Bishop and everyone else had to run for their lives, while muskets and poisoned arrows were fired at them.

One of the greatest joys of Crowther's life was the moment when he ordained his son, Dandeson, who later became Archdeacon of the Niger Delta. In later years a paddle steamer was provided by friends in England, to enable the aging Bishop to travel more quickly from place to place.

In 1890 a great Farewell Meeting was held in Exeter Hall in London. On December 31st, 1891, when nearly ninety years of age, Samuel Adjai Crowther was called to higher service.

### **3. THOMAS COKE (1747-1814), MISSIONARY ZEAL AND THE EAST**

Thomas Coke was born at Brecon on 9th October, 1747. His father was a doctor, and several times was Chief Magistrate of the town. He was obviously a man of considerable means, and Thomas Coke, when he met Wesley, had an income of £1,200 a year. Thomas entered Oxford as a gentleman commoner of Jesus College, and was ordained deacon of the Church of England in 1770, and priest in 1772. In 1775 he took the degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

Somehow he became acquainted with one of Wesley's preachers - Thomas Maxwell - who exercised a powerful influence upon his life. The young Anglican priest felt 'a new accession of power', and he was instinctively drawn to Methodism, with which, in 1777, he threw in his lot entirely. The Methodist people took Coke to their hearts - he had the charm of youth, a round, ruddy, cherubic face, a portly yet graceful figure, and a mind that was quick and understanding. His earnest, simple preaching attracted crowds, and popularity marked him for its own; but Coke did not want to narrow his ministry to any one congregation, for his eyes were upon the wider world. Wesley quickly discerned this and said: 'Brother, go out and preach the Gospel to all the world'. Even more truly than Wesley himself, Coke might have declared, 'The world is my parish.'

In 1784 he drew up and circulated "*A Plan of the Society for the Establishment of missions among the Heathen*". Members of this Society were to subscribe two guineas a year and to pray for the heathen. A general meeting was held in January, 1784, and it was announced that a sum of £66/3/-d. was in hand.

For years Coke struggled on in the endeavour to carry out his plan. He travelled up and down England raising money, and spent much time in visiting the

West Indies and West Africa, crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic in comfortless boats in pursuance of his self-imposed task. It was not until 1793 that the conference authorised a general collection for Foreign Missions. Coke's fund for the support of the work in the West Indies was exhausted and grievously in debt. He himself had given £917/17/211d. and had loaned - 1,200 for chapels in the West Indies. With characteristic generosity he cancelled these claims.

Coke, however, had his eyes on the East - particularly on Ceylon and India. He appealed to Methodism to embark on this new enterprise, and travelled far and wide to collect funds. There was opposition. Rev. Joseph Benson declared that the raising of large sums for this purpose would be the ruin of Methodism! (We still hear now and then the echo of that doleful voice.) Coke made a magnificent speech at the ensuing Conference, promising to give €6,000 himself, and swept the Conference on a high tide of enthusiasm to launch a Mission to Ceylon and Java in 1813. Finally, on 30th December of that year he set off from Portsmouth with his little band of missionaries, but he was not to complete the voyage. He had been unwell and had given his fellow-travellers some anxiety; but nothing could make him desist from his language studies. One morning a friend knocked on the door of his cabin, but there was no response. Coke lay lifeless on the floor. He died without realising his vision to the full, but bequeathed to the growing 'Methodist Church a task that still engages it.

(From "*The First Century of Missionary Adventure, 1855-1955*" by the Rev. J. W. Burton).

#### **4. ALEXANDER DUFF (1806-1863) AND INDIA**

'This hardy Scotsman and great missionary was a pioneer in two senses, as being the first missionary of the Church of Scotland to India, and as leading the way to higher educational missions in that land. Dr. Pierson ranks him with Carey and Livingstone as 'one of the great missionary triad of the new age'.

Reaching Calcutta in 1830, at the age of 24, after a memorable voyage on which he twice suffered shipwreck, Duff threw himself energetically into his appointed task. He began a new chapter in Indian missions by introducing the policy of making English rather than the vernacular the medium of higher education, and also by insisting upon giving the Bible an essential place in the daily school curriculum. His plan was novel, and it was greeted with mistrust by missionary leaders, and with opposition by Indian Brahmins. But the aged Carey gave him his approval and sympathy, and the friendship of an educated and enlightened Brahmin of great influence, Ram Mohan Roy by name, proved a timely help.

With unflinching courage the young missionary educator opened his school, and on the very first day faced the issue by bidding his pupils repeat after him the Lord's Prayer in Bengali, and then putting into the hands of each one a copy of the Gospels and calling upon a pupil to read. An ominous silence ensued, after which one of the number said: 'This is the Christian Master. We are not Christians. How then can we read it?' Whereupon Ram Mohan Roy, who was present, quietly rose and replied: 'Christians have read the Hindu Shastras and have not become Hindus. I have read the whole Bible, and you know that I am not a Christian. Read the book and judge for yourselves.' The day was won, and the school became so popular that increased accommodation was soon necessary and many students had to be turned away. Duff followed up his advantage by arranging a course of lectures for educated men on natural and revealed religion. These lectures aroused great excitement and no little antagonism, but a spirit of inquiry was awakened, and Duff was rewarded by seeing a number of gifted men renounce Hinduism and accept Christ. Some of these later became prominent in the Gospel ministry.

Ill health twice compelled Dr. Duff to return home, in 1834 and 1849, but the loss to India was perhaps more than compensated by the missionary impulse he imparted to the home churches, not only of Great Britain but also of the United States, which he toured in 1854. Dr. A. T. Pierson calls him ‘the most eloquent missionary orator of the century’, and writes, ‘He made the very pulse of missions to beat quicker, shaping missionary effort and moving hundreds to go, as well as tens of thousands to give ... and gave such impetus to work in other lands as no man since has ever equalled.’

Dr. Duff’s home church conferred upon him high degrees and honours, and after failing health required his taking final leave of India he accepted, in 1863, a Missionary Professorship, in which position he delivered lectures each winter in the colleges of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. By this and every other means, until death removed him in 1878, he laboured to strengthen and extend the cause of missions, on whose altar his own gifts and powers had been unreservedly laid.”

(From “*Progress of World-Wide Missions*” - Glover.)

### **5. JOHN R. MOTT (1865-1955) - A VARIED MINISTRY**

John Mott was born in the State of New York, U.S.A. on 28th May, 1865. He was brought up in the State of Iowa and educated at Upper Iowa and Cornell universities. His parents were devout believers, and Mott was converted two years before entering Upper Iowa University. He was behind the move to establish a Y.M.C.A. in this university. When he went on to Cornell he became the outstanding Christian leader in the University.

In 1888 John Mott was invited to join the full-time staff of the Y.M.C.A., going from college to college spreading and strengthening the work. He eventually accepted the offer, and his work was very greatly blessed. Reading of Stanley, “In Darkest Africa”, stirred him to see the need of the world.

Mott’s first overseas journey was in 1891 to a conference of the World Alliance of Y.M.C.A. From 1895-7 Mr. and Mrs. Mott journeyed round the world. The result was the establishment of the World’s Student Christian Federation, with its national movements on every continent.

Throughout the period from 1897 to 1910, the World’s *Student Christian Federation* grew and was strengthened by further journeys of Mott. He also edited a new magazine, “*The Student World*”. His second book, written at this time, was “The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation”. This period also saw an expansion of his service to included youth of all classes, professional, industrial, rural and commercial; it also extended to boyhood. This took place through his extended work for the Y.M.C.A. throughout the world. Toward the end of this period he was called by the committee preparing for the World Missionary Conference of 1910 at Edinburgh to the chairmanship of the commission on “Carrying the Gospel to All the non-Christian World”. He was later made chairman of that conference itself and was given the degree of LL.D by Edinburgh University.

The horizon was thus further expanding. From seeking to help youth, it widened to the men and women of all ages throughout the non-Christian world.

In the period from 1910 to 1914 Mott concentrated upon giving reality and practical effect to the visions and decisions of the Edinburgh Conference. In particular, he carried through a series of over a score of conferences in Asia in 1912-13. They brought into being national missionary councils, which later became national Christian councils, in India, China and Japan. These were linked with the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, of which Dr. Mott was chairman.

The fifth period of Mott's life was his war service from 1914-1918. One aim of his life now was to prevent the W.S.C.F., Y.M.C.A., and the association of the national Christian councils from being rent in pieces. The first held together. The second sought to meet the need of millions of youth under terms on both sides of the conflict. The problem of the third was difficult, for German Christians were cut off from contact with all their mission fields in Asia, Africa and the Islands.

From 1918 to 1928, Mott dedicated himself to helping to restore the morale and re-shape the policies of the Christian forces in face of the world situation. The W.S.C.F., under his guidance, shared in relief of students in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Dr. Mott also gave his experience and energy to help in reframing the structure and policy of the W.S.C.F. in these years. In 1928 he resigned his official chairmanship of the organisation.

In 1926, he accepted the presidency of the world's Alliance of Y.M.C.A's and shared in the drastic reconstruction and re-shaping of its policies and outlook.

During this period the International Missionary Council was formed by the integration of nearly thirty national councils in the West and East. In these Councils the younger Churches of the East have come into a strong place of leadership. This was achieved by a series of meetings of the International Missionary Council and its executive committee, leading up to the historic meeting of the Council at Jerusalem in 1928. The Jerusalem Meeting saw the missionary situation less in geographical terms of East and West than in functional terms of the relation of the world mission of Christianity to industry, to the rural life of the world, to education, and to non-Christian systems of thought and faith. The horizon of the world mission of Christianity has thus widened, for it is conceived as the aggressive revolutionary power of Christianity in all human relations.

In his later years Dr. Mott, freed from a large measure of executive functions, devoted his energies to backing new Asiatic Christian ventures, the movement towards unity in India, and the advancement of the newer projects of service to industrial and rural communities, under the aegis of the International Missionary Council.

## **6. TOYOHICO KAGAWA (1888-1960) THE INDIGENOUS MISSIONARY**

This outstanding Japanese figure was born on July 10th, 1888. His father was headman of nineteen villages in his native province of Awa. He was later a member of the Privy Council.

Morally, the elder Kagawa was very much a man of his times. He left his wife alone in Awa while he made gay with wine and women. Toyohiko, with three other children, was born of a geisha woman in Kobe. Toyohiko was legally adopted by his father. When he was four years old, both his parents died and he was entrusted his father's neglected wife in Awa.

The lad found no welcome there, he was shown no love and was abused and beaten. One event left an enduring impression upon the young Kagawa. A neighbour child lay at the point of death, and he was accused of having injured her. He rarely played with the children of the neighbourhood, and there had been no opportunity to quarrel with the injured girl. The false charge went like a sword-thrust into his sensitive soul. For three days he wept without ceasing. He had a small savings fund raised by selling eggs, and taking this, he gave it all to the

sick child and begged forgiveness of the parents. After leaving the home at Awa, he entered a Boys' school at Tokushima on Shikoku. He was appalled at the low moral tone of the dormitory and repelled by the conduct of the other boys. He was as lonely as in Awa. At a critical stage, missionaries came into his life. His first contact with Christianity was through a Japanese Christian schoolteacher, but Kagawa himself points to Dr. H. W. Myers as his father in the faith. In 1905 he entered the Presbyterian College in Tokyo. In his second year of college, Kagawa was stricken with tuberculosis. He had to leave school for a year. He began writing at this time the first draft of a novel. When he had made but a partial recovery, he entered the Kobe Theological Seminary to continue preparations for his life work.

At the age of 21 years, Kagawa went to live in the Shinkawa slums. Into his tiny quarters he took beggars, alcoholics, a murderer, and the diseased. He himself contracted trachoma from a beggar. He supplemented his meagre income by cleaning chimneys. His day began with a six o'clock street meeting. Racked with a tubercular cough, he would stand in drenching rain proclaiming the love of God. He would fall exhausted to the ground and be carried back to his hut. He was living in the slums when his first books were published. In 1914 Kagawa went to America and spent two years at Princeton University. From his study of conditions in the slums, Kagawa concluded that the only way to be rid of the slums was to improve the condition of the labourer. In 1921 he was called by 30,000 labourers to champion their cause. This resulted in his being dragged to gaol and spending thirteen days there. In this same year, following a meeting in Kagawa's hut, the Japan Peasants' Union was launched. Despite great opposition, Kagawa toured Japan in the interests of the peasants' cause. By now his work in Shinkawa, the fame he had won in the literary world, and his leadership of the labour movement had made him a national figure. He had friends and followers by the thousand scattered through every walk of life.

In 1929 Kagawa sounded the call to form a great Christian crusade in Japan. A committee was set up to organise the venture, which was called "The Kingdom of God Movement". It was launched with simultaneous campaigns in the six largest cities of the Empire. One of the major objects was to win the students of the nation, although all classes were to be evangelised.

When first married, Kagawa and his wife continued to live in the slum; however later, because of their little family, they moved to a small house elsewhere, built by Kagawa himself. Here they lived on a bare minimum of Kagawa's income, the remainder being devoted to his social settlements and work for labourers and peasants.

Kagawa's idea of the Gospel was that it brings full-rounded emancipation, economic, political, physical, psychological and social, both for the individual and for society. He died on 23rd April, 1960.

## **7. FRANK LAUBACH (1884- ) THE MISSIONARY OF LITERACY**

Dr. Laubach went to the Philippines in 1915 as Dean of Union College and Seminary in Manila. Five years later he was out in the wilds of Mindanao teaching ferocious Moros to read. These Moslem people had no written language, but with the help of a Filipino, Laubach adapted the phonetics of the language to the Roman alphabet - one letter to a sound and only one sound to a letter. With four vowels and twelve consonants he was able to write Maranaw, the Moro dialect. How was he to teach the Moros to read it? He found three commonly-used Maranaw words which together employed all 12 consonant sounds. Using each of these key words as a skeleton, he made charts with letters an inch high and hung a lesson on each of the words. Each syllable was illustrated by a picture, and the pupil learned to

identify the written syllable with the picture. Simple sentences were constructed ~;v syllables learned, each syllable identifiable by its picture. Soon the pupil was able to read the syllables without the pictures.

“**Each one teach one**” became Dr. Laubach’s motto; 70% of the Moros learned to read from his charts, and he prepared lessons in 17 other Philippine dialects. In 1935, Dr. Laubach prepared charts for teaching in Malay. He went on to India, and, with advisers, prepared lessons in Hindi, Marathi, Telegu, Tamil and Urdu. He visited Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Turkey and was invited to work in Africa by the League of Nations. Sponsored by the Committee on World Literacy of the U.S. Foreign missions Conference, Dr. Laubach worked in Latin America. Nine governments officially adopted his method. In 1944 he had applied his method to 84 different tongues.

In all his world-wide campaign, Dr. Laubach claims that he has never found an adult too old to learn. He prefers to teach them one at a time or in small groups, to avoid embarrassing them. With interest, encouragement and praise for progress made, he has found that they will persevere and succeed in learning to read.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In our Second Series we will cover the wider scene of the proclamation of the gospel in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We will also examine the impact the Gospel had upon the societies to which it went. However, if we look back over our studies we will see that for two millenniums the Christian Gospel and the church has maintained a remarkable dynamic, the evidences of life which appeals *not only* to the simple of heart, but for those who seek a high moral dynamic for their nations.

We commenced our studies by showing that God has always been a Missionary. Jesus Christ was sent for this very purpose into the world and has committed the same ministry to his followers. Whilst much of the happenings of church history has sad overtones, yet on the whole, where the pure Gospel has been preached, wonderful responses and events have taken place.

We need to study these continually in order to combat what is not inimical to the Gospel, and to preserve and maintain what is. #

