

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS RISE AND DEVELOPMENT
IN THE "INDIAN" COMMUNITY

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study of the Indian mission of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA (AFM) covers a period of 16 years since its inception in 1930 in Stanger, Natal. Twenty two years earlier the pentecostal message was introduced to South Africa when the AFM was established. The two White missionary overseers appointed were C.S. Flewelling, from 1930 to 1940, and J.T. du Plessis, from 1940 to 1945. In this initial period crucial missiological principles were implemented which were to play a major role in influencing the particular developments within the Indian Section.

The link between the pentecostal movement in South Africa and the Azusa Street revival of 1906 in Los Angeles, USA, emphasises the fact that the pentecostal message that was transplanted here was shaped by various factors in the racist American society of the 19th and early 20th century. The immigrant Indian community in South Africa, who came as labourers, were bedeviled by socio-political and economic factors which impinged on their evolution. The resultant feeling of insecurity created by these debilitating factors proved to be fruitful soil for the pentecostal movement, which offered a haven to this community on the fringes of society.

The development of the AFM Indian mission was due not merely to the efforts of White missionaries, as is generally held, but also to dedicated indigenous pastors. The first three full-time pastors were Samuel Manikkam, David F. Williams and Henry James.

These Indian church leaders faced various hardships in the ministry and, in spite of their shortcomings and their struggles, played an integral role in the development of the AFM "Indian" church.

In its development, the AFM has been characterised by a strong conformity to White societal policy of racial segregation. The effects of this policy is evident in the sectional divisions existent within the AFM, and is indicative of the organisation's close alliance with the political philosophy of the status quo. Together with its ideological bias, the church's theological conservatism has precluded it from involving itself in affirmative socio-political action in an apartheid ridden society. Further, the Indian Section has been plagued by numerous schisms, resignations and secessions, which has also contributed to the tardy growth of the AFM within this population group.

In 1989 the Composite Division of the AFM had been established, comprising the former Indian, Coloured and Black Sections. The White Section, or Single Division as it has now become known, has remained aloof from this practical initiative towards the formation of one church. As of January 1993 the Indian Section (and the other sections of colour) will theoretically cease to exist. It is clear therefore that the future of the Indian mission lay in the Composite Division, with its hope for one church in one nation, and serves as a barometer of the coming struggle and reward for a society seeking to rid itself of the final vestiges of racial prejudice.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFM (of SA) :	Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa
AFM GJB :	AFM (Indian Section) Golden Jubilee Brochure
AFM DJB :	AFM (Indian Section) Diamond Jubilee Brochure
CBC :	Covenant Bible College
CU :	Committee for Unity
DBC :	Durban Bible College
DC :	District Council
DRC :	Dutch Reformed Church
DRMC :	Dutch Reformed Mission Church
EC :	Executive Council
EWISA :	Evangelical Witness in South Africa
FGC :	Full Gospel Church of God
IBC :	International Bible College
NIDWC :	Natal Indian District Workers' Council
NIBTI :	Natal Indian Bible Training Institute
NIDC :	Natal Indian District Council
NNCDC :	Natal North Coast District Council
NSCDC :	Natal South Coast District Council
PPC :	Pentecostal Protestant Church
RPW :	Relevant Pentecostal Witness
S&D :	Stanger and District
Stanger DJB :	AFM Stanger Tabernacle Diamond Jubilee Brochure
UDW :	University of Durban-Westville
WC :	Workers' Council

INTRODUCTION

After her "incomplete survey of Indian missions in Natal" in Christian Indians in Natal, 1860-1911 (1983), p.166, J.B. Brain, Professor of History at the University of Durban-Westville, emphasised "the need for the various denominations to undertake research on their early history and to give credit to the hitherto unknown pioneers who laboured to establish Christianity among the Indians of Natal in the 19th and early 20th centuries." Concerning the history of the AFM within the Indian community, very little had been recorded.

Isak Burger's Geskiedenis van die Apostoliese Geloof Sending van Suid-Afrika, 1908-1958 (1987), concentrates on the development of the denomination within the White community in South Africa. The history of the Indian mission, which was confined to not more than 300 words in his comprehensive study, is a synopsis of the "achievements" of White missionary overseers of the AFM until 1958. G.C. Oosthuizen's study on Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in South Africa (1975), includes a brief overview of the AFM. Oosthuizen merely mentions the beginning of the AFM Indian mission, incorrectly attributing the initiative to Charles S. Flewelling, an American missionary. The focus of his study is the ecclesiastical policy of the many pentecostal denominations among Indians.

The inclusion of the AFM in G.J. Pillay's A Historico-Theological study of Pentecostalism as a Phenomenon within a South African

Community (1983) is an attempt to highlight the role of Indian pioneers. Due to the expansive nature of his study limited attention had to be paid to the history of the AFM. C.R. De Wet's study, The Apostolic Faith Mission in Africa, 1908-1980. A Case Study in Church Growth in a Segregated Society (1989), and A.J. van Staden's Die Apostoliese Geloofsending van Suid-Afrika (1980), have left the history of the Indian churches of the AFM unexplored.

A strong case therefore exists for an academic and historical study of the Indian mission of the AFM in a fragmented, White-oriented, racist society. The existing meagre references to the Indian field are mere "obiter" writings, incidental to what has hitherto been portrayed as a trail blazing effort by pioneer White missionaries. The role of Indian pioneer Christian leaders in the AFM are relegated to obscurity, or at most, are statistical data for the records of these White missionaries. A study of the Indian mission from one who happens to be on the "other side" of the colour line, without any vested interest in promoting any one in particular, is thus a pressing need to give a balanced picture. This study is an endeavour "to give credit to (these) hitherto unknown pioneers" and is also motivated by the effect the racial policies of a White dominated South Africa has had on the Indian mission (and also necessarily on other racial sections of the AFM). The consequent formation of the Composite Church as a powerbloc against the White Section of the AFM is an attempt by the victims of the apartheid-ridden society to reflect the racial harmony so sorely needed not only in the

country but also within the denomination.

The concentration on the first 16 years (1930-1946) of history covers the period of two missionary overseers, C.S. Flewelling and J.T. du Plessis. Within this pioneering period the tone was set for the future of this mission. We would attempt an understanding of the interplay of the various factors that laid the foundation for the present "Indian" AFM Church. The paucity of written documents for this history has been one of the major difficulties in the research. Certain idiosyncrasies in pentecostal circles emphasise the importance of the present and the future and so relegate history to obscurity. Sources consulted in this research include periodicals, brochures, minutes of meetings and personal interviews.

The first chapter traces the history of the modern pentecostal movement to 1906 in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, USA. The subsequent pentecostal missionary enterprise had resulted in the establishment of the AFM in South Africa in 1908 under John G. Lake. The second chapter focuses on the history of Indians in Natal, the pioneer pentecostal movement among Indians under J.F. Rowlands and the establishment of the AFM "Indian" Church in Stanger in 1930, during the ministry of C.S. Flewelling. The following chapter concentrates on the development of the church from 1940 to 1946, during the ministry of J.T. du Plessis and the three pioneer Indian ministers of the AFM, viz, Samuel Manikkam, D.F. Williams and Henry James. The final chapter is a summary of events from 1946 until the present, including the establishment

of the various churches, the Covenant Bible College, the secessions and tensions created by the denomination's segregationist policies. The conclusion reflects on some of the problems encountered in the history of the mission, including racial segregation, lack of theological training, problems in church growth and a theological assessment in relation to the South African socio-political context.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

1.1. THE RISE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (AFM of SA) was launched in the first decade of the present century, in the Bree Street Tabernacle, Johannesburg, as a pioneer church within the modern Pentecostal Movement in South Africa. Its origins may be traced to the Pentecostal Revival that took place in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, USA, on 09 April 1906,¹ under the leadership of William Joseph Seymour. Frank Bartleman, a Pentecostal historian, notes that the "Azusa Street revival is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern pentecostal movement."²

A number of antecedent historical conditions prepared emergent western society and conditioned it for the kind of revivalist, eschatologically dogmatic kind of Christianity that is represented by so-called Pentecostal movement, now so widespread around the world.³ Among the more important of these antecedent

¹Bartleman, Frank : Azusa Street, Logos International Plainfield, New Jersey, 1980, p.43

²Synan, Vinson : The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States, Eerdman, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971, p.114. Refer also to Bartleman, p.ix. See also Dunn, J. : The Pentecostals in The History of Christianity, Struik, Cape Town, 1977, p.618

³Nicol, John Thomas : The Pentecostals (Pentecostalism), Logos International, Plainfield, New Jersey, 1966, pp.18-19; See also Bruner, Frederick Dale : A Theology of the Holy Spirit. The

factors may be listed the following:

1.1.1. Revivalist Christianity

If Methodism provided the theological influence for Pentecostalism, American revivalism provided the necessary style of operation.⁴ Bloch-Hoell states that local revivals took place in New Jersey, a few years prior to the Great Awakening in 1734.⁵ This "active, emotional revivalist Christianity very much favoured the rise and the growth of the Pentecostal Movement",⁶ giving American religion, and hence Pentecostalism, "the individualising and emotionalizing of the Christian faith."⁷ Frontier life in the USA, for various reasons, gave rise to this type of Christianity, with a greater appeal to the emotions than to the intellect. Revivalism, closely connected with "camp meetings" became the method of recruiting church members. Bruner states: "The more primitive and emotional the preaching directed towards the mass, the more successful were the results" especially in the southern and western states of the USA, "where the Pentecostal Movement reaped its richest

Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1970, p.35

⁴Bruner, p.39

⁵Bloch-Hoell, Nils : The Pentecostal Movement. Its origins, development and distinctive character, Scandinavian University Books, Oslo, p.7

⁶Ibid

⁷Bruner, p.39

harvest."⁸

The Pentecostal Movement found a great ally in this revivalist spirit and assumed much of its characteristics, including great emphasis on Christian activity linked to proselytising, and a crave for excitement in worship. It took on its characteristic form of preaching, with appeal more to the emotions than the intellect, combining both elements of evangelism and revivalism.⁹ One of the noted revivalists during this period was Charles G. Finney (1792 - 1876), who "combined both the theology (essentially Methodism) and the methodology (essentially revivalism) which were later to find a permanent home in the movement called Pentecostal."¹⁰

1.1.2. Wesleyan Methodism and the First Evangelical Awakening

The overriding thesis in Synan's book on "The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States" is that "the historical and doctrinal lineage of American pentecostalism is to be found in the Wesleyan tradition."¹¹ He states: "John Wesley, the indomitable founder of Methodism was also the spiritual and intellectual father of modern holiness and pentecostal movements, which have issued from Methodism within

⁸Ibid, pp.6,7

⁹Ibid, p.7

¹⁰Bruner, pp.41,42

¹¹Synan, p.8

the last century."¹²

John Wesley and George Whitefield in England and Jonathan Edwards¹³ in the USA, played prominent roles as leaders in the First Evangelical Awakening in the eighteenth century. With the First Awakening came many of the characteristics of Protestantism, with the emphasis on deep personal experience, arising from the doctrine of assurance. Reacting against the "prevailing creedal rigidity, liturgical strictness, and iron-clad institutionalism, that had largely depersonalised religion",¹⁴ "Methodist theology placed great emphasis on this conscious religious experience"¹⁵ coupled with "warmth, feeling, experience and morality" in religion, which Wesley termed "heart religion."¹⁶ From Methodism the Pentecostal Movement derived the emotional fervour, revivalism, firm belief

¹²Ibid, p.13. Leslie Davidson, a prominent leader in the American Methodist Church, and being of Pentecostal persuasion, states that "the foundations of the twentieth century charismatic movement were firmly laid down in the rediscovery of the dimension of the Spirit through the evangelical revival ... I doubt whether there would have been any Pentecostal movement today, apart from the eighteenth century revival of interior religion." Davidson, L.: Pathway to Power, Watchung, N.J., 1972, p.292. Bruner claims that "eighteenth-century Methodism is the mother of the nineteenth-century American holiness movement which, in turn, bore twentieth-century Pentecostalism." I. Vergara, a Jesuit student of Pentecostalism in Latin America, concluded that the "Pentecostal movement is Methodism brought to its ultimate consequences." (Bruner, p.37)

¹³Suelflow, R. : Christian Churches in Recent Times. Christianity in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Concordia, St Louis, Missouri, 1980, p.137

¹⁴Synan, p.22

¹⁵Ibid, p.14

¹⁶Ibid, p.22

in the bible, Armenian theology, divine healing, ethical rigour, rejection of ecclesiasticism and belief in the "Second Blessing of 'entire sanctification.'¹⁷ Sanctification was regarded as the unmistakeable characteristic of the Methodist Revival.¹⁸ Therefore the major influence of Methodism over Pentecostalism has been the emphasis on experience, especially an experience subsequent to conversion.¹⁹

1.1.3. The Second Evangelical Awakening

The Second Evangelical Awakening began in America in 1857-8. This revival, which became known as the "layman's revival",²⁰ was initiated by Charles Grandison Finney, whose views on sanctification corresponded with those of John Wesley. The nineteenth century was a period of many "ungodly" philosophies and ideologies. The church was in the grip of rationalism and liberalism. American society was plagued by the question of slavery and by internal political struggles. It was also a period of economic depression. All these factors contributed to a general feeling of negativity and disappointment in the current state of religion and caused many to rethink their religious

¹⁷MacRobert, Iain : The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA. MacMillan Press, London, 1988, p.37

¹⁸Burger, Isak : Geloofs Geskiedenis van die Apostoliese Geloofsending van Suid Afrika 1908 - 1958, Evangelie Uitgewers, Braamfontein, 1987, p.51

¹⁹Bruner, p.39

²⁰Neill, S. : A History of Christian Missions, Penguin, Middlesex, England, 1964, p.139

position. In this awakening, the leaders, including D.L.Moody and R.A. Torrey, stressed and urged converts to seek the promise of the further experience of grace i.e. the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which awaited all believers.²¹

Torrey's only discernible effect on Pentecostalism was specifically with "the spiritual baptism",²² preaching on the Spirit's operations subsequent to conversion.²³ Torrey gave the "teaching of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost a new, and ... more scriptural and doctrinally correct, emphasis on the line of 'power from on high', especially for service and witness".²⁴

1.1.4. The Holiness Movement

Charles Conn, a Pentecostal historian, notes that "the Pentecostal movement is an extension of the holiness revival that occurred during the first half of the nineteenth century".²⁵ Other church historians, as Brunner, Nicol, Robert Mapes Anderson, concur.²⁶ Except for the issue of speaking in tongues, there is little to distinguish between these two

²¹Burger, p.52-55 and Suelflow, p. 139

²²Brunner, p.45

²³Ibid

²⁴Ibid

²⁵Ibid, p.44

²⁶Brunner, p.42. Refer also to Nicol, p.5 and Anderson, Robert Mapes : Vision of the Disinherited. The Making of American Pentecostalism, Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, p.29

movements.²⁷ Nicol affirms this by stating that many of the Holiness churches associated themselves with Pentecostalism, because of the latter movement exhibited features similar to itself, such as biblical fundamentalism, the prominent role accorded to the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, revivalism and a puritanical rejection of things considered "worldly", such as tobacco, alcoholic beverages, cosmetics, and theatre.²⁸

The Holiness Movement was a "Puritan reaction against the growing institutionalism and secularism in the established churches in America."²⁹ It sought to stimulate religious piety by rejecting the "worldliness" within these churches, which was evidenced by the churches stand on evolution and the social gospel, and substituting an enthusiastic religion in its place.³⁰ Nicol sees the Holiness Movement as an attempt among certain Methodists to revive an interest in John Wesley's doctrine of sanctification (Christian perfection), because they felt that this emphasis had

²⁷Anderson, Ibid

²⁸Ibid, p.55. Nicol records the Pentecostals' acknowledgement of "indebtedness" to the Holiness Movement, and itemises five emphases that the Holiness Movement contributed to Pentecostalism, viz., 1. there is a blessing subsequent to and distinct from conversion 2. the believer must seek to be led by the Spirit in all affairs of life 3. the purpose of revivals and camp-meetings should be for winning converts to the church and "rejuvenating the spiritual lives of the faithful" 4. the believers' hope for the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ 5. the believer is to shun all forms of "worldliness" such as amusements, jewellery, cosmetics, luxury etc. (Nicol, pp.6-7)

²⁹Bloch-Hoell, p.12

³⁰Burger, p.55. Refer also to Anderson, pp.31-32, Nicol, p.5, Synan, p.5

been neglected by Methodism.³¹ The theological centre of the Holiness Movement was the second experience, "specifically a conversion into Scripture holiness, sanctification, or as it was often called, perfect love. This centre assured 'the subsequent experience' an importance it was later to assume in Pentecostalism."³²

Dissatisfied with their established churches, such as the Methodist and Baptist Churches, and in search of experiential Christianity, adherents of the Holiness Movement, both Black and White, left to form separate Christian fellowships.³³ Seymour was one of the many who left Methodism because of its "cold formality". The attraction to the Holiness-Pentecostal movement was its emphasis on total involvement of body, mind and soul in worship and its call for a rigorous personal ethic.³⁴ Vinson Synan noted that at least "eighty percent of the members of Negro Pentecostal Churches came from other Churches, particularly from Baptist and Methodist denominations."³⁵ These holiness congregations provided the necessary infrastructure for the new Pentecostal movement.³⁶ As a result of the spread of the

³¹Nicol, p.5

³²Bruner, p.42

³³Anderson, p.32 and Burger, pp.55-58, Nicol, pp.39,55

³⁴Hollenweger, Walter J. : After Twenty Years' Research on Pentecostalism, International Review of Mission, Vol. LXXV No. 297, January 1986, p.5

³⁵MacRobert, p.83 and Bloch-Hoell, p.31

³⁶Clark, Matthew S. & Lederle, Henry I. : What is distinctive about Pentecostal Theology ? UNISA, Muckleneuk, Pretoria, 1989, p.9 and Bloch-Hoell, p.32

Holiness Movement, the Keswick Movement was initiated in England in 1875, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance was formed in the USA in 1887 by A.B. Simpson. Anderson reckons that the Keswick movement was "absolutely crucial to the development of Pentecostalism", which imbibed the teachings of dispensationalism, premillennialism and the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" from the former.³⁷ Many of the leading figures who were nurtured in the Christian and Missionary Alliance later became leaders in the Pentecostal Movement.³⁸ The Holiness Movement was represented by men such as William E. Baardman, Robert P. Smith and Andrew Murray, in South Africa.³⁹

1.1.5. The Zionist Movement of John Alexander Dowie

The Zionist Movement, under John Alexander Dowie, played an important role in paving the way for the rise of the Pentecostal Movement in South Africa. The early Zionist congregations formed the nucleus of the Pentecostal Movement and later the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA (AFM). The AFM adopted much of the emphases of the Zionist Church. Many hundreds of Zionist-type independent churches trace their origins to missionaries led by Dowie.⁴⁰ Dowie had emigrated from Scotland to Australia in 1872. Leaving

³⁷Anderson, pp.40-43

³⁸Burger, p.55-58 and Nicol, pp.39, 55

³⁹Oosthuizen, G.C. : Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in Metropolitan Durban, South Africa, Human Science Research Council, Pretoria, 1975, p.67

⁴⁰Hollenweger, Walter J. : The Pentecostals, SCM Press, London, 1972, p.65

the Congregational Church, he began an independent ministry with puritanical emphases against alcohol and tobacco, and very strong belief in the practice of divine healing.⁴¹ In 1888 he built the giant Zion Tabernacle in Chicago, USA, and in 1896 the holy Zion City which he named The Christian Apostolic Catholic Church in Zion.⁴² From 1896 Dowie regularly published "Leaves of Healing", in which were testimonies of healing.⁴³ From 1901 onwards, notes Hollenweger, "Dowie's highly individual personality seems to have taken on delusions of grandeur",⁴⁴ and was eventually cast out of the church he had founded.⁴⁵

Burger mentions three important emphases of the Zionist Movement which became characteristic of the early Pentecostal Movement and of the AFM. The emphasis on Holiness and the rejection of the use of alcohol, tobacco, medicines and the eating of pork.⁴⁶ With his emphasis on Faith (Divine) Healing,⁴⁷ Dowie, of all the Pentecostal healing evangelists, brought the aspect of prayer for the healing of the sick to the foreground.⁴⁸ The movement also

⁴¹Ibid, p.117

⁴²Ibid

⁴³Ibid. Refer also to Sundkler, Bengt : Zulu Zion and some Swazi Zionists, Oxford University Press, London, 1976, p.90

⁴⁴Ibid. Refer also to MacRobert, p.44, Sundkler, p.30

⁴⁵Sundkler, p.30 and Synan, p.91

⁴⁶Burger, pp.61, 62 and Sundkler, Ibid

⁴⁷Burger, pp.61, 62 and Sundkler, p.30

⁴⁸Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.118

placed an emphasis on Baptism of adults⁴⁹ by triune immersion.⁵⁰

1.1.6. The Azusa Street Revival and William Joseph Seymour

In the USA of the 19th and 20th century, Blacks suffered bitterly at the hands of Whites, and many of the innumerable brutalities were at the instigation of White Christians. American churches were not exempt from the spirit of racial prejudice. Blacks sat in the "African corners" or "nigger pews" in the remote sections of the church.⁵¹ In the face of this constant humiliation Black Christians developed a type of spirituality⁵² that eventually led to the Pentecostal Revival in 1906 in Azusa Street, Los Angeles. This Revival, became the cradle of twentieth century Pentecostalism, and the Azusa Street experience was subsequently regarded as fundamental to the origins of the world-wide Pentecostal movement.⁵³ Pentecostalism, experienced in both the Black and White Churches, was essentially Black in origin,⁵⁴

⁴⁹Burger, Ibid

⁵⁰Oosthuizen, pp.69, 70. This mode of baptism is referred to as triune immersion, triple immersion or three-fold immersion in water. This tradition uses the trinitarian formula for baptism in water, as commissioned by Jesus Christ in Matt 28:19, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." The mode of baptism is triple immersion, where, at the mention of each Person of the Trinity, the recipient is submerged in water. This differed from the tradition of single immersion.

⁵¹Suelflow, p.148

⁵²Synan, pp.176-7

⁵³Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.22. See also Hollenweger, After Twenty Years' Research on Pentecostalism, p.5 and Dunn, p.618

⁵⁴MacRobert, p.48

emerging out of the context of the brokenness of Black existence in America.⁵⁵ Stephen Neill, a noted missiologist, states that "Pentecostals ... have a special gift for making the Christian message audible where human misery is at its worst."⁵⁶ James S. Tinney, a Black Pentecostal theologian, affirms: "The Pentecostal Revival had begun in an all-Black home in an all-Black neighbourhood, under Seymour's sole guidance."⁵⁷ Other historians, such as Leonard Lovett, Synan, Bartleman and Hollenweger concur with this opinion.⁵⁸

William Joseph Seymour was born an American Black slave in Louisiana and "saved and sanctified" under the "Evening Light Saints".⁵⁹ He is described as "very plain, spiritual and humble ... blind in one eye", stocky and dishevelled in appearance, quiet and unassuming, but fervent in prayer and preaching, displaying awesome spiritual power.⁶⁰ He had left what was perceived as the "worldly" Methodist church for the Holiness Movement.⁶¹ To improve his religious training, he attempted to attend Charles Parham's Bible classes in Houston, but, because of racial prejudice, was excluded from the gathering of White

⁵⁵Ibid. p.77.

⁵⁶Neill, pp. 459, 460

⁵⁷MacRobert, p.48.

⁵⁸Refer to Synan, p.105, Bartleman, p.xi, Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, p.xvii and MacRobert, p.48

⁵⁹Anderson, p.60

⁶⁰Bartleman, p.41 and Anderson, p.60

⁶¹MacRobert, p.49

students. He was allowed to listen from outside the classroom through the half-open door.⁶² A turning point in Seymour's pilgrimage was in January 1906, when he accepted an invitation to be an associate pastor in a small Black holiness church in Santa Fe Street, Los Angeles. This fellowship, led by one Sister Hutchinson, was formed as a result of some members being excommunicated from the Baptist church for espousing Holiness doctrine.⁶³

Seymour's first sermon in this Church of the Nazarene was based on Acts 2:4, declaring that "speaking in tongues was the initial evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit"⁶⁴ and "that no one had a real Baptism in the Holy Spirit unless he spoke in tongues."⁶⁵ This teaching was regarded as a repudiation of that held by members of the church, who saw the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and sanctification as being one and the same experience. The church henceforth was closed to Seymour.⁶⁶ He was invited to live and preach in the home of one Richard Ashbury at 214 North Bonnie Brae Street,⁶⁷ in a "depressed section" of Los Angeles. In the beginning, the members were primarily Black washerwomen.⁶⁸

⁶²MacRobert, p.xii and Synan, p.103

⁶³Bloch-Hoell, p.34 and Synan, pp.104-105, Anderson, p.61

⁶⁴Synan, p.106

⁶⁵Anderson, p.65

⁶⁶Synan, p.106. Refer also to Bloch-Hoell, p.37, Nicol, pp.32-33, Anderson, p.65

⁶⁷Synan, p.106.

⁶⁸Anderson, p.65

By April 1906 it was reported that the "religious excitement was almost at boiling point."⁶⁹ Many received the "baptism in the Holy Spirit", which was accompanied by the gift of speaking in "other" tongues. The attendance at these meetings swelled and the porch of the Ashbury home was found to be inadequate. A few days later, this group of Christians moved to an abandoned building in 312 Azusa Street,⁷⁰ which had at first served as a church for the Methodists and later as a storeroom. This became the meeting place for the new Pentecostal church,⁷¹ and the Pentecostal mecca for pilgrims from all over the world.⁷²

The local Revival captured the interest of people of all races in the nation. The church, which was now called the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission on Azusa Street, was unpretentious, including members of all racial and ethnic origins.⁷³ In defiance of the racial mentality of his time, and in affirmation of the Christian doctrine of the oneness of the human race, Seymour opened his religious revival to everyone. Hollenweger states that for Seymour "Pentecost meant more than speaking in tongues. It meant to love in the face of hate..."⁷⁴ Soon White Christians and pastors from the South, and from far away as Canada and Europe, attended these revival services. Through the

⁶⁹Bloch-Hoell, p.38

⁷⁰Anderson, p.66

⁷¹Bloch-Hoell, p.38

⁷²Nicol, p.34

⁷³Nicol, p.33 and Anderson, p.33

⁷⁴Hollenweger : After Twenty Years, p.5

prayers of Black Christians they received the blessings of the Spirit. White Christians and leaders sought the prayers of their Black counterparts to rid themselves of their racist attitude.⁷⁵

Hundreds of White ministers sought to be ordained for the ministry by Black Pentecostal leaders as Bishop C.H.Mason, head of the Church of God in Christ in Memphis, Tennessee.⁷⁶ Black and White Christians of all walks in life, flocked to Azusa Street, and as equals experienced the spirit of the new revival, even the motoric movements to the point of wallowing on the dirt floor.⁷⁷ Blacks, Whites, Chinese, Jews, Indians, Mexicans, and Ethiopians side by side, paid careful attention to the preaching of Seymour.⁷⁸ There was a tremendous sense of racial harmony in the early stages brought about by this new experience of Pentecost. It is said that there was no racial prejudice evident in the services which exhibited a truly biblical manifestation of Pentecost.⁷⁹ Meetings were "conducted on the basis of complete racial equality."⁸⁰ Ethnic minority groups of Los

⁷⁵Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.24 and Bartleman, pp.xix-xx.

⁷⁶MacRobert, p.83 and Anderson, p.189, Synan, p.79

⁷⁷MacRobert, p.83

⁷⁸Synan, p.109. Refer also to Anderson, p.69. In the foreword to Bartleman's book, Synan lists the five major teachings that were emphasised in Azusa Street Mission, viz, 1. justification by faith 2. sanctification as a definite work of grace 3. the baptism in the Holy Spirit evidenced by the speaking in "other" tongues 4. divine healing "as in the atonement" 5. the personal pre-millennial rapture of the saints at the second coming of Christ. (Bartleman, p.xx)

⁷⁹Synan, p.109 and Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, pp.23-24

⁸⁰Synan, p.168

Angeles found themselves welcome at Azusa Street, and discovered there a "sense of dignity and community denied them in the larger urban culture."⁸¹ Bartleman exulted: "The colour line was washed away in the blood."⁸² One can well understand why historians refer to the Pentecostal Movement as the "link in the democratizing of society" riddled with class and racial prejudice,⁸³ and as an "intercultural agent throwing a bridge across the troubled waters between two cultures which otherwise may never meet."⁸⁴

The revival continued for three and a half years, with meetings held three times per day. Soon the number of congregations with pentecostal emphases, increased, with Los Angeles alone having nine missions.⁸⁵ To disseminate information about the Revival and his Mission, Seymour began a newspaper, The Apostolic Faith, whose editor was a certain Florence Crawford.⁸⁶ Others who feature in this Pentecostal Revival are Frank Bartleman, an independent Holiness Evangelist,⁸⁷ Charles Fox Parham, whose role will be discussed below, W.F. Carothers, a co-leader with Parham in the Bible College established at Houston, and Joseph Smale, the minister of the First Baptist Church in Los Angeles,

⁸¹Anderson, p.69

⁸²Bartleman, p.54

⁸³Bloch-Hoell, p.11 and Oosthuizen, p.67

⁸⁴MacRobert, p.xiv

⁸⁵Bartleman, pp.67, 93, 136-137 and Anderson, p.70

⁸⁶Bartleman, p.xix

⁸⁷Bartleman, p.32 and Anderson, p.64

who was forced to resign his pastorate because of his Pentecostal persuasion.⁸⁸

Charles Fox Parham, born in 1873 in Iowa, is incorrectly referred to by some historians as "the father of the modern Pentecostal Movement".⁸⁹ It is therefore important to establish his role in this Pentecostal Revival. Parham entered Southwestern College, a Methodist school at Winfield, Kansas, in 1889.⁹⁰ He was licensed by the Methodist Church in 1892 and given a dual pastorate over the Eudora and Linwood churches.⁹¹ He experienced great disappointment in not being able to achieve tangible results in his ministry. Coming under Quaker influence, Parham broke his association with the Methodist Church in 1894⁹² to join the Holiness Movement.⁹³ In 1897 he prayed for his own healing from a type of heart disease. It is reported that when he recovered he immediately threw away all his medicines, abandoned doctors and cancelled his insurance policy.⁹⁴ In 1898

⁸⁸Nicol, p.34 and Bartleman, pp.33-34

⁸⁹Anderson contests the thesis that the modern Pentecostal Movement originated among Black Americans and strongly advocates primacy of Parham in the modern Pentecostal movement, which, he says, originated among a group of Whites at the beginning of the century and carried six years later to Los Angeles by Seymour. (Anderson, pp.37, 253. Refer also to Bartleman, p.ix and Bloch-Hoell, p.20). Other historians, as MacRobert and Burger, state that Seymour had not spoken in "other" tongues when he left Houston for Los Angeles.

⁹⁰Anderson, p.48

⁹¹Ibid

⁹²Anderson, p.49

⁹³Nicol, p.27

⁹⁴Anderson, p.49

Parham began the Bethel Healing Home in Topeka, Kansas, and published a newspaper called "The Apostolic Faith".⁹⁵ His movement became known as the Apostolic Faith Movement.⁹⁶ In 1900 he began the Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas,⁹⁷ where the emphasis was prayer, and the only study text-book the Bible.⁹⁸

From an assignment that Parham had set for his students, the latter concluded that the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" was accompanied by the initial evidence of speaking in "other" tongues,⁹⁹ and was separate from the Christian's experience of justification and sanctification.¹⁰⁰ It was Parham who first singled out glossolalia as only evidence of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit".¹⁰¹ While this became Parham's chief contribution to and the most unique feature of the twentieth century Pentecostal Movement,¹⁰² it is Seymour who should be credited with being the "father" of the modern Pentecostal Movement. Dunn

⁹⁵Nicol, p.81 and Anderson, p.50

⁹⁶Ibid, pp.96-97

⁹⁷Anderson, p.51

⁹⁸Bloch-Hoell, p.19 and Nicol, p.27

⁹⁹This phenomenon is referred to as glossolalia, xenoglossia, and xenolalia. Refer to Anderson, p.16

¹⁰⁰On the first day of 1901, one of the Parham's students, one Miss Agnes Ozman, is reported to have "received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost "and began to speak in tongues." She claimed to have spoken only in Chinese for three days, and wrote only in Chinese characters. (Bloch-Hoell, p.23 and Nicol, pp.27-28)

¹⁰¹Synan, p.99. See also Bartleman, pp.xvii-xviii and Dunn, p.618

¹⁰²Anderson, p.58.

states that it was the Azusa Street revival "which really forged the link between Spirit-baptism and tongues."¹⁰³ John G. Lake, who was the first missionary with a pentecostal emphasis to come to South Africa, states that the fervent prayer of Seymour, "Heaven's fire fell over the world, and the most extensive revival of real religion in the century resulted."¹⁰⁴

In 1905, in Brunner, near Houston, he won over the independent Holiness mission of Revd W.Fay Carothers,¹⁰⁵ which mission remained the headquarters of the Apostolic Faith Movement in Texas for many years. In the same year, Parham began a Bible school in Houston which he co-led with W.F.Carothers.¹⁰⁶ This college was to play a major role in the coming revival movement, as William J. Seymour was a "student" here.¹⁰⁷ His later role as an antagonist of the Azusa Street Mission and Seymour's leadership will be discussed in the next section. Here we shall note the deficiency of Parham's experience of Pentecost, which was content with the mystical, but refused to be translated in terms of the biblical experience which transcended racial barriers.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³Dunn, p.618

¹⁰⁴Lindsay, Gordon : Sketches from the Life and Ministry of John G. Lake, Voice of Healing, Shreveport, La, 1952, p.78

¹⁰⁵Ibid

¹⁰⁶Nicol, p.31

¹⁰⁷Bloch-Hoell, p.29

¹⁰⁸Refer to Acts 2, 10; I Cor 12:13; Eph 2:11-22; Gal 3:28

1.1.7. White Racism

From the very beginning, the Pentecostal movement was beset by controversies and schisms, both doctrinal and racial. Eventually different denominations were formed with their peculiar doctrinal emphases. "Within a decade", Anderson remarks, "of the initial Pentecostal Revival, the movement, aside from its fragmentation into innumerable minor factions, had split into three major doctrinal segments: Second Work Trinitarians, Finished Work Trinitarians, and Unitarians".¹⁰⁹ It was not very long before the initial harmony among the races, as manifest at the Azusa Street Mission, began to evaporate. The colour line had been redrawn.¹¹⁰ The White Pentecostal constituency soon separated from the Black Pentecostal Christians. This led to the establishment of separate Black and White Pentecostal churches.¹¹¹ MacRobert states that the "Pentecostal Movement conformed to the prevailing racist attitudes of White America. White Pentecostals valued and retained glossolalia but neglected or rejected the equality and unity which the Spirit brought to Azusa Street."¹¹² The analysis of Leonard Lovett is that "When

¹⁰⁹Refer Anderson, chapters IX, X for a fuller treatment of these controversies.

¹¹⁰Anderson, p.188 and Synan, p.180

¹¹¹MacRobert, p.88. Synan states: "The church continued to be inter-racial until 1908, when the Negro (Black) churches, reflecting the growing trend toward segregation, separated with the blessing of Whites to form their own group." (Synan, p.66) Anderson asserts that the independent course chosen by the White Pentecostal constituency was with the consent of their Black counterpart. (Anderson, p.189)

¹¹²MacRobert, p.88

Whites could not 'Europeanise' Pentecostalism and purge it of its 'Africanism', they separated and formed their denominations. Thus White Pentecostals conceded to the pressure of a racist society."¹¹³

In 1906, tension arose between Parham and Seymour in the Azusa Street Mission, which eventually led to their parting ways.¹¹⁴ Parham's innate racial prejudice was not manifest during the initial dynamic phase of the Pentecostal movement. After he was ostracised from the Pentecostal movement as a whole and rejected by his Black protege, Seymour, Parham openly expressed his racist sentiments.¹¹⁵ For the rest of his life, he continued to vilify the Azusa Street meetings as a case of "spiritual power prostituted to the sinful fits and spasms of the holy rollers and hypnotists" and denounced Seymour as "being possessed with a spirit of leadership".¹¹⁶ He rebuked the worshippers, whom he referred to them as "hogs".¹¹⁷ In his writings in October 1906, Parham condemned racial integration by expressing disgust at the intermingling of Blacks and Whites, which was against the custom of American society. He could not envisage Pentecost as "that event which broke down the walls of the nations, colour, language, sex and social class."¹¹⁸ He began to proclaim the

¹¹³Ibid

¹¹⁴Nicol, p.83. Anderson, p.257.

¹¹⁵Anderson, p.190

¹¹⁶Synan, p.112

¹¹⁷Hollenweger : After Twenty Years'... p.5

¹¹⁸Ibid, p.xv

supremacy of the White race through his Anglo-Israel brand of theology, and was regarded as a writer for and "a sympathiser of the Ku Klux Klan".¹¹⁹ From November 1907, his name no longer appeared on the official letterhead as Projector for the Azusa Mission. The letterhead, thereafter, of the new-named Pacific Apostolic Faith Movement, designated Seymour as the Pastor and Manager.¹²⁰

The racially integrated Pacific Coast Apostolic Faith Movement, as Seymour's work was now called, became largely Black when Whites refused to accept Seymour's leadership. In 1911, White adherents of Azusa Street left Seymour because he did not conform to their view on sanctification as referred to above. Among these were Florence Crawford and Clara Lunn, his secretary.¹²¹ William H. Durham divided the Pentecostal Movement even further by propagating his sectarian views of the Finished Work, much against the 'Second Work of Grace' doctrine of Seymour.¹²² He also rejected Seymour's leadership and established a movement that was to be dominated by Whites.¹²³ Leonard Lovett remarks:

¹¹⁹Hollenweger : After Twenty Years' ... p.5. Refer also to Synan, p.180 and Anderson, p.88

¹²⁰Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.23 and Bloch-Hoell, p.48

¹²¹Anderson, p.189.

¹²²Durham propagated a two-stage pattern to salvation i.e. conversion and sanctification being one simultaneous experience, and the baptism in the Holy Spirit being the second experience. Seymour preached a three-stage pattern, with conversion and sanctification being two distinct experiences, the latter continuing throughout ones life. (Refer Synan, pp.147-151, Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.23, Bartleman, p.146)

¹²³Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p. 23

"No man can genuinely experience the fullness of the Spirit and remain a racist."¹²⁴ One notices that the Pentecostal Revival at Azusa Street was initially a testimony to the fact that "God is not one to show partiality",¹²⁵ and that the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" was witness to the unity between the races. The document of the Relevant Pentecostal Witness (RPW) states: "It is here that God called to himself a prophetic movement in an oppressive society that belied the dignity of Black people."¹²⁶ This initial harmony was short-lived and as the racist spirit of the American society prevailed "there emerged a right-wing element that brought about the unchristian (racial) separation that led to the formation of separate White and Black churches."¹²⁷ The Pentecostal experience was reduced to merely speaking in "other" tongues without any relevance to the problems of society. This revival of 1906 was a tremendous impetus to world-wide mission nonetheless.¹²⁸ Many of the White Pentecostal missionaries carried the racial prejudices of American society as a mental substratum along with the message of the gospel. In mission fields riddled with conflict arising from dominant White supremacy, as in South Africa, such a message of the Pentecostal experience found a fertile ground. The RPW document comments on the message of Pentecost that was transplanted in South Africa

¹²⁴MacRobert, p.xv

¹²⁵Acts 10:34 (NASV)

¹²⁶Document of the Relevant Pentecostal Witness, RPW Publishers, Durban, 1988, p.3

¹²⁷Ibid

¹²⁸Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, pp.63-71

thus:

"It was unfortunate that White Pentecostals succumbed to the pressure of conservative mainline churches, which tried to discredit them by pointing out their 'lowly' beginnings in a Black church. It was unfortunate that White Pentecostals gave in to the laws of the Southern states which prohibited racially mixed meetings. It was unfortunate that we received this kind of compromised Pentecostalism, the kind that shaped our thinking and our theology. Much of what we received as traditional Pentecostalism is in fact a subversion of the true Pentecost of Acts 2 and of Azusa Street."¹²⁹

1.2. THE MESSAGE OF PENTECOST COMES TO SOUTH AFRICA

1.2.1. John Graham Lake

During the period of the Revival, John Graham Lake (1870-1935) and Thomas Hezmalhalch, who later were to become the pioneers of the AFM in South Africa, felt a calling to be missionaries in Africa.¹³⁰ Thomas Hezmalhalch was a preacher in the American Holiness Church and John G.Lake had been an Elder in the Zion Apostolic Church of John Alexander Dowie.¹³¹ Lake had come from a family riddled with sickness, many of whom he reports to have

¹²⁹RPW Document, p.3

¹³⁰Nicol, pp.50-51 and Hollenweger : The Pentecostals, p.120

¹³¹Lindsay, p.31

experienced the miracle of healing through prayer.¹³² In his autobiography, he claims that one member of his family had been healed from an inflamed kidney and another raised from the death-bed after being healed of cancer. His wife was supposedly healed of pulmonary consumption.¹³³ John Alexander Dowie had prayed for the healing of members of Lake's family in their distress,¹³⁴ and it was he who had taught Lake that the days of miracles have not passed.¹³⁵ Lake moved to Zion City in 1906 to learn more about divine healing, which he practised for a few years.¹³⁶

Lake describes his quest for the baptism in the Holy Spirit thus: "God, if You will baptise me in the Holy Ghost, and give me the power of God, nothing shall be permitted to stand between me and a hundred-fold obedience."¹³⁷ He continues: "The result of this baptism was to show me a new revelation of the nature of the lord Jesus Christ. A new tenderness for the lost, awakened in my soul. I saw mankind through new eyes....my life was swayed by this

¹³²Lindsay, pp.24-29. Anderson remarks that "Personal tragedy, frustration and despair, common to the human condition as they are, seem peculiarly pronounced in the life story of more than one Pentecostal leader. Indeed personal tragedy so closely preceded the conversion of some, that one is all but compelled to recognise a causal relationship between these experience." (Anderson, p. 104)

¹³³Lindsay, pp.24-29

¹³⁴Ibid, pp.13,26

¹³⁵Ibid, p.29

¹³⁶Ibid, p.3

¹³⁷Ibid, p.15

overwhelming passion...to proclaim the message of Christ..."¹³⁸ John G. Lake and Thomas Hezmalhalch had, on one occasion, visited Azusa Street and had kept contact with Seymour. It was here that they received their divine calling to South Africa for evangelistic work.¹³⁹ Lake, however, in giving a sketch of his own life, makes no mention of being influenced by the Azusa Mission or of meeting with W.J.Seymour or even the effect Dowie's ministry had on his work. Being a "rugged individualist" he credits the experience of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", his call to the mission field in South Africa and his launch into the healing ministry to his own individual search and decision.¹⁴⁰ Burger records the lasting impression Seymour's piety made on Lake thus: "It was not what he said in words; it was what he said from his spirit to my heart that showed me he had more of God in his life than any man I had ever met up to that time."¹⁴¹ He had also met Parham. The influences of these early pioneers of the modern Pentecostal Movement must have had an influence on Lake and his ministry. Lake recounts how, in April 1907, he disposed of all his assets and "started out in independent evangelistic work without a dollar, being absolutely dependent upon God, along the faith lines and after the manner of George Mueller of England

¹³⁸Ibid, p.16

¹³⁹Oosthuizen, p.88 and Burger, p.131

¹⁴⁰Lindsay, pp.viii, 13-17

¹⁴¹Burger, p.131-132

and Hudson Taylor of China Inland Mission."¹⁴²

On 19 April 1908, both Lake and Hezmalhalch, with their families, a certain Miss Sackett and J.O. Lehman, left the USA for South Africa,¹⁴³ carrying with them the new found Pentecostal experience which encapsulated much of the "black roots." Hollenweger summarises these "black roots" as: orality of liturgy, narrativity of theology and witness, maximum participation of the total Christian community, inclusion of dreams and visions into private and public worship and understanding of the relationship between body and mind as evidenced in the ministry of healing by prayer.¹⁴⁴ This tradition of Christianity they transplanted in South Africa, with its enthusiastic, ecstatic and experiential emphasis, and rigidly fundamentalist and anti-intellectual attitude.¹⁴⁵ They also carried with it "a large amount of American cultural baggage",¹⁴⁶ tainted with the spirit of racial prejudices of their society. This team of missionaries landed in South Africa on 15 May 1908 to begin their mission of evangelism.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴²Lindsay records the reportedly miraculous nature of Lake's travel to South Africa, including the provision of the sea-fare and the housing accommodation. (Lindsay, pp.vii, 17)

¹⁴³Ibid, pp.17,30,31 and Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, p.124

¹⁴⁴Hollenweger, After Twenty Years, p.6

¹⁴⁵Dunn, p.620

¹⁴⁶Clark & Lederle, p.18

¹⁴⁷Lindsay, pp. 18, 30, 31

1.2.2. The Zion Church in South Africa

The Zionist Church, comprising a mixture of races, was established in Transvaal before the coming of Lake.¹⁴⁸ This church formed the bridgehead for the penetration of the Pentecostal message into the South African community and provided the initial nucleus of believers for this Christian tradition here. This Pentecostal group of Christians initially constituted the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA (AFM), and also provided the first indigenous leader for the new ecclesiastical organisation in the person of Pieter Louis le Roux. A discussion of the establishment of this church is therefore necessary.

A group of people were influenced by the revival in the Herisau district, Switzerland, in the 1860's. Being ostracised by their country-people, some thirty of these Swiss emigrated, the majority settling in South Africa. The young Johannes Buechler (1864-1944), had settled in Johannesburg in 1889. In 1892 he was ordained in the Congregational Church to serve a "Coloured" congregation. He resigned from the Congregational Church in Johannesburg in 1895 on account of his doubts about infant baptism. In March of that year he encouraged his congregation to build a chapel of their own which became known as the "Zion Church".¹⁴⁹ Influenced by Dowie's "Leaves of Healing", Buechler began practising divine healing. Edgar Mahon, a captain in the Salvation Army in southern Natal, is reported to have been healed

¹⁴⁸Lindsay, p.31 and Sundkler, p.28

¹⁴⁹Sundkler, pp.28, 29

through his prayers. Dowie promised to appoint Buechler his "Overseer" in South Africa, if the latter was prepared to first visit Zion City in Chicago. Buechler did visit Zion City but was so repulsed by the "sycophantic personality cult" encouraged by Dowie that he challenged Dowie.¹⁵⁰ To signify his break with Dowie, Buechler, on returning to South Africa, changed the name of Zion Church to the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1903.¹⁵¹ He continued to believe in and practise divine healing, and later invited Daniel Bryant, one of Dowie's followers to South Africa.¹⁵²

Mention must also be made of **Andrew Murray** (1828-1917) of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) of South Africa, and his role as leader and President of the Holiness Movement in South Africa.¹⁵³ He was the leading Reformed theologian of that time, who saw in the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" an experience separate from "rebirth" and an endowment with power. He also emphasised divine healing. Together with theological conservatism, he stressed the aspect a "warm inner life".¹⁵⁴ He

¹⁵⁰Ibid, pp.28, 29

¹⁵¹Sundkler, pp.30, 31. This name is not to be confused with the Apostolic Faith Mission founded by Lake.

¹⁵²Sundkler, p.31

¹⁵³Hofmeyr, J.W. : Christianity in South Africa between 1875 and 1948, in Perspectives on Church History, Ed Pillay, G.J. and Hofmeyr, J.W., Haum, Pretoria, 1991, p.267. Refer also A Reader in South African Church History, Reader 2, Course 354A, Theological College by Extension College (TEEC), Johannesburg, 1990, pp.19-24

¹⁵⁴Latourette, K.S. : A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol 5, The Americas, Australasia and Africa, Harper and Row, New York, 1970, p.325

so created the ground for a fuller understanding of Pentecost, and is credited with initiating revivalism into the Dutch Reformed Church". Murray found a fervent disciple in **Pieter Louis le Roux** (1864-1943), a DRC missionary to the Zulus in Wakkerstroom, Eastern Transvaal. Sundkler regards the relationship between these two men as "one of the subtle turning-points in South African church history." Le Roux established the Zion Church, which was so named because of the congregation's use of the "Zion Liedere" (hymn-book). In 1897 he met with Buechler, and was soon introduced to Dowie's "Leaves of Healing". This further strengthened his resolve towards engaging in a ministry of divine healing but was forbidden by the Missions Committee of the DRC from propagating this new teaching. On account of his strong conviction about divine healing, and his rejection of infant baptism, he finally resigned from the DRC in March 1903. Thereafter he established a Black church independent of the DRC in Wakkerstroom.¹⁵⁵

Daniel Bryant arrived in the Transvaal on 8 May 1904, as the first missionary and Overseer of Dowie's Christian Catholic Church.¹⁵⁶ In Johannesburg he established a thriving congregation.¹⁵⁷ Bryant prepared this congregation for a revival to follow by urging them to seek and pray for the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."¹⁵⁸ He visited Pieter le Roux at Wakkerstroom in

¹⁵⁵Sundkler, pp. 14, 16, 17, 19, 22, 25

¹⁵⁶Lindsay, p.31 and Sundkler, p.36, Oosthuizen p.69

¹⁵⁷Sundkler, p.37

¹⁵⁸Lindsay, p.31

1904, where 141 persons were baptised by immersion, making this the first series of baptisms undertaken by the Zion Church in South Africa. Bryant also baptised Le Roux and his wife by three-fold immersion in water.¹⁵⁹ Bryant went on to ordain le Roux as elder of the Christian Catholic Church in Zion on 31 July 1904 and his wife as evangelist. When Bryant went on a ten-month visit to the United States in 1906, le Roux was left in charge of the congregation in Johannesburg. Bryant returned to USA in 1908.¹⁶⁰ That year, through Lake's preaching, le Roux was won over to the Pentecostal message with its emphasis on speaking in "other" tongues.¹⁶¹ Joining the Pentecostal Movement meant leaving the African Zionists, which event placed the latter group in a crisis later.¹⁶²

1.2.3. The Establishment of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA

During his five years (1908-1913) in South Africa, Lake is recognised as having introduced Pentecostalism into the country and being the founder of the AFM.¹⁶³ During this period the message of Pentecost spread such that Lake is credited with having established 125 White congregations and over 500 Black

¹⁵⁹Sundkler, p.38

¹⁶⁰Lindsay, p.39, 41-42

¹⁶¹Nicol, p.170. Refer also to Sundkler, pp.14, 53-55, Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, p.114,115, Oosthuizen, p. 69

¹⁶²Sundkler, pp.53, 54

¹⁶³Nicol, p.170 and Lindsay, p.3

congregations.¹⁶⁴ It must be noted that many of these Black churches were in existence before Lake's arrival. This is evident in the elaborate hierarchy that had already been established in "The African Catholic Church", which, upon receiving the pentecostal experience, joined Lake in toto.¹⁶⁵ Therefore he cannot be credited for establishing these churches, but leading them into the pentecostal experience. Lake's ministry is likened to that of the apostles of Jesus Christ "in which signs wonders and miracles were manifested",¹⁶⁶ and through which, Lindsay, without any proper substantiation, states that 100,000 miraculous healings took place.¹⁶⁷

Lake and Hezmalhalch began services on 25 May 1908 in a hall in Doornfontein, Johannesburg with a racially mixed congregation.¹⁶⁸ Lindsay reports that the revival saw hundreds converted, "baptised with the Holy Spirit" and healed.¹⁶⁹ Divine healing was greatly emphasised and became the demonstration of the power of God in Christ and of the superiority of the Pentecostal message over that of the established churches. Soon the Zion Church, which had hired the premises of the Presbyterian Church in 88 Bree Street, Doornfontein, for their regular worship services, invited Lake and Hezmalhalch to conduct their meetings

¹⁶⁴Lindsay, p.20

¹⁶⁵Sundkler, pp.54, 55

¹⁶⁶Lindsay, p.vii

¹⁶⁷Ibid, pp.viii ff

¹⁶⁸Sundkler, p. 52

¹⁶⁹Lindsay, pp.31-32

there. A revival started and soon the entire congregation was won over to the Pentecostal movement. The AFM was launched in this Tabernacle in 1908.¹⁷⁰ Due to the racial practices in South Africa, Whites would scorn to sit with Blacks even for worship.¹⁷¹ But the revival resulted in a great wave of such conviction that in the Doornfontein Church "all shades of colour and all degrees of the social scale mingled freely in their hunger after God."¹⁷² The spirit of friendliness and warmth of these worshippers, the chanting, singing and spontaneous prayers during these services attracted many members who were disillusioned with the formal liturgy of the established churches. The AFM grew in numbers rapidly.¹⁷³

On 27 May 1909, the first Executive Council was elected with Thomas Hezmalhalch as the first President and John G. Lake as the first Vice-President of the AFM. In 1910, Lake was appointed as President, which title, in the honorary capacity, he retained until his death in 1935.¹⁷⁴ The newly established church sought State recognition and was registered as an "unlimited association" and the act of establishment and statutes were registered in October 1913 under the name of the Apostolic Faith

¹⁷⁰Oosthuizen, p.88. Refer also to Lindsay, p.35, AFM, Central Tabernacle Diamond Jubilee Calendar (1908-1968), AFM Publishers, Johannesburg, 1968, Centrefold.

¹⁷¹Lindsay, pp.45, 46

¹⁷²Burton, W.F.P. : When God makes a Pastor, SCM, London, 1934, p.32 and Burger, pp.167, 168

¹⁷³Lindsay, p.35

¹⁷⁴Ibid, p.34

Mission of South Africa.¹⁷⁵ Lake shared the pastoral duties with others and in time became the first Pastor of the Bree Street Tabernacle, in Johannesburg, which later became known as Central Tabernacle. This place served as the head office of the AFM until 1913.¹⁷⁶ In 1911, Hezmalhalch rebelled against Lake's domineering ways and left the church.¹⁷⁷ When Lake left South Africa in 1913, Le Roux was appointed the leader of the AFM and became President on 1 March 1914, which title he held until his death in 1943.¹⁷⁸ Le Roux now concentrated on the White work, and this left him with little time to supervise the Black churches from Wakkerstroom. Some of his best former Black co-workers, including Daniel Nkonyane, Elijah Mahlangu, left him. When le Roux joined the AFM, the Black Zionist church was apprehensive about following him, because this meant parting with the name "Zion", which they regarded as indispensable. The Executive Council of the AFM therefore suggested that "this portion of our Mission be known henceforth as the Zion Branch of the Apostolic Faith Mission." Le Roux's physical absence from Wakkerstroom led to two factions developing around the leadership of both Nkonyane and Mahlangu. Nkonyane found support in Edgar Mohan, captain of the Salvation Army in southern Natal, and was soon excommunicated from the church. He founded the Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion, and Mahlangu his

¹⁷⁵Oosthuizen, p.88. The AFM received full legal recognition as a result of a decision of Parliament in 1961.

¹⁷⁶Lindsay, p.34 and AFM Diamond Jubilee Calendar, p.5

¹⁷⁷Sundkler, p.55

¹⁷⁸Sundkler, p.55 and AFM Diamond Jubilee Calendar, p.3

own Zion Apostolic Church in Johannesburg.¹⁷⁹

Isak Burger, present President of the AFM, White Section, states that the beginnings of Pentecostalism as manifest in the pioneering days of the AFM was multi-racial in character.¹⁸⁰ This is not in agreement with Lake's testimony, however, which is that Blacks sat on one side of the church and Whites on the other.¹⁸¹ Soon the congregation was segregated with Lehman holding special meetings for Blacks in the Zulu language, in a "separate native hall", in Doornfontein.¹⁸² Within a few months racial segregation was extended to include the institution of baptism. Initially Whites and Blacks were baptised together. In November 1908, this practice was changed due to opposition from Whites. The Executive Council decided at first that Blacks must be baptised after Whites,¹⁸³ and still later decided that the baptism of Blacks shall be a completely separate event from that for Whites.¹⁸⁴ The fact that the AFM spread principally among the Afrikaans-speaking Whites,¹⁸⁵ whose Reformed Church

¹⁷⁹Sundkler, pp.42, 53-55, 58, 62

¹⁸⁰Burger, p.459

¹⁸¹Lindsay, p.35

¹⁸²Ibid

¹⁸³Minutes of Executive Council, AFM, 06 November 1908. Refer also to Burger, p.175, Sundkler, p.54.

¹⁸⁴Ibid, 30 July 1909

¹⁸⁵Nicol, in recording statistics for 1962, states that 90% of the White membership of the AFM was Afrikaans-speaking (Nicol, p.170). Refer also to Oosthuizen, p.70 and Sales, J.M. : The Planting of the Churches in South Africa, Eerdman, Grand Rapids, 1971, p.147

background did not teach the equality of the races,¹⁸⁶ contributed to the AFM's lending support to the apartheid policy of the South African government during the many of its existence.¹⁸⁷ Soon the racist mentality of the Whites prevailed over the biblical teaching of the equality of the races. As we shall see later, when the AFM spread among the various population groups in South Africa, it further entrenched the policy of racial segregation by creating four separate racially exclusive sections viz, White, Black, Coloured and Indian, each having its own constitution.¹⁸⁸

The above survey reveals that the message of Pentecost that reached South Africa at the beginning of this century, had been moulded by various religious, philosophical and social factors prevalent in the American society of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Revivalism, Methodism, the Evangelical Awakenings, and the Holiness Movement together provided the Pentecostal Movement with its emphasis on emotional fervour, biblical fundamentalism, divine healing, puritanical ethical vigour, proselytism and an imminent eschatology. The speaking in "other" tongues, as the

¹⁸⁶Refer to Villa-Vicencio, Charles : The Theology of Apartheid, Methodist Publishing House, Cape Town. (No date), Morpew, Derek : South Africa, The Powers Behind, Struik Christian Books, Cape Town, 1989, pp.97-117 for a fuller treatment of the subject. Villa-Vicencio endeavours to identify the theological and biblical arguments in the Reformed Church which affirm the God-given nature of apartheid. Morpew states that "apartheid is first and foremost a church issue" and discusses the development of the policy of racial segregation in the DRC.

¹⁸⁷Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, p.121

¹⁸⁸Morpew, p.132

authentic evidence of ones receiving the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" was Parham's unique contribution. These characteristics essentially comprised the Pentecostal message. Historical observation of the modern Pentecostal Movement, initiated by the Los Angeles revival, under Seymour, was a divine witness to the equality of the races. But the truth of this witness had been suppressed at the initial stages,¹⁸⁹ and separate White and Black pentecostal churches arose. Therefore it is my contention that the pentecostal message that Lake carried to South Africa, which led to the formation of the AFM, was a "compromised Pentecostalism, the kind that shaped our thinking and our theology. Much of what we received as traditional Pentecostalism is in fact a subversion of the true Pentecost of Acts 2 and of Azusa Street."¹⁹⁰ The racial mores of South African society was rapidly transfused into the AFM by its pioneers and has continued to plague the denomination even after 84 years.

¹⁸⁹Refer to Rom. 1:18-19.

¹⁹⁰RPW Document, p.3

CHAPTER TWO

THE PIONEER DAYS

This chapter seeks to provide an overview of the emigration of Indians from India to South Africa in 1860. The focus of attention will be on the Indian community in Natal because the rise of the Pentecostal Movement and, subsequently, the AFM amongst the Indians was initiated in this province. This will be an attempt at understanding the advent of the Pentecostal Movement within the particular socio-political and economic context of the Indian settlers. The role of the Rowlands family in the development of Pentecostalism among the Indian community will also be reviewed. Finally, I will concentrate on the pioneering days of the AFM among the Indians in Natal. Of importance to this discussion will be the work of the pioneer missionaries, especially Charles Samuel Flewelling and the role of some of the pioneer Indian Christians.

2. 1. THE ARRIVAL OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Indians first came to South Africa over 130 years ago.¹ They came in two categories, namely as indentured labourers and as "free" or "passenger" Indians.² The indentured workers came especially as labourers for the sugar industry in Natal which had begun in the decade of the 1850's. They came as the result of

¹Brookes, Edgar H. and Webb, Colin de : A History of Natal, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1965, p. 85

²Pachai, B and Bhana, S : A Documentary History of Indian South Africans, David Philip Publishers, Cape Town, 1984, p.2

intense negotiations between the government of Great Britain and the legislatures of the political dependencies of Natal and India.³ The whole process was rooted in the shortage of reliable labour in Natal. The Governor of the Cape Colony and the High Commissioner of Natal, Sir George Grey, had made representations to the Indian authorities and the British Government to sanction the importation of labour from the East. The British Government was the dominant partner as it had political control over the governments of Natal and India. This pact ensured that the necessary safeguards be introduced to protect the interests of these labourers.⁴ Some of these protective laws are mentioned below.

The history of Indians in South Africa is a history of intense socio-economic struggle, aggravated by a hostile political situation, which eventually led to the destruction of the cultural and societal homogeneity of the Indian community.⁵ These factors had an important part to play in preparing Indians for the Pentecostal message. Oosthuizen, in his study of the Pentecostal Movement within the Indian community, states that "Pentecostalism has the ability to give satisfaction to a specific socio-economic layer of uprooted people."⁶ It is

³Pachai, Bridglal : The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question 1860 - 1971, Struik, Cape Town, 1971, p.1

⁴Pachai, p. 4

⁵Pillay, G. J. : A Historico-Theological Study of Pentecostalism as a Phenomenon within a South African Community, Ph. D. Thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1983, p.44

⁶Oosthuizen, pp. 13-19

Oosthuizen's contention that Pentecostalism found a strong foothold in the Indian community within the context of insecurity created by its socio-political and economic upheavals.⁷

A survey of their history reveals among other things, that Indians were called solely for the purpose of providing a source of cheap and reliable labour for the burgeoning sugar industry in Natal.⁸ The majority of these Indian labourers who had come to South Africa were initially agricultural labourers in India. Conditions of socio-economic deprivation had contributed to their decision to leave India when opportunities for emigration arose, after the emancipation of slaves in 1833.⁹ White Natalians were able to import Indian indentured labourers subject to the

⁷Ibid, pp. 18-25, 30-33, 65

⁸This fact is well documented. Refer to Brookes and Webb; Pachai; Pillay, G.J.; Pillay, L.V., Marimutoo, V.E., Singh, I.D., Chengalroyen, Y. : History 2000, Nasou Ltd, Goodwood, 1986, pp.162ff, Brian, J.B. : Christian Indians In Natal. 1860-1911. A Historical and Statistical Study, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1983, Subramoney, Siva : The Arrival of Indians in Mount Edgecombe, Shree Emperumal Hindu Temple Society (SEHTS) Centenary Festival Brochure 1890-1990, Mt Edgecombe, 1990, pp.13ff, Smith, Lindsay H. : Anatomy of Apartheid. Corruption of Power, Khanya Publishers, Germiston, 1979, pp.129ff, Palmer, M. : The History of the Indians in Natal, Natal Regional Survey, Vol 10, 1, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1957, p.3

The Byrne Emigration Scheme of the British Colonial Government had introduced about 2500 White European settlers into Natal. Edmund Moore, one of these settlers, successfully produced the first crop of sugar cane in 1850 in Compensation, on the North Coast of Natal, about 60km from Durban. Within the decade a prosperous sugar industry was established with over 40 sugar mills spread all along the Natal coast. This enterprise was hindered by the lack of cheap and reliable labour. Black labour was proving unreliable. Whites believed manual labour to be the lot of the "non-Whites". This led to the importation of Indian labourers.

⁹Pillay, Marimutoo, Singh and Chengalroyen, p.163 and Brain pp.xv, xvi, 3

conditions of certain laws devised in 1859.¹⁰ A total of 152,184 indentured Indian immigrants arrived in South Africa during the period of 51 years from 1860 to 1911. Some "Passenger" Indians came at their own expense, under the ordinary immigration laws of the colony, enjoying the same citizenship rights as Whites until this changed. They were primarily Muslim traders.¹¹ These early labourers were contracted to various White sugar barons¹² and were settled in various areas along the coastal areas of Natal, such as Empangeni, Amatikulu, Stanger, Darnall, Kearsney and Mount Edgecombe¹³ in the North, and Illovo, Sezela, and

¹⁰Brain, p.4. Refer also to Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.6, Subramoney, pp.13, 14, Calpin, G.H.: Indians in South Africa, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1949, p.6.

Law 14 was important in that it specified the conditions of the indenture:

Section 9: After 5 years of service (industrial residence), the coolie immigrant was to be considered as free as any other non-indentured person in the colony and could choose to re-indenture himself, change his place of residence, or he may return to India at his own expense.

Section 24: After 10 years of residence in the Colony the "free" Indian shall be entitled to a free passage back to India.

Section 28: The ex-indentured Indian may commute his right to a free passage back to india for a piece of land equal to the cost of such a return passage. In this regards the approval of the Lieutenant Governor had to be obtained.

Section 29: No coolie may leave the Colony without written permission from the Immigration Agent in Durban.

¹¹Brain, pp. 3,4, Pillay, Marimutoo, Singh and Chengalroyen, p.164, Bugwandeem, Dowlat : "Historical Perspectives" in The Indian South Africans. A Contemporary Profile, Ed. Arkin, A.J., Magyar, K.P. and Pillay, G.J., Owen Burgess Publishers, Pinetown, 1989, p.3

¹²Arkin, Magyar, and Pillay, p.44

¹³Mt Edgecombe was so named by Captain William Smerdon, an English sea-captain from Devon, England, who settled here in the 1850's. Smerdon built his first sugar mill in 1861. In 1895,

Port Shepstone in the South. Pachai, in his demographic profile for 1904, reckons that 80% of the Indian population were settled in Natal,¹⁴ where the Pentecostal Movement among the Indians was to be initiated.

The religious affiliations among these early immigrants were diverse. 90% were Hindus, 8.5% were Muslims, 1.4% were Christians,¹⁵ and the rest were Parsees, Jains and Buddhists. The Christians came mainly from five denominational traditions,¹⁶ viz Roman Catholic, Church of England, Lutheran, Wesleyan-Methodist, and Baptist.¹⁷ As will be noted later, the

under Marshall Campbell, a Scotsman, the enterprise became known as the Natal Estates Ltd. Of the 351 Indians on board the Belvedere, the second ship to bring Indian labourers to Natal on 26 November 1860, ten were assigned to Smerdon in Mount Edgecombe. Of the last batch of Indians on board the S.S. Umlazi, in 1911, 23 were assigned as labourers to the Natal Estates Ltd. (Subramoney, pp.9-15)

¹⁴Pachai, The Indian South Africans, p.29

¹⁵In her tedious examination, Brain identifies 2150 persons from the total immigrant population of 152,184 as being Christians. This is in variance with the commonly held estimate that Christians comprised 5% of the immigrants. She argues that this was due to scholars drawing their conclusions from the first few years of the arriving labourers, rather than considering the entire period from 1860 to 1911. Other scholars, she continues, had possibly assumed this initial estimate to be correct, without verification. (Brain, pp. 4, 5, 244, 247)

¹⁶Ibid, pp. 178, 193-229

¹⁷Ibid, pp. 209-211, 221-222. Refer also to Naidoo, Thillayvel : Indian Pentecostalism. A Hindu Assessment, Dept of Science of Religion, University of Durban-Westville, Durban, 1989. p.21, Glendale Baptist Church Golden Jubilee Commemorative Brochure 1941-1991, 1991, p.5

Under Revd S. H. Stott and Revd Ralph Stott, the Methodist Church began energetic missionary activity among the Indian labourers on the Natal North Coast. With the rise of trained Indian evangelists the Methodist Church took firm root amongst the Indians in Natal. The majority of Baptist Christians arrived

Methodist and the Baptist churches provided the nucleus of members for the launch of the AFM among the Indians.

The terms of the contract under which these indentured labourers toiled were often violated by their White employers and the governing authorities.¹⁸ At times, wages were withheld, and promised gratuities not paid.¹⁹ After their contractual period the majority of the now "free" Indians decided to remain in

between 1900-1911. In 1900 a group of about 103 such labourers arrived from the Telegu districts on the west coast of India. Many were settled at Kearsney, on the North Coast of Natal, on the tea estate of Sir Leige Hulett, and others in Tongaat and Stanger. In June 1903, the first Baptist minister arrived in the person of Revd John Rangiah, and six months later, on 27 December 1903, the first Telegu Baptist Church in Natal was formed at Kearsney. In 1921, Revd Theophilus M. Rangiah succeeded his father and remained as minister until his death in May 1947.

¹⁸Pachai lists five factors that militated against the proper observance of these contracts.

1. In order to lodge a complaint of ill-treatment or other violation to the magistrate, the labourer had to first obtain a pass from his employer to leave the estate.
2. The labourer had communication problems with the magistrate who could not understand their vernacular, either Tamil, Telegu or Hindi.
3. The magistrates also neglected their lawful duty by not visiting these tea estates to oversee the conditions of life and labour.
4. The "Coolie Immigration Agent ... was impotent as guardian of labourers' interests in view of a multitude of factors varying from indifference to incapacity".
5. The "host government failed to live up to its fundamental responsibility to provide the protection required". (Pachai, Brijlal : South Africa's Indians. The Evolution of a Minority, University Press of America Inc., 1979, pp. 3,4. Refer also to Thompson, L.M. : Indian Immigration into Natal 1860-1872, Archive Year Book for South African History, Vol 2, Cape Town, 1952, pp.46-48. The actual cases revealing the struggles of the Indian community from the time of their arrival in South Africa is well documented by Pachai and Bhana.

¹⁹Brain, p.xvi, xvii, 4

Natal.²⁰ Of about 13,000 "free" Indians who applied for a piece of Crown land in lieu of their passage back to India, only 53 received these promised grants, before the law was repealed in 1892.²¹ This revocation of the grant of Crown land was a serious breach of contract. The living conditions of these early Indians were generally sub-minimum, lacking basic facilities.²² Whites accepted Indians as long as they continued in their role as labourers and menials,²³ but not as equals.²⁴ The superior industry of the Indians, the economic competition presented by the Indian traders and the emergence of the "free" Indians created resistance among the Whites in the country. Whites now looked upon Indians as "potentially dangerous economic

²⁰Pillay, Marimuttoo, Singh and Chengalroyen, p.164. refer also to Calpin, p.6, Brookes and Webb, p.87, Kuper, Hilda : Indian People in Natal, Natal at the University Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1960, p.2;

²¹Subramoney, p.14 and Pachai, The SA Indian Question, p.8

²²Houses were crudely constructed huts of dried cane and mealie stalk. In many estates barracks-type homes were set up with insufficient number of rooms and space being at a premium. There was no electricity provided. No special accommodation was made for unmarried women, no privacy for the married and no consideration for caste distinctions. Water was drawn from communal taps, and ablution blocks were also communal. Sanitation was poor and unhygienic. The workers complained of insufficient and neglectful medical care, rations below that promised, harsh curfew laws and police brutality. (Brain, pp.xvi, xvii, 4. Refer also to Kuper, p.24, Pillay, Marimuttoo, Singh and Chengalroyen, pp. 164, 165)

²³The Wragg Commission was appointed in 1874 to investigate the social and economic aspects of Indians in Natal. In 1887 it reported Whites accepting the presence of Indians in Natal as labourers only. If this was not possible, then Black labour should be introduced, even if it meant introducing a form of forced labour. (Pachai, The SA Indian Question, pp.8,9)

²⁴With the British annexation of Natal in 1843, the law postulated that there would be no discrimination whatsoever, and the protection of law extended to all alike. (Ibid, p.2)

competitors".²⁵ Various efforts were made to repatriate Indians after their years of indentureship had expired.²⁶ Living continuously under the threat of repatriation created a deep sense of anxiety and insecurity within the Indian community.²⁷

Pentecostalism, as will be discussed later, first made its inroads into the Indian Community in 1925, sixty-five after the arrival of the first group of Indians to South Africa. During

²⁵Kuper, p.4 and Deenon, Donald and Nyeko, Balam : Southern Africa since 1800, Longman Group Ltd, London, 1972, p.60. Pachai and Bhana document the fierce anti-Indian trader sentiment expressed by the Whites, who sought to curtail the opportunities of Indians wherever possible, even to the point of expulsion. (Pachai and Bhana, pp. 30-52)

²⁶Various laws were promulgated with the intention of reducing the possibility of Indians remaining in the Colony. In 1891, the law granting land to the "free" Indian was repealed. The Immigration Law Amendment Act of 1895 levied an annual residential tax of three pounds against every adult Indian. Act 8 of 1896 disenfranchised the Indian voter. The Natal Government Act in 1897 regarded persons not domiciled in the Colony, and who were unable to read and write in one European language, as prohibited immigrants. It was in 1961, one hundred years after their arrival, that Indians were declared citizens of South Africa. The Acts calling for their repatriation were only repealed in 1975. (Pachai, The South African Indian Question, pp.8,9. Refer also to Greyling, J.J.C. : Problems of Indian land-ownership and occupation on the Natal North Coast - A socio-Geographic Investigation, Ph.D Thesis, University of Natal, Vol 1, 1969, Oosthuizen, G.C. and Hofmeyer, J.H.: A Socio-Religious Survey of Chatsworth, Institute for Social and Economic research, University of Durban-Westville. No 7, 1979, pp.5,6; Pillay, Marimutoo, Singh and Chandalroyen, p. 164, Smith, p.129)

²⁷From their research into the Indian Community, Oosthuizen and Hofmeyer conclude that the Community could never experience security and stability for the following reasons:-

1. They had no political rights to make decisions for themselves.
2. Indians were restricted in their movements, relocated and were never secure about their properties.
3. They were not regarded as bona fide citizens, and had the threat of repatriation hanging over their heads for over half a century.
4. "Economic frustration was the lot of a large section." (Oosthuizen and Hofmeyer, p.11 and Oosthuizen, pp.13-19)

this period of sixty-five years one notes the lot of the Indian indentured labourers and the minimal advancement gained. Through these turbulent years, experiencing breached contracts, inhumane living conditions, White resistance and antagonism, and the disfavour of the law, these indentured labourers achieved the status of "free" Indians. The turmoil and the insecurity of this period had given rise to a sense of instability within the community. Oosthuizen points out that the Pentecostal Movement found a fertile ground amidst this feeling of insecurity.²⁸ If Oosthuizen's assumption is correct, then this would mean that the Indian Community had suffered a great psychological breakdown in terms of its identity, which would include its religious and cultural mores.

2.2. THE PIONEER PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN THE INDIAN COMMUNITY

The nucleus of the church within the Indian Community in South Africa had been the five Christian denominations, alluded to earlier, which had been transplanted from India.²⁹ During this early period no other Christian denomination, including the Pentecostal groups, had been active in the Indian mission field. There was no large-scale evangelistic effort amongst the Indians in Natal between 1860-1911.³⁰ The impact of these five established churches on the Indians throughout their history in

²⁸Oosthuizen, p.65

²⁹Brain, pp.178, 193-229

³⁰Ibid, p. 229

South Africa has been minimal,³¹ while their membership has been steadily decreasing through the years.³² Yet, in comparison to other religious groupings, Christianity records the highest growth figures.³³ This growth is attributed to the rise of the Pentecostal churches, which has been remarkably successful in their evangelistic efforts.³⁴ The Pentecostal Movement made its greatest gains in the labouring class of the Indian Community rather than among the traders and others from the "Passenger" class.³⁵

The emergence and the extensive proliferation of the Pentecostal churches coincided with two major demographic shifts within the Indian Community.³⁶ The first such shift took place during the 1920's and 1930's for socio-economic reasons. Pentecostalism found its initial appeal among the growing urban Indian population.³⁷ The Full Gospel Church of God, the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, and the Assemblies of God were the three major Pentecostal denominations which flourished during this

³¹Naidoo, p.142

³²Oosthuizen, pp.1, 155-162

³³Naidoo, p.4

³⁴Pachai and Bhana, p.151 and Oosthuizen, pp.155-162, Naidoo, pp. 1-4. Refer to Oosthuizen for a fuller treatment of the subject of the evangelistic practices of the Indian Pentecostal churches.

³⁵Pillay, G.J. p.52 and Oosthuizen, pp.1, 3, 17, 19, 21-26, Naidoo, pp. 27, 47-48

³⁶Pachai and Bhana, p.152. Refer Pillay, G.J., pp.52ff for a fuller treatment of this phenomenon.

³⁷Pillay, G.J. pp. 53-56

period.³⁸ The second demographic shift was due to the Group Areas Act of 1950.³⁹ Through this iniquitous Act, thousands of Indians were forced to leave the urban and surrounding areas to settle in peri-urban areas, in mammoth townships such as Chatsworth⁴⁰ and later Phoenix. Other Pentecostal churches and, especially, the Indian Independent churches, developed during this period.⁴¹

The United Pentecostal Mission of Natal was the first Pentecostal church to be established in the Indian Community, on 17 July 1925, by John A. Rowlands.⁴² Rowlands, of Quaker background, established the Natal Trading and Milling Company in Pietermaritzburg after his arrival from England in 1922. He served as chairperson of the local "Indian" Methodist Church in Thomas Street.⁴³ Ebenezer Theophilus, an Indian fruiterer, together with his family, were also active members of this Methodist Church. When Rowlands, and a few members, left the Methodist Church, Theophilus offered this little group of Christians the use of his home cum fruit shop at 519 Longmarket

³⁸Pachai and Bhana, p.152 and Oosthuizen, pp.72, 88

³⁹Oosthuizen and Hofmeyer, pp.8-11 and Pillay, G.J., p.53

⁴⁰Chatsworth is established on 2000 ha. of land. Originally built for 165,000 Indian residents, its population may now be approximately 400,000. This township is recognised as having the largest concentration of Indians in any one community outside India. (Oosthuizen and Hofmeyer, pp.11, 16)

⁴¹Pillay, Ibid and Pachai and Bhana, p.152

⁴²Oosthuizen, p.52 and Pillay, p.77

⁴³Pillay, Ibid, pp.75-79, 80, 85, 87 and Naidoo, p.24

Street, Pietermaritzburg, for worship services.⁴⁴ This separated group organised themselves to become known as the United Pentecostal Mission of Natal (UPM). The Theophilus family was the first baptised by immersion in water in the UPM.⁴⁵

An association was formed with the pioneering Full Gospel Church in Pietermaritzburg, which had amalgamated with the Full Gospel Church in America. The Pentecostal church took root in Pietermaritzburg and soon the fruit shop was extended and renovated to become known as the Obededom Temple.⁴⁶ One of the Rowlands' sons, John Francis, saw in the collapse of his father's business a sign from God to enter into full-time ministry in the Church. With the coming of J.F. Rowlands to Durban on 09 October 1931, the Pentecostal church also spread here and into the surrounding areas.⁴⁷ In November 1931, the churches in Pietermaritzburg and Durban finally came under the Full Gospel Church to become known as the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa.⁴⁸

Many evangelistic campaigns⁴⁹ were held in the cities during

⁴⁴Moving Waters, A monthly Bethesda Publication, 1973, p.75 and Oosthuizen, p.73

⁴⁵Pillay, Ibid

⁴⁶Ibid

⁴⁷Ibid, Refer also to Oosthuizen, pp.72-73.

⁴⁸Oosthuizen, Ibid

⁴⁹Brain indicts the Christian churches as "bearers of western civilization, which they saw as superior to all the cultures with which they came into contact." The "White settler was unshakeably convinced of the superiority of his religious

this period to gain converts. Some were conducted by J.F. Rowlands himself,⁵⁰ and others by visiting evangelists, one of whom was Stephen Jeffreys from England.⁵¹ The pentecostal emphases, together with the euphoria of the emotionally charged atmosphere, spontaneous prayers and worship, loud and repetitious singing, amplified popular music, hand-clapping and testimonies, which are different from the rigid and lifeless liturgy of the established churches prove an attraction to people who would travel great distances to attend these services. It was during this period that the AFM began its mission to the Indians.

2.3. THE PIONEER CHURCH OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION AMONG INDIANS AT STANGER, NATAL

The Missionary Policy as delineated in the Articles of Association of the AFM in 1946 reads:

"The General Workers' Council shall have full power and authority to determine the Missionary Policies of the Mission and to create and establish such organisations as may be required from time to time to effectively promote the aims and objects of the Mission in the Mission

beliefs and of his intellectual and artistic heritage." Brain suggests this as the driving force for the missionaries, whether professional or lay-persons. They saw it as their duty to attempt the evangelisation of the Hindu and Muslim immigrants, who were generally well satisfied with their own religion." (Brain, p.193)

⁵⁰Oosthuizen, Ibid

⁵¹Pillay, Ibid

fields."⁵²

The aim, as stated in the Church Laws of the AFM, White Section, in 1961, is "to establish, next to the White Section, sections for the Coloureds, Indians, Blacks and African states, which shall each have its own policy ..."⁵³ The policy formulated for the Indian Mission calls for the "establishment of an Indian Church (sic), co-existent with the Mother Church" because an "Indian Church (sic) can best accomplish this task of obtaining the highest spiritual, social and secular advantages amongst Indian people."⁵⁴ The AFM Indian Mission, however, was initiated in 1930, not through the implementation of a missionary policy, but in a rather insignificant and comparatively trifling way.

2.3.1. The Christians in Stanger and surrounding Districts

White members of the AFM, working for the S.A. Railways, had come to live in the Railway Quarters in Stanger, on the North Coast of Natal, some 80km from Durban. A railway engine-driver, J.R.T. Budge and his wife, Frances, lived here.⁵⁵ **Frances Budge**, a former Dutch Reformed Church member, and her husband had been

⁵²Articles of Association of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, 1946, Article 65(a), Comforter, March 1946, p.18

⁵³Church Laws of the AFM of SA, 1961, as amended, Preamble

⁵⁴Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, Indian Church Policy, p.1

⁵⁵Apostolic Faith Mission of S.A., Indian District Golden Jubilee Brochure, (hereafter AFM GJB), 1980, p.6, Apostolic Faith Mission of S.A., Diamond Jubilee Brochure, (hereafter AFM DJB), 1991, p.6, Apostolic Faith Mission, Stanger Central Tabernacle, Diamond Jubilee Brochure, (hereafter AFM Stanger DJB), 1990, p.5

involved at lay level in the ministry of their local church of the AFM for Whites in Stanger. She shared the Pentecostal experience with her Indian Christian friends from the Methodist Church. They showed a keen interest in the experience of Pentecost.⁵⁶ One of them, **George Williams**,⁵⁷ to whom Frances Budge had previously sent some books explaining the doctrinal standpoint of the AFM and the Pentecostal message, responded more affirmatively, stating that they were seeking membership of such a church. Desirous to enlist them as members of the AFM, she agreed to hire a hall for Pentecostal services if Indians were willing to attend. Frances Budge is quoted as saying to Williams: "... if you get your people to come to this church, I will hire a Hall."⁵⁸ The term "your people" could be a reference to the Indian as a racial group, so insinuating racial separation, but also to Indian Christians from the Methodist Church, thus insinuating an act of proselytization. It is evident, that the initial thrust of the Pentecostal message was directed to Christians from this church who were growing disillusioned with their denomination.

David F. Williams, a pioneer member of long standing and former minister of the AFM, and nephew of George Williams, stated that there was growing disillusionment among the Indian Christians

⁵⁶Castle, L.S.H., The Indian Field, The Apostolic Faith Mission of S.A. - 50 years of blessing on the Bantu Church, 1965, p.22 and AFM Stanger DJB, p.5

⁵⁷Minutes, AFM Stanger and District, 11 January 1941, p.13

⁵⁸Castle, p.22

from the established churches.⁵⁹ He recounts that at this point he was a member of the Methodist Church for seven years and notes a great lack of pastoral attention for the Indian members of the Methodist Church in the North Coast. Due to racial prejudice, Indians could not join fellow White members for services in the Methodist Church in Stanger. While the Indian members were given use of the premises to hold separate services on Sunday evenings, Sunday mornings saw them gathering in various homes for the purpose of worship. Williams admits that this state of affairs had produced in them a "form of godliness but denying the power thereof".⁶⁰ He stated:

"I did not know about personal conversion. I was merely religious, without having a personal experience with Jesus Christ. My Christian experience consisted of dead formalism and mere ritualism (sic). We just went to church for the sake of going and came back empty and dry. Our worship had no meaning. There was no demonstration of the Holy Spirit in the Methodist Church where I had been brought up (sic). But I knew something was missing in my life. I was thirsting for a fuller experience."⁶¹

Hazel Manawar, a long-standing Methodist in Durban, recalled the state of the Methodist Church amongst the Indians in the North

⁵⁹Williams, David F., Personal Interview, Stanger, 6 September 1991

⁶⁰This is a typical method employed by Pentecostal Christians generally. Scriptural quotations are often used to describe events, experiences and bolster one's own argument. This is also indicative of the primacy of position accorded to Scripture in the life of the pentecostal Christian.

⁶¹Williams (Interview), Ibid

Coast of Natal, where she lived. Her grandfather, Moses Tikaram Boloo, was a missionary of the "Indian" Methodist Churches in the North Coast. His status did not entitle him to fulfil all the duties of a minister in his denomination. Until about 25 years ago, the "Indian" Methodist Churches in the North Coast (such as Umhlali and Gledhow) came under the jurisdiction of the Lorne Street and Coastal Indian District. The neglect of these churches arose because Indian evangelists had to travel from Durban to the North Coast by train, and thereafter walk great distances to the church. At times they would arrive very late, and often not at all. She attributes this to insufficient funds being set aside for the Indian work by the Methodist Church, and also to the fact that this section of the work was not given the same treatment as its White counterpart.⁶²

The Pentecostal message, as defined earlier, would have proved attractive to such disillusioned Christians from the established churches, such as the Methodist and later the Baptist churches.⁶³ Some of these White AFM Christians and these Indian Christians had been attending some Pentecostal services in Durban in 1929, and reported to have witnessed many miraculous healing taking place under the ministry of Evangelist Stephen Jeffreys.⁶⁴ With greater passion, these Christians carried the

⁶²Information supplied by Hazel Manawar, 4 September 1991

⁶³Williams (Interview), Ibid

⁶⁴Refer to the Comforter, January 1931, Vol. II No 1, pp.4,5

Pentecostal message back home.⁶⁵ It must therefore be recognised that there already existed a small pocket of Indian Christians with pentecostal leanings and preference. In spite of the tradition within the Indian Section of the AFM, and the claim by some scholars, these Indian Christians should be credited as being the nucleus and pioneers of the pentecostal movement amongst the Indians in the North Coast.⁶⁶ The coming of the American missionaries, which will be discussed below, provided these Christians with the opportunity and the denominational framework within which to openly express their Pentecostal preference in worship. During this period, Charles Samuel Flewelling, an American Pentecostal missionary, had also conducted Pentecostal services in a hall in Inanda, about 35km north of Durban. Frances Budge was deeply impressed by Flewelling's ministry of healing. Claiming to have been healed through his prayers, she sought to invite him to hold similar services in Stanger.⁶⁷

The account goes, as traditionally held in the AFM and recounted by J.R.T Budge, that Frances Budge had apparently lost a five pound note. She prayed for its recovery and, if found, promised to pay the two pounds and ten shillings for the hire of the Maha

⁶⁵AFM Stanger DJB, p.5. D.F. Williams and David James, also a member of long standing and a former minister in the AFM, confirm this statement. G.J. Pillay (pp. 83, 110) mentions Jeffries' countrywide revival campaigns and his close association with the growing Full Gospel Church amongst the Indians.

⁶⁶Oosthuizen, p. 89 and Pillay, G.J., p. 110

⁶⁷Flewelling, Ida, Personal Interview, Phoenix, 18 February 1980.

Saba Hall in Stanger, to host a pentecostal campaign. When it was recovered, she extended an invitation to two Pentecostal missionaries, Charles Samuel Flewelling and his brother-in-law, Moody Wright, also an American missionary.⁶⁸

2.3.2. The First Missionary Overseer - Charles Samuel Flewelling

Charles Samuel Flewelling and his wife, Ida Flewelling, had come to South Africa as missionaries in 1928. His father had left the Anglican church to become a member in the Holiness Baptist Church in USA, and so did young Charles. Three events had greatly inspired his young faith and set the course for his life and ministry in the church. The first was the reputed miraculous healing of his mother, Susan Valley Flewelling, in 1910, after one Pastor Magoon, a Pentecostal evangelist in USA, had prayed for her.⁶⁹ Similar to the experience of John G. Lake, this incident later influenced Flewelling's evangelistic ministry, which placed great emphasis on divine healing.⁷⁰

The second event was on 26 August 1917, when Flewelling, together with the pastor, Edgar Grant and many members of the Baptist Church in Easton, underwent the Pentecostal experience of "baptism in the Holy Spirit", at a service conducted by an evangelist, Aimee McPherson.⁷¹ This experience, a result of the

⁶⁸Castle, Ibid and AFM GJB, p.6, AFM DJB, p.6

⁶⁹Flewelling, Ida (Interview), Ibid

⁷⁰Pillay, p.108

⁷¹Flewelling, Ibid, and Comforter, June 1939, p.19

influence of the Azusa Street awakening, must be seen as a major factor in his missionary enterprise. The Pentecostal experience, having burst forth on the scene at Azusa Street, had unleashed a tremendous wave of missionary activity.⁷² Because of this Pentecostal experience, Grant was relieved of his ministerial duties in the denomination thereafter.⁷³ The final straw that decided the future of Flewelling's life was a simple event that borders on superstition. Ida Flewelling recalled that while Charles was ploughing a field of buck wheat, the plough handle snapped in his hand. This he interpreted as a divine call to enter the ministry which he subsequently did.⁷⁴

Between 1917 and 1920, Flewelling, Moody Wright and Grant held many evangelistic services which eventually led to the establishment of the Easton Pentecostal Church.⁷⁵ In September 1923, he married Ida Monteith, a Methodist with Pentecostal leanings. Together they continued evangelistic services and the setting up of little congregations around the country. In April 1927, at a missionary conference in the Bethel Bible School, New Jersey, they decided to accept the invitation for missionary work

⁷²Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, pp.63-74

⁷³Flewelling, Ibid

⁷⁴This is true of much of the pentecostal Christian's apparent encounter with the supernatural. Natural occurrences are often interpreted as an omen or a supernatural message of some import for their lives. The account of Frances Budge and her lost five pound is an example. This is due possibly to the emphasis laid on personal experience and the belief in the imminence of God through personal encounter. This, coupled with a fervent faith, leaves little to co-incidence.

⁷⁵Flewelling, Ibid

amongst Blacks in Africa.⁷⁶ Leaving USA on 17 March 1928 on the S.S. Calgary, the couple arrived in Cape Town on 16 April 1927⁷⁷ and worked under the auspices of the AFM of SA in Durban. This was made possible since Moody Wright, who had preceded them to South Africa by eight months, had already become involved with the work of the AFM here. When Wright returned to the Transvaal in 1930, Flewelling succeeded him as Missionary Superintendent in Natal. Moody H. Wright had also come to South Africa from USA as a missionary in August 1926. He served in the AFM as a missionary on the Rand till 1930 and later as the Missionary Superintendent of the AFM.⁷⁸ The latter office gave him oversight of all the evangelistic work undertaken by the Whites in Black areas.

2.3.3. The First Gospel Campaign

On 18 October 1930, Flewelling and Moody commenced the evangelistic services for all racial groups.⁷⁹ Initially more Christians from the Methodist and Baptist churches were attracted by the preaching and practice of the pentecost experience.⁸⁰

⁷⁶Ida Flewelling claimed that she had previously had a vision of preaching to a group of people, whom she had identified as American Blacks. She assumed their evangelistic mission lay amongst these American Blacks. At this meeting she claimed to have received further clarification by the missionary invitation and became confident that their ministry lay amongst the Black peoples of Africa. (Flewelling, Ibid)

⁷⁷Comforter, June 1939, p.14

⁷⁸Flewelling, Ibid

⁷⁹AFM DJB, p.6 and Pillay, p.110

⁸⁰Castle, Ibid and Williams (Interview), Ibid

D.F. Williams, who was later to serve as pastor of the Stanger Church, recounts the circumstances surrounding his attendance at these meetings from the second night of the campaign:

"Initially there were more Christians who were attracted to the services, because it was something new. I was also very interested in this Pentecostal message. But at the same time I was very critical and had become prejudiced against these Pentecostal pastors. Unbelievers (people of other faiths) were attracted when they heard about the signs and wonders taking place in these meetings. Miracles and healing were taking place, and devils were being cast out from people who were possessed."⁸¹

Williams' apprehension was heightened by the fear injected into him by his uncle, George Williams, who, in spite of his initial interest, warned young David that the Spirit manifest in this campaign would kill him if he went anywhere near. He continued:

"My curiosity got the better of me, and so I went to the meeting on the second night. I sat at the back of the hall with the scoffers and mockers to observe what was happening."⁸²

He found himself captivated by the emotionally charged atmosphere in the service, and was irresistibly drawn forward at the invitation by the preacher for commitment to Christ. "What will you do with Jesus, what will your answer be?" was the preacher's question that brought him to his knees. Williams recalled:

⁸¹From 19 October 1930, until his resignation in July 1989, D.F. Williams had remained a member of the AFM of SA, making him the longest-serving member of the denomination.

⁸²Ibid

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I wanted to run out of the hall. I thought of my uncle's warning about this Holy Spirit. This spirit of fear was from the Devil. But I was held by the power of the Lord. I prayed silently to the Lord. 'If this Spirit is from You, then I want a revelation to confirm this.' I went forward. I made my confession and was 'slain by the Spirit' (sic).⁸³ I had a vision of an angel who said to me, 'It is time to pray. Lift up your head and see.' I found myself kneeling at the foot of the cross, on which Jesus was hanging. Here I received my invitation from the Lord to go into the ministry. I was baptised in the Holy Spirit and began to 'speak in other tongues'. I lay there in this state for hours and at 2 o'clock the following morning I was carried to my bed still speaking in this 'unknown tongue'. Though I had been a member of the Methodist Church for seven years, I was only "born-again"⁸⁴ on this night of 19 October 1930. This

⁸³This is an expression commonly used among pentecostal christians, with reference to a Christian's mystical experience in the encounter with the divine. It is frequently explained as the "coming of the Holy Spirit to fill the spirit of the Christian". This is accompanied by a state of ecstasy which could manifest itself primarily by the individual's entry into a trance-like state, which could lead to weeping, speaking in "unknown tongues", receiving of visions or worshipping. Often the person subjected to this experience would fall to the ground and lay on his or her back.

⁸⁴The term "born-again" is used by evangelical and pentecostal christians to refer to a life-transforming experience by the individual after his or her confession of and acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus. This is usually accompanied a subjective, euphoric feeling, and a reputedly miraculous deliverance from certain habits such as smoking, drinking of alcohol and such vices which are taboo to Pentecostal Christians.

brought a great change in my life.⁸⁵

Other members of the Methodist Church, viz, George Williams, a carpenter, Alfred Williams, a painter, William Laing, a shoemaker, and Ely M. Laing underwent similar experiences of conversion and "baptism of the Holy Spirit" during the course of these services.⁸⁶ One of the outstanding miracles during these services, was the allegedly dramatic conversion of a young gang leader, Harry Jack on the third night of the campaign, 20 October 1930.⁸⁷ While healing and conversions were taking place, a great persecution of the AFM missionaries is said to have followed under the 19-year old gangster.⁸⁸

The traditional account is that he was asked by officials of a certain religious group to disrupt the campaign because of the numerous conversions taking place. Harry Jack agreed to carry this out, and went to the services with "murderous" intentions

⁸⁵Williams (Interview), Ibid

⁸⁶AFM GJB, p.6 and AFM DJB, p.6

⁸⁷Jack, Mercy, Personal Interview, 20 February 1980. Refer also to AFM Stanger DJB, pp.40-42 and Castle, p.22. Williams contends that there has been much fabrication in the events surrounding the conversion of Harry Jack. Harry Jack had come to the service, but not as a gang leader, but with the possible intention of disrupting the meetings. After the healing of his rupture and his conversion, he was ostracised by his immediate family and spent a month with the Williams'. He was later reunited with his family. (Williams, Ibid)

⁸⁸Williams prefers not to use the term "persecution" to describe the reaction to the Christians during this time, as it is too dramatic and sensational. He states that it was a natural period of concern and anxiety for the Hindu community and certain comments were wont to be made and pressures applied to the newly converted to recant their new-found faith. (Williams, Ibid)

against the missionaries.⁸⁹ The preachers were threatened but they refused to vacate the hall. It is held that he was miraculously restrained from harming the missionaries, and through an encounter with the divine that very night, was supernaturally healed of a rupture of the stomach, converted to Christianity, received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", spoke in "other" tongues, and was called by God to enter the ministry. These dramatic events, it is accepted, made him the first convert from Hinduism during the evangelistic campaign held by the AFM missionaries.⁹⁰ There are discrepancies in the recounting of the events of that night 60 years later by his wife, Mercy Jack, and the account of L.H.S. Castle, written 35 years after the event. L.H.S. Castle had been the missionary overseer of the Indian mission of the AFM from January 1963.⁹¹ If he was sent to

⁸⁹Jack, M (Interview), Ibid, and AFM Stanger DJB, pp.40-41, Castle, p.22. Du Plessis, however, states that Jack had gone to the meeting with stones in his pocket intending to disrupt the services. (Du Plessis, J.T., Personal Interview, Johannesburg, 20 August 1992)

⁹⁰Ibid

⁹¹Mercy Jack testifies that on the third night of the service, Moody Wright gave a prophetic utterance concerning the presence of a gang in the service. He invited the gang to surrender or else great disaster will follow. Harry Jack felt himself being drawn irresistibly forward. When both evangelists laid their hands on him and prayed, he fell to the ground in a trance-like state, overpowered by the Holy Spirit. He then had a vision of angels, heaven and hell, chariots on streets of gold, and Jesus, in kingly robes, seated on a golden chair in a golden courtroom. Being instantly healed of his rupture he was invited by Jesus to do His work and suffer much persecution for his witness. Castle, devoid of the embellishments, recounts: "While Pastor Flewelling was preaching on Divine Healing and the power in Jesus' Name, this aggressive young man came forward with a challenge: 'If your Jesus can heal me of this very painful rupture, I will believe.' On being prayed for, he received the divine touch and was instantly healed. He was then overpowered by the Holy Spirit, and saw a vision of Jesus, suffering and dying on the cross. Harry Jack accepted this wonderful Christ as

disrupt the meetings because of the numerous conversions from Hinduism that were taking place, could he then be regarded as the first convert from Hinduism in the AFM? However, he later became the pastor of the AFM in Kearsney.⁹²

2.3.4. The First AFM Church is established for the Indian Community

This group of Christians at Stanger were the firstfruits of the AFM Indian mission and formed the nucleus of the first church of that denomination in this particular community. Flewelling was the first appointed Missionary Overseer. It is clear that, from the inception, there was no thought of integrating these Christians into the already existing AFM church for Whites at Stanger. The AFM sought to maintain its policy of racial separation, and, as will be noted later, did not recognise Christians of colour as members but as adherents. It must also be noted that Flewelling was also appointed as Missionary Overseer of the Black mission of the AFM. His various reports to the Missionary Council indicate that the latter mission placed a great demand on his time and resources.⁹³ This later occasioned him to neglect the churches in the Indian mission, which he left increasingly in the care of his wife, Ida Flewelling, or untrained lay persons or one Stella Gallon, who

his personal Saviour and was gloriously converted and saved." (AFM Stanger DJB, pp. 40-41 and Castle, p.22)

⁹²AFM GJB, p.6 and AFM DJB, p.6

⁹³Comforter, June 1934, p.14, October 1934, p.11, November 1937, p.24, October 1938, p.8

assisted Flewelling in his ministry,⁹⁴ and whose racist attitude is reflected in her remarks about Indians. She stated: "Recently I visited the mill barracks at Umhlodi, 28 miles from Stanger... This place is still in real darkness and people are exceedingly raw...(and) behaved very queer."⁹⁵

Four different linguistic interpretations viz, English, Zulu, Afrikaans and Telegu were employed in the services. Local members served as interpreters; James Forbay, who assisted Flewelling in the Black mission, was the Zulu interpreter, W.Dafel, member of the "White" AFM church at Stanger, interpreted into Afrikaans and either Mercy Manikkam, Samuel Moses or J.Reuben, interpreted into Telegu.⁹⁶ The assumption by Williams and leaders in the Indian mission that the composition of the congregation and, later, the board reflected a non-racial church⁹⁷ will be discussed in the next chapter. Baptismal statistics reveal a steady increase in membership. Twenty one persons were baptised by immersion in water at Stanger Beach on 16 November 1930, 88 on 5 October 1931 and 20 in November 1931.⁹⁸

However, services continued to be held wherever possible - in the open, on the streets-corners, near hotels to invite "drunken

⁹⁴Comforter, November 1938, p.10

⁹⁵Ibid

⁹⁶Ibid

⁹⁷AFM DJB, p.7 and AFM Stanger DJB, p.9

⁹⁸C.S. Flewelling's personal diary

sinners", in prisons, in rented halls and in homes.⁹⁹ Beside worship services for Christians, the purpose of the other services were clearly evangelistic in nature, intended to convert people to Christianity, and also enlist members for the AFM from the established churches. The open-air services followed a simple pattern. The participants were the preacher and other Christians. Firstly there were prayers followed by singing of hymns and choruses, which usually carried the message of Jesus as the Son of God, His death and resurrection to save sinners, the efficacy of His shed blood, victory, deliverance and healing in the Name of Jesus Christ. This was accompanied by music from a guitar or an accordion, usually played by Flewelling. Testimonies from new converts, from people delivered from demonic oppression, alcohol, smoking, from those who are reported to have been healed from various diseases, all lent support to the message of salvation. This also indicates the immediate involvement of new converts in the ministry of the church. The preaching of the gospel message draws attention to the human state of sin and humankind's alienation from God. This "waywardness" is manifest in "sins of the flesh", such as smoking, drinking, gambling, dancing, and sexual vices to name a few. No reference was usually made to sins such as racial prejudice, bigotry, economic exploitation and oppression, which have proved more detrimental to the development of the Black peoples of our land.¹⁰⁰ The final invitation, referred to as the "altar call", concluded the service and provided opportunity for interested persons to come to the

⁹⁹AFM DJB, p.6

¹⁰⁰RPW Document, p.7

evangelistic company of Christians for prayer and counselling.¹⁰¹

The increasing number of conversions from Hinduism to Christianity is said to have resulted in the Hindu religious leaders' withdrawing their permission for the continued use of the Maha Sabha Hall for regular church services. The fledgling assembly of the AFM continued its services behind the hall until 1933, when the Public Works Department (PWD) Hall, which was previously used as a beer-hall, was renovated and used for this purpose. Land was purchased in Colenbrander Street for fifty pounds¹⁰² and building operations commenced in 1935. Du Plessis states that Flewelling's forte was the building of churches.¹⁰³ The new church was officially opened on 20 June 1937.¹⁰⁴

2.4. THE INITIAL SPREAD OF THE AFM of SA

The immediate outward thrust from Stanger was north into the surrounding Indian settlements, first into Darnall and then into Kearsney, 25km and 10km away respectively.

2.4.1. Darnall

The first opportunity for this spread arose around November 1930,

¹⁰¹Williams (Interview), Ibid

¹⁰²Ibid

¹⁰³Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

¹⁰⁴AFM GJB, p.6 and Stanger DJB, pp.6,10

when three men, **Samuel Moses, Mundro John**¹⁰⁵ and **James Moonsamy**, who lived in Darnall, met with Flewelling. Being encouraged by their experience after attending services in Stanger, they requested Flewelling to hold regular Pentecostal services in their area. These men, and their families, were members of the Darnall Baptist Church, but holding their independent fellowship.¹⁰⁶ David James, eldest son of James Moonsamy, remembers that his father and others from Darnall, had attended a Pentecostal gospel campaign conducted by Stephen Jeffreys in the Durban City Hall in the late 1920's. Due to the great numbers present, his father was unable to enter the auditorium. Believing in the evangelist's message of divine healing, which was relayed through amplified speakers for the benefit of those who were standing outside, James Moonsamy was immediately and miraculously healed of acute appendicitis. Though he became a member of the Darnall Baptist Church, which was the only denomination operative in the area, he, together with the others who had attended Jeffreys' campaign, had a definite preference for the pentecostal method of worship.¹⁰⁷

In 1929, these families were forced to leave their local church, because their pentecostal leanings brought them into conflict

¹⁰⁵Nathaniel, D.N. : The Origin and Development of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa 1900 - 1978, M.Div Thesis, University of Durban-Westville, 1979, pp.19,44

¹⁰⁶Minutes, Stanger & District, 10 July 1941, p.30, Refer also to AFM GJB, p.7, DJB, p.6, and AFM Stanger DJB, p.8

¹⁰⁷James, D., Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 26 August 1991

with their minister, Revd T.M. Rangiah.¹⁰⁸ During the period 1929 - 1931, this group, not willing to relinquish its membership of the Baptist Church, spared no effort and expense to effect an understanding with its leaders to allow them to continue in their pentecostal experience. They had met with Revd Smith, Secretary of the Natal Indian Baptist Association (NIBA), T.M. Rangiah, Jacob, Atkins, Salvessen, Fergusson Davis, and Mountford, the Executive Councils of both the Natal Baptist Association (NBA) in Durban, and NIBA in Kearsney, the General Assembly at Tinley Manor, and by means of a letter, even brought their appeal before the Baptist Convention in India. Often they were expelled from the personal interviews. Unsuccessful in their bid to be accepted as members of the Baptist church, and in order to keep alive their Christian faith, they established an independent fellowship.¹⁰⁹

During this period Mundro John, assumed the role of "Pastor" to this little group of Christians in Darnall, a position which he held while a member of the local Baptist Church.¹¹⁰ Samuel Moses served as treasurer. They were mandated by the group to make representation to other churches in Stanger with a view to affiliating with a "suitable body or Mother Church." They met with leaders of various denominations, before setting up an

¹⁰⁸Minutes, Ibid and Du Plessis

¹⁰⁹Minutes, Ibid, p.30, AFM GJB, p.7, DJB, p.6

¹¹⁰Minutes, 08 June 1940, p.1, 20 July 1940, p.6. See also Nathaniel, p.19

interview with Flewelling of the AFM.¹¹¹ These families formed the nucleus of the new church and were the pioneers of the AFM in Darnall, while Flewelling provided the necessary leadership.

On the site where the present AFM Church is situated in Darnall, near the home of Samuel Moses, the first service was held in the open on 4 December 1930. With the enthusiastic support of the residents, regular church services were soon being held in the local Methodist Church hall, and thereafter in the homes of Christians, especially that of Samuel Moses. In these services, Flewelling preached with the aid of two interpreters to cater for the Tamil and Telegu speaking. One such service that deserves special mention was on the night of 28 February 1931, in the home of Samuel Moses. It proved so inspirational that it continued until eight thirty a.m. the following morning. It is reported that in this service a blind man had his sight miraculously restored when Flewelling prayed for him. The role of divine healing is evidenced again when 61 persons were reportedly converted to the Christian faith as a result of this incident, and were subsequently baptised in water.¹¹² The services continued to be held in the home of Samuel Moses until the next decade, when a church was built,¹¹³ which will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹¹¹Minutes, 10 July 1941, p.30

¹¹²Flewelling (Interview), Ibid

¹¹³AFM DJB, p.15

2.4.2. Kearsney

The third area of outreach in the Indian mission was Kearsney, which comprised four sections, generally referred to as Tea Estate, Kirkley Vale, Old Factory and New Factory. The first recorded service to be held in Kearsney by Flewelling was in Tea Estate on 17 May 1931, where "a small company but a good spirit" was evident.¹¹⁴ In August 1931, the Manikkams of Kearsney, a family belonging to the Kearsney Telegu Baptist Church, became members of the AFM.¹¹⁵ Nathaniel, who served as pastor of the Baptist Church in Natal, notes that some dissident members, dissatisfied with the proposed amalgamation between NIBA and Indian Baptist Mission (IBM), had joined the AFM and FGC in these early years. These dissidents included the Manikkams, Frank, Saul, and Baliah. He also adds that the pentecostal style of worship with its emphasis on healing, the showing of Christian films and the fact that these pentecostal churches were under the supervision of White leaders had attracted them to these denominations.¹¹⁶ It is stated that Mr Manikkam Senior had awaited for a "sign" from God, in order to join the AFM. He interpreted the birth of his son, Edward, as this sign.¹¹⁷ Once again one notices the simplicity of faith of these early Christians, who sought for omens and portents and gave supernatural import to natural events. Early in this period

¹¹⁴Flewelling, Ibid

¹¹⁵Nathaniel, p.47

¹¹⁶Ibid

¹¹⁷AFM DJB, p.6

another family from this church, that of Jelliah Joshua, from Kirkley Vale, also joined the AFM.¹¹⁸ The initial services were held in the homes of the Manikkams, Jelliah Joshua and one Francis Williams.

The embryonic church experienced great opposition from Revd T.M. Rangiah.¹¹⁹ The antagonism arose from the fact that, from the beginning of the century, as mentioned above, the Baptist Church had held the monopoly with regard to the propagation of the Christian faith in the area. This attempt by the AFM to obtain a foothold in Kearsney was therefore seen as an intrusion. In settled communities such as Darnall and Kearsney, there was always the possibility of members leaving one ecclesiastical organisation for another. The new denomination was accused of "sheep stealing", as members left the Baptist Church to join the new pentecostal community in the area.¹²⁰ This resistance was energized by Revd Rangiah's extreme aversion to the pentecostal movement, which he described as being possessed with the very "spirit of Antichrist". His antipathy is further demonstrated in his later reference to Justus T. du Plessis, the AFM Missionary Overseer who succeeded Flewelling, as a "wild fox", an allusion to the emotional outbursts and overt physical movements manifest in a pentecostal service.¹²¹

¹¹⁸Ibid

¹¹⁹Williams (Interview), Ibid. Refer also to Stanger DJB, p.19, AFM GJB, p.8

¹²⁰Ibid

¹²¹Ibid, Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

As a result of this resistance, arrangements were made for services to be held in a Church for the Coloured community, led by one Pastor Francis, in a little settlement referred to as I.D. Mia's, about 4km away from "Tea Estate". Every Sunday, for the whole of 1931, this group of 40 adults, together with their children, made the return journey on foot for the services. The circumstances were not conducive to numerical growth, however.¹²² On 1 December 1932, Jelliah Joshua, who was later to serve as one of the local pastors in Kearsney, was granted permission by Ted Hulett, the owner of the sugar plantation, to conduct services in members' homes. As from the end of 1932, services were held in the homes of Francis Williams, Jelliah Joshua, the Manikkams and Harry Jack. When (in the latter half of 1934) services were held in New factory and in Tea Estate, the number of decentralised outreach points grew to four, including Kirkley Vale and Old Factory.¹²³ Mercy Manikkam, at the age of 15, usually acted as a Telegu interpreter, as this was a predominantly Telegu speaking community. Other interpreters assisted in Tamil, Hindi and Zulu, the latter for the benefit of Blacks living nearby. Sunday School was conducted by Mercy Manikkam, under a syringa tree, where the services were also sometimes held.¹²⁴

The methods of evangelisation varied from open air services, personal witnessing from house to house to tent campaigns. The

¹²²AFM GJB, p.8 and Stanger DJB, pp.19, 20

¹²³Ibid

¹²⁴Ibid, Jack, M (Interview), Ibid

first tent campaign was held in Old Factory on 29 January 1935, on the premises of the Manikkam family. The first recorded baptism at Kearsney took place on 13 December 1931 when 12 converts were immersed in water.¹²⁵ In July 1934, Konari, a local Hindu Priest, was converted to Christianity and was given the name, Abraham.¹²⁶ Konari is reputed to have been miraculously healed of some physical sickness through Flewelling's intercession. The details are related by Flewelling in a testimony in Central Tabernacle, Johannesburg, on 9 December 1934.¹²⁷ The account portrays the arrogance that was often displayed by missionaries (and ordinary Christians) in their proselytizing programme. Beside denigrating other faiths, the denigration of one's culture is emphasised by Flewelling's preference for the convert's new name, Abraham, rather than Konari, which was the name he had always held. This was a common practice, for White missionaries taught new converts to reject their traditional names which were often identified with the Hindu deities. The changing of names is indicative of ones rejection of the old faith and an acceptance of the new faith. After his conversion, when the Hindu devotees refused to worship at the temple, it was renovated and hereafter used as the first church for the AFM in Kearsney.¹²⁸ Expenses were met by the contributions of the local members. All members gathered here for

¹²⁵Ibid. Refer also to AFM GJB, p.8 and Stanger DJB, p.20

¹²⁶Comforter, May 1934, p.19. refer also to June 1934, p.14, December 1934, p.9, Stanger DJB, p.20

¹²⁷Comforter, December 1934, p.9

¹²⁸Comforter, October 1934, p.10

Sunday morning services, while evening services continued to remain decentralised.¹²⁹ Another Hindu temple was vacated by its devotees and subsequently "removed because the Hindus found (that) while they were worshipping, God's people next door would be praying for them."¹³⁰

Representative leaders from Kearsney (and Darnall) were appointed to the Stanger and District church board which had oversight over the three churches. Harry Jack was appointed as a local pastor in Kearsney by the church board. Notwithstanding that this status involved assuming much of the responsibility of the ordained ministry, it was a non-salaried office, as the individual would normally be in secular employment as well. The church was destroyed in 1936, when a huge tree fell on it. Sunday morning services reverted once again to the different areas until 22 April 1957 when a new church was built in Kearsney.¹³¹

When the Indian mission of the AFM was initiated, the Indian community had already been settled in South Africa for 70 years, mostly on sugar plantations along the Natal coast. Humiliating experiences in a racist society and the ever present threat of repatriation had created within the community a sense of insecurity. This created a fertile soil for the pentecostal message which penetrated this population group late in the 1920,s. At the end of the decade of the 1930's, after ten years

¹²⁹AFM GJB, p.8 and Stanger DJB, p.20

¹³⁰Comforter, November-December 1939, p.25

¹³¹Stanger DJB, p.20

of ministry by Flewelling, three AFM churches were established in Stanger, Darnall and Kearsney. These churches conformed to the principle of racial separation as practised in South African society, and adhered to by the AFM. Christians from the Methodist and, especially, the Baptist churches served as the nucleus of this mission, which created great antipathy between the denominations. When Flewelling left the Indian mission there was no indigenous leader trained and the membership after ten years, according to Du Plessis' estimation, was "no more than one hundred, 30 at Stanger, 40 at Darnall and 30 at Kearsney".¹³²

¹³²Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

CHAPTER THREE

THE YEARS OF ESTABLISHMENT : 1940 - 1946¹

Continuing in the same theme, we will now devote some attention to the development of the AFM churches already existent in the Indian community and the rise of new churches during the six years of ministry of the second Missionary Overseer, Justus Telo du Plessis. The role and struggles of indigenous leadership in the church, especially the three pioneer full-time Indian pastors, viz, Samuel Manikkam, David F. Williams, and Henry James will be emphasised. While historical records may attribute the success of the spread of the church among people of colour to White missionaries, one should not be ignorant of the vital role of indigenous personnel, both in the lay and the full-time capacity. For this reason it is necessary to examine the policy of racial separation as practised by the AFM. We will also comment on the extension of mission activity into the social and caring dimensions, and the resultant establishment of a Nursing Home.

3.1. JUSTUS TELO du PLESSIS (born 1917)

Justus Telo du Plessis, born on 4 September 1917 on a mission station in Basutoland (Lesotho) of Afrikaner parents, spent his early years in Ladybrand, Orange Free State (OFS). He was

¹The two Presidents of the AFM during this period were Pieter Louis le Roux and Gusbert Johannes Vermuelen. Le Roux succeeded John G. Lake in November 1913 and remained in this office until April 1943 when Vermuelen succeeded him and held office until April 1962. (Burger, p.282)

christened Telo after an African chief in Lesotho. He states that from his youth he had a longing to engage in missionary work and had therefore completed a correspondence course on biblical instruction through the London College. In 1938, soon after his marriage, he offered himself to the full-time ministry as a session of the OFS District Council of the AFM at Parys. He recounts certain circumstances that led him to the Indian mission. A dream, in which he found himself preaching in the Indian vernacular to a group of Indian labourers on an estate in Natal, awakened his consciousness in this direction. He believed that this was confirmed thereafter by three events. When his wife was taken seriously ill, Du Plessis began to question God concerning her state. He states that he had a vision in which two words were boldly drawn across the sky - "Stanger, Disobedience". Through this the young couple received a divine intimation that this was due to their unwillingness to enter the Indian mission. The second event was the challenge issued by Moody Wright, the Missionary Superintendent of the AFM, explaining the need for a full-time missionary amongst the Indians. When his brother, David du Plessis, General Secretary of the AFM, suggested that he visit Stanger and the Indian mission, he found his final confirmation.²

Thereafter, in 1940, J.T. du Plessis accepted his appointment as the Missionary Overseer of the Indian mission after Flewelling had left to oversee the Black mission. Du Plessis commenced his ministry in Natal on 02 June 1940, and served as Pastor and

²Du Plessis, (Interview), Ibid

Overseer until his transfer to the AFM Church in Krugersdorp on 30 November 1946, his ministry in Natal running the full course of World War II.³ Du Plessis states:

"The Indian field was our first love and our first ministry. We gained our experiences here and learnt valuable lessons and also the Telegu language. We came to love the Indians more than we did our own people. We conformed to some Indian customs. My wife wore the sari, and often when the men would speak together she would retire with the women into the kitchen."⁴

He recounted the various hardships he encountered while in Natal. For nine months he received no stipend from the Missionary Council and the local church could barely afford his rent. He recalls the miraculous way in which the local people, such as one M. Balia, owner of the Enterprise Garage in Stanger, provided the food and clothing for his family, which included his daughter of a few months. Part of his struggle included the loss of his son, David.

Du Plessis states:

"I so loved the Indians that I virtually became one of them. I studied their culture, their language and their traditions. ... Things were going hard with that community. I had studied the history of their advent as indentured labourers in the old Natal Colony ...the great struggles under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi ... A person had to

³Du Plessis, Ibid. Refer to Castle, pp.22,23, AFM GJB; p.36

⁴Du Plessis, Ibid

be blind not to see the social maladjustments between the various communities in South Africa... In my great love for the Indians and my blind zeal I burnt up my energies in vain efforts to change the order of things overnight. I slated the government ... (demanded) immediate social readjustment. I insisted on compulsory education for every Indian child ... I battled for higher wages.."5

He gained immense popularity. He was invited by an Anglican clergyman, Revd Mike Scott, to accompany him on a "sit in" on the resistance plot in Umbilo Road, Durban, to demonstrate his solidarity with Indians. He refused as this would have resulted in his incarceration by the South African security police which would render him unable to proclaim the gospel. He continues: "I had already come to notice that the more I became involved in social and political activism the more I lost my joy in Christ."6 His "renewal... (and) restoration" came through the confrontation of one of the elders from the Darnall Church, Samuel Moses. Moses' loving rebuke of Du Plessis is paraphrased by the latter:

"you and padriamma (wife of the pastor) came from the Orange Free State as angels sent by God. ... You were full of the love of God and full of the Holy Spirit, full of compassion, full of forgiveness. Your preaching was effective and your prayers were powerful. ... because (of)

⁵Du Plessis, J.T. : The Ministry of Reconciliation, Paper presented at South African Christian Leadership Assembly (SACLA), Pretoria, 7 July 1979, pp.11-13

⁶Ibid

your example I came to love (those I had previously hated), the Afrikaner ... the English ... the Zulus. ... Then came an evil time when you became ensnared with what I would call a Social Gospel. You became so interested in uplifting overnight the entire Indian Community to a higher social level, that you neglected your primary vocation to lead men and women to Christ and to a higher spiritual plain. You failed to remember that whenever persons were brought to Christ they automatically rose to a higher social level. You got your priorities all mixed up. Your sermons are no more than political talks ... Instead of exercising a ministry of reconciliation, ... you are creating bitterness in our hearts."⁷

Du Plessis concludes that Moses' concern, prayer and the reading of two biblical passages, Rom 13:1-7 and I Pet 2:11-17, "saved" his ministry.⁸ Understanding the political context of the first half of the 1940's under Prime Minister Smuts, and the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, one is bound to question the motivation for Du Plessis' involvement.

He states that his recall from the Indian mission by the Executive Council was due to his political involvement.⁹ When Du Plessis left, the membership in the Indian mission, which was

⁷Ibid

⁸Ibid

⁹Du Plessis, Ibid

barely 100, in 1940, had reached 650.¹⁰ The developments in the Indian mission in the area of organisation, administration, and encouraging indigenous lay and ordained ministry, will be discussed in the rest of this chapter.

3.2. THE NEED FOR INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

Du Plessis states that his ministry in Natal had been greatly strengthened by the local Christians serving in the lay capacity. He specially refers to the Moses', Manikkams, and Williams' as stalwarts of the AFM and as his counsellors. He stated that the great lack in Flewelling's ministry was his inability to train indigenous leaders and workers in the church. He trained and encouraged Indian Christians to preach, which did not happen previously.¹¹ On 18 August 1942, M.D. Kasselmann, a visiting evangelist from the AFM, Johannesburg, spoke to the Stanger church board about the need for indigenous leadership and his motivation is recorded in the minutes as follows:

"(f) Full Time Indian Workers:

The idea of having another Full Time European Missionary is a good one. Unless this Missionary is called of God he will ever prove a burden to the Indian Mission Field. As the Indians have their own customs and Eastern mode of living, it would take a number of years for the European Missionary to be accustomed to them... If Indian Full Time Workers were appointed more work can be done by them as they know

¹⁰Ibid

¹¹Ibid

and understand the Indians and will be able to do more than the European Missionary who is a novice. In this way the Indian Mission Field can grow."¹²

This was reiterated eighteen months later by A. Schoeman, the Organising secretary of the AFM:

"The Mission (AFM) has won a good reputation and the time has come to win souls for the Lord. ... The work has grown to such dimensions that it is impossible for one man to do all the work. We feel sure that it is not in the best interests of the work to encourage any further European (White) lay preachers to interest themselves in the work. Time has now come when our Indian Brethren ought to be trained to become Full-time Ministers in the Field."¹³

Three young men offered themselves as full-time workers and so became the pioneer Indian evangelists and pastors of the AFM. They were Samuel (Bobby) Manikkam, David F. Williams, and Henry James.

3.3. THE THREE PIONEER INDIAN FULL-TIME PASTORS

These pioneers, in their role as ministers in the church, have been referred to in the minutes of this period, 1940-1945, as evangelists and workers, even though de facto they exercised all the duties incumbent on a pastor.

¹²Minutes, Stanger and District, 18 August 1942, pp.65, 66

¹³Ibid, 02 March 1944, p. 109

3.3.1. Samuel (Bobby) Manikkam (1920 - 1981)

Samuel Manikkam, known as Bobby, was born on 30 July 1920. His family, as recorded earlier, had left the Baptist Church to join the AFM in Kearsney in 1932. The Stanger church board recognised the potential in the young man who became actively involved in the lay ministry before he reached the age of twenty.¹⁴ On 8 October 1940 young Samuel was appointed assistant to J.T. du Plessis.¹⁵ A few days later, Samuel's father, known as father Manikkam, confirmed his son's willingness "to work for the Lord".¹⁶ During these four years, he lived with the Du Plessis' in Stanger,¹⁷ so as to receive first-hand practical training for the ministry. This was the closest any of these early ministers came to receiving some form of theological or practical for the ministry. The close paternal relationship that was forged is evidenced in that Du Plessis referred to Manikkam as "my son".¹⁸

The minutes reads:

"Bro(ther) S.M. Chetty (Samuel Manikkam) pointed out to the Board that no arrangements were made for Board and Lodging of the Full-time Evangelist in the minutes. The burden was

¹⁴Ibid, 08 June 1940, p.2, 23 June 1940, p.3

¹⁵AFM DJB, p.8, Stanger DJB, p.12

¹⁶Minutes, Ibid, 13 October 1940, p.9

¹⁷Ibid, 23 May 1942, pp.60-61. Williams noted that this period had proved to be a time of tremendous development and was beneficial for young Manikkam's ministry later.

¹⁸Revd A.L. Hammond, pastor of Trulite Fellowship, Umhlatuzana, Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 17 July 1991. Confirmed by Williams and Du Plessis.

left on the Pastor. ... Pastor du Plessis commented that he was quite willing to Board and Lodge (sic) the Evangelist free of charge and would only request one additional Full time Indian Evangelist. He pointed out that there were many young (people) who could be trained as Workers ..."¹⁹

Due to his appointment as evangelist in December of that year, Manikkam was nominated onto the Stanger and District church board.²⁰ In January of the following year he was elected secretary of the church,²¹ and, in March 1944, became the Secretary-Treasurer of the church.²² The meticulous record kept of meetings during his term of office reveal his sound administrative ability and inclination to order. Rev A.L. Hammond, a relative of the Manikkams, observed that "his home was run as a model parson's home". He exercised his ministry diligently, and even wore a clerical collar, much to the discomfort of his Pentecostal colleagues.²³ At a Missionary Conference in Johannesburg in April 1941, Manikkam was ordained as a full-time evangelist for the Indian mission.²⁴

When Du Plessis moved to Durban to establish the church there, Manikkam, with the assistance of Henry James, was given charge

¹⁹Minutes, Ibid, 23 May 1942, p.61. Refer also to 23 January 1945.

²⁰Ibid, 29 December 1940, p.12

²¹Ibid, 11 January 1941, p. 12

²²Ibid, 04 March 1944, p.113

²³Hammond (Interview), Ibid

²⁴Revd Sagren Pillay, present pastor of the AFM Stanger Central Tabernacle, Personal Interview, Stanger, 6 August 1991.

of Stanger and District churches from September 1944.²⁵ He henceforth became known as pastor of the Stanger church. He was the first Indian pastor and thereafter, upon his appointment on 15 November 1947, the first Indian marriage officer in the AFM.²⁶ In his perception, the ministry was not solely an involvement ecclesiastical functions but included community-related issues. Manikkam served on the board of the AFM Mission Clinic in Stanger, which shall be discussed later, the Stanger Mission School, Child Welfare Society, and Friends of the Sick Association (FOSA).²⁷ When he resigned from the pastorate of the Stanger church on 31 March 1956,²⁸ he, together with one Louis Francois, founded an evangelistic organisation called the "Voice of Deliverance". He became evangelist for Natal on 06 May 1956,²⁹ and with a thousand-seater tent travelled around the country to fulfil his evangelistic vision.³⁰ He resigned from the AFM and became a pastor of the Pentecostal Protestant Church (PPC) on 03 April 1959.³¹ Du Plessis states that Manikkam's resignation was occasioned by his not receiving his stipend regularly from the Executive Council, in Johannesburg. He also

²⁵Minutes, Ibid. p. 127

²⁶Minutes of the AFM, Natal District Indian Workers' Council (hereafter NIDWC, 11 January 1947, p.28, 15 November 1947, p.32;

²⁷Pillay, Sagren, Ibid. The idea of the Maternity Clinic was mooted by the church board.(Minutes, S&D, 15 February 1941, p.17)

²⁸Stanger DJB, p. 12 and AFM DJB, p. 8

²⁹Pillay, Sagren, Ibid

³⁰Saul, Paul, Personal Interview, Pietermaritzburg, 2 September 1991

³¹Pillay, Sagren, Ibid

adds that J.C. Treptow, who served as Missionary Overseer in 1958, resigned from the AFM the same year to join the PPC. He "poisoned Manikkam against the AFM" because of the schism that developed over G.R. Wessels.³²

3.3.2. David F. Williams (born 1914)

Williams was born on 25 January 1914 in Stanger. Due to difficult living conditions and the general lack of interest in education encountered among Indians in the early years, coupled with the long distances that had to be negotiated to get to school, Williams states that he managed to attain formal education to the level of standard three in a Stanger school. He nonetheless became a successful building contractor.³³ Events that led to Williams' leaving the Methodist Church to become a member of the Stanger Church have already been recounted.

Williams was elected to serve on the Stanger and District church board on 23 November 1941.³⁴ In 1942, W.H. Wright, the Missionary Superintendent, recognised the potential and the dedication of young Williams and suggested to the board that he be recommended as a full-time evangelist to work among Indians in Pretoria. On 23 January 1943 the board responded affirmatively, stating that they "were glad that another young couple already was called from their midst and also that it is

³²Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

³³Williams (Interview), Ibid

³⁴Minutes, S&D, 23 November 1941, p.41

(their) sincere desire that more would be called in the near future. Acknowledging the wisdom of the Superintendent's choice the board expressed their "regret to lose ... Bro(ther) and Sis(ter) D.F.Williams from (their) midst as they proved a great blessing".³⁵ Once again it is evident that any form of preparation was not considered necessary.

David F. Williams was appointed a full-time evangelist on 27 March 1943.³⁶ Williams testifies about his experience on the night of 18 October 1930, which has been noted above. In his alleged vision he states that he received the divine challenge to "go and proclaim God's Word". He continues:

"I laid two conditions before the Lord. Only if they are fulfilled will I go into the full-time ministry. The first was that if I married, it would have to be to a lady from another Christian denomination. Secondly, the invitation into the ministry must be to an area beyond Natal. These were fulfilled precisely. Frances Budge met a young Methodist lady, whom I did not know. Frances told me that I would eventually marry that particular lady. After four years I met the lady again; we began courting and I did end up marrying her. When Moody Wright spoke to me about going into the full-time ministry in Pretoria, I knew that the second condition was fulfilled. I agreed to enter the ministry."³⁷

³⁵Minutes, S&D, 23 January 1943, p.87

³⁶Williams, Ibid

³⁷Ibid

This is another example of the pentecostal Christian living with the immanence of the divine. Every event in ones life, however ordinary, is given a supernatural import as a sign from heaven.

Disposing of his business, Williams, his wife and their baby of a few months, went to Marabastad, Pretoria, to assist an American missionary, one Pastor Elliot.³⁸ For a year they lived in a rented room, and was supported by the Mayfair Assembly of the AFM in Johannesburg, to the amount of seven pounds and ten shillings per month.³⁹ At times he had to fall back on his little savings that he had accumulated during the period of his employment.⁴⁰

On 9 September 1944, when the North Coast area was sub-divided into manageable areas, Williams was appointed as the evangelist for the New Guelderland - Zululand area, which included Empangeni, Ntambenana, Umzimbetee, Felixton, Darnall, Syembesi, and New Guelderland.⁴¹ As pastor of the Darnall Church, he was also appointed contractor for the church building, which began in 1946 and was officially opened in 1948.⁴² From 1949 to 1952 he served as pastor of the Overport Church,⁴³ and of the Stanger

³⁸Williams, Ibid

³⁹Ibid. Refer also Minutes, S&D, 2 March 1944, p.110

⁴⁰Ibid

⁴¹Minutes, Ibid, 18 November 1944, p. 134

⁴²Minutes, S&D, 09 September 1944, p.127. Refer also to AFM GJB, p.9 and DJB, p.15.

⁴³AFM DJB, p. 8

Church from March 1959 to March 1988.⁴⁴ He was responsible for the building of the present Stanger Tabernacle which was officially opened in December 1986.⁴⁵ His resignation from the AFM, in July 1989, is the loss of the only surviving pioneer. He continues as pastor of the Assembly of Believers, an independent church which he formed in 1989.⁴⁶ Commenting on his motivation for remaining in the ministry for nearly fifty years, Williams simply remarked: "I didn't think that there was another person in the whole world who had a calling from the Lord like I did."⁴⁷

3.3.3. Henry James (1925 - 1987)

James Moonsamy was only a baby of a few months when his parents emigrated from India. His son, Henry James, was born in Darnall on 1 December 1925. The acceptance of membership in the Indian mission of the AFM has already been stated. Henry James testified that in June 1937, through the prayer of Flewelling, he was healed of tuberculosis.⁴⁸ Seven years later, after being interviewed by du Plessis, young Henry's father, James Moonsamy, "expressed his desire to see his son, Henry, in the Lord's service." The board noted:

⁴⁴Stanger DJB, p. 12

⁴⁵Stanger DJB, p.12

⁴⁶Williams, Ibid

⁴⁷Ibid

⁴⁸James, Henry, Personal Interview, Merebank, 23 February 1980. Refer also Minutes, S&D, 04 March 1944, p.114.

"Bro(ther) Henry who was healed from T.B. (tuberculosis) was given for the Master's service. It would be a great asset to the work if he could be taken immediately so that our present Evangelist (Samuel Manikkam) could have company to visit the members in the District etc."⁴⁹

Entering the full-time ministry on 04 March 1944, and as assistant to Manikkam, James was accepted as a "training Evangelist on trial"(sic), without any formal preparation or training. Initially, only his travelling expenses were met by the church treasury.⁵⁰ Four months later he was granted an additional amount of one pound per month,⁵¹ which was further increased to one pound and ten shillings from October 1944. He served as pastor of the Darnall Church from 1949 to 1952, of the Overport Church from 1952 to 1956, and of the Stanger Church from 1956 to 1959.⁵² In 1959 he accepted a transfer to the pastorate of the struggling Clairwood Church, about 10 km south of the Durban city centre, which led to the establishment of the Merewent Church in Merebank. He remained pastor here until his death in 1987.⁵³

⁴⁹Minutes, 04 March 1944, p.114

⁵⁰Ibid

⁵¹Ibid, 17 July 1944, p. 117

⁵²Minutes, Ibid, 18 November 1944, p. 136

⁵³AFM GJB, pp.13, 14 and DJB, pp.28, 29. Refer also to AFM Indian Section, 22nd Workers' Council Annual General Meeting Report, 1988, p.22

3.4. STRUGGLES OF THESE EARLY PIONEER MINISTERS

The minutes of the Stanger and District Church for this period reflect the struggles of these pioneer pastors which included the lack of sufficient financial support, no efficient means of transportation, and no proper housing, which have had a devastating effect on their family life.

3.4.1. Lack of sufficient financial support

The AFM vigorously followed a policy of establishing self-supporting churches, which caused undue hardships for these early pastors. The Indian pastors were completely dependent on the income generated in the local church through the system of tithes⁵⁴ and offering. The uncertain stipend and allowances of these pioneer pastors therefore relied totally on the contributions of the labouring class, whose income were so low, that they could barely meet their own needs. The meagre remuneration given to these pastors had continuously been discussed by the board, as it was creating a strain on them personally and in the fulfilment of their ministry and also on their families, as in the case of Williams.⁵⁵ The local church, with their limited finances, often responded as best they could, and often pleaded with the Missionary Council to extend some

⁵⁴Each working member was expected to contribute 10% of his or her earnings for the maintenance of the pastor and the church.

⁵⁵Refer to Minutes, S&D, 4 March 1944, pp.114,115, 17 July 1944, p.117, 9 September 1944, p.125, 27 January 1944, p.117.

financial relief.⁵⁶ In spite of promises to raise sufficient financial support for young married couples intending to enter the full-time ministry, made by the Missionary Superintendent,⁵⁷ the Missionary Council intransigently reiterated its policy thus:

"the Executive was not in favour of supporting one Evangelist from headquarters, because all Pastors and Evangelists should be supported by their own work. Only the Missionaries are given a small support by them."⁵⁸

For a period of five months after he returned to Natal in 1944, Williams "was not given any remuneration from the Executive". The board, in appreciation of his services, stated:

"He is a great asset to the work. Seeing the hard (difficult) circumstances that our Brother is undergoing, it was unanimously resolved that three pounds as a love offering plus one pound eleven shillings and two pence Railage on goods from Pretoria be paid from the treasury."⁵⁹

At a subsequent meeting between the board and a delegation from the Missionary Council on 20 July 1944, to discuss the possibility of Williams' support by this council, W.W.F. Preller, the acting Missionary Superintendent, stated:

"that a policy was laid down by the Executive Council ...

⁵⁶Ibid

⁵⁷Minutes, Ibid, 25 October 1941, p.38

⁵⁸Minutes, Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.43

⁵⁹Ibid, 17 July 1944, p.117

that only the Overseers' Allowances are paid from Headquarters and that Evangelists, Workers and all full-time men should be supported by each respective Assembly. The conditions prevailing at Pretoria where Brother Williams stepped out were such that there was no other alternative but to support him from Headquarters. In view of the fact that he was now returned to his own Field, the responsibility devolves upon the Assembly where he will be appointed."⁶⁰

Arising from the deliberations of 4 March 1944, the board decided to appoint Williams to the Darnall Church both as pastor and contractor for the proposed building. The meeting further resolved to "apply to the Missionary Committee for the full stipend usually allowed for Missionaries" to be paid to Du Plessis to enable them "to divert the five pounds per month" which he from the church to Williams.⁶¹ His projected stipend was eleven pounds with a rent allowance of thirty shillings,⁶² but finances only allowed him a total of eight pounds and ten shillings a month from August of that year.⁶³ The establishment of a Minister's Benefit Fund for Indian pastors in September 1944,⁶⁴ from the tithes paid by these ministers, was a feeble attempt by the Missionary Council to make provisions for their

⁶⁰Ibid, 20 July 1944, p.120

⁶¹Ibid

⁶²Ibid, 04 March 1944, pp. 114-115

⁶³Ibid, 09 September 1944, p.127

⁶⁴Ibid, 9 September 1944, p.125

future. However their meagre and irregular stipends could barely meet their immediate needs, and so this fund was perceived as yet another eschatological promise.⁶⁵

R.Ezra, who was pastor of the Darnall Church from 1959 to 1961, speaks of the drastic effect this lack of adequate and dependable financial support had on his ministry and family during those three years. He said:

"Labourers in the sugar mill were poorly paid. Funds only came into the church's treasury when the sugar mill was crushing (cane), and that was only for about four to six months of the year. I had to travel regularly, with my own vehicle, from Stanger, where I lived, to Darnall and over the vast area of Zululand. I just could not cope, so I spoke to the Overseer, W. Dafele, who himself could not respond positively to my needs. I was forced to resign from the full-time ministry and go back to my panel beating business, so that I could feed my family."⁶⁶

Du Plessis referred to this policy of self-supporting churches as the "honourable thing" and went on to provide an analogy, shared by one Willie Cargo, a Kenyan preacher. He spoke about a baboon which lived in the woods in Kenya and attracted the attention of travellers. These humans continued to provide edible items to the animal, which grew more and more dependent on this source of food. When the authorities forbade humans from feeding

⁶⁵Williams (Interview), Ibid

⁶⁶Ezra, R., Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 14 October 1992

wild animals, the baboon was found dead within a few weeks. Cargo is said to have intimated: "If you give a Black man money, then he will never seek to find it himself. Rather help a man to help himself."⁶⁷ Even though this policy was meant to create a sense of independence in the local church, some form of financial assistance for a pioneering church is only necessary both for the church and the pastor. The Missionary Council would rather readily support the White missionaries than the Indian workers of the AFM.⁶⁸

3.4.2. Transportation

Economic deprivation prevented the early pastors from acquiring mechanical vehicles. Williams recalled that all their travelling that could not be done by train, were done on bicycles, and on foot.⁶⁹ A report by Du Plessis, two months after commencement of his duties in Natal, illustrates the point. He said:

"In two months time we have travelled 1786 miles and we also walked about 140 miles during the time we had no car ... 56 christian homes were visited approximately three times each and we visited 11 Indian barracks at regular intervals ... 400 non-believing (sic) families have been visited."⁷⁰

⁶⁷Du Plessis

⁶⁸Minutes, Ibid. 14 November 1942 p. 76

⁶⁹Williams, Ibid

⁷⁰Comforter, August/September 1940, p.11

In the rural areas members of the church were scattered over a vast area and often these Evangelists were forced to walk over 30 km each way to fulfil their ministerial responsibilities.⁷¹ Bicycles which were the cheapest means of travelling, was also difficult to obtain. In a board sitting

"H. Jack suggested that something be done to buy bicycles which should be given to Young People who were eager to do something for the extension of God's kingdom by distributing tracts and visiting the heathens (sic).⁷²

Numerous requests were made to the Missionary Council in this regard,⁷³ until one was donated.⁷⁴

Cars, on the other hand were the prerogative of White workers in the church, such as Du Plessis and Budge, and allowances paid for from the church treasury.⁷⁵ A letter of thanks written to one Mr M. Baliah, of the Enterprise Garage, Stanger, on 20 July 1940, indicates that Du Plessis owned a car at the beginning of his ministry in Natal.⁷⁶ Du Plessis states: "The Local Board had bought a car but this did not give satisfaction ... it was impossible to get along with it any more."⁷⁷ In spite of their own needs these early pioneers even mooted for a special car fund

⁷¹Ibid. Williams confirms this.

⁷²Minutes, Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.45

⁷³Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.45, 18 August 1942, p.63

⁷⁴Ibid, 14 November 1942, p.76

⁷⁵Ibid, 08 & 23 June 1940, pp.2,3, 23 January 1942, p.46

⁷⁶Ibid, 20 July 1940, p. 6

⁷⁷Comforter, Ibid

to be initiated for another car for Du Plessis. Samuel Manikkam "gave a general report of the improvements that have taken place since the arrival of Pastor du Plessis. In his address he mentioned ... the new stations that were opened in the Zululand district. He related some of his experiences in visiting these places with Pastor du Plessis and how that it had become essential for Pastor du Plessis to buy a new car, so as to give every outstation a fair deal. Since the Pastor was willing to sacrifice some of his luxuries to see the work of God extended, he made an appeal to the Board to show him their appreciation by giving him a monthly instalment to pay on his new car. Bro(ther) W. Dafel, the treasurer, moved that ... two pounds ten shillings be given as a monthly instalment as funds permitted, until the car was paid off. Seconded by J.H. Jack. Unanimously accepted."⁷⁸

Du Plessis, without mentioning the struggles of the local people, remarked: "The Lord began to move in the hearts of some of His children and we managed to buy another car at a reasonable price, praise the Lord."⁷⁹

3.4.3. Neglect of the Indian mission

The many deprivations faced by the early Indian leaders created in them a feeling of neglect. Often they noted that the fledgling Indian mission was not given serious thought by the Missionary

⁷⁸Minutes, Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.46

⁷⁹Comforter, Ibid

Council. A discussion in October 1941 reads:

"Insertion of the Indian Work in the Comforter:

The General feeling was that more publicity be given to the Indian Work in the Comforter. Bro(ther) J.H. Jack moved, Seconded by Bro(ther) Manikkam that a letter be written to the Executive Council regarding the above matter.⁸⁰

Du Plessis' remark that on his tour of the Rand early in 1942 he "would interview the Executive Council and ask them to take more lively interest in the Indian Work" reveals this feeling of neglect.⁸¹ In a meeting with Wright, on January 1942, the board restates its case:

"Insertion of the Indian Work in the Comforter

Bro(ther) S. Moses suggested that more publicity be given to the Indian Mission Field in the Comforter. He noticed that even on the General Page it states, M.H. Wright, Supt of the Native Work. This is unsatisfactory. We desire recognition and strong representation on the Executive Council."⁸²

Wright's comments in the Comforter confirms that the Missionary Council had not given this mission the deserved attention:

"I visited our Indian work in Stanger ... We found that the Indian work has grown to the extent that I feel the time has come that our Mission must take definite notice of this

⁸⁰Minutes, Ibid, 25 October 1941, p.36

⁸¹Ibid, 26 March 1941, p. 20

⁸²Ibid, 29 January 1942, p. 47

work."⁸³

As experienced during the ministry of Flewelling, the Indian mission felt slighted because the Black mission demanded more of the attention of Wright and the Missionary Council.

3.5. OTHER EARLY CHRISTIAN WORKERS

There were many, who have already been introduced, who were involved in the lay capacity in the ministry of the church. An appointment to the church board was in itself an indication that the particular individual had proved himself a dedicated and willing worker in the church.⁸⁴ Du Plessis initiated the practice of appointing local pastors in the churches. He stated that he was appalled by the fact that only White missionaries were called and recognised as "pastors", even when most of the work in the church was done by the Indian Christians in the lay capacity. He added that when a man was appointed a local pastor, he was called "pastor",⁸⁵ and this is confirmed in the minutes.

Samuel Moses served on the first board of the Stanger and District Churches as a representative of the Darnall assembly.⁸⁶ In 1941, he was appointed the local pastor for Darnall,⁸⁷ which

⁸³Comforter, June 1939, p.11

⁸⁴Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

⁸⁵Ibid

⁸⁶Minutes, Ibid, 08 June 1940, p.1

⁸⁷Minutes, ibid, 24 November 1940. p.11. The Minutes for the period 1940 - 1945 continues to refer to him as Pastor Samuel Moses.

created animosity between him and Mundro John. He served in this capacity until his death in 1948.⁸⁸ Du Plessis refers to Moses as "a man with a strong personality, an outstanding counsellor and with a sound mind", one whom he turned to for counsel at various instances. He went on to relate how that it was through the intervention of Moses that his ministry was "saved" during the time of Du Plessis involvement in the Indian struggle in the mid 1940's.⁸⁹

Mundro John also served on the church board in 1940 as a representative member for Darnall.⁹⁰ A dissension between John and Moses developed after the latter was elected to the position of local pastor.⁹¹ The details of this strife led to John's excommunication from the Darnall Church on 20 September 1941.⁹² **Harry Jack** was a member of the church board in 1940, as a representative for the Kearsney Church.⁹³ In 1941 he was appointed as the local pastor,⁹⁴ and later a certified part-time worker in Kearsney.⁹⁵ Later, upon his retirement he became pastor of the Kearsney Church until his death in 1976.⁹⁶ Others

⁸⁸Du Plessis, Ibid

⁸⁹Ibid

⁹⁰Minutes, Ibid, 08 June 1940, p.1

⁹¹Ibid, 10 July 1941, p.29-31

⁹²Ibid, 20 September 1941, p.32

⁹³Ibid, 20 July 1940, p.6

⁹⁴Ibid, 24 November 1940, p.11

⁹⁵Ibid, 23 December 1944, p.144

⁹⁶Stanger DJB, p.20

who exercised a leadership role in this early period and served on the church board include **Sunny Jack, James Forbay, George Williams, William Laing, J.Reuben, David C. Ramiah, S. Zacheriah, J.R.T. Budge, W. Dafel and B.M. Saul.**

3.6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCHES

3.6.1. Stanger and Kearsney

The **Stanger Church** continued to serve as the main centre for the Indian mission as it spread both in the north and south coasts of Natal. The board, comprising representative leaders from the Darnall, Kearsney and, later, Zululand churches was known as the "Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, Indian Branch, Stanger and District", served as the controlling body for the missionary activities in these areas.⁹⁷ As already noted, Du Plessis was pastor in Stanger from 1940-1944, and Manikkam for rest of the period under discussion. The **Kearsney Church** continued under H. Jack as local pastor.⁹⁸

3.6.2. Darnall

In the **Darnall Church**, Samuel Moses served as the local pastor.⁹⁹ Services were held in a room referred to as the

⁹⁷Refer to the Minute Book, Stanger and District.

⁹⁸Minutes, Ibid, December 1940, p.11

⁹⁹Ibid, 24 November 1940, p.11

"prayer room".¹⁰⁰ The church struggled for two years to acquire land to build a church.¹⁰¹ In June 1941, a building fund committee was established with S.Moses as treasurer, and plans were made for the laying of two cornerstones, one by the General Manager of the local mill, one Mr Bihl, and the other by the Missionary Superintendent, M.H. Wright.¹⁰² Williams describes the obstacle¹⁰³ the church faced in fulfilling this project. He states:

"Mr Bihl had made a tentative offer of land to build a church in Darnall, but he did not follow it through. The major obstacle to obtaining a church site came from Rev T.M. Rangiah, of the Baptist Church. Because they were the first established church in Darnall, Rangiah believed that his denomination had the monopoly to propagate the Christian faith in the area. This is the same reaction we experienced in Kearsney, and still later in Glendale. Rangiah was extremely anti-pentecostal. He referred to Pastor Du Plessis as a 'wild fox' and called the pentecostal movement 'Antichrist'. He forbade young people meeting across denominational lines. If a member of our church were to join with his, Rangiah would rebaptise that person."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰Ibid, 28 August 1940, p.7 and 26 March 1941, p.19

¹⁰¹Ibid, 29 January 1941 - 02 March 1944

¹⁰²Ibid, 29 June 1941, p.24

¹⁰³Ibid, 12 November 1941, p.40

¹⁰⁴Williams (Interview), Ibid

Various attempts and meetings were held with the Directors of the Darnall sugar mill, including W.R. Hulett, and Sir J.L. Hulett.¹⁰⁵ In October 1943, after negotiations between the Missionary Council and the management of the mill, and through the influence of some members of the church who held important positions in the company, a site of one half of an acre was granted.¹⁰⁶ With a loan of five hundred pounds from the Missionary Council, building operations commenced in 1946, with Williams as contractor.¹⁰⁷ Due to the fact that the lease was granted for a ten year period, the Executive Council advised that the building should not be elaborate.¹⁰⁸ The church was officially opened in 1948.¹⁰⁹

In June 1941, dissension arose when M. John accused S. Moses of pilfering assembly funds.¹¹⁰ The matter was satisfactorily resolved by the board when Moses gave a detailed account of the expenditure.¹¹¹ Because John continued to harbour a bitter spirit, the board's decision of excommunication of both M. John and his brother, D. John on 20 September 1941, reads:

"The Chairman explained to the Board that after the last

¹⁰⁵Minutes, Ibid, 20 September 1941, p.34, 23 January 1942, p.42, 11 September 1943, p.99

¹⁰⁶Ibid, 06 October 1943, p. 106

¹⁰⁷Ibid, 4 March 1944, p.114 and 17 July 1944, p.116

¹⁰⁸Ibid, 20 July 1944, p.122

¹⁰⁹AFM GJB, p.9 and DJB, p.8

¹¹⁰Minutes, Ibid, 29 June 1941, p.24

¹¹¹Ibid, 10 July 1941, pp.29-31

Board meeting it was his painful duty to settle some or other trouble which apparently existed in Bro(ther) John's imagination, and that Bro(ther) John's attitude on all these occasions was very unChristlike (sic). On the occasion when the petition of the Darnall Church had to be signed, both Bro(ther)s M. & D. John refused to append their signatures. Bro(ther) M. John, being an elder in the assembly, was a poor example to the younger Christians. Under these circumstances the Chairman requested the Board to sanction the letter of disfellowship which was already written to them."¹¹²

The following discussion by the board seem to indicate that the strife arose as a result of jealousy ("evil consequences"), after the appointment of Samuel Moses as local pastor.

"8. Titles of Pastors etc.

Bro(ther) Moses suggested that (the) titles of Pastor should be discouraged amongst part time Workers. In his speech he used the illustration of Bro(ther) M. John and pointed out the evil consequences of these titles, among part time Workers. To avoid friction in future the Board strongly discourages the use of the title amongst part time Workers".¹¹³

Nathaniel mentions that in 1922, M. John was replaced as pastor of the Darnall Baptist Church by John Durgiah, "because it was

¹¹²Ibid, 20 September 1941, p.32

¹¹³Ibid, 25 October 1941, p.38

anticipated that pastor M. John would return to India."¹¹⁴ It is possible that dissatisfaction over his displacement occasioned his separation from this local congregation.

3.6.3. Clairwood and Mayville, Durban

In the suburbs of **Durban**, two churches were established in **Clairwood**, and in **Mayville**, in 1940, through the efforts of one **J.G. Nortjie**, a member of the AFM, working in the Lion Match Factory, Durban.¹¹⁵ This is corroborated by the fact that on 11 January 1941 the Stanger church board discussed the possible election of a board for the Clairwood assembly.¹¹⁶ Du Plessis described Nortjie as "small, stocky, not very forceful but a strong leader, who loved the Indian people". An early Indian evangelist who assisted Nortjie in Durban was one **Albert Murugan**, from the Mayville Church.¹¹⁷ On his own property and with his own finances, Nortjie built the church in Clairwood.¹¹⁸ When he sought to go to a Bible College in Johannesburg, the Executive Council directed Du Plessis to negotiate with Nortjie concerning the purchase of his property in Clairwood, which he was offering at six hundred and fifty pounds.¹¹⁹ The church was later used by the Black mission.

¹¹⁴Nathaniel, p.44

¹¹⁵AFM GJB, p.13. Williams and Du Plessis confirmed this.

¹¹⁶Minutes, Ibid, 11 January 1941, p.14

¹¹⁷Du Plessis

¹¹⁸Minutes, Ibid, 29 January 1942, p.50

¹¹⁹Ibid, 29 May 1943, pp.92,93 and AFM DJB, p.13

In response to the need expressed by Wright for more missionaries to be appointed among the Indians, Nortjie's application was reviewed as follows:

"This Board appreciates the services rendered in the past by Bro(ther) Nortjie. We do not doubt his sincerity and zeal. The fact that he owns the Church where the assembly worships at present should not influence us in our decision. If he is not called of God he will ever prove a burden. The Indian work is in its infant stage and a false move would be a great setback. Although we do not believe in actual opposition we feel that Durban is a most strategic centre for Indian Work in Natal, and therefore our representative should favourably compare with Missionaries of other denominations. We feel that Bro(ther) Nortjie is unsuitable."¹²⁰

After his years of study at Bible College, Nortjie was appointed to the pastorate in Ficksburg.¹²¹

Nortjie had gathered a few believers living in the area to begin the church in **Mayville-Overport**, in the home one Mr Paul Muthusamy.¹²² Paul Muthusamy and later his son, Samuel Muthusamy, have played important roles in establishing the church here.¹²³ The church services had to be moved to various school rooms to accommodate the believers. The first Indian full-time

¹²⁰Ibid, 29 January 1942, p.50

¹²¹Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

¹²²AFM GJB, p.31

¹²³Williams and James H. (Interview), Ibid

pastor to be appointed here was Andrew Chetty.¹²⁴

Recognising the strategic position of Durban for the future of the Indian mission and the fact that the urban areas were proving more conducive to church planting and growth, Du Plessis sought to continue his ministry here. In his report to the board on the progress in Durban, he said:

"that his eyes were opened to great many things. There was a marvellous scope for a Pentecostal Work to be established in Durban. Since the Believers are in no way under obligation to their Employers, it was easy to establish churches at all centres in Durban.... the believers at Mayville were fortunate in having a hall in which they could worship, (as) Church building was vitally necessary. Time was now ripe for a Full-time Missionary to be placed in Durban. Although we do not believe in actual opposition (sic) we feel that Durban is a most strategic Centre for Indian Work in Natal, and therefore our representative should favourably compare with Missionaries of other denominations."¹²⁵ He added later "that to work in Durban was more convenient than in the country because it was thickly populated and it was more easy for the members of the public to attend, on account of the available transport."¹²⁶

¹²⁴AFM GJB, Ibid

¹²⁵Minutes, Ibid, 29 May 1943, pp.91,92

¹²⁶Ibid, 17 July 1944, p.117

Du Plessis saw Durban as a "ripe Field" and summed up the missionary possibilities here as follows:

"The city with her 90,000 Indians is indeed a gold mine of souls. Durban is an industrial city and as such she offers employment to many under the Wage Determination Act. Labour is controlled by organised Labour Unions, (and) consequently the earning power per man is much higher than is the case in agricultural areas. The cost of living is also higher but the facilities ... in the City more than compensate for this. The Durban Hindoos (Hindus) are not so attached to their heathenism (sic) and also not so much under the influence of their Priests. Durban should become the hub of the Indian Work. If this Work is well organised an indigenous work in every sense should be something of the not-too-far distant future. The time for the (Apostolic Faith) Mission to launch out in Durban is overdue."¹²⁷

3.6.4. De Charmoy

By the beginning of 1941,¹²⁸ there were about 25 Christians at **De Charmoy**, about 10 km south of Stanger. A church was not established here as members travelled to Stanger to attend services. Regular visits were made by the evangelists to the area, during which time services were also held.¹²⁹ One S. Zacheriah, who served as the local pastor was appointed by the

¹²⁷Ibid, 09 September 1944, pp.125,126

¹²⁸Ibid, 15 February 1941, p.15

¹²⁹Williams (Interview), Ibid

board as a certified evangelist for De Charmoy in June 1941.¹³⁰ By August 1942, when the assembly was without a local pastor, the leaders from Stanger continued to serve the assembly until one, M. Luke was appointed.¹³¹

3.6.5. Glendale

The Baptist Church had begun its ministry in **Glendale**, about 60 km north of Stanger, in 1908, and two churches were established, in 1927 and 1941.¹³² An evangelistic and strong proselytization programme by Du Plessis resulted in some members of the Baptist Church being enlisted for the AFM in 1943.¹³³ The minutes read:

"The Chairman said that there was a great opportunity of starting a Pentecostal (church) here and that he had received many invitations from the local people to come and instruct them in true Christianity. He also pointed out that Mr R. Ramacharan donated a plot of ground to the Mission to build a church. The Council saw the urgent need and requested the Chairman to launch out on a weeks Campaign immediately".¹³⁴

An analysis of Du Plessis' report reveals the following:

¹³⁰Minutes, Ibid, 29 June 1941, p.24

¹³¹Ibid, 23 December 1944, p.144

¹³²Glendale Baptist Church Golden Jubilee Commemorative Brochure 1941-1991, Stanger, 1991, pp.5,6 and Nathaniel, p.43

¹³³Minutes, Ibid, 23 January 1943, p.87, 18 Nov 1944, p.133

¹³⁴Ibid, 23 January 1943, p.87

A "non-Pentecostal" church was already in existence in Glendale, which was the Baptist Church. His remarks show a disregard for ecumenical relations and an arrogance in assuming that the Baptist Church does not practise "true Christianity". Du Plessis envisaged a fierce proselytizing campaign against the Baptist Church to build the membership of the AFM.

Du Plessis' report a few months after the initial attempt to build a church in Glendale reads:

"Here on the North Coast the Mission had won a good reputation and time has now come to win souls for the Lord. ... Owing to the lack of Church Buildings in the District it was impossible for any extension work. Our hands are tied down by Estate Owners. Time and again appeals have been made to them to grant us plots of ground, where we could build churches at our own expense, but all attempts seemed unsuccessful. The Baptist Association seemed to have the situation well in their hands. The only way to conquer these difficulties was to appoint Full-Time Married Evangelists who could visit every Member as well as non-members and win them for the Lord and the (Apostolic Faith) Mission. In this way Pentecost can be well established."¹³⁵

In November 1944, Manikkam mentions the presence of members of the Stanger and District church in Glendale.¹³⁶ This "intrusion" by the AFM created great tension between the two denominations.

¹³⁵Ibid, 29 May 1943, p.91

¹³⁶Ibid, 18 November 1944, p.133

In spite of promises made by one Mr Ramacharan, the inability to obtain land for a church building brought any hope of establishing a church here to nought.¹³⁷

3.6.6. Zululand - Amatikulu and Empangeni

The beginning of the **Zululand Church** was due not to any conscious effort of the missionary or evangelists, but through one **B.M. Saul**, who lived in **Amatikulu**. In 1941, the application for membership of the Stanger Church by Saul and his family, had been accepted by the board.¹³⁸ This resulted in evangelistic excursions into the area by Du Plessis, Manikkam, Williams and, later, James, and in services being conducted in Amatikulu by September 1941.¹³⁹ These men covered the areas of Amatikulu, Felixton, Empangeni, Fosses Farm, Ntumeni, Kwambonambi, Mtunzuni, Ngeneni, Umfolozi and Ntambenana.¹⁴⁰

Some of the early Christians belonging to the AFM in this area were Vengetsamy Joseph, and R.G. Francis, who later relocated and so became one of the pioneers of the Mount Edgecombe Church.¹⁴¹ When Saul was appointed as leader of the few believers here to serve on the Stanger and District church board in May 1942,¹⁴²

¹³⁷Ibid, 29 May 1943, p.91

¹³⁸Ibid, 15 February 1941, p.17, 30 June 1941, p.28

¹³⁹Ibid, 20 September 1941, p.34

¹⁴⁰Williams (Interview), Ibid

¹⁴¹AFM GJB, p.29 and DJB, p.17

¹⁴²Minutes, Ibid, 23 May 1942, pp.59, 60

he called for the appointment of a full-time evangelist for Zululand.¹⁴³ Six months later, his application for this appointment was turned down because the church finances could not support an evangelist with a large family.¹⁴⁴ Williams and James spoke about having to walk many miles to visit members and conduct services.¹⁴⁵ Williams was appointed as evangelist for Zululand in 1944,¹⁴⁶ James in 1947 when the church came under the supervision of the Darnall Assembly.¹⁴⁷ The **Empangeni Church** began during this period by one Pastor Copp, from Durban, and subsequently handed over to Du Plessis.¹⁴⁸ By May 1942, George Subhani was appointed as leader to serve on the Stanger Church board,¹⁴⁹ and by January 1943, R.G. (Bobby) Francis is appointed.¹⁵⁰ Williams describes him as a great help for the work of the ministry in the area.¹⁵¹

3.6.7. Mount Edgecombe

The **Church at Mount Edgecombe** was begun in the 1940's when Christian families from further up the North Coast settled here

¹⁴³Ibid, 29 May 1943, p.92

¹⁴⁴Ibid, 14 November 1942, p.76

¹⁴⁵Williams and James H. (Interviews), Ibid

¹⁴⁶Minutes, Ibid, 09 September 1944, p.127

¹⁴⁷James, H., Ibid. Refer also to AFM GJB, p.29 and DJB, p.17

¹⁴⁸Minutes, Ibid, 23 May 1942, p.58

¹⁴⁹Ibid, 23 May 1942, p. 58

¹⁵⁰Ibid, 23 January 1943, p.83

¹⁵¹Williams (Interview), Ibid

to work for the Natal Estates, Mount Edgecombe Mill. Daniel Kannaparthi Narayansamy and one Brother Joseph arrived in 1945, from Syembezi, near Darnall, followed by Ramdin Sookraj (S.Gideon), from Kearsney, Aaron Lazarus and R.G. Francis. After holding family prayer services for a few years, in 1948 they sought help from members of the Overport Church to begin an AFM church here. For fourteen years the little church met in a room, 4meters x 3meters in size, given by a widow of the assembly, Mrs Asiavadam Pydiah, until a church was built. Many alleged miracles took place, including the miraculous healing of a Hindu priest, one M.S. Morgan, who later became the evangelist and pastor of various churches in the Indian mission.¹⁵²

3.6.8. Harding

The **Harding Church** was initiated by Joseph Govender, who was converted to Christianity while in Durban, through the witness of lay worker Nortjie in 1939. After his conversion, Govender conducted prayer services in his home in Harding which eventually led to his brother, Jacob, being converted to Christianity.¹⁵³ In January 1942 the intention of Nortjie to establish a church in the Port Shepstone - Harding area was left in abeyance, until a full-time evangelist could be placed in the area.¹⁵⁴ The Govender brothers, with the assistance of Albert Murugan and

¹⁵²Reddy, D. C. : Gospel on Bicycle Wheels, The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, Mount Edgecombe, 24th Anniversary, 1955-1979, Durban, 1979, pp.2-5

¹⁵³AFM GJB, p.28 and DJB, p.20

¹⁵⁴Minutes, Ibid. 23 January 1942 p. 45

Flewelling, continued to conduct services in a large round hut until a church was built.¹⁵⁵

3.7. STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS IN THE INDIAN MISSION

The Indian mission of the AFM constituted one district, referred to as "Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, Indian Work (Mission), Stanger and District",¹⁵⁶ with the Stanger church serving as the "main centre". The district included all the churches established north of Stanger. With the resolution of the Workers' Council in Johannesburg in 1941, the Indian Field Workers' Council, comprising the combined boards of Stanger (and District) and Durban, was initiated on 25 October 1941.¹⁵⁷ On 30 November 1941, the first Indian Workers' District Council, the forerunner of the Natal Indian District Council (NIDC), and governed by the Missionary Council through White Missionary Overseers, took place.¹⁵⁸ When Du Plessis moved to Durban, the North Coast was divided into two areas in September 1944, with the hope that it would help the spread of the mission and establish the churches through the designated evangelists. Williams was appointed evangelist over the New Guelderland-Zululand area, while Manikkam, with the assistance of James, was appointed over the Stanger and District churches.¹⁵⁹ The ministry of the Indian

¹⁵⁵AFM GJB, p.28 and DJB, p.20

¹⁵⁶Minute Book, Stanger and District, June 1940-January 1945

¹⁵⁷Minutes, Ibid, 25 October 1941, p.37

¹⁵⁸AFM DJB, p.7

¹⁵⁹Minutes, Ibid, 9 September 1944, pp.126, 127

mission also extended into wider community issues such as health care.

3.8. ESTABLISHMENT OF A MATERNITY CLINIC

In February 1941, Sister M. Grundy, a missionary from Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), was invited by the Missionary Council to address the Stanger church board on the need for a "Mission Clinic". She stated that service to God must be manifest by serving the community,¹⁶⁰ and that the clinic can be seen as a means of developing the Indian Mission,¹⁶¹ through proselytization. When David du Plessis, brother of J.T. du Plessis and general Secretary of the AFM, visited the Indian mission on 4 March 1942, he stated that he agreed with "his brother ... that the Executive Council was guided by God in the appointment of Sis(ter) Grundy."¹⁶² Williams stated that the services provided by the mission clinic was of a very high quality when compared to the maternity facilities in the local provincial hospital which were either very poor or almost non-existent.¹⁶³

Funds for the building were raised through mortgaging the local church property.¹⁶⁴ The Executive Council gave a grant of two hundred and fifty pounds and a loan of two hundred and fifty

¹⁶⁰Ibid, 15 February 1941 p. 17

¹⁶¹Ibid, 25 October 1941, p. 38

¹⁶²Ibid, 4 March 1942, p.54

¹⁶³Williams (Interview), Ibid

¹⁶⁴Ibid

pounds towards this ambitious project.¹⁶⁵ The local magistrate, M.P. Snyman, laid the corner-stone,¹⁶⁶ and, by January 1942, the building was erected¹⁶⁷ and officially opened on 25 July 1942, by the High Commissioner for the government of India in South Africa.¹⁶⁸

This social nature of this venture was a great unifying factor as it brought the community together in the spirit of cooperation, whereas proselytization had always been the cause of much division.¹⁶⁹ Members of other faiths made various contributions to the Clinic - Khan's Hospital and Dispensary furnished the Labour Ward, Mr E.M Paruk, the Private Ward, Mr E.M. Mulla and Mr Ramportal, the General Ward.¹⁷⁰ Beside individual cash donations, private practitioners, such as L.G. Christopher and one Williams, also offered their services.¹⁷¹ Fees were levied according to one's earning, ranging from three

¹⁶⁵Minutes, Ibid, 11 September 1943, pp.100-101

¹⁶⁶Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.43

¹⁶⁷Ibid, 29 January 1942, pp.50, 51

¹⁶⁸Ibid, 17 October 1942, pp. 69, 70

¹⁶⁹Thillayavel Naidoo states: "Pentecostals need to develop a sense of concern with more immediate objectives such as the basic courtesies imperative in inter-religious interface before other long term concerns outside the arena of Christian theology can receive any consideration." (Naidoo, Thillayavel : Indian Pentecostalism - A Hindu Assessment, Department of Science of Religion, University of Durban-Westville, 1989, pp.98, 99.) G.C. Oosthuizen, in the foreword to Naidoo's thesis, states that the methods employed by the Pentecostal churches in the process of proselytization has had "not only religious repercussions but often also serious repercussions on the intergroup level." (Ibid)

¹⁷⁰Minutes, Ibid, 17 October 1942, pp.69, 70

¹⁷¹Williams, Ibid

pounds and three shillings to five pounds and five shillings. When Sister Grundy, the first matron of this clinic¹⁷² resigned, Sister M. van Graan was appointed.¹⁷³ The Clinic Management Committee consisted of the office-bearers, matron and the Stanger church board.¹⁷⁴ Poornamah Manikkam, sister of Samuel Manikkam, served as a nurse,¹⁷⁵ and Williams was appointed the maintenance manager.¹⁷⁶ Until 30 September 1944, the clinic had ministered to a total of 72 patients, of whom thirty-one were Indians, one White, nine Blacks and five Coloureds.¹⁷⁷

Two major problems were experienced in the few years of the Clinic's existence. The first concerned the arrogance and antipathy displayed by Grundy towards Indians. Williams related that three Indian ladies had walked a great distance and arrived outside the visiting hours, to comfort a convalescing inmate, who had lost her child. In spite of their pleas, Grundy refused permission to visit. While these ladies lingered, Grundy is reported to have angrily shouted: "You Indians must know rules and regulations. I told you dirty Indians to get out of this yard." Having rebuked her racist remark, Williams referred the incident to the board, who rightly felt that her attitude toward people of other faith had caused the Christian witness of the

¹⁷²Minutes, Ibid, 17 October 1942, pp.69, 70

¹⁷³Ibid, 11 September 1943, p. 101

¹⁷⁴Ibid, 17 October 1942, p.70 and 06 October 1943,p. 105

¹⁷⁵Ibid, 04 March 1944, p. 112

¹⁷⁶Ibid, 14 November 1942, p. 77

¹⁷⁷Ibid, 18 November 1944, p.136

institution great irreparable harm.¹⁷⁸

At the board meeting of 14 November 1942, Grundy was very vitriolic towards some members of the board and displayed gross arrogance.¹⁷⁹ A further meeting between the board, the Missionary Superintendent, and Grundy made the following findings:

- "1. Sister Grundy's spirit of intolerance and insubordination.
2. Her natural aversion for men and consequent disinclination to co-operate with a Board consisting of Indian men.
3. Her exclusive association with individuals outside of the (Apostolic Faith) Mission and the consequent lack of confidence.
4. The fact that she was not missionary minded which was abundantly proved by her non-appearance at any of our meetings.
5. The gross insults which she slung at visitors to the Clinic.
6. Her declaration in the Board Meetings of her non-confidence in our Missionary Superintendent and Executive Council.
7. Her insulting attitude towards our Overseer on all occasions. The feeling that this was prompted by a distinct

¹⁷⁸Williams, Ibid

¹⁷⁹Minutes, Ibid, 14 November 1942, p. 77

anti-Afrikaans spirit."¹⁸⁰

The board, noting her volatile temperament, her inability to relate civilly to Indians, her lack of Christian compassion and cooperation, accepted her resignation.¹⁸¹ On becoming bitter, Grundy joined the Full Gospel Church.¹⁸²

The second predicament concerned the pecuniary constraint that this endeavour put the church in. Due to the clinic's serving the labouring class, charges were minimal and numerous "pauper cases admitted". This created a great deficit, with the clinic at one time owing over one hundred and forty five pounds to its creditors. Applications made to the Secretary for Public Health, yielded no monetary assistance.¹⁸³ With the mounting pressure of creditors, and because the project could not fulfil the Missionary Council's ultimatum to become a viable project by August 1945, the clinic was shut down after three years of operation.¹⁸⁴

3.9. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMERGENCY AND BENEVOLENT FUND

The establishment of this Emergency Fund on 20 July 1940, is

¹⁸⁰Ibid, 29 November 1942, pp.79-81

¹⁸¹Ibid, 29 November 1942, p.81

¹⁸²Williams, Ibid

¹⁸³Minutes, Ibid, 18 November 1944, pp.135-136. Williams states that the government's failure to subsidise this important ministry to the community, contributed to the closure of this institution. (Williams, Ibid)

¹⁸⁴Minutes, Ibid, 27 January 1945, p. 151

another indication of the mission's seeking to relate the Christian faith to the area of social needs.¹⁸⁵ The contributions from each family, which was a shilling a month, was used for relief assistance for widows, orphans, the poor and even for funeral expenses.¹⁸⁶ The small amounts collected from the meagre wages of the members was also used towards the maternity clinic,¹⁸⁷ and a contribution made towards the Bengal Relief Fund.¹⁸⁸ However altruistic the motivation, Williams states that because of the low wage earned by the members, who were predominantly farm labourers, the Fund could not be kept operational for long.

3.10. THE SEEDS OF RACIAL SEPARATION

3.10.1. Adherents, not members!

It is important to establish members of the Stanger and District churches within the family of the AFM during these years. The revised Articles of Association of the AFM in 1946 defines members of the Indian Mission as adherents. It reads:

"1. The members of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa ... shall be composed of 200,000 persons of European descent ...

2. The Non-European, that is to say, the Indian, Coloured

¹⁸⁵Ibid, 20 July 1940, p. 6

¹⁸⁶Ibid, 23 January 1943, p. 84

¹⁸⁷Ibid, 18 November 1944, p. 135

¹⁸⁸bid, 17 July 1944, p. 116

and Bantu (Black) adherents to the teachings, doctrines and practices of the Mission, shall be governed by separate policies and instructions formulated and drawn up for the aforesaid communities by the Executive Council in consultation with the Missionary Council, and approved by the General Workers' Council."¹⁸⁹

3.10.2. A non-racial Church?

The initial impression one gains from the records of this period is that the Stanger Church had a non-racial composition. This is evidenced by the presence of Coloureds in the persons of the Forbays and the Laings, and Whites, such as the Budes and Dafels. Du Plessis states that due to the multi-racial character of the congregation a banner on the front wall of the church read: "Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, International Sanctuary".¹⁹⁰ While the Stanger church was not racially exclusive, the assumption that this reflects non-racialism may not be so easy to establish when one examines the facts.

The policy of the AFM was not one of racial integration but the creation of separate and racially exclusive churches. Williams states that an AFM church for Blacks had already been established in Erasmus Dam, during the period of Flewelling's ministry.¹⁹¹ There is no mention of a Black person serving on

¹⁸⁹AFM ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION, Comforter, March 1946, p.7

¹⁹⁰Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

¹⁹¹Williams, Ibid

the board in Stanger. Further, as stated earlier, there was already in existence, an AFM church for Whites in Stanger. Still later, the Coloureds separated.

The reference to Budge and Dafel as members of the Stanger Church can be contradicted by the following argument. Their presence may not be interpreted as accepting membership of the Stanger Church. It was a policy of the AFM which became policy of the Indian mission that White Christians should assist as lay workers in the churches of other racial groups,¹⁹² which was their role in Stanger.¹⁹³ This is also indicated by the fact that they "were appointed to take charge of the work" in the absence of Du Plessis.¹⁹⁴ When the Indian mission had to be represented at the AFM Natal Workers' Conference, in Volksrust, in August 1940, Du Plessis, Dafel and Budge were nominated because this was a "Whites only" conference, according to AFM policy.¹⁹⁵ The minutes of 29 January 1942 reads:

"The Chairman said that Brothers Budge and Dafel were office bearers in the Indian Mission Field and that both of them supported the work by paying their tithes into the treasury. He also stated that if the tithes of these brethren were withdrawn the work would suffer a great financial loss. The Chairman requested the ruling of the Executive Council in this matter of what was to happen to

¹⁹²AFM Indian Church Policy, Regulations 104, 105

¹⁹³Minutes, Ibid, 11 January 1941, p.13

¹⁹⁴Ibid, 20 September 1941, p.34

¹⁹⁵Ibid, 28 August 1940, p.7

these brethren when a Full-time Pastor arrived in Stanger for the European Work."¹⁹⁶

The controversy surrounding their presence in the Indian mission revolved around their financial contribution.¹⁹⁷ The General Secretary stated "that these brethren should continue to tithe into the Indian treasury for as long as they were actively involved in the Indian work."¹⁹⁸ Du Plessis agreed that their presence had important financial implications for the struggling Stanger and District churches.¹⁹⁹ The records show that by September 1943, these men had withdrawn their tithes²⁰⁰ and by 1944, they had left the Indian mission when O.H. Raper arrived as the new pastor of the "White" church in Stanger.²⁰¹ It must be remembered that Whites were regarded as members and people of colour were adherents of the AFM. It is evident that these families had not surrendered their membership, and so could not be fully-fledged members of the Indian mission. Their presence served certain practical purposes, i.e. financial support and as lay workers. In the light of the above one cannot refer to the Stanger Church as being non-racial. The presence of Whites in the Indian mission hereafter is only in the capacity of oversight and

¹⁹⁶Ibid, 29 January 1942, p.49

¹⁹⁷Ibid, 4 March 1942, p.54

¹⁹⁸Ibid, 4 March 1942, p.54

¹⁹⁹Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

²⁰⁰Minutes, Ibid, 11 September 1943, p.102

²⁰¹Williams, Ibid

control.²⁰²

3.10.3. Further separation between Indian and Black missions

Further separation between the Black and Indian missions became evident when in January 1941, the Stanger Church board decided to withdraw its financial support of James Forbay, because he was assistant to Flewelling in the Black mission as interpreter. The recommendation was that the Black mission support him.²⁰³ Concerning the Annual Sunday School Prize distribution and Picnic on 23 January 1942, "one of the members (of the board) remarked that he noticed some native (Black) girls in the classes" and that they had also participated in the rally in Durban. "He commented that this was un(in)advisable ... (and) that natives should be encouraged to attend the Native Sunday School ... in Bozama."²⁰⁴

On 18 August 1942, M.D. Kasselmann, a visiting evangelist from Johannesburg, made some suggestions for the "betterment of the Indian Work." One of the suggestions was the separation between the Black and the Indian missions for the "betterment of this great and needy (Indian) field". His motivations were that the Blacks and Indian communities have different customs and forms of worship. The envisaged separation would remove a "great burden" from the Missionary Superintendent, who could therefore

²⁰²Minutes, Ibid, 20 July 1944, p.119 and Castle, p.23

²⁰³Ibid, 11 January 1941, p.14

²⁰⁴Ibid, 23 January 1942, p.43

concentrate exclusively on the Indian mission, which he would represent directly on the Missionary and Executive Councils.²⁰⁵ Du Plessis states that this was not a separation of the races, as Blacks had a separate place of worship at Erasmus Dam by this time. This was merely to appoint a Missionary Superintendent exclusively for the Indian mission, which was the cry of the board for some time.²⁰⁶ Would the work not have been richer, and the various communities enriched by a spirit of integration than segregation?

At the close of this period of ministry of Du Plessis, there were three full-time pastors, referred to as evangelists viz. S. Manikkam, D.F. Williams, H. James and many local preachers. With little formal education, no theological training or any form of preparation for the ministry, these young men faced many struggles to fulfil their ministry. Churches were established along the Natal North Coast as far as Zululand, and down the South Coast as far as Harding. Numerical growth was slow and proselytization often brought the AFM into conflict with the Baptist Church in the north. Establishment of churches was slow because of a shortage of land and a lack of financial support. There were two church buildings, in Stanger and Darnall and two church sites in Kearsney and Harding. A Maternity Clinic was established, operated for a few years and had to close down for lack of finance. Works were established in Stanger, Darnall, Kearsney and outreaches in Zululand, in Amatikulu and Empangeni,

²⁰⁵Ibid, 18 August 1942, p.62

²⁰⁶Du Plessis, Ibid

and in Mt Edgecombe, and in the South Coast of Natal, in Harding, and around Durban in Clairwood and Overport. The AFM continued along strict racial lines, and members of the Indian, Black or Coloured mission seen as adherents and not as members.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE LATER YEARS

In the decades following 1946 AFM churches were planted in many Indian areas, predominantly in Natal and a few struggling churches in the Transvaal. On the event of the diamond jubilee of the Stanger Church, Paul D. Murugen, past chairperson of the North Coast District Council of the AFM, remarked: "(from) the seed that fell to the ground, ... (a) mighty tree (Stanger Church) ... grew up, with its branches spreading North and South ... all over South Africa (and) to the ends of the earth."¹ Ronnie Naidoo, the present Moderator of the Indian Section of the AFM, affirms that the Indian Mission had grown and spread further north and south of Stanger, and inland into all parts of Natal, and as far afield as the Transvaal, with supporting works in Mauritius and India.² Statistics reveal that in the year of golden jubilee of the AFM Indian Section there were 6865 members, 17 full-time workers and 19 fully-fledged assemblies. By the diamond jubilee year statistics reveal a hundredfold increase. The Moderator reported: " ... we presently have 12,000 members, 34 full-time workers and 33 assemblies with many outreach works. We are also reaching out to Mauritius and India."³ We shall endeavour a cursory glance at the spread and development of these churches. Thereafter we will discuss the many secessions that had plagued the denomination and the establishment of a Bible College

¹Stanger DJB, p.38

²Ibid, p.34

³AFM DJB, p.9

in Durban. It will also be necessary to view the structural developments within the Indian Section which had contributed to the development of the Composite Church, comprising the Indian, Black and Coloured Sections.

4.1. THE AFM "INDIAN" CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1.1. Durban and surrounding areas

In 1959 Henry James was transferred from the Stanger Church and became pastor of the **CLAIRWOOD CHURCH** of twenty members and earned an average income of five pounds per month. Services were held in a rented church in Horseshoe Road, built by C.S. Flewelling for Black AFM Christians. In 1961 the Group Areas Act forced the removal of people who were living together to racially exclusive townships, all on the outskirts of Durban -Blacks were moved to Lamontville and Umlazi, Coloureds to Wentworth and Indians to Merebank and Chatsworth. The church at Clairwood thus ceased to exist. James, with a nucleus of 50 Indian Christians who had moved away from Clairwood, began the **MEREWENT CHURCH**, in Merebank. A church building was erected in 1965.⁴ Evangelistic outreach was undertaken in the neighbouring Indian areas, including, Chatsworth.⁵ After the death of James in 1987, Mark Pillay, a member of the assembly, was appointed pastor of the Merebank Church in 1990. Presently the membership of the church

⁴AFM DJB, p.28

⁵AFM GJB, pp.13,14

is 500, including children.⁶ The **OVERPORT CHURCH** rented an outbuilding in Booth Road in 1961 for conducting services. Over the years the numerical growth in this church had been minimal, with statistics for 1975 showing 70 adults and 20 children.⁷ Samuel Muthusamy served as elder and was followed by Jimmy B. Murugen, who was a lay preacher in the Methodist Church before joining the AFM in 1958. Others who served as pastors here were Tom Govender, from the Westcliff Assembly, M. Chinappan and, in 1991, Richard Stephen.⁸ Stephen's mode of ministry resulted in some discontentment among members, who subsequently withdrew their financial support. This provoked the resignation of Stephen from the AFM that year. Presently the church here is not operational and the Executive Council had been contemplating closing down the assembly.⁹ Ronnie Naidoo attributes this to the relocation of members to Newlands and Phoenix. He added that the opening of a new church under the auspices of Durban Christian Centre has won the remaining members.¹⁰ The **NEWLANDS WEST CHURCH**, which started in August 1988 in the home of one Bala Reddy, now has 65 members. M.P. Naidoo was appointed pastor of the church¹¹ but he resigned from the AFM early in 1992. Elias

⁶AFM DJB, pp.28ff

⁷Oosthuizen, Pentecostal Penetration, p.96

⁸AFM DJB, p.33

⁹Naidoo, Jonathan, General Secretary of the Indian Section, and Vice-chairperson of the Greater Durban Region of the AFM, Composite Church, Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 5 October 1992.

¹⁰Naidoo, Ronnie, Moderator of Indian Section, AFM, Personal Interview, Durban, 13 October 1992

¹¹AFM DJB, pp.32,33

Govender has been inducted as minister.¹² A little assembly of 30 Christians in **AVOCA** which was initiated by P.K. Johnson, former member of the Mount Edgecombe Church, and one Derek Pillay, affiliated with the AFM in March 1987. Ricky Moses was appointed pastor in 1988 and Sas Govender from 1989 until 1991.¹³

4.1.2. Chatsworth and surrounding areas

When R. Ezra left Stanger in 1964 to resettle in Chatsworth, he gathered about 20 Christians who had also moved into the new township, to begin a new church in Bayview. His invitation to Henry James to minister the eucharist to the little congregation every month resulted in disharmony between them. Consequently Ezra left with about 30 fellow Christians to start an independent church, which later affiliated with the PPC.¹⁴ James continued his ministry here and his efforts laid the foundations for a church to be built in **WESTCLIFF, CHATSWORTH** in January 1973. The elder, Nathaniel Rajanna, was responsible for the oversight of the work under James. Vasie Pillay was inducted as pastor in July 1973, and served till his resignation in 1982. Between 1972 and 1976 over twelve young people entered various training institutions in preparation for the ministry.¹⁵ They included

¹²Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

¹³AFM DJB, p.12

¹⁴Ezra, R. (Interview), Ibid

¹⁵AFM DJB, pp.43,44

Elijah Morgan, Dean C. Reddy,¹⁶ Abel David, Aaron and his wife, Pat Govender, Silas David, Jonathan Naidoo, Sivey and Sagren Pillay, Vivian Subramoney and Morgan Henry. Having retired from his secular employment, David James, brother to Henry James, was inducted as pastor in 1982 and served until 1988, when he resigned from the denomination after his retirement that year.¹⁷ Jonathan Naidoo assumed the pastorate in 1991. The assembly presently boasts nearly 600 members which includes children.¹⁸

The **ARENA PARK CHURCH**, known as "Pentecostal Revival Centre" before its affiliation with the AFM, was initiated in September 1972 by Bashu Singh, who served as the first pastor. When Singh was transferred as pastor to the Laudium Church, Pretoria, Prem Harriardass, an elder of the church, was appointed pastor. The assembly of 250 members purchased the property where the members congregated for R70,000 from Singh.¹⁹ The **HAVENSIDE CHURCH** was launched in 1982 by Sivey Pillay with four families meeting in the home of one Victor Vee, a former member of the Pentecostal Repentant Church (PRC), Chatsworth. From 1986 to 1988 Joseph D'Allende served as pastor. Sivey Pillay continues as pastor since 1988.²⁰ The church of 200 members has now rented a hall in

¹⁶Oosthuizen, Ibid, p.251

¹⁷Ibid

¹⁸Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

¹⁹AFM DJB, p.11. Mrs P. Harriardass, wife to Prem Harriardass, states that the membership had dropped due to members relocating to Phoenix. 7 October 1992.

²⁰AFM DJB, pp. 19,20

the Rocket Towers Centre, in Bayview, Chatsworth.²¹ In 1991 another assembly of 50 members was inaugurated in **HAVENSIDE**. M.Chinappan has been appointed pastor of this group.²² The **SOUL SAVERS OUTREACH**, in **BAYVIEW**, had affiliated with the AFM in 1991. Eugene Pillay, pastor of the 200 members, was formerly a member of the Members in Christ Assembly (MICA).²³ The **MOBENI HEIGHTS CHURCH**, which began in May 1989, has 30 members with Rocky Moodley serving as the pastor.²⁴

The **SHALLCROSS CHURCH** was initiated in 1976 by Pubal Govender, a member of the Merewent Church. Elders Raymond John and Thambi Pillay supervised the assembly of 70 members until August 1986 when Vasudhevan Dorasamy, of the Westcliff Assembly, was inducted as pastor. Three members, including one Samuel Matthews, registered at the Covenant Bible College in preparation for the ministry.²⁵ In January 1991, Ashwin Anirudhe was inducted as pastor.²⁶ Evangelistic outreach by the Shallcross Church has resulted in the formation of the **GOOD SAMARITAN CHURCH**, in Montford.²⁷ In 1991, Rhandon Nagoor was appointed pastor of this small assembly of 50 members.²⁸ In the same vicinity, a church

²¹Naidoo, Jonathan

²²Ibid

²³Ibid

²⁴AFM DJB, p.30

²⁵Ibid, pp.38,39

²⁶Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

²⁷AFM DJB, Ibid

²⁸Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

called the **BREAD OF LIFE** has been established in 1990. Siva Pillay, formerly a member of the New Protestant Church in Chatsworth, pioneered this work which now has 100 members.²⁹ In 1991 in **MOORTON**, a church of 60 members has been founded with Ashwin Balram as pastor.³⁰

The church in **MARIANNHILL**, adjoining Chatsworth, was launched in 1975 by M.S. Morgan, who served as the first pastor, and the then Missionary Overseer, C.S. Kantor. Abel David succeeded Morgan in 1977, and Jonathan Naidoo served from 1981 to 1991. The church has about 300 members. In October 1988 the Samaritan Centre for counselling and rehabilitation was opened in Mariannhill by Jonathan Naidoo.³¹ Vasudhaven Dorasamy has been appointed pastor since January 1991.³² An outreach in **WYEBANK**, about 10 km away from Mariannhill, led to the formation of a church there in 1987. Since January 1991 Samuel Matthews has been serving as the pastor of this church of 40 members.³³ The **CROSSMOOR VICTORY CENTRE**, with about 40 members, meeting in Crossmoor, is an outreach station of Mariannhill Church, and is soon to be an independent church.³⁴

²⁹Ibid

³⁰Ibid

³¹AFM DJB, pp.27,28

³²Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

³³Ibid

³⁴Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

4.1.3. Natal South Coast

The **MALAGAZI ASSEMBLY, ISIPINGO**, about 20 km south of Durban, was started in 1967 by Sonny Kannigan of the Merewent assembly. A church stands erected on property leased from the Isipingo Town Council. Presently the 250-member church is controlled by an elected committee with branch services being held in the nearby **ORIENT PARK**.³⁵ A new assembly, called **POWER CENTRE**, with 100 members was started in 1991 in **LOTUS PARK, ISIPINGO**. Roy Kawalpersadh has been appointed pastor of this church which presently is under the jurisdiction of the Merewent Church board.³⁶ The **UMZINTO** and **UMKOMAAS ASSEMBLIES** were pioneered by Henry James in the 1970's and had a combined membership of 70. Frank James, brother of H. James, served as pastor for both assemblies for ten years.³⁷ In 1991 Frank James resigned from the AFM and affiliated, together with these two fledgling assemblies, with another denomination.³⁸ Since the inception of the **PORT SHEPSTONE CHURCH** in May 1990,³⁹ there has been marked numerical growth, with membership increasing from 40 to approximately 120. Presently Rex Krishna serves as pastor here.⁴⁰ The church at **HARDING** continued under the elder Jacob

³⁵AFM DJB, p.21

³⁶Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

³⁷AFM DJB, p.45

³⁸Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

³⁹AFM DJB, Ibid

⁴⁰Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

Govender, with a membership of 80 adult and 90 children.⁴¹ In 1991 Sas Govender was appointed pastor here.⁴²

4.1.4. Mount Edgecombe-Phoenix-Verulam Complex

Since 1953 M.S. Morgan was the recognised Evangelist of the **MOUNT EDGECOMBE ASSEMBLY**. R.G. Francis was appointed the local pastor on June 1956. M.S. Morgan was ordained as pastor on 21 April 1958 and continued until his transfer in October 1966. C.R. Timothy was appointed pastor from 1968 to 1971, Paul Devadasan Murugen from 1972 to 1981, Dean C. Reddy from 1978⁴³ to 1982, Abel David from 1982 to 1987, Robert Munien from 1987 to June 1992,⁴⁴ and Paul Varathan from July 1992 onwards.⁴⁵ At present, after a recent secession, the remaining members have combined with the Phoenix Restoration Tabernacle to form an amalgamated church of 320 members.⁴⁶ One elder, C.K. Harry, played a prominent role in the expansion of the church in the early years.⁴⁷

The **VERULAM** and **BUFFELSDRAAI ASSEMBLIES** began as evangelistic outreaches of the Mount Edgecombe Church, under C.K. Harry in

⁴¹AFM DJB, pp.20,21

⁴²Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁴³Reddy, D.C., pp.4,7,11-13

⁴⁴Munien, Robert : Personal Interview, Phoenix, 7 October 1992

⁴⁵Ibid

⁴⁶Varathan, Paul : Personal Interview, Phoenix, 13 Oct 1992

⁴⁷Reddy, p.9

1976 and later became independent. The Buffelsdraai Church, which was officially opened in June 1979, has 150 members. C.K. Harry served as pastor for both assemblies until Andrew Govender, from the Tongaat assembly, was appointed as pastor for Buffelsdraai in March 1990. Harry continued to serve as pastor of Verulam Church with over 250 members.⁴⁸ A further sub-division of the Mount Edgecombe assembly in July 1981 led to the formation of the present **PHOENIX VICTORY CENTRE** with Paul D. Murugen as pastor. The congregation of 300 members meet in a newly erected church building in Eastbury, Phoenix.⁴⁹

PHOENIX RESTORATION TABERNACLE was started in Stanmore, Phoenix in November 1982 by Paul Varathan, a former member of the Phoenix Victory Centre.⁵⁰ As stated above, the church amalgamated with the Mount Edgecombe Church in July 1992, with Paul Varathan as pastor.⁵¹ In January 1987, Richard Stephen was appointed as pastor of the assembly of 70 members in **SASTRI PARK, PHOENIX**.⁵² Upon Stephen's transfer in 1991, Leslie Moonsamy was inducted as pastor.⁵³ The **PHOENIX FAITH MINISTRIES**, with a membership of 150 under Preggy Dick, who serves as pastor, affiliated with the AFM in April 1989.⁵⁴

⁴⁸AFM DJB, pp. 13,43

⁴⁹Ibid, p.37

⁵⁰Ibid, pp.34,35

⁵¹Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁵²AFM DJB, pp.35,36

⁵³Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁵⁴AFM DJB, pp.45,46

4.1.5. Natal Midlands

On 17 June 1964, five men, John R. Paul, M.P. Naidoo, Dickson Moodley, Clement Reddy and Dorasamy Devar, started the **PATMOS TEMPLE**, in Northdale, **PIETERMARITZBURG**, which they affiliated to the AFM.⁵⁵ On 7 June 1969 a new church building was officially opened in Mysore Road.⁵⁶ J.R. Paul served as the pastor until his death in 1970.⁵⁷ C.R. Timothy succeeded as pastor from 1971 to 1975, Paul Saul from 1976 until his resignation in 1980, and since 1981 Aaron Govender has been the pastor of the church which now has about 300 members.⁵⁸ Outreach work has led to the establishment of churches in Dalton and Richmond.⁵⁹ Employment in the newly established sugar mill in **DALTON**, approximately 50 km south-east of Pietermaritzburg, attracted some Christian families to settle here in 1966. V. Lazarus and Shadrack V. Nathaniel began a church here. The building of a church in Dalton was completed in December 1975. The assembly of 150 members continued under the leadership of S.V. Nathaniel, who later was appointed the pastor.⁶⁰ Since Nathaniel relinquished his position in 1991, Ricky Moses was inducted as the minister. The **PARADISE ASSEMBLY, GLENCOE**, was started by Martin Hattingh, Vice-chairperson of the AFM Glencoe Assembly, White Section. On 28 May

⁵⁵Ibid, p.33. AFM GJB, pp.25,26

⁵⁶Ibid

⁵⁷Ibid

⁵⁸AFM DJB, p.34

⁵⁹Ibid

⁶⁰Ibid, p.14 and AFM GJB, pp.25,26

1989 the pioneer assembly was established, with Hattingh in charge and Nathaniel assisting in 1990.⁶¹ Since the formation of the Composite Church, Hattingh, having resigned from the White Section, has been appointed the local pastor for this church of 100 members.⁶²

4.1.6. Natal North Coast and Zululand

The **TONGAAT CHURCH** was initiated in 1965 by Paul Saul, son of B.M. Saul of Zululand, who remained pastor of the Tongaat Church for ten years. Randle Narayani, former member of Westcliff Assembly, Chatsworth, served as pastor for a year. Ronnie Naidoo, present Moderator, was inducted pastor of the assembly in May 1979. A church building was purchased from the Catholic Church for R40,000 in 1980. When Ronnie Naidoo became full-time Moderator in 1987, Lazarus Govindsamy, a graduate of the Covenant Bible College of the AFM, was inducted as the new pastor of 500 members.⁶³ Govindsamy had resigned from the AFM in July 1992 and Ronnie Naidoo is now serving as pastor of the church.⁶⁴ In **STANGER**, through the strenuous effort of D.F. Williams, the new and larger church building was officially opened in December 1986 to accommodate the 500 members.⁶⁵ Williams resigned from the AFM

⁶¹Ibid, pp.18,19

⁶²Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁶³AFM DJB, pp.41,42

⁶⁴Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁶⁵Williams (Interview), Ibid

in March 1988, after his retirement.⁶⁶ Sagren Pillay, who served as an assistant pastor since 1982, has since been appointed to the pastorate here.⁶⁷ As members relocated, the remaining members of the **KEARSNEY CHURCH** were absorbed into the Stanger Church.⁶⁸ The **DARNALL CHURCH** continued for a while under the guidance of elders Neethee Samuel and Marcus Munien, and thereafter under the pastoral oversight of M.S. Morgan. Aaron Govender assumed the pastorate from 1977 to 1981, Sagren Pillay from 1986 to 1988 and Vivian Subramoney from 1988 to 1989. Since October 1989, Emmanuel Varathan has been inducted as pastor of the 250 members.⁶⁹ The church in **FELIXTON, ZULULAND** was led by the elder, Ram Anamanthu, from 1969 until Abel David was inducted as pastor in 1981. The latter resigned in 1982.⁷⁰ Presently Nolan Naidoo is the pastor of the church of about 40 members.⁷¹ The **RICHARDS BAY CHURCH** began in August 1986. Lulu Andrews is pastor to approximately 200 members here.⁷²

4.1.7. Transvaal

The **ACTONVILLE CHURCH, BENONI**, was begun in February 1981 when Dan Patrick and his family, from Merebank, settled here. Vivian

⁶⁶Ibid

⁶⁷AFM DJB, pp.40,41. Refer also to Stanger DJB, pp.13,14

⁶⁸Ibid

⁶⁹Ibid, p.16

⁷⁰Ibid, p.18

⁷¹Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁷²AFM DJB, pp. 37,38

Subramoney worked as a pastor here in 1982, before he resigned from this assembly of 32 members.⁷³ The gathering has now dwindled to 10 members, and since 1991 is no longer recognised as an assembly by the Executive Council.⁷⁴ Churches were also initiated in **LENASIA**, Johannesburg, by Colin Garach and in **LAUDIUM**, Pretoria, by Leggie Naidoo. Bashu Singh was pastor of the Laudium assembly for a few years until he resigned in 1983. Abel Frank was appointed pastor in Lenasia South for a few years until he resigned in 1985 to form an independent church. These assemblies of the AFM are no longer existent.⁷⁵ In 1988 through C.S. Spies, pastor of the AFM Ermelo Assembly, White Section, started an assembly in **CASSIM PARK, ERMELO**. Elias Govender, from the Mount Edgecombe assembly, was inducted in 1988 as pastor for the 8 families in the assembly. A property has been purchased for erecting a church building here.⁷⁶ Contentions among the members led to Govender's transfer to Durban early in 1992. Nolan Naidoo had served as pastor for a few months. Presently the assembly is under the pastoral oversight of Spies. There is uncertainty concerning the continuance of the work here also.⁷⁷ With the formation of the Composite Church, there are plans to grant the nearest regional council oversight of this work.⁷⁸

⁷³Ibid, p.12

⁷⁴Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁷⁵Ibid

⁷⁶AFM DJB, pp.16,17

⁷⁷Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁷⁸Naidoo, Ronnie (Interview), Ibid

4.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A BIBLE COLLEGE

In 1956, when Charles Neilsen was the Missionary Overseer, funds were raised from USA to begin a Bible College for the Indian Mission.⁷⁹ A property was leased from the Durban City Council in Tarndale Avenue, Overport, where the Natal Indian Bible Training Institute (NIBTI) was established.⁸⁰ Two years later, as a result of administrative problems, the College came under investigation by the Missionary Council and was subsequently closed.⁸¹ The opportunity of providing theological training for the Indian clergy was thus lost and only reawakened twenty years later. In the meanwhile those who were interested in training for the pastoral ministry registered at Bible colleges of other denominations.⁸² In 1982, W.L. Wilson, an American pastor, offered to begin a Bible College for the AFM, Indian Section.⁸³ The Covenant Bible College (CBC) was launched in 1983 in the Westcliff Church, which was temporarily used as a venue. The Lyric Theatre in Sydney Road, Durban, was purchased for R20,000 in 1985, and presently accommodates the College and the offices of this Section. Wilson served as the first principal, succeeded by his American son-in-law, Glen Davies. The Executive Council decided to become the Curatorium of the College. Jonathan Naidoo

⁷⁹Minutes, Natal Indian District Workers' Council (NIDWC), 18 February 1956, p.86

⁸⁰Ibid, 15 December 1956

⁸¹Ibid, 29 November 1958

⁸²Oosthuizen, pp.251,255

⁸³Naidoo, Ronnie, Ibid

assumes that this resulted in the resignation of Davies, because the latter expected the institution to remain autonomous.⁸⁴ The present principal, Ronnie Naidoo, had been appointed in 1986. Eighty five students, some belonging to other denominations, have graduated from CBC to date. Presently there are 102 students registered in the College, of which 36 are full-time. Prospective ministers, having gone through the required training at CBC are generally appointed to fledgling assemblies, which often begins as outreach centres of nearby churches. Ronnie Naidoo therefore states that CBC has been an important factor in the increase of the number of pastors and churches.⁸⁵ This progress has been bedeviled by several schisms which eventually led to numerous resignations and secessions. This has contributed to the formation of various independent churches which we now turn to.

4.3. SECESSIONS FROM THE AFM

The earliest secession that affected the AFM as a whole was the result of a heated debate in the late 1950's, concerning the involvement of pastors in politics. G.R. Wessels, an ordained minister and Vice-President of the AFM, was nominated by the Nationalist Party to the extended senate in 1955, to serve under the then Prime Minister Strydom. The resulting schism of 1958 witnessed the exodus of members who disagreed with Wessels' nomination, and the involvement of pastors in politics. So began the first congregation of a new pentecostal denomination under

⁸⁴Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁸⁵Naidoo, Ronnie, Ibid. Refer also to AFM DJB, p.10

the name, **PENTECOSTAL PROTESTANT CHURCH (PPC)**, in Observatory, Cape in September of that year.⁸⁶ J.C. Treptow, the Overseer of the Indian Mission for 1958, also resigned from the AFM that year to join the PPC.⁸⁷ The earliest members to leave the AFM Indian Mission to join the PPC were Samuel Manikkam,⁸⁸ and Aaron Lazarus.⁸⁹ Manikkam's resignation, according to Du Plessis, was occasioned by the irregularity with which he had been receiving his salary from the Missionary Council. He also added that the influence of Treptow, who had "poisoned Bobby's mind against the AFM because of the Wessels affair", had a great part in the latter's decision.⁹⁰ On the other hand, the resignation of Lazarus, who served as elder of the Mount Edgecombe assembly from 1955 to 1959,⁹¹ was due to an unpleasant incident involving Treptow.⁹² The minutes of the Mount Edgecombe board for 12 April 1959 reads:

"During Pastor Treptow's visit, he (Treptow) insisted that during the presence of a pastor it was not rightful for an elder to go to the pulpit ... (Since) then Brother Aaron

⁸⁶For a fuller treatment of the schism refer Burger, pp.324-338. Also refer Lapoorta, Jaapie : Is the White Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa Politically Neutral or Apolitical? Unpublished paper, 1991, pp. 5,6 and Horn, Nico : South African Pentecostals and Apartheid. A Short Case Study of the AFM of SA, Unpublished paper, 1991, pp.7,8

⁸⁷Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

⁸⁸Pillay, Sagren, Ibid. This was confirmed by Du Plessis.

⁸⁹Reddy, D.C., pp. 8,9

⁹⁰Du Plessis, Ibid

⁹¹Reddy, D.C., p.15

⁹²Minutes, AFM Mount Edgecombe Church Board, 31 January 1959

did not attend services."⁹³

On 6 September 1959, Lazarus resigned from the AFM and began a new branch for the PPC in Mount Edgecombe.⁹⁴

The Merewent Church experienced four secessions in the 1980's. **THE SAINTS CHURCH OF SA** began in Merebank in March 1981 with C.G. Ernest as pastor. Ernest, a local pastor in the Merewent Church, together with two other families, resigned from the AFM that year. He alleges that the success of his ministry brought him into conflict with Henry James. This, together with his contention about the maladministration of local church funds, led him to resign. The present membership of the Saints Church, including its five outstations, is about 550. At the same time as Ernest's resignation, a large contingent of members of the Merewent Church, under Gopaul Naidoo, also seceded to form an independent assembly which later affiliated with the South African Evangelical Mission (SAEM).⁹⁵

In 1982, Charles Paul resigned from the AFM to pioneer the **BETHEL PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP**, which has about 350 members who meet in Merebank and Chatsworth. His wife, Radha Paul, attributes their resignation to the fact that the leadership of the Church had not given due recognition to her husband's alleged ministry of divine healing. She adds: "He felt stifled in his ministry and the good

⁹³Ibid, 12 April 1959. See also Reddy, pp.8,9

⁹⁴Reddy, D.C., p.9

⁹⁵Ernest, C.G. : Personal Interview, Merebank, 12 July 1991

reports were not well received by the local leadership."⁹⁶ The other secession was under Pubal Govender who started an independent church in Isipingo, which is now affiliated to the Durban Christian Centre.

In 1990, G.N. John, a local pastor, and about 15 members, left the Merewent assembly, apparently dissatisfied with the induction of Mark Pillay as pastor. They accepted membership in the Havenside church under Sivey Pillay.⁹⁷ The churches of the AFM in Umzinto and Umkomaas ceased to exist when Frank James resigned in January 1991 and affiliated his combined congregation of about 70 members with the **CHRISTIAN REVIVAL CENTRE**. According to Jonathan Naidoo, James' reason for resignation was his dissatisfaction with the Executive Council's lack of recognition of his ministry and training for ordination. Naidoo adds that his stipend had been subsidized by the Executive Council for over ten years, while the church showed no signs of numerical or financial growth.⁹⁸

Not taking into account the schism between Ezra and James in 1964, the Westcliff Assembly in Chatsworth experienced three major secessions in the 1980's and numerous individual resignations. The first group of about 70 members left the church in March 1982 under Vasie Pillay to form the **SILOAM ASSEMBLY**, in Westcliff, Chatsworth, which later affiliated with the **APOSTOLIC**

⁹⁶Paul, Radha : Personal Interview, Merebank, 8 October 1992

⁹⁷Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁹⁸Ibid

CHURCH OF GREAT BRITAIN. Pillay, who served as pastor in the AFM for ten years, states that he came into conflict with the local church board which he claims had been exercising undue authority over him as the minister.⁹⁹ The second secession in September of the same year, comprised a group of approximately 100 members under the leadership of Abel Jacob, and the youth group which he founded, called the Soldiers of the Cross. They were disillusioned with the board's management of the affairs of the church. At the same time, Dean C. Reddy resigned his pastorate in Mount Edgecombe to assume pastoral oversight of this little assembly which became known as the **FREE CHURCH OF CHRIST.**¹⁰⁰ In July 1988, David James and 70 members resigned to form the **CHATSWORTH EVANGELISTIC CENTRE.** Being a member of the AFM since he was seven years old, he states that he was dissatisfied with the Executive Council which did not exercise proper protocol regarding his retirement. He also questions the wisdom of the Council in not retaining his services after retirement in June 1988. In the same vein he castigates the church board, which he regards as having "no vision for expansion" and being "too authoritative".¹⁰¹ In 1980 Morgan Henry resigned from the AFM, when his application for the full-time ministry in the denomination received no positive response from the Executive Council. He was accepted as pastor by T.J. Bronkhorst of the Faith Centre, Chatsworth. Together with members who left the Faith Centre in November 1987, he established and assumed

⁹⁹Pillay, Vasie : Personal Interview, Merebank, 17 July 1991

¹⁰⁰Personal Information

¹⁰¹James, D (Interview), Ibid

pastoral oversight of an independent church, called **FAMILY WORSHIP CENTRE**, in Chatsworth which now has about 300 members.¹⁰² In 1982, while pursuing his studies for the ministry at the International Bible College, Reggie Kisten resigned from the AFM to join an independent church called the Pentecostal Revival Church (PRC). He states:

"the AFM was not using ones ministry to the fullest. The pastor, himself not adequately qualified, had provided no motivation for young people towards theological or biblical studies. For years the board was controlled by some individuals whose only interest has been in holding certain offices in the church without encouraging others to participate in the ministry of the local church."

In 1984 he resigned from the PRC to establish **TRUTH AND LIFE MINISTRIES**, an independent church which presently has about 150 members in Chatsworth and Phoenix.¹⁰³

The Mount Edgecōmbe Church has not been untouched by this fissiparous tendency as it also experienced two secessions. After Dean C. Reddy resigned in September 1982, approximating 200 members resigned in protest two months later. Reddy's protest was against the racist policy followed by the AFM, exacerbated by the poor leadership within the Indian section due to a lack of proper training. An independent church to serve the Mount Edgecombe-Phoenix-Verulam areas was formed which, together with the church

¹⁰²Henry, Shirley : Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 08 October 1992

¹⁰³Kisten, Reggie : Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 16 July 1991

in Chatsworth, constituted the **FREE CHURCH OF CHRIST**. Ten years later, in June 1992, Robert Munien's resignation from the AFM led to a mass resignation of approximately 85% of this congregation. He launched the **CHURCH IN PHOENIX** with 300 members including children. This also occasioned the resignation of Lazarus Govindsamy and M.P. Naidoo, who joined Munien as co-pastors. Munien attributes his resignation to his inability to cope with the rigid hierarchy and institutionalism existent within the AFM. He alleged that the ecclesiastical hierarchical defrauds the local church of its biblical autonomy in the temporal and spiritual sphere. He adds that ecclesiastical institutionalism curtails the charismatic operations within the church giving little or no scope to its "ministry gifts" such as apostles, prophets and evangelists.¹⁰⁴ In 1986 Abel David resigned from the AFM for reasons similar to those given by Munien. He adds that the racist and democratic structure by which the denomination is constituted is "not of God". He complained of experiencing great isolation while in the ministry, as "there is a great lack of a family spirit within the AFM". In January 1988 he pioneered a church called the **RESTORATION CENTRE**, which presently has a membership of about 150, and meets in a renovated home in Riet River (Mount Vernon), near Verulam. The church is presently affiliated to the New Covenant Ministries.¹⁰⁵ An interview with Paul D. Murugen reveals that "after 30 years as a member of the AFM, of which 20 have been spent in the ministry", he finally decided to resign from the AFM as of 31

¹⁰⁴Munien, Robert, Ibid .

¹⁰⁵David, Abel : Personal Interview, Phoenix, 15 July 1991

December 1992. He stated that his ecclesiological understanding has undergone a change through the influence of the Restoration movement and the teaching of an American, Billy Schuetz. He rejected the hierarchical structure and institutionalism of the AFM, claiming that the autonomy of the local church is a biblical concept to be followed. He said: "I do not believe that the church can be democratically run. I believe in a family concept of the church, where the pastor is the father figure. Children (members) do not have a vote to run the home."¹⁰⁶

In the second half of the 1970's, the Pietermaritzburg congregation began experiencing grave problems with its minister Paul Saul. Due to the nature of the allegations levelled against Saul, many members had anticipated that disciplinary action would be taken against him. This failed to materialise. The Executive Council however, in the absence of factual evidence, reinstated Saul. This act led to two secessions. About sixty members, led by Sunny Paul, son the founding pastor, John R. Paul, resigned in protest. On 3 August 1980, Paul began an independent church called the **OLIVE ABUNDANT LIFE MINISTRIES** in Pietermaritzburg. It presently has about 150 members and has purchased a property for a church building.¹⁰⁷ The Executive Council wavered in implementing its decision of the reinstatement of Saul. The membership dwindled to 30, which included two members of the board. In January 1981, C.S. Kantor, the Overseer, suggested

¹⁰⁶Murugen, Paul D., Personal Interview, Phoenix, 17 October 1992.

¹⁰⁷Paul, Sunny : Personal Interview, Pietermaritzburg, 02 September 1991

that, for the sake of the progress of Patmos Temple, Saul be transferred to another church. Saul and the remaining members, interpreting this as the Executive Council reneging on its decision, resigned. In August 1982 he initiated the **HEBRON ASSEMBLY**, an independent church in Pietermaritzburg, which now has about 120 members.¹⁰⁸

In March 1988, 15 months after completing the new church in Stanger, and after 45 years of pastoral ministry in the AFM, D.F. Williams, retired. Williams is adamant that

"the ministry knows no retirement, even though some leaders within the AFM may view the retired person as becoming useless and so need to be cut out. A retired pastor can be re-employed and his experience used in some capacity in the church. With this hope in mind, I continued as a member of the Stanger Church for about 16 months."¹⁰⁹

However, the rapport between Williams and the members led to a contention between the older and the younger minister, Sagren Pillay. Williams states that he often felt humiliated because of the discourteous attitude of the younger minister and his experience of rejection at the hands of the Executive Council. In sympathy with Williams, seven families resigned, and when Williams finally resigned a few months later, in July 1989, he conducted alternative worship services in his home in Stanger. He was the oldest member, a pioneer and longest serving pastor of the Indian Section at the time. To experience a sense of

¹⁰⁸Saul, P., Ibid

¹⁰⁹Williams (Interview), Ibid

fulfilment, Williams notes, he began the **ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS**, which now has about 300 members meeting in various centres in Stanger, Tongaat, Phoenix and Avoca.¹¹⁰ In the Transvaal, the AFM Lenasia Church had ceased to exist when Abel Frank and the few remaining members resigned to form an independent church in 1985. Frank's reason was that the church was too far away from the controlling body in Durban for proper oversight. Frank began the **SOLID TRUTH TABERNACLE** which now has approximately 350 members and is affiliated to **LIFE CENTRE MINISTRIES**, Johannesburg, under Jack Lockwood.¹¹¹

4.4. STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE AFM

We turn our attention now to certain structural developments within the Indian Section, which eventually led to the formation of the Composite Church.

4.4.1. Missionary Councils and Overseers

For 53 years the Indian Section was controlled by the Missionary Council through Missionary Overseers. Each church in the White Section was expected to involve itself in mission to the nearest "non-White " AFM church.¹¹² Such missionary activities were

¹¹⁰Ibid

¹¹¹David, Silas : Interview, Johannesburg, 20 August 1992. David is a close associate of Frank and lives in the vicinity of the church.

¹¹²AFM Church Laws, White Section, 2.46

coordinated and controlled by the Mission Department.¹¹³

The Comforter outlined the denomination's missionary policy:

"Our method of working is not at all like many which we see in this country. We see that most of the churches have adopted the method of doing missionary work through the medium of mission stations. The Apostolic Faith Mission has always been ... a mission, rather than a church..."¹¹⁴

The decision by the Executive Council in 1928 that White workers be appointed "to charge of the Coloured work where there is such and that European workers represent the Coloured assemblies at their respective Councils"¹¹⁵ is indicative of the general policy concerning missions. M.D.Kasselman, suggested in 1942 that "the Indian Mission Field ... (be) placed under direct supervision of the Executive Council... (and that) a Representative (be) appointed on the Executive exclusively for the Indian Mission Field."¹¹⁶ After Du Plessis transfer the following served as Overseers of the Indian mission: J.S. Labuschagne (1946-1947), E. Hooper (1947-1948), F.G. Hawley (1948), O.H. Raper (1948-1950), M.J. van Rensburg (1950-1951), Charles Neilsen (1951-1958), J.C. Treptow (1958), W.Dafel (1958-1962), L.H.S. Castle (1963-1965) and C.S. Kantor (1965-1983).¹¹⁷

¹¹³Ibid, 7.6.256-278

¹¹⁴The Comforter, August/September 1941, p.7

¹¹⁵Minutes, Executive Council, 02 April 1928, Book 4, p. 1018

¹¹⁶Minutes, S&D, 18 August 1942, p.66

¹¹⁷The attendance record in the minutes of the NDIWC reflect the various Overseers who acted as chairpersons of the Council. This was confirmed by Williams and H. James. Refer also Castle

4.4.2. Separate Policies

Until 1983 the Indian Section was governed by a separate policy and instructions were formulated and drawn by the Executive Council in consultation with the Missionary Council.¹¹⁸ The following statements reflect the paternalism exercised by Whites over the Indian Mission: An "Indian Church, co-existent with the Mother Church" shall be established.¹¹⁹ "This policy shall be enacted via the duly constituted channels as provided for in the Church Laws of the AFM of SA - Mother Church."¹²⁰ Ronnie Naidoo, on the event of the diamond jubilee of the Stanger church remarked that "Central Tabernacle of the AFM of South Africa is the Jerusalem/Mother Church of our work".¹²¹ In 1981, with the adoption by the White Workers' Council of the policy of "Diversity in Unity", the AFM was divided into four sections viz, White, Coloured, Indian and Black, each with its own policy. The preamble to the Church Laws of the White section reflects the superiority maintained by the White Section which reads:

"to establish, next to the White Section, sections for the Coloureds, Indians, Blacks and African states, which shall each have its own policy similar to that of the White Section but adapted to their own specific needs and circumstances, but with the explicit understanding that they shall never be contrary to the spirit and principles

¹¹⁸Articles of Association of AFM, 1946, Article 2

¹¹⁹AFM Indian Church Policy, p.1

¹²⁰Ibid

¹²¹AFM Stanger DJB, p.34

of the constitution and regulations of the White section."¹²²

The paternalism is reflected in the concept of trusteeship over the mission churches as noted:

"All properties acquired for the use of the Indian, Coloured and Bantu (Black) communities, shall be held in trust for each community by the Executive Council through the Trustees of the Mission and such properties shall not be disposed of or transferred from one community to another, unless with the consent of the community occupying the premises. Any funds collected by the said communities or derived from the sale of their properties, shall be held in trust for the community concerned by the Executive Council."¹²³

The policy of the Indian mission reads:

"All fixed properties acquired by the Indian Church, whether by means of purchase, deed of donor or in any other manner, shall be held in trust for the Indian Church by the Executive Council of the Mother Church through the Trustees."¹²⁴

4.4.3. Membership

Indian Christians became recognised members of the AFM by an act

¹²²AFM Church Laws, White Section, Preamble Clause 3 (c)

¹²³Articles of Association of the AFM, 1946, Art 65 (c)

¹²⁴AFM Indian Church Policy, 14 (d)

of the White Workers' Council of 1981. The change of status is recorded thus:

"COMMON MEMBERSHIP OF ALL SECTIONS OF THE CHURCH

That this Council subscribes to the following interpretation of the Church Laws with regards to church membership:

That articles 1 and 2 of the Statutes which form an addendum to the Private Bill regarding the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa No.24 of 1961 are no longer applicable because of the amendments to the Church Law which have been made since then. There is no longer a position where the Whites are acknowledged as members and others as adherents. Whites, Coloureds, Indians and Blacks who belong to the AFM are full and equal members of the Church as a whole. As members of the Apostolic Faith Mission they are divided into the following sections: White, Coloured, Indian and Black."¹²⁵

4.4.4. System of Government

Until 1982, the system of government within the Indian Mission included local church boards, one district council (DC) which was synonymous with the workers' council (WC) and which comprised representatives from local churches, and the Natal Indian District Committee (NIDC) which served as the executive body. The

¹²⁵Letter by J.T. du Plessis, General Secretary, White Section, 13 August 1981, pp.1,2

Missionary Overseer presided over all Councils except for the local church boards. In February 1982 the Natal North Coast District Council (NNCDC) and the Natal South Coast District Council (NSCDC) were inaugurated, with Ronnie Naidoo and H. James as first chairpersons respectively. The NIDC was replaced by the Executive Council (EC). The acceptance of the new constitution and the death of Kantor in 1983 witnessed the last White Overseer and the acknowledgement of indigenous leadership. In 1984 the first Indian Moderator was elected in the person of Paul D. Murugen. He was succeeded by Henry James in 1985, and, a few months later, by Ronnie Naidoo who continues to serve in this capacity.¹²⁶

4.4.5. Formation of the Composite Church

The decade of the 1980's witnessed the intense deliberation on racial unity within the AFM. The decision on membership taken by the White Section has been noted above. On 16 May 1981, in the Indian Section, the WC mandated the EC "to enter into negotiations with the Coloured and White sections of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA ... for the purpose of establishing "ONE CHURCH of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA".¹²⁷ In June 1981, in Port Shepstone, the executive bodies of both the Coloured and Indian sections adopted a Declaration of Intent "to work towards full spiritual co-operation and organisational unity

¹²⁶Naidoo, Ronnie, Ibid

¹²⁷Memorandum presented by EC Indian section to EC White section, 4 August 1981, p.2

of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA."¹²⁸ In August 1982 the EC of the Indian section presented a memorandum to its White counterpart, in which it outlined the divisive nature of the racial policy of the AFM. Drawing upon its theological pronouncements of the church as One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Prophetic, the paper called for a dismantling of all discriminatory laws within the denomination and for a new constitution for one racially integrated church.¹²⁹ This memorandum was not accepted by the White Executive Council.

Negotiations with the White Section by both the Coloured and Indian Sections reached a stalemate. On 26 August 1983, in Durban, both the Coloured and Indian Sections re-affirmed their "intention to work towards complete spiritual and structural unity of the two divisions of the church", while continuing to negotiate with the Black section to participate within such a structure. The ultimate purpose was the formation of a single structural unit of the AFM of SA consisting of all four sections.¹³⁰ In a joint consultation of all four sections in August 1985 a declaration of intent was drawn, which rejected apartheid and accepted a single structural unity for the AFM. Provision was also made for the appointment of a Committee for Unity (CU) comprising eight representatives from each of the four

¹²⁸Declaration of Intent, 29 June 1981; Refer Minutes of EC Indian section

¹²⁹Memorandum, 4 August 1981

¹³⁰Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the future of the AFM, WC Coloured Section, 30 September 1983, Maranatha Park, Johannesburg, pp.2,3,4

sections ¹³¹ "to formulate further steps for the implementation of the unification of the church".¹³² When the WC's of all four sections adopted this declaration in 1986, an equally-represented presbytery was decided upon to "be the main governing body of the Church."¹³³ These structures were set up with view to negotiating the various hurdles in seeking racial integration within the AFM. A draft Unity constitution was drawn and accepted by the Black, Indian and Coloured sections,¹³⁴ while the White section suggested various amendments.¹³⁵ George M. Mahlobo, secretary of the Composite Division, states his suspicions thus:

"The White WC would not accept the presbytery, which, they say, has too much authority. The White Section now prefers that power should be devolved into the local churches, which would guard their rights to assets such as property. This is similar to the Nationalist Party system to privatise before a democratic government could be elected. The attitude of Whites is also politically motivated, as they are suspicious and afraid that powerful Black leaders of the AFM, such as Frank Chikane, Secretary of the South

¹³¹Mahlobo, G.M., Personal Interview, Phuthaditjhaba, 16 November 1992. See also Secretarial Report, Committee for Unity, p.1 and Lapoorta, Jaapie, p.7

¹³²Secretarial Report, Committee for Unity; Refer also to Minutes, Committee for Unity, 11 June 1986, p.1 and the Proposed Document of Intent, 02 August 1985.

¹³³Ibid, p.2

¹³⁴Letter from Ronnie Naidoo, Moderator, Indian section to E.J. Gschwend, Johannesburg, 07 June 1988

¹³⁵Minutes, Committee for Unity, 10 September 1987, pp.2,3; refer also circular letter HS6/88 from General secretary, White section, 18 April 1988

African Council of Churches (SACC), may be elected to serve in decisive positions in the AFM. Whites have the economic muscle and efficient administration to influence some Black leaders within the AFM to their way of thinking. It is now necessary for international pressure to be applied to move the White or Single Division, as it is now known, towards a true democracy."¹³⁶

In 1987 the three sections decided to continue the process of unity on the principles of the draft constitution, while keeping the door open to the White section. In the process "an own legal personality for the organisation" should be secured.¹³⁷ Finally, the first phase in the unity process was completed when the Composite Division of the AFM was formed in September 1989, in Cape Town, comprising the former Coloured, Indian and Black sections. The WC of the White section, feeling the formation of the Composite Church was a trifle hasty, has left itself open for negotiation. There are approximately 350,000 members in the Composite Division, which still continues its ethnic divisions. The first WC of the Composite Church was held in Mbabato, Bophutatswana, in May 1992 with over 1000 delegates, and so initiating the second phase in the process for one church of the

¹³⁶Mahlobo, Ibid

¹³⁷Letter from General Secretary, Coloured section, to G. Mahlobo, General Secretary, Black section and Committee for Unity, 15 February 1988; Letter from General Secretary, Indian section, to G. Mahlobo, 14 April 1988; Letter from Moderator, Indian section to E.J. Gschwend, Chairperson, Committee for Unity, 07 June 1988

AFM.¹³⁸ The country is divided into 22 non-racial regional councils. Membership at the local church level will no longer be given racial consideration but geographical. As from January 1993 "ethnic divisions will be done away with altogether". A liaison body, created in May 1990, comprising the office-bearers of the Composite and Single Divisions, continue the third phase which is to maintain intense deliberation with the White sector, towards the formation of one church.¹³⁹ Presently, E.J. Gschwend, former Missions Director and Moderator of the Black Section, has been elected as President with the other two former Moderators, Ronnie Naidoo and Jaapie Lapoorta serving as vice-Presidents.¹⁴⁰

In 1946 there were three established churches and the beginnings of five other. Over the period of 46 years, a total of 44 churches had been established in the Indian section. Presently 34 churches are operational, 8 have ceased to exist, two churches have combined and the fate of the last fledgling church in the Transvaal is still being decided. The estimated membership including children, after 62 years is around 6500. Fourteen churches have up to 100 members, 12 churches between 100 and 250, 4 churches between 250 and 350 with only four churches having over 500 but not more than 600 members. The AFM of SA (Indian Section) experienced fourteen secessions, with ten taking place in the 1980's and 4 within the last two years. There has been

¹³⁸Mahlobo, Ibid

¹³⁹Ibid

¹⁴⁰Naidoo, Ronnie, (Interview), Ibid

numerous resignations of ordained and local pastors, and dedicated lay persons, who have later become pastors, over this period which has also contributed to the rise of independent churches, of which we mentioned six, and there is every indication that this trend will continue. Reasons for these "breakaways" cover a wide spectrum, ranging from personality conflicts to a rejection of the denomination's racial policies, and also includes administrative problems as the high handedness of the Executive Council and church boards, and theological changes such as changes in ecclesiology. With the tardy growth rate and the multiplying secessions, the future of the AFM among the Indians seems bleak. A Bible College had been established with a total of 85 graduates. The problem of racial divisions as entrenched in the constitution of the AFM continues to gnaw at the foundation of the church. Three sectional divisions, viz, Black, Indian and Coloured have combined to form the Composite Division with its own administrative structure and a membership of 350,000. Presently there are two divisions within the AFM, The Composite and the Single Divisions, with a fervent hope for one AFM church.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the foregoing excursion into the development of the Indian mission of the AFM, we will now endeavour an assessment of this history. A discussion of the missionary policies of the AFM will reflect the powerful influence the racial structuring of South African society has had on the missionary practice of the AFM. The effects of the lack of theological training on the ordained ministry and leadership in the Indian mission will be noted. The third section will offer an evaluation of the growth of the church, focusing on the strategies employed in church planting and the problems encountered viz, building of churches, finances, and secessions. Before we consider the road ahead for the AFM in the Indian community, we will also endeavour a theological assessment of the Pentecostal experience vis-à-vis the South African socio-political context, and the rising reaction within the community.

5.1. MISSIONARY POLICY

5.1.1. The Racial Factor

Clark and Lederle, in assessing Pentecostalism in relation to the socio-political context, state: "it seems as though the underlying attitude of many Pentecostals is that the church as such should not involve itself in political matters." This attitude has often "taken the form of conformity to the status quo and indifference to those groups and ideologies which act

against states and social structures."¹ F.P. Moller, past President of the AFM, states: "The Pentecostal churches in South Africa and their members have generally kept aloof from political matters."² Lapoorta vigorously denies this assumption and states that the AFM "was and is still actively involved in both the formulation and perpetuation of the Apartheid system in both church and society."³ The assumption of Clark and Lederle that since the 1960's, the AFM had moved in the direction of supporting the governing Nationalist Party⁴ is not a true reflection as we shall see later. Morphew, a pentecostal pastor in the Assemblies of God, remarks that "apartheid is first and foremost a church issue",⁵ having its beginnings in the DRC. The influence of John G. Lake and his American experience and the experience and the culture and theology of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa are pertinent.

As we have seen, the pentecostal revival of 1906 under Seymour in a depressed Black community in Los Angeles, USA, was divine testimony to the brotherhood of humankind. The "language miracle"⁶ as experienced by the early church (Acts 2) "is a picture of the unity which God gave and still gives to those who

¹Clark and Lederle, p.85

²Moller, F.P. : Church and Politics. A Pentecostal View of the South African situation, Gospel Publishers, Braamfontein, 1989, p.3

³Lapoorta, p.1

⁴Clark and Lederle, p.86

⁵Morphew, p.101

⁶Ibid, pp.125-127

are willing to receive His spirit. Pentecost has been called the "'Tower of Babel' turned upside-down",⁷ as a reversal of the divisive experience of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)⁸. Suppressing this divine testimony we noted the development of separate Black and White pentecostal churches in USA and the consequent transplantation in South Africa of this "compromised pentecostalism",⁹ by Lake who himself was a "proponent of racial segregation."¹⁰ His message received an enthusiastic response from many South African White Christians who believed in the superiority of their race.

European settlers in South Africa, predominantly the Dutch-speaking group, became politically and culturally dominant, with Christianity entering as their hereditary faith.¹¹ Stephen Neill, a prominent missiologist, notes that the Dutch held strongly to their view that "it is the destiny of the White man to rule and that of the Black man to obey."¹² The DRC, to which

⁷Hargreaves, John : A Guide to the Book of Genesis, TEF Study Guide 3, SPCK, London, 1969, p.68

⁸Tutu, D : A Christian Vision of the Future of South Africa, in Christianity in South Africa, Ed Prozesky, M., Southern Books, Bergvlei, 1990

⁹RPW Document, p.5

¹⁰De Wet, C.R. : The Apostolic Faith Mission in Africa. 1908-1980. A Case Study in Church Growth in a Segregated Society, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1989, p.158

¹¹Latourette, K.S. : A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol 5, The Great Century: The Americas, Australasia and Africa 1800 AD to 1914 AD, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970, pp. 319, 320

¹²Neill, S. : A History of Christian Missions, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1964, p. 310

the majority of Whites belonged, was the channel and tie for the common life of the emergent Afrikaner volk.¹³ In 1829 and 1834, resolutions adopted by the DRC Cape Synods reflect a policy of open membership which was initially practised within this denomination.¹⁴ However, because the average White member supported racial segregation, "popular sentiment began to overpower theological truth".¹⁵ Due to mounting pressure, the Cape Synod of 1851 resolved that, because of the "weakness" of these Whites, separate places of worship should be created for people of colour.¹⁶ This "weakness" became a missionary policy of the DRC in 1881, when a separate Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) was formed for reaching people of colour. In the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism in the 1930's this "became the 'biblical' policy of the church and the advice given by the church to the state."¹⁷ As we have noted earlier, the majority of Whites who embraced the AFM were Afrikaans-speaking, nurtured in this Reformed school.

¹³Latourette, p.322. See also Suelflow, R. : Christian Churches in Recent Times, Christianity in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Concordia, St Louis, p.194, A Reader in Southern African Church History, Theological Education by Extension College (TEEC), Course 354A, Reader 1, Johannesburg, 1990, p.41, and Hinchliff, P. : The Church in South Africa, SPCK, London, 1968, p.1

¹⁴De Gruchy, J. and Villa Vicencio, Charles : Apartheid is a Heresy, David Philip, Cape Town, 1983, p.31 and Kinghorn, Johann : The Theology of Separate Equality in Christianity in South Africa, Ed Martin Prozesky, Southern Books, Bergville, 1990, p.58. See also Hinchliff, p.40

¹⁵Morphew, p.100

¹⁶De Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio, p. 19

¹⁷Morphew, pp.101-103

The initial multi racial services of the AFM were replaced by separate churches for Blacks and Whites within a few months. Blacks were gradually separated to one side of the church,¹⁸ until a separate venue was acquired by the Executive Council in September 1908 for the use of Black worshippers.¹⁹ The divine institution of baptism was not exempt from White racial idiosyncrasy. In seeking to avoid an intermingling of the races, the church leaders at first resolved that the baptism of Blacks should follow the baptism of White converts,²⁰ and later decided that separate baptism services be held for Blacks.²¹ In spite of his ostentatious claim of love for Blacks,²² in his biography Lake states:

"In 1910 the African fever ravaged the Waterburg and Zuitkansberg districts. ... I sent a special message to Louis Botha, Premier of Transvaal, outlining the situation. ... I was invited by Botha to visit Pretoria. While there, the Transvaal Parliament passed resolutions recognising my services. When the South African States joined together in a Union ... (and) Botha became National premier ...(he called) elections for a Parliament. At his request I outlined a native policy and submitted it to the Government. ... I was invited to come to Cape Town to address the Parliament on this issue. I did so - ... I

¹⁸Lindsay, p.35

¹⁹Minutes, Executive Council, 17 September 1908

²⁰Ibid, 6 November 1908

²¹Ibid, 30 July, 1909

²²Lindsay, pp.44-46

framed the policy in harmony with our American policy of segregation of the Indian tribes, having as an example the mistakes of the United States and other nations in regard to their handling of the native nations. This policy, as outlined by me, was practically adopted by the Boer party in toto."²³

Lake's espousal of the policy of racial segregation reflects on his pentecostal experience and the policy of the AFM. Lake's pentecostal proclamation boasted a release from addictions to tobacco, alcohol, and other physical "vices", but fell short in proclaiming change of attitudes of racial prejudice. Lindsay compares Lake to the Apostle Paul and refers to Lake's ministry as "one nearest to apostolic ideals". Paul, in spite of the prejudices of his day, sought to break down the "barrier of the dividing wall".²⁴ He declared a oneness in Christ that surpasses racial, sexist and class distinctions,²⁵ in the face of insurmountable odds.²⁶ He said: "If I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor."²⁷ The inadequacy of Lake's experience of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" which he states issued forth in him a "hundred-fold obedience", a "new revelation of the nature of the Lord Jesus

²³Quoted in Lindsay, pp. 21,22

²⁴Eph 2:14 (NASV)

²⁵Gal 3:28

²⁶Gal 2:11-16. Refer also to Acts 15:1-29, 21:15-40

²⁷Gal 2:19 (NASV)

Christ", and a "new tenderness for the lost",²⁸ is manifest when tried by the "weightier provisions of the law : justice and mercy and faithfulness".²⁹ It is for these reasons that N. Majeke can remark that "missionaries came from a capitalist Christian civilization that unblushingly found religious sanctions for inequality", and so acted as agents of the colonial authorities.³⁰ Klaus Nurnberger notes that a development of "this-worldly" consciousness had been retarded because of missionaries who "represented a pietistic, upward - rather than forward-oriented spirituality".³¹

Building on the feeling of White superiority, the early White leaders of the AFM made crucial resolutions in the first few years which sought to perpetuate the system of racial separation in the church. The Executive Council decision, in February 1909, to appoint White superintendents and overseers of Black churches, was meant to "uphold the domination of the White Church over the Blacks", and to fall "in line with the expectation of the government."³² White paternalism is further evidenced by their appointment of a "Native Council" for AFM Black churches. This

²⁸Lindsay, pp. 15, 16

²⁹Matt 23:23 (NASV)

³⁰Quoted in Saayman, Willem : Christian Mission in South Africa. Achievements, Failures and the Future in Christianity in South Africa, Ed Prozesky, Martin, Southern Books, Berglvelei, 1990, pp. 31, 34

³¹Nurnberger, K., : The Impact of Christianity on Socio-economic Developments in South Africa, in Christianity in South Africa, Ed Prozesky, M., Southern Books, Berglvelei, 1990, p. 158

³²De Wet, p.161

council, because it comprised 50% White members, was totally subject to the White Executive Council.³³ The racial policy of the AFM was clearly enunciated in July 1917 thus:

"we do not teach or encourage social equality between Whites and Natives (blacks). We recognise that God is no respecter of persons. ... We therefore preach the Gospel equally to all peoples, making no distinctions. ... White, Coloured and Native (Black) peoples have their separate places of worship, where the sacraments are administered to them."³⁴

The exercise of certain social customs was curtailed. The Christian practice of the kiss of greeting between Blacks and Whites was forbidden and greeting between the races by the shaking of hands was restricted. De Wet notes Le Roux's standpoint on the latter custom. He stated that missionaries to Blacks should shake hands with Blacks anywhere, but clergy serving the White constituency should refrain and "exercise the utmost care so that the unconverted (White) should not get the opportunity to blaspheme the name of the Lord." He continued that there is no social equality among the races and admonished that Blacks should not offer their hand or approach a White person in public places, but should "wait until the White man made the first advance."³⁵ The WC of 1944, identifying with rising Afrikaner Nationalism, affirmed:

³³Ibid, p.162

³⁴Ibid, pp. 165ff

³⁵Ibid, p.168

"1. Race Relations: The Mission stands for segregation. The fact that the Native, Indian and Coloured is saved does not render him European. ...

5. Native (Black) Education: The Mission stands for a lower education but is definitely against a higher education."³⁶

The policy of inferior education was intended to subjugate Black people, "to reduce them to the status of readily available cheap labourers".³⁷

Other White leaders of the AFM have also given clear indication of the denomination's bias towards Afrikaner Nationalism, which is epitomised by the Nationalist Party. Lapoorta quotes from a letter from J.T. du Plessis to advocate J.G.Strydom in 1950 in which the former states: "Vandag, dank God is die AGS 'n suiwer Afrikaanse kerk." (Thank God, today the AFM is a pure Afrikaans church.)³⁸ The debate in the 1950's over Wessels' nomination to the Nationalist Party is another indication of this ideological bias. This identification is evident in Moller's analysis of the spectrum of South African politics. He talks of the "Right Wing" including the Conservative Party (CP), Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) and the Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), and the "Left Wing" including the African National Congress (ANC), the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), the Houses of Delegates and Representatives, Inkatha and any other which stands for a "one-

³⁶Ibid, p.171

³⁷Ibid

³⁸Lapoorta, p.3

person one-vote" system for South Africa.³⁹ He disparages the Kairos Document and "Evangelical Witness in South Africa" as products of liberation theology, which operate on Marxist principles.⁴⁰ Lapoorta therefore states that the underlying presupposition in the AFM's political involvement is racism.⁴¹ This has been the cause of schism within the church, and has hampered the wholesome development of the indigenous leadership and the creation of truly democratic structures free from racial prejudices. It cannot therefore be said, as Clark and Lederle portray Pentecostalism, and as Moller argues, that the AFM played a passive role as far as politics is concerned.⁴²

The various resolutions and practices of the AFM reveal that instead of transforming society, the AFM has conformed to societal institutions such as racialism.⁴³ The impact of the AFM in South Africa can be measured by the following comments by Oosthuizen on the impact of Christianity in South Africa:

"Christianity professes to give meaning to life and to assist people to understand their existence. Like any other religion, it is ultimately measured by the quality of the direction it gives people on the vital issues they encounter, including their relationships with others. It is mostly this that qualifies a religion as a constructive or

³⁹Moller, p.12

⁴⁰Ibid, pp.20-34

⁴¹Lapoorta, p.9

⁴²Clark and Lederle, p.89

⁴³Saayman, p.30

destructive force."⁴⁴

Saayman's quotation of E. McDonagh with reference to Christian Missions in South Africa is also pertinent to the AFM:

"The gospel should have the effect of judging the self-centredness of the powerful and not just of consoling the powerless. It should provide the inspiration, courage and strength to understand and finally be seen to overcome the exclusion and discrimination. Its apparent failure to do so over such a long period is partly understandable in human society; it is hardly excusable to the church in the divine plan."⁴⁵

As a church, the AFM should seek to give leadership to a country enveloped by violence due to tensions created by generations of racial prejudices. In so doing, it will fulfil its total mission as a divine institution for the healing of the nation.

5.1.2. Theological Education

Oosthuizen's evaluation that the "Indian Pentecostal ministry is to a large extent theologically an untrained ministry"⁴⁶ is true with regards to the older generation of ministers in the AFM. As we have noted, theological education was not emphasised nor was it regarded as a prerequisite for the ordained ministry in the period when the Indian mission was under White overseers.

⁴⁴Oosthuizen, G.C. : Christianity's Impact on Race Relations in South Africa, in Christianity in South Africa, Ed. Prozesky, Martin, Southern Books, Bergvlei, 1990

⁴⁵Saayman, p.30.

⁴⁶Oosthuizen, Pentecostal Penetration, p.261

Flewelling did not train or encourage indigenous leaders in the ministry. Du Plessis stated that his strength lay in the indigenous leaders, those who served in the lay capacity as well as the ordained ministers. It can be said that in the pentecostal system, as evidenced in the AFM, "practical apprenticeship rather than educational requirements receive emphasis".⁴⁷ Manikkam received some practical instruction while living with Du Plessis. Williams received a year's practical experience under Pastor Elliott, while James' training was received while apprenticed to Manikkam. Beside this in-service training, it is clear that enthusiasm superseded the need for theological education as the criterion for admittance into the ordained ministry.

The only exception during the period of White overseers was when Charles Nielsen established NIBTI in 1956. Some of the ministers who studied here during the two short years of its existence were R.Ezra, M.S. Morgan, Edwin Manikkam, the last-named who later joined the DRMC, and Joseph Prakasim, who later joined the Presbyterian Church. R. Ezra states that Nielsen had made great efforts to raise the necessary funds for this venture. He adds that the Executive Council had intentionally diverted these funds to the Black mission, thus depriving the Indian mission of a sorely needed training institution for its leaders.⁴⁸ Jonathan Naidoo states that the tardy numerical growth in the Indian mission should also be attributed to the fact that the overseers generally did not encourage theological trained Indian churchmen.

⁴⁷Ibid, p.259

⁴⁸Ezra, R (Interview), Ibid

He adds that in his 18 years as overseer, Kantor was strongly opposed to the establishment of a bible college. Only in 1983, with the rise of a more independent Indian leadership was affirmative action taken and CBC established.⁴⁹

As was true of the church's mission to Blacks, there existed a "system of using uneducated, almost untrained ... men in the ministry" in the AFM Indian mission.⁵⁰ In the absence of any incentive from the early leaders to seek theological instruction, the younger generation of ministers had to take the onus on themselves. Oosthuizen rightly observes: "The Durban Bible College (DBC) has done the most with regards to a more thorough theological training for Indian Pentecostal pastors"⁵¹ in the period when no other bible colleges existed. Paul Saul was the first pastor of the AFM who had completed a four year pastoral course at this institution⁵² of The Evangelical Alliance Mission, in Merebank. Ronnie Naidoo had also completed his training for the ministry here.⁵³ Some ministers have studied at the Western Cape Bible College, at the International Bible College in Durban, one attaining some credits for theological courses taken at the University College of Durban. By 1978, the only university educated minister of the AFM (Indian section) was

⁴⁹Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁵⁰Sundkler, Bengt E.M. : Bantu Prophets in South Africa, Oxford University Press, London, 1961, p.121

⁵¹Oosthuizen, Pentecostal Penetration, p.246

⁵²Saul, Paul, Ibid

⁵³Naidoo, Ronnie, Ibid

Dean C. Reddy. Presently all candidates for the ministry have to complete the three years of instruction at CBC.

In interviews with the pastors, (those who have resigned and those who remain within the AFM),⁵⁴ two questions were posed:

Do you consider biblical or theological training important for the ministry? What, in your opinion, were the reasons for the lack of emphasis on training for the ministry over the years in the AFM?

The following points may be noted from their responses:

1. Except for a few who had completed some biblical courses, the older generation of pastors have had no formal theological or biblical instruction for the ministry.
2. All pastors of the younger generation have had a few years of formal theological or biblical instruction.
3. All recognised the need for biblical instruction for the ministry as the Bible is the symbol of Pentecostalism.⁵⁵ It is especially the younger generation of ministers who have discovered and therefore emphasized "the need for more adequate and directed theological training."⁵⁶

⁵⁴D.F. Williams, C.G. Ernest, V. Pillay, C.K. Harry and D. James represent the older generation, while J. Naidoo, R.Naidoo, A. David, R. Kisten, D.C. Reddy, P.D. Murugen, and R. Munien are representative of the younger generation of ministers.

⁵⁵Oosthuizen, Ibid, p.268

⁵⁶Ibid, p.259

4. The reasons given for the lack of emphasis in this regard in the past could be categorised as follows:

4.1. Eschatological: The expectation of the imminent return of Christ does not necessitate years of theological study "to get one into heaven". The time can be more profitably utilized by "serving the Lord", by which is meant the proclamation of the gospel.

4.2. Evangelistic: Flowing from the eschatological motif, the urgency to get as many "souls saved" as speedily as one possibly can, also did not necessitate intense theological training.

4.3. Individual pietism: For the purpose of salvation, which is construed as an individual's preparation for the after life, "head knowledge" (theological education) is rejected in favour of "heart knowledge" (simple faith in God and His Word).

4.4. Pre-eminent is the pneumatological motif of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", which is sufficient for ones life and work. The Holy Spirit, who "guides into all truth" (Jn 16:13), teaches the Christian through his anointing. Human teachers or formal studies therefore become unnecessary (I Jn 2:27).

4.5. Many of the younger ministers stated that the older pastors, feeling their status would be threatened and afraid of being "shown in a bad light", did not encourage them to undertake formal training.

4.6. The younger pastor recognised the need for suitably qualified ministers to enable the church "reach the educated young people".

The establishment of CBC is therefore the result of the growing need among the younger generation of ministers for formal training for the ministry. CBC, "a Pentecostal Evangelical College" aims to give students academic and practical training for the ministry.⁵⁷ The General Bible course comprises 52 six-month modules to be completed over 3 years, and includes various subjects such as Old Testament and New Testament Studies, Dogmatics/Systematic Theology and Ethics, Church History, Pastoral/Practical Theology, Science of Religion/Missions and some "contemporary trends" as Spiritual Warfare, Demonology, Church Growth, and Psalmody.⁵⁸ There are 13 lecturers, 11 of whom are pastors in the AFM.⁵⁹ As stated previously, CBC is recognised as being the major reason for the numerical growth of the church in the last few years.

5.1.3. Church Growth

As discussed earlier the experiences of the Indian community in South Africa had created a sense of insecurity and rootlessness. The process of acculturation brought about by western

⁵⁷Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, Covenant Bible College (CBC Prospectus), Prospectus, p.1

⁵⁸Ibid, pp.2-10

⁵⁹Naidoo, Ronnie, Ibid

influences, destroyed the basic infrastructure in the traditional Indian way of life such as the family *Kutum* system.⁶⁰ Oosthuizen states: "The uprooting of families, the breaking up of the joint families, and their re-establishment in large new townships, led many to a feeling of insecurity." This had been accentuated by the high cost of living they now had to contend with and having to live under the constant threat of repatriation. The Group Areas Act has further intensified this feeling of rootlessness and insecurity.⁶¹ Pentecostalism, with its "ability to give satisfaction to a specific socio-economic layer of uprooted people", found a fruitful soil among such people, offering "psychological compensation" for a feeling of social inferiority.⁶² Oosthuizen comments that the majority of pentecostal Christians are from the lower income group, the marginal people,⁶³ who find in pentecostalism a solace in projecting their longing for the "perfect life of well-being" in the hereafter rather than "here". He continues: "Salvation-religion is sought by those who find themselves in a situation of insecurity and here the emphasis is on the teleological, where the end determines the course."⁶⁴

This holds true for pentecostalism generally, but, as Burger remarks, the numerical growth in the AFM Indian mission has not

⁶⁰Oosthuizen, Pentecostal Penetration, pp.50,51

⁶¹Ibid, p.19

⁶²Oosthuizen, Ibid, pp.10, 27, 48

⁶³Ibid, pp. 22, 24, 325, 330

⁶⁴Ibid, p.330

been as dramatic as evident in the other communities.⁶⁵ After 62 years, of the 44 churches established, 34 are operational with a combined membership of not more than 6500 adults and children. The mission has been served by 54 ordained Indian pastors, of whom 31 are presently active in the denomination. Estimated statistics for Bethesdaland,⁶⁶ the Indian mission of the Full Gospel Church of God (FGC), which began about two years prior to the AFM Indian mission reveal a membership of approximately 65,000 for 1989, and presently boasts 103 ordained Indian male ministers and 12 licensed female ministers, 4 of whom are eligible for the pastorate, and over 180 churches all over the Republic.⁶⁷

The Indian mission was born in the **rural areas** of the Natal North Coast, in a period when the demographic shift of the Indian population was towards the **urban and peri-urban areas** such as Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Some of the problems that the rural areas posed for the growth of the mission were recognised by Du Plessis when considering Durban as the strategic centre for expansion. The problem of obtaining land for **building churches** was dependent on the good graces of owners of the large sugar

⁶⁵Burger, p.433

⁶⁶Bethesdaland has been incorporated into the United Assemblies which had been formed in 1989.

⁶⁷Naidoo, Arthur, Personal Interview, Chatsworth, 29 October 1992. Arthur Naidoo was former Moderator of Bethesdaland and present Principal of the Bethesda Bible College.

estates. This lack proved a drawback for consistent growth.⁶⁸

People adhere all the more steadfastly to their **traditional religions and ways** and are "under the influence of their Priests" in the agricultural areas more than in the cities. There was always a lack of strong **financial support** as members were labourers in the sugar mills and other plantations and so earned meagre wages. Du Plessis also mentions that as Christians in the urban areas "are in no way under obligation to their Employers it was easy to establish churches at all centres in Durban." Industries and labour unions in the urban areas provided a greater earning capacity for people. The AFM's missiological policy of developing self-supporting, self-propagating and, in a limited way, self-governing churches, in no way expiated this situation. In contrast to the rural areas, easily available **transport** in the city, benefitted members who wished to attend church services. The **population** of the rural areas was scattered over a wide area, whereas Durban, with 90,000 people in 1944, was more densely populated.⁶⁹ One is led to ask whether these factors were not determinative for the slow progress of the AFM.

The AFM Indian mission, with a congregational-presbyterian system of government, was superintended by many **White missionary overseers**. Most Overseers did not serve the Indian mission in

⁶⁸This situation also holds true for today. There are just eleven church buildings, of which three are on leased property. Other congregations meet in rented premises, backyard tent structures or in school rooms.

⁶⁹Minutes, S&D, 9 September 1944, pp.125, 126 and 29 May 1943, pp.90-92

their full-time capacity. Du Plessis assumed the role of missionary and pastor, whereas others served in this capacity to chair council meetings but gave no concerted leadership.⁷⁰ This lack of strong and consistent leadership in the AFM over the years is in stark contrast to that offered by J.F. Rowlands to the FGC's work among Indians.⁷¹

Indigenous leaders, both in the ordained ministry and in the lay capacity, had played a vital role in the establishment of the AFM churches. While White missionaries offered some leadership, the "work on the ground", as Du Plessis states, was done by Indian men, who were the "backbone of the Indian mission".⁷² In evangelism, **divine healing**, the "**baptism of the Holy Spirit**", and **ethical rigorism**, played an influential role in recruiting members. At various instances the Indian mission had to contend with the monopolistic tendencies of **historic churches**, such as the Baptist Church, which were already established in many areas. The resulting proselytization and competitive spirit created great antipathy against the pentecostal church. The spate of **secessions and resignations** added to the other debilitating factors and has also greatly reduced the membership in the mission.

⁷⁰Naidoo, Jonathan, Ibid

⁷¹Naidoo, Arthur, Ibid

⁷²Du Plessis (Interview), Ibid

5.2. THEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PENTECOSTAL EXPERIENCE vis-à-vis THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

The White Section of the AFM is not apolitical, despite Moller's assumption to the contrary. On the other hand, the older generation of Indian pastors in the AFM were taught by White missionaries and Overseers to assume an apolitical stance without an overt knowledge of the underlying ideological bias of their White counterpart. The Evangelical Witness in South Africa (EWISA), a document of the Concerned Evangelicals, states that "our theology was influenced by American and European missionaries with political, social and class interests which were contrary or even hostile to both the spiritual and social needs of our people in this country."⁷³ The inadequacies seen within evangelicalism by the EWISA document also holds true for pentecostalism which, while emphasising the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", has a firm theological basis in the former. The RPW document therefore correctly refers to "Pentecostal Theology as a Conservative Status Quo Theology".⁷⁴

Extreme **conservativism** has led to a type of legalism and pride and an inadequate theology about Christian living.⁷⁵ The concept of **dualism**, which demarcates between the real world of the spirit and the material world of evil, has had the disastrous effect of

⁷³EWISA Document, Concerned Evangelicals, Dobsonville, Johannesburg, 1986, p.2

⁷⁴RPW Document, p.7

⁷⁵EWISA, p.8

enabling Christians to "live a pietistic "spiritual" life and still continue to oppress, exploit, and dehumanize people." This dichotomy between the sacred and the secular has mesmerized victims of oppression and dehumanisation into not resisting injustice. This dichotomy had taught a concentration of a Christian's vertical relationship to God, while decrying the horizontal plane.⁷⁶ The pentecostal message is "highly spiritual ... giving birth to an 'other-worldly' theology."⁷⁷ **Salvation** is portrayed solely as "a personal affair between the individual and God. It is highly internalised and the conditions within society that make people act in a certain way are not taken into account."⁷⁸ Hence all related concepts such as peace, oppression, redemption, reconciliation, and righteousness are conceived in the same mystical sense. The effect of this hermeneutic is reflected in the pentecostal concept of evangelism, which negates the socio-political realities of human existence. This view is affirmed by Lidia Vaccaro de Pehetta who states:

"The task of evangelism is incomplete if its sole interest is the spiritual life of those who receive the gospel.... Pentecostal experience does not cause men and women to withdraw from the world in which they live. Rather they are instruments of God's intervention in that world."⁷⁹

⁷⁶Ibid, pp. 7-9

⁷⁷RPW, p.10

⁷⁸Ibid

⁷⁹Quoted in Clark and Lederle, p. 87

Righteousness is understood in a spiritual sense and seen as an individual's preparation for the after-life. This preoccupation with heaven is reflected in the pentecostal liturgy, songs and ministry.⁸⁰ The emphasis on **eschatological and apocalyptic concepts** in pentecostal Christianity is a result of their relativising the temporal by the eternal. The imminent return of Christ, the pre-millennial disposition and heaven together create an escapist mentality in pentecostalism. The apocalyptic tendency holds "no hope that the world and its structures has any lasting future."⁸¹ Pentecostals conceive socio-political involvement as an exercise in futility. Legitimate Christian activity is to convert men and women from this temporal aeon to become citizens of the eternal kingdom of God.

While there exists in Pentecostal churches a well developed community ethic, there is a corresponding lack of **social ethic**. This is largely due to a social analysis which is based on the New Testament redemption experience rather than on the Old Testament creation experience.⁸² Hence oppression can readily be viewed as bondage to "spiritual" powers such as demons, and redemption viewed solely as emancipation from slavery to these spiritual powers and from enslavement to physical addictions. Fundamental to this discussion is the meaning of Christian **love**⁸³ as espoused by many pentecostal leaders. A shallow

⁸⁰RPW, p.10

⁸¹Clark and Lederle, p.91

⁸²Ibid, p.93

⁸³Hinchliff, p.107

theological ethic is exhibited by Lake and Du Plessis, who both claimed a great love for Black or Indian peoples. White Christians who claim to love their neighbours must recognise the inadequacies of their claims when measured within the context of the inequitable and racist South African society. Christianity's potential for good is therefore extremely underdeveloped,⁸⁴ if this claim to love does not seek the total well-being of its object. Lake's claim to love was contradicted by his espousal of the policy of racial separation. Du Plessis' claim to love was contradicted in the heat of the Indian struggle when he refrained from "sitting on the resistance plot" because of his notion that this will "hinder" his proclamation of the gospel. It must be stated that the maintenance of a "rigid separation of races ...(is) a denial of the Christian ideal of love."⁸⁵

Because pentecostal Christians associate the Bible "with activity and experience rather than ... (understand it) as a textbook of doctrine,"⁸⁶ therefore experience takes precedence over doctrine in the exercise of their faith. The fundamentalist outlook in the use of the Bible lends to passivity in the area of socio-political involvement. An example is the use of Rom 13 by Samuel Moses in his reasoning with Du Plessis and his call for non-resistance and a blind allegiance to the government of the

⁸⁴Prozesky, Martin : Implications of Apartheid for Christianity in South Africa in Christianity in South Africa, Ed Prozesky, Martin, Southern Books, Bergvlei, 1990, pp.127, 128

⁸⁵Hinchliff, p.106

⁸⁶Clark and Lederle, p.101

day.⁸⁷ One of the problems for the pentecostal Christian is this "anomaly between his love for Scripture ... and his apparent lack of ability to comprehend Scripture"⁸⁸ within its context.

The AFM's apocalypticism, its concept of redemption, its scepticism concerning temporal power struggles and its emphasis on the personal experience of truth and salvation make political involvement difficult. Because of this inadequacy, para-church organisations have been established to fulfil this lack in Christian social awareness. The Relevant Pentecostal Witness and Crisis Care, which are operative among Indian, Black and Coloured Christians in Durban, had been initiated to serve as catalysts to these churches. Pravin Maharaj, a minister in the Assemblies of God and national coordinator of RPW, states that in classic Pentecostal understanding one cannot find a theological model for social action. This, he says, is because theological information for social action is retarded by its stance on the priority of experiential pneumatology before scripture. In his study, he seeks to show that, on the basis of the Azusa Street Revival under Seymour and the experience of non-racism, there can be a legitimate social ethic based on pneumatology for the development of a pentecostal social ethic.⁸⁹

⁸⁷For an alternate exegesis refer to EWISA Document, pp.15-20

⁸⁸Clark and Lederle, p.101

⁸⁹Pravin S. Maharaj is presently researching his study on "The Influence of the Holy Spirit and Agape on Pentecostal Social Ethic in South Africa" for his M.Theol, University of Durban - Westville, Personal Interview, Durban, 29 October 1992.

5.3. THE FUTURE OF THE AFM IN THE INDIAN COMMUNITY

A thorough study needs to be undertaken in the area of church growth vis-à-vis the United Assemblies (FGC) within the Indian community. Through critical self-evaluation, the "Indian" churches need to understand their role in society, be informed by their history, and need to discover new goals. In this light a restructuring may be necessary to avoid the trend of secessions and the consequent loss of membership. The lack of proper records and the easy manner in which the pioneers of the mission are discarded reveal that there is no concept of the "greatness of the past". An assessment of its Pentecostal experience vis-à-vis the Latin American and Scandinavian pentecostal churches which "have consciously involved themselves in socio-political concerns"⁹⁰ will facilitate the AFM's understanding of its own need for socio-political involvement. Its concept of evangelisation must be reassessed with a view to fulfilling the total ministry of Christ.

The establishment of CBC was a great step forward for the Indian Section. The future of the "Indian" Church of the AFM may lie in the newly established Composite Church which would be a tangible sign of destroying the remaining vestiges of racial discrimination in society. Indian church leaders have experienced the severe effects of racism in every sphere of their lives. The recent election of Indian leaders to the various regional councils in the Composite Church, even with a Zulu-speaking

⁹⁰Clark and Lederle, p.86

majority, is a testimony to the recognition of the ability of Indian leaders. It reveals the inadequacies of the apartheid system that dominated the AFM in its total history and the alignment of the denomination to Afrikaner Nationalist ideology. The Composite Church is an indictment on the AFM and other pentecostal churches that have been dragging their feet on the issue of racial integration. The Composite Church may a sign to the nation that in the face of a Black majority, people may still be elected to leadership on merit and not on the basis of the colour of their skin.

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