

## **HOW WAS THE GKS FOUNDED?**

WHAT does God's Kingdom Society (GKS) stand for? How, when and by whom was she founded? What precisely is her mission? And what are her doctrines? These are some of the questions often asked by people. Many of them ask with a sincere desire to know the truth, but some others do merely to find fault. Whatever the motive of anyone, the facts, no doubt, are of vital interest to unprejudiced, honest people.

There is nothing in the history of the GKS for which we the members should be ashamed. It is a record of happenings that confirm the time-honoured truth that what God has planted no one can uproot. And so, we have every cause, rather, to glory in the Lord.

The God's Kingdom Society is a purely Christian Organisation founded by the Almighty God through the instrumentality of the late Gideon Meriodere Urhobo, of the blessed memory. The late G. M. Urhobo, who was the first President of the GKS, with just an instrument chosen by God through Jesus Christ, according to the election of grace, to accomplish His purpose. – Matthew 24: 31; Acts 15: 14-18; 10: 9-35; James. 1: 18.

Any religion or faith is literally organised by man but spiritually either by God Who moves and directs the man through His Spirit or by the devil. And we "know them by their fruits". – Romans 6: 16; Matthew 7: 15-20.

As a matter of fact, there is no religious organisation that can claim that God Himself came down to this earth to set it up. God has always used men, as He pleases, to carry out His will. Jesus Christ himself, when he was on earth, said: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him (God) that sent me." – John 6: 38.

Also, the early apostles of Jesus Christ were practical examples of people chosen by God to be His vessels. All the spiritual gifts and powers manifest in them and which they exerted in the work of the ministry were derived from the Almighty Father. For that reason, the glory, honour and praise of their successes must be ascribed to God who, by His grace, fitted them to their several uses.

Said St. Paul, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase, So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase..." -1 Corinthians 3: 5-10.

## **History**

The history of the God's Kingdom Society is linked with the biography of her first President, Brother G. M. Urhobo, in respect of his career as a preacher of the gospel. He hailed from Urhobo tribe and was the second son of a kind pagan gentleman-the late Ukoli of Agbassa village in Warri, Midwestern State of Nigeria. He was educated at the Warri Government School, and he taught in Roman Catholic schools as well as the Government school, Warri, in the twenties. In June 1930, he joined the Posts and Telegraphs Department as a postal clerk and telegraphist.

Undoubtedly, his strong inclination for divine knowledge fired his interest in the Holy Bible which he spent most of his time to study. The most significant experience of his life came when he fell into a trance and received the Lord's commission. It was this remarkable occurrence that brought about the radical change in his life from a civil servant to an adroit preacher of the gospel! There was never a time he equivocated with regard to his spiritual calling; rather, he ever so well made open declarations about the grace the Lord bestowed upon him-and he lived up to it. Here is his own testimony:

"After three and half years' diligent and prayerful studies of the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ revealed himself to me in a vision and commanded me to go and proclaim the good news of God's Kingdom (or 'Gospel of Peace') to all nations as the only remedy for all human sufferings and woes; to expose all the false doctrines which Satan had used to deceive the people and to keep them in ignorance of God's Kingdom and purpose of creation; and to pronounce God's written judgment against all wickedness."

Under the circumstances, it was virtually impossible for him to continue to serve under the Nigerian Colonial Government. He had no other alternative than to obey the Lord's command, like St. Paul of Bible fame (Acts 26: 12-20), and devote his life wholly to Christ's Ministry as "the Lord's freeman". So, in February 1933, he resigned from the Government Service and became a full-time Minister of the gospel of Christ. This was quite in harmony with the biblical injunction, which says: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: Likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men " – 1 Corinthians 7: 22, 23.

The resignation of Brother G. M. Urhobo from the civil service for no other reason than that he, being anointed by the Lord, was going to give his whole time to God's Kingdom service, gave cause for his own relatives and many of his colleagues and friends to view his sanity with suspicion. It was really difficult for the unspiritual to appreciate his decision and course of action in throwing to the winds, for the love of preaching as some said, such an enviable post in the Government Service in those days when men of his social rank were regarded as the elites of society!

Right from the start of his career as a preacher, Brother Urhobo became an object of hatred and reproach as Christ truly said would happen to the chosen ones. (John 15: 18, 19; 17: 14-16). His relatives and friends forsook him. Some said he was mad; others called him a devil and deceiver just as Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, was called. (John 10: 20). Many false reports about him were published and circulated by certain people and the Watchtower Society warning the people to avoid him because of his teachings, which they considered to be revolutionary.

His worst antagonists were among the members of the Watchtower Society and the Roman Catholic Church

Owing to the persecution in Warri he went to Sapele in June 1933. There, too, it was not all roses for him. His expository lectures in which he criticised the false doctrines of "churchianity" stirred great enmity of the clergymen against him

## **Urhobo vs Brown**

In October 1934, Brother Urhobo went to Lagos where, owing to his interest in the publications of the late J. F. Rutherford – former President of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of America-he came in contact with the late W. R. Brown, the local representative of the Watchtower Society in Nigeria.

Later on, there was a disagreement between Brother Urhobo and Mr. Brown over the issues of doctrine. Brother Urhobo had in a biblically constructive argument, for the purpose of correction (2 Timothy 3: 16, 17), called the attention of Mr. Brown to certain errors in the teachings of the Watchtower Society about “Marriage”, “Jehovah’s Organisation”, “Selection and ordination of the 144,000 Anointed Christians”, “Leadership”, “Memorial Supper”, “Women Preaching” and their fixing dates for “Armageddon”.

Instead of Mr. Brown to allow the Spirit of Christ to dominate his reason as to consider the correction of Brother Urhobo from a scriptural stand-point, he lost his temper. Yes, King Solomon said, “He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly.” (Proverbs. 14: 17) And St. James stated, “For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” – James. 1: 20.

The honourable course open to Brother Urhobo was to part company with Mr. Brown whose teachings, he pointed out were inconsistent with the Scripture. It is those doctrinal issues that are the base of the vast gulf still existing between the God’s Kingdom Society and the Watchtower Society whose members call themselves” Jehovah’s Witnesses”.

## **GKS Organised**

It was in Lagos in that same year 1934 Brother Urhobo, through his soul-stirring public lectures, attracted a handful of adherents whom he, through the Spirit of God, organised into a group of Bible students. And it was that group that has grown steadily by God’s grace, into thousands of Christians allover Nigeria and abroad, in spite of stiff opposition and tribulations of the devil and become a mighty Christian Organisation known, today, as GOD’S KINGDOM SOCIETY. This precisely fulfils the Bible: “A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.” – Isaiah. 60: 22; see also Matthew 13: 31, 32.

The members of the Watchtower Society having failed in their attempt to hinder the progress of the GKS, resorted to a campaign of calumny. They called Brother Urhobo a devil, Judas, man of sin, thief, prisoner, a withered branch, and such like contrary to the Bible. (Matthew 5: 43-45) They are not ashamed that the man whom they always called a “withered branch” was more virile in preaching the gospel than they; and the GKS, which is the fruit of his labour, continues to grow by leaps and bounds through the grace of God in fulfilment of the Bible. – Psalm 105: 24; 115: 11, 13-15; Isaiah. 9: 6, 7.

We are sometimes amused when we hear some people talk glibly about the God’s Kingdom Society. They ask, “How can it be the church of God when it was founded by man?” They add, “The GKS sprang from the Watchtower Society; we knew the founder very well: it was the late G. M. Urhobo who was an ordinary postal clerk.”

It is those who have no spiritual understanding that look down on the work of God on carnal or worldly considerations. We do not know of any church denomination, we reiterate, that God Himself came down from heaven to establish on earth. The Roman Catholic Church cannot make such a claim. Even their claim that it was founded by St. Peter is scripturally unsustainable. Historically, the influence of pagan Rome on that church is common knowledge. We need not go into details as to why people who had no spiritual light became "rulers of the church from outside".

The Church of England split or sprang from the Roman Catholic Church. Under Henry VIII, the break with the papacy became complete.

The Lutherans started with Martin Luther and the Presbyterians with John Calvin. And was it not John Wesley, after graduation and ordination as a priest in the Church of England, that founded the Methodist Church? What about the Salvation Army? Was it not founded by William Booth, a Methodist minister, in the East End of London in 1865?

Are the Baptists not successors of the Anabaptists who seceded formally from the Church of England in 1633. and "among their early and most distinguished names are those of Milton and Bunyan"? (Vide Jack's Reference Book, page 839).

The Adventists of which the Seventh- Day Adventists is just a body, started in North America with William Miller, a Baptist minister.

### **Russell vs Barbour**

Finally, let us take a look at the Watchtower Society whose members are most vociferous in making bombastic claims and scandalising others. They claim that theirs is "Jehovah's Organsation", but who founded it? It was founded by Charles Taze Russell at Pittsburgh, Pa., in America. And what was he before then? A Watchtower publication, Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose, has this to say: "Russell was in partnership with his father, assisting him with his business activity in a men's furnishing store...he abandoned it all to devote his entire time to the ministry," (Page 17).

The book stated that "in 1876, while Pastor Russell was in Philadelphia on a business trip, he happened to come into possession of a copy of the magazine The Herald of the Morning" being published by N. H. Barbour of Rochester. N. Y. He was pleased and interested because of the similarity of their views "even though he recognized it as an Adventist paper". He got in touch with Barbour to arrange a meeting at his (Russell's) expense in order to discuss matters. "He was satisfied with the evidence Barbour presented." The book continues; "As a result of Russell's meeting with Barbour, his study group in Pittsburgh became affiliated with the group at Rochester..." (Page 18)

It is interesting to note that a division soon arose between Russell and Barbour because of differences on scriptural points. This resulted in Russell's breaking away, The Watchtower publication quotes Russell as stating among other things; "Therefore, after a most careful though unavailing effort to reclaim the erring, I withdrew entirely from The Herald of the Morning, and from further fellowship with Mr., Barbour." (Pages 20-21, emphasis ours).

What moral right, therefore, have the Watchtower witnesses to point accusing fingers at Brother G. M. Urhobo for parting company with Mr. Brown and the Watchtower Society on doctrinal grounds?

However, the point we are making in our reference to other religious bodies is that none of them is in a better position than the God's Kingdom Society to claim to be God's Organisation. But judged by the standard of morals, discipline and, above all, the preaching of the truth of God as contained in the Bible, we, like St. Paul recommend the GKS to "every man's conscience in the sight of God". The GKS does not, however, claim to be the only true church organisation in the whole world. We say all this not out of ill-will or animosity but for the purpose of enlightenment.

The fact that Brother Gideon Urhobo was an African or a postal clerk was no reason why God would not use him to do His work. Late President Rutherford of the Watchtower Society stated in his booklet, *Favored People*, that the blessings of God have no reference whatsoever to nationalities; He wrote: "The blackest man from Africa will have the same opportunity as the white man of America." (Page 7).

The early apostles of Jesus Christ were common men but it pleased God to make them His workmen. If God could choose a fisherman to be an apostle, is it a postal clerk He could not call to labour in the gospel? (Matthew 4:18-22; Acts 4; 13) There is a popular hymn having this stanza:

Not many rich or noble called,

Not many great or wise;

Those whom God makes His kings and priests

Are poor in human eyes.

This was drawn from the first epistle of St. Pauls to the Corinthians in which he made it clear that it is those the world regards as foolish and base God chooses to do His work. He wrote: "For ye see your calling, brethren, bow that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the – foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence." – 1 Corinthians 1: 26-29.

So when some people say contemptuously that the first President of the GKS did not go to Europe or America or university, we do not bother ourselves because we know that they are spiritually ignorant. The reproaches, malicious misrepresentations, slanders and persecutions of men have never stayed God's blessings from descending upon the GKS. St. Paul was so reproached and branded a heretic, yet he told Felix: "But this I confess unto thee that after the way which they (his accusers) call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." – Acts 24: 14.

## **Success.**

The success of Brother Gideon Urhobo is no longer in dispute. Today the God's Kingdom Society, no matter whatever view anyone holds, reflects the glory of God and stands as an everlasting monument, by the grace of God, of Brother Gideon M. Urhobo-an illustrious son of Africa!

With regard to the mission of the GKS, the following extracts from her Constitution are explicit enough:

“(a) To declare God's Kingdom of righteousness and peace on earth and to express this doctrine in every conceivable way and form, within the bounds of law, order and human decency and to do so at any time or place, to the best of our knowledge and understanding of Bible interpretations and symbolism.

“(b) To vindicate, admonish, preach and impart to mankind irrespective of colour, creed or caste the wholesome idea of service, fear, adoration and reverence to God Almighty, the Maker of Man, the Author of Life, and the Great Ruler and Architect of the Universe, and for this purpose always to organise meetings and gatherings in any corner of the street, road, house or premises, in any township, village or locality without harm, violence nor damage to any person or property and without infringement of any laws or regulations of any constitutional authority of Government.

“(c) To excite the interest of Africans and all peoples of the earth to the study of the Holy Bible, the Christian ethics and theology and to promote all means and measures conducive to the propagation of this knowledge for the eventual peace and realisation of harmony and tranquility among all people of the human race in accordance with scriptural ideology.”

We have published this in the interest of the readers who have been asking to know more about the God's Kingdom Society. Yes, the GKS is planted by God; it is not the work of man. Therefore, anyone persecuting her is “fighting against God”. – Acts 5: 29-42; Luke 10: 16; Mark 9: 41, 42; Hebrews 10: 31; 12: 29.