

INTO AFRICA

A GREAT GIFT OF HEALING TO THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST AFTER OVER 150 YEARS OF SUFFERING THROUGH THE DIVISION AMONG THE BAPTISTS IN 1829 - 1832

It has often been said that war is not a solution to many of the problems that caused it in the first place. The wars that take place among the Lord's people only serve to give the devil cause for joy. Usually the issues that bring the opposing sides to divide get so focused on the errors of the other that they all forget the good that both may have been doing. It is no different when the Baptists in America had their split in the years between 1829 and 1832. When this happened both sides had exceptional men who were able to preach to the edification of the Lord's people. There were also men on both sides who were not very well able to understand what the truth of God's grace is. On the one hand some thought that the ministry had to be schooled in the institutions of the land before they were qualified to pastor churches. On the other hand some thought that God calls the man to preach and all he had to do was go to the pulpit and let the Bible fall open wherever it may and just start working his mouth and God would pour out of it the message that the people needed to hear. Some thought they had to spend days on end preparing their sermons during the week while others thought it was not needful to prepare at all. Some thought preaching could not be done without writing it out while others thought it was wrong to have any notes at all. You get the picture. All these were in some ways wrong. As it developed, some started preaching the responsibility of sinners so strongly that finally salvation was based on mans free will and God could not save him unless he met certain conditions presented to him. Others started preaching that man had no responsibility at all, and that his every action was determined beforehand by God. They did not think that the man was at all involved in his salvation. All these attitudes are wrong in some of their applications. At the time of the division most of the issues were of the kind that had to do with the practice within the Baptist church. This conflict was so sharp in 1832 that the line was drawn in the sand by some of the Baptists at a place called Black Rock Meeting House in Baltimore, Maryland. From that time most of the Baptists who were of the opinion that all things not authorized by scripture were of the mind of men and were not to be recognized by the churches. These Baptists were finally identified as Primitive (original) Baptists and by some as Old School Baptists. The other group was known as Missionary Baptists or New School Baptists. In my opinion there were some good and bad on both sides of the issues.

As the years went by things began to crystallize on both sides until the Primitive Baptists began to be known as Anti-Mission Baptists because they were not involved with mission work through Mission Societies. They were opposed to these Mission Societies, and still are, believing any evangelistic or mission work must come under the authority and direction of the church. However, the Primitive Baptists were not "anti-mission" as some labeled them. Over the years even some within the Primitive Baptists have taken on an anti-mission attitude, but it is not the position of the Primitive Baptists everywhere. I would like to record here the position of the Baptists who were later known as the Primitive Baptists as they stated it at the Black Rock convention on Friday, Saturday, September 28, 29, 1832. "We will now call your attention to the subject of Missions.. Previous to stating our objections to the **mission plans**, we will meet some of the false charges brought against us relative to this subject, by a simple and unequivocal

declaration, that we do regard as of the first importance the command given of Christ, primarily to his apostles, and through them to his ministers in every age, to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” and do feel an earnest desire to be found acting in obedience thereunto, as the providence of God directs our way, and opens a door of utterance for us. We also believe it to be the duty of individuals and churches to contribute according to their abilities, for the support, not only of their pastors, but also of those who go preaching the gospel of Christ, among the destitute. But we at the same time contend, that we have no right to depart from the order which the Master himself has seen fit to lay down, relative to the ministration of the word. We therefore cannot fellowship the plans for spreading the gospel, generally adopted at this day, under the name of Missions; because we consider those plans throughout a subversion of the order marked out in the New Testament. In reference to the medium by which the gospel minister is to be sent forth to labor in the field, agreeable to the prophesy going before, that out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, the Lord has manifestly established the order, that his ministers should be sent forth by the churches. But the mission plan is to send them out by a “Mission Society.” These societies that have taken over the mission work from the churches was what the Primitive Baptists were opposed to and still are. It is true that since the division, most of the Primitive Baptists have not practiced what they preached about the sending the preachers out into the mission field. The Primitive Baptists have suffered much because of their neglect of this work.

On November 14, 1900 at Fulton Church in Fulton, Kentucky fifty-one ministers representing three hundred and thirty-five Primitive Baptist churches with memberships amounting to fourteen thousand, five hundred members who were in direct fellowship with over one hundred thousand Primitive Baptists, met for four days. The purpose for this meeting was to promote harmony among themselves and to make a statement of their beliefs. In the preface of their printed book of the meeting they stated, “Many of our brethren have desired for years that a general or national meeting be held for the purpose of uniting our people everywhere in doctrine and practice; every lover of our people has grieved and deeply distressed to see our dear old Baptists torn into factions in so many places”. At this meeting they re-adopted the London Confession Of Faith of 1689 and adopted and republished by the Philadelphia Association in September 25, 1742. The Fulton assembly had this to say about the London Confession, “The London Confession of Faith has served one of the most needful services among our people of any document of faith since the days of the apostles, **and has stood unquestioned as an expression of the Primitive Baptist’s interpretation of the Bible from then till now.**” Some of our dear brothers and sisters have been led astray by many preachers who in recent years have begun to say they do not believe what it contains. It seems to me that they are trying to make some sort of special denomination of the old church according to their own likes and doctrines. The Fulton assembly also made this statement about evangelism and spreading the gospel, “The work of an evangelist is indispensable. Without such work the gospel kingdom would be extended no farther, as it is the chief work of an evangelist to introduce the gospel where it is not known and to organize churches. There should be no lack of appreciation of either pastor or evangelist, as both are indispensable in the up building and progress of the church and is authorized by the Word of God. (See Ephesians 4:11.) If the claim of Primitive Baptists be true, no one has access to baptism, the elements in the Lord’s Supper, or any other gospel privilege where there is no Primitive Baptist church or ministry. In view of the vast territory in our own country that is absolutely ignorant of Primitive Baptist doctrine, and therefore totally destitute of church privileges, and as the redeemed of the Lord are among every nation, kindred, tongue, and

people under heaven (Rev. 5:9) we behold the great necessity of stirring our people up on this subject. This clearly demonstrates that we claim too much or do too little. We earnestly solicit our people to encourage the work of an evangelist--not to spend his time in visiting large and well-organized churches, but to labor with the feeble and destitute churches and in places **where there is no church**. The churches should lovingly, freely, and faithfully contribute of their carnal means as God has blessed them to the support of brethren engaged in this needful work.” Now that a little over one hundred years has passed, for the first one hundred years the admonition has all but fallen to the ground and not been done. This poor sinner began to preach the necessity of these things around 1950 -1960. At first I did not get too much resistance about it. Perhaps it was because I was young and nobody thought I would make any difference anyway, and in my thinking I didn't. The general population of the churches seemed to respond warmly but some of the ministry seemed hostile. The only reason that I can think of was that the people knew it was right and the ministry was embarrassed because they had not done it and did not want the spotlight put on their neglect. Perhaps I am wrong.

But low and behold, a little before the year 2000, the Lord so stirred up one Elder L. Jeff Harris with a special calling for the work of an evangelist, as well as pastor. Elder Harris had more than the desire to see it done. He was the first man that I have known in my life as a Primitive Baptist minister to actually do something about it. He had through the providence of God the opportunity to make a journey into the Philippine Islands just before the turn of the century. At this date there are numerous churches established and the truth is being spread there as I write this message. God has sent several others there, and at least two of them have moved there and continue to work there. Elder Harris didn't stop there. He went on to India, and to some countries that I don't even know about. He has gone enough that he has now come under attack by many who have not the cause of Christ as their most important concern. They are like the Jews of old. They won't enter into the work and want to prevent any who would do so from doing it. Among the ministers who have supported the work, one of my grandsons, Elder Nathan Pitney has begun to travel on a good many trips to many places with Elder Jeff Harris. The church where I am the co-pastor has tried to support their trips when we were able to do so. We also through the providence of God were brought in contact with people in two African countries, Kenya first and then Malawi. After two successful trips into Malawi, when the third time was coming up, I had a very strong impression to go with Elders Harris and Pitney. Since I am now seventy-two years old, I have reason enough to know that I cannot go all over the world preaching. Since our church, Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church supported the work from the beginning and extended an arm of the church there and gave the authority to the evangelist to baptize, not only in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, but also by the authority of Fellowship Church, I felt it my burden to go and let the people know how we have prayed for them and to see for myself firsthand how the work was going. Also I hoped to help in the ordination of our first two African Elders in the country of Malawi. I also wanted to take Elder Royce Beal along with myself, Elders Harris and Pitney. He is a black Primitive Baptist that I have truly grown to love and admire. I wanted him to see the land of his heritage and to see what the Lord was doing there. So we began to work out the plans to go and start saving the money to go. I also knew that if I went I would have to rent a conveyance at the airport and keep it with me while I was there because I could never have stood the hardness of dragging around my luggage on the public transportation and having to stand up much of the time. Thus after all these years in the ministry and preaching about how we need to evangelize, I was finally planning to do something about it. I count it such a blessing to go with the team of Elders Harris and Pitney

because I love and respect their judgment and needed their experience to help me along the way. Elder Beal also was a good team member to have along.

THE TRIP

Tuesday 8-24-04—This was the beginning of a new experience for my loved ones and me. Outside of them all being fearful for my health at this stage of my life, they were all very playful and supportive. I could feel somewhat like the scripture tells about David the shepherd as he went to visit with the army when they were facing the Philistines. It said that he left the sheep in the hands of a keeper. I was reluctant to leave my dear crippled wife and also to leave the rest of the family and church but I have learned to commit their care to the one who watches over us all. Thus we, Elders Jeff Harris, Nathan Pitney, Royce Beal and I boarded a South Africa Air Lines plane. We settled into the plane about 10:00 a.m. and it started our journey at 10:30 a.m. Our first stop was off the west coast of Africa at Sal Island for fuel. We did not get off the plane because it was in the night. We refueled and our next stop was unscheduled and was at Cape Town South Africa to let off some passengers. We then went on to Johannesburg, South Africa. Here we had to find a place to spend the night because the plane up to Malawi did not leave until the next day. It was scheduled to leave at 10.20 a.m. South African Time (SAT). We were able to get a very nice room at the Holiday Inn. We also had a good supper at the restaurant there. The room cost us about \$60.00 each. I stayed in the room with Brother Royce and Nathan and Jeff stayed in a room together. This was the way we did on the entire trip. From here I got to call June. She said she had taken the first shower in her new roll-in shower. The four of us had a very sweet prayer service in the room, praying for the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and His anointing upon the work that we were set out to do. We also prayed for the grace of discernment to know just what we should do when we got there. We also prayed for all our loved ones at home and retired for a good nights rest.

Thursday 8-26-04--We lost six hours, therefore an entire day calendar wise by the time we got up this morning. Most of it was spent on the airplane. My reason for mentioning time, money spent, and things like that is to help anyone who may be inspired to make such a journey will know what to expect. We arose about 6:00 a.m. SAT, here at the Holiday Inn at Johannesburg, South Africa. We all felt refreshed and had our last really good meal for quite sometime. Our lodgings were very good and the meals were good. All this was quite a luxury for us all. We really had no choice about where to stay, for every other place was more. All in all, our room, food, and shuttle to carry us to and from the airport cost each of us \$87.17. This was about in line with the cost in the USA. The other brothers used the time waiting for our flight to leave to send e-mails to their loved ones at home. Since I had talked to my dearest last night, I did not do so. Our flight to Lilongwe, Malawi got away at 10:30 SAT. Brother Royce struck up a friendly conversation with the woman who was taking tickets up and she bumped him and me up to first class on that flight. We took quite a bit of ribbing from Brother Jeff and Nathan about it. The only difference I could tell was all the fancy linen and expensive food that they served. I wasn't hungry so it didn't do me much good. Brother Royce really used it for all it was worth and enjoyed it. This flight took something around two hours, so we arrived at the airport around 12:30 p.m. SAT. It took about an hour to round up all our baggage and go through customs. We could not find Brothers Lackson and Lameck. We had hoped they would be there and help us negotiate for a rental car for our trip. It seems that the communication from Brother

Jeff to them got lost or mixed up in the translation or something. They did come to the airport but it was long after we left. We went ahead and made our arrangements for the car ourselves. We found out that if I paid for it with my visa card, they would give me the visitor's rate, which was much higher than the local rate. We could get the local rate by paying with cash. Since we did not have time to look around at other places and the time of the day that it was, we didn't have very much to select from. They had a Nissan 4X4-7 Passenger-stick shift-air conditioner- 4 cylinder diesel that they wanted \$2,600.00 for if we paid with visa. The price for cash was \$1,700.00. If our two Africa brothers had been there we could not have gotten all of our luggage and the all six of us in this unit. We thought about getting two cars if they showed up. Two Toyota cars would have cost less than the one 4X4 Nissan. They did not have air conditioning nor would they travel the roads as well where we were going. The final decision was to take the 4X4 since we could all get in it with the luggage and we would have the luggage out when the African brothers finally caught up with us so we could all ride together. I thus paid cash for this and it ran me out of funds to start with. While I was paying for the car, the other brothers exchanged a good bit of their dollars into the currency of Malawi. At the time they did that the exchange rate was 118 kwachas for \$1.00. All this meant that you had a large stack of money but it would buy very little. We finally got all our luggage loaded up and started our journey up to Mzuzu which was about a 5 to 6 hour trip over the best road in that country which was about equal to our secondary county roads, but it was paved. Brother Jeff and then brother Nathan did the driving. It was sort of strange to me since the steering wheel was mounted on the right of the car and you had to drive on the left side of the road. The most of the traffic was large trucks hauling tobacco. It was not unusual to see one of them broken down on the side of the road. Not very much motorized traffic, but people walking on both sides of the road everywhere we went. I likened it all to ants going back and forth to their nest. There were a few bicycles more than cars, but the majority was walking. I was amazed at the women carrying their loads up on their heads without holding on to it. I mean it was not unusual to see them with a 50 lb. sack of corn or rice or a large stack of sticks and other items that were apparently very heavy. I observed that all the women were clothed very modestly and in bright colors. If they had a baby they would have it on their back wrapped in a cloth tied around over their shoulder. I have thought that if I hear of any women complaining about their life here in the USA, I would like for the Lord to place them over here for about one month and when they got back, I think you would never hear another complaint out of them. The men were dressed mainly in a shirt and pants and some had on ties and some had suits on, but all walking. The clothes looked nice and they looked clean considering most came through many dirt roads to get where they were. When we were on dirt roads the stream of people did not slow down. I finally figured out that they were walking between small markets and sometime larger markets to buy their food and to sell their wares, mostly homemade or homegrown. It was very much like this everywhere we went in this nation. The only difference being at the larger cities and the larger markets the people were so thick that you could not drive down the street without blowing the horn and waiting for them to open up a place for our car to get through. We finally arrived at Mzuzu around 8:00m p.m. and found the lodge where Brother Jeff and Nathan stayed last year. If you ever want to come to these parts it takes you about three days of your allotted time just to get to the place where the work will begin. We were blessed to secure two rooms that were newly built and they had a bathroom in each of them with a hot water heater. This was a great blessing even here. The other times they were here they only had two showers for the entire lodge and two toilets. Each room had two good beds. There was no heating and air conditioning but during our stay there it was not

needful. This is their wintertime and the temperature was cool at night and about 85 degrees in the day time. We got our luggage unloaded and Brother Jeff had Brother Lackson's cell phone number and placed a call to him. He and Brother Lameck were down at the airport looking for us. It will forever be a mystery to me how they did not see us. They caught public transportation around 12 p.m. and got back to Mzuzu around 5:30 a.m. They called Brother Jeff and told him that they were going home to get refreshed and they would see us around 9:00 a.m. We had a fairly good supper (all meals here took about one and one-half hours to get served). After supper, we had a very fruitful prayer service and tried to pray for all our loved ones at home and thank the Lord for our arriving here safely

Friday 8-27-04--This will be our first day to do the work we came here for. We had a good nights sleep and arose refreshed. Brothers Lackson and Lameck came on over and after breakfast we all loaded into the Nissan and went for about one hour and a half to a village called Elangeni. To get there we went about 15 miles up the paved road and then about 15 miles of the roughest dirt road I have ever been on. I was raised on a dirt road but never like this. It is not a public route so it never gets scraped. Ruts are long and deep. I found out that we were expected to stop at the market in Mzuzu and buy the food for the crowd and bring it with us. Brother Lameck is a real good trader and he got enough food for about 70 people for around \$20.00. There was corn, some fish, and some greens that I never heard what they were. Brother Lackson did the driving back into this village for us. Brother William Chirwa is the chief in this village and we went to his house where they had set up a meeting place under a Mango tree. They had built us a little straw hut to sit under. Before the meeting started, brother William invited us to enter his house, which was a great honor. He and his wife lived in one room with a bed and a few sparse belongings in a trunk and one dresser. They had a few more things hanging on the wall. The rest of the family all lived in another room across a breezeway type opening. The roof was a thatched roof and in much need of repair. I was told that this was the best house in the area. It humbled me very much when he had all the adult women in the family to come in for us to meet them. Each and every one of them got on their knees and held their hand up to shake our hand, then moved over to the next one and do the same and then they returned to their duties. This room was about 12' X 14' in size with no windows. After awhile they took the few chairs that were there out under the Mango tree and began to gather for the meeting. The males that were there sat in the chairs and the women and children sat on the ground on a mat made out of straw. It was not a custom for them to do this but only because there were not enough chairs. They had previously built a little brush arbor large enough for us four preachers to sit under. At this meeting there were about 30 souls gathered. Brother Lameck led the congregation in two songs. It was here that I heard for the first time the beautiful way in which these Africans sang the songs of praise to God. I had heard it on the video that brother Nathan brought from his last trip, but I assure you it is not the same as being there and watching them and listening to them. Brother William announced the order of the services for the morning. Brother Jeff came first, and I sure was glad that he did for I have never preached with an interpreter before, nor had Brother Royce. Brother Jeff set the theme for the meeting with some very good gospel about the grace of God and His power to save sinners. Brother Nathan then preached mostly about perseverance. Brother Lameck preached and this was the first time I had heard him. I enjoyed him very much and he has a very animated manner but not out of the good ways of preaching. Brother Royce then preached and went on a good "fishing trip" (fishing for men) that I thought was very good. We then had a question and answer session. Brother Jeff, Nathan and I participated in that. We then broke for lunch. The women cooked their food as always on an

open wood fire on the ground. They had liver, sardines, and rice that we had purchased at the market on the way out there. The four of us from the USA did not try to eat with them for our system was not adjusted to their cooking or food. We all brought some canned stuff and bottled water so we ate from that. After that was over we assembled back and I then tried to preach to them. I felt good liberty and began to get accustomed to preaching with the interpreter. We closed the meeting and made our journey on back to Mzuzu. We had supper at the lodge. It was fairly good but as always very slow in coming. After supper we had our nightly prayer meeting and we also discussed whether the work of ordaining Brother Lackson and Lameck should be done. There was a united agreement that brother Lameck should be, but since brother Royce and I had not heard Brother Lackson, we thought to wait until tomorrow to decide on him. I went down to the office and paid my room charge for our remaining time there in Mzuzu. It cost us approximately \$22.50 each for each night

Saturday 8-28-04-- Brother Royce and I rested real good during the night. The crowing of roosters and the barking of the dogs woke us so we got up about 5 a.m. excited and ready for another day trying to worship the Lord in this Country. All of us gathered at the hotel cafe at 6:30a.m. to eat breakfast when they opened. They are slow, slow, slow by our standards. Reminds me of cold syrup running out of a jar, seemed it will never get there. A man had washed the dust, and there was a plenty of it, off our car. He wanted 200 kwachas, about \$2.00 for the task. I thought it was a real bargain. Brother Lackson and Lameck arrived and we all drove back up to where we were yesterday, a place called Elangeni. The roads were so rough I began to worry about Brother Royce as to whether it would do him any damage since he has trouble with his colon area after his prostrate operation. He did make it alright, although he said that if we had to do it one more time he didn't think he could make it. We did stop at the market again on the way and bought some fish, corn and some sort of greens. Enough for about fifty people for around \$15.00. The wind was blowing pretty brisk this morning and I was glad I had a light coat and hat since we were outside. This time of the year is their winter. Brother Jeff preached first this morning and he preached one of the most powerful evangelistic sermons that I have ever heard, and Brother Royce did the same. Brother Lackson went before them and did mighty well. There were three women and one man about 16 years old that rose and confessed Christ as their hope of salvation. We broke up the meeting and retired down to a creek about two miles away for baptism. I was not going to try to walk that far because of my health and I just couldn't risk it. They however did carry the car around another way and got within about 1/4 mile of the place. I then walked down there and got back by taking only one nitro tablet. Their singing was beautiful. Brother Royce baptized two of them and brother Jeff the other two. Sort of a funny thing happened. The water was not even deep to the knees and Brother Royce slipped and fell right on top of the woman that he baptized. Nathan has a video of that. Afterward we came back. We then had lunch and we ate our own food the same as yesterday. After lunch I preached first then brother Nathan preach a most inspiring sermon on the "body of the church". We then said good-by to all the people there and brother William came with us back to Mzuzu. Brother William showed us what he had written down about his vision for a church in his area. He thought he could give the land for a building. He thought that if they could get some pigs and chickens they could raise more, sell eggs, and build with the natural material around there and be able to survive while doing so. I thought it was a very good plan and vision. He went home with Brother Lackson and spent the night with him. We let Brother Lackson carry the car with him so he could come and get us tomorrow. We finally got our supper, had our prayer meeting together

and especially thanked the Lord for his mercy and grace and prayed for our churches and loved ones at home. We were all pretty tired and turned in early.

Sunday 8-29-04—We arose about 6:00 a.m., dressed and had our breakfast. Another 1 1/2 hours to get it. Brother Lackson, Lameck, and William picked us up and we went by the market and then to the Mzuzu Fellowship for services. We did not meet in their regular meeting place because it was not available to us for this day. We met in a schoolroom since it was on a Sunday and not being used. They are a very lively group of worshippers. The singing was beautiful. If ever I can come again I want to bring a tape recorder so I can get a recording of it. This morning Elders Jeff, Nathan, and Royce did the preaching and I thought all did very good. I love the way they do about receiving people to be baptized. They tell the preachers before the services and then they are asked to stand if they want to follow Christ in baptism. They stand and then questions are asked of them about their experience and then they retire to the river to do the work. At the house there were three that stood and at the river there was one other making a total of four in all. Nathan did the baptism of all four of these and he did as they did at the other place, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost and by the authority of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church. He was the only one who had clothes with him to baptize, so he did it all. It took about an hour for the people to get back from the river to the meeting place and then they prepared their meal. We ate our own stuff. It was awhile in preparation so I took some pictures of what they were doing. We had a private session with brother Lackson and Lameck and questioned them extensively about their understanding of the scripture and their qualifications as ministers. After it was over, all four of us from the USA agreed that the work of ordination should be done.. Since this fellowship is meeting under the arm of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church, as co-pastor of Fellowship Church I called for the assembly of the presbytery for the purpose of ordaining Brother Lameck and Brother Lackson to the full work of the gospel ministry. The presbytery was formed of Elders Jerry M. Hunt, Sr., Nathan Pitney, Royce Beal, and Jeff Harris. We elected Elder Jeff as our moderator. Elder Harris appointed the following to take charge of the parts assigned to them. Elder Nathan Pitney is to keep the record of the proceedings. Elder Jeff Harris to examine the two men to be ordained. Elder Royce Beal to pray the ordination prayer with the laying on of hands by us all. Elder Jerry M. Hunt, Sr. to deliver the charge to both men. It all went well I thought. Thus we now have two men who are Elders in the Nation of Malawi Africa. I hope they continue to be a great blessing to the Lord's people in that area for a long, long time to come. It was dark by the time we got back to the room at Mzuzu. We went down to a place where we could make a call to our loved ones at home for the cost of \$3.00 per minute. June and I talked for 6 minutes and it was worth every cent of it to hear her lovely voice. All seemed to be well at home. We went back to our rooms had supper, prayer and retired for the night.

Monday 8-30-04--The Mzuzu assembly gathered in a different place since the school house was not available today. Brother Nathan and I took Brother Jeff and Brother Royce over to the meeting place and came back to the bank in Mzuzu so that I could use my visa card to get an additional \$1000.00 converted into kwachas. The reason was because I used most all of my cash to get the discount on the rental car therefore I was out of funds. As all things we have encountered in Africa this also took a long time to get done. We were at the bank at 9:00 a.m. when it opened. There is always a large crowd of people around when that happens. Probably about 200 to 300 people were there at this time. We didn't have to stand in line to get our transfer window to start our business. We were told that they could not start the process until 10:00 so we filled out all the necessary papers and waited. They said they had to get approval

for visa, then they had a broker somewhere, maybe in England, who would convert the dollars into pounds sterling and then they could convert that into their local currency. While we were waiting, we decided to go down to the little super-market and get a few things that we wanted. There was a place where Brothers Nathan and Jeff, on their previous trips stopped in and sent off e-mail back home. Nathan wanted to stop by there because there was a young woman there who had attended some of the meetings that was held before and showed a real interest, but it was too far for her to walk from where she lived to get there. She was real happy to see Nathan. She wanted to walk on down to the super market with us and help with our selection. While there brother Nathan told her to get anything she wanted. She exclaimed, "anything?" He said, "Yes". At first she selected a container of about 2 gallons of cooking oil. Then she saw a sack full of rice or meal and switched. She was so thankful. She said she could feed her family for about three months on what she got. We went on back and finally got the money and prepared to leave about 10:30 a.m.. The money was in new bills and made such a large stack that it was hard to carry it concealed, but I did manage. That is the first time I have ever had, literally a sack full of money. The exchange rate at the time of this transaction was 108.47 kwachas to the dollar. It also cost about \$20.00 to get it all done. We finally arrived at the meeting place and Brother Jeff was already preaching. I followed him. We then broke for lunch and followed our regular routine with us eating from our snacks that we brought with us. After lunch Brother Nathan preached a real powerful discourse followed by Brother Royce who did real well. Brother Royce made a statement that some folks tell him that when he says, "Ain't God good" is not good English, but it is good gospel. The entire meeting was such a good one. The preaching, prayers, singing, and fellowship were so spiritual that it was hard to break up and leave them. It is probably the last and only time that I will ever be there. My first contact in Malawi, one Rhynold Addison Waphoka, was at the meeting yesterday and came back today. He had his son, Jerry Hunt Waphoka with him so I could meet him. He named him for me several years back because he got a letter from me with some money in it on the very day the boy was born. After the service was over we made a decision to put in the money to give to Brother William to purchase the pigs and chickens that he wanted to try to carry on his vision at Elangeni. The cost worked out like this. I had \$500.00 given to me do whatever it seemed would help these people, therefore with this \$500.00 I bought one pig each for six families. Jeff also bought one for each family giving them the two that they needed. I also bought 16 chickens for each of the six families making a total of 96 chickens. I had enough left to purchase a bicycle for Brother William, which will allow him to go about his area evangelizing. I hope the ones who entrusted the extra five hundred dollars will be pleased with what I did with it. I also discussed with Brother Jeff the need for a tin roof for Brother William's house. The tin would cost about \$400.00 and Brother Jeff suggested the four of us put into it \$100.00 each. He and Brother Nathan were going to go on over into Kenya and have additional cost. I assumed that cost myself so they would have the extra funds to help in Kenya. Brother William is a worthy brother and will soon be an Elder among our people and is in a position to bring many souls into the fellowship in his area. May God bless him. As our work was done in Mzuza we went back to the lodge, packed our belongings, had our supper then a very blessed prayer session. We shaved and showered before retiring because we had to leave out at 6:00 a.m. in the morning going down to Zomba in the southern part of the nation.

Tuesday 8-31-04--This day is to be another long day of travel. Brother Lameck and Lackson arrived at 6:00 a.m. Brother Jeff had given me a can of chocolate drink for breakfast which did very well and we were able to get off as soon as we packed all the luggage in the car.

It was a very long drive. It is about as far south of the airport at Lilongwe as Mzuzu was to the north. We passed through settlements by the name of Nkhata Bay, Chinthche, Dawangwa, and Nklotakota. We took a few pictures of Lake Malawi, the third largest fresh water lake in the world. It was like looking at the ocean without the waves. We went on though Salina, Mira, and Balaka where we stopped and tried to get some lunch. We went to one restaurant and they took us to another one that was considered to be more upscale. It was barely passable but we did get enough to keep us going. We got another tank of diesel fuel for the car. It amounted to about \$60.00, as it did each time we had filled it. Fuel is much higher than it is in the USA. We reached the city of Zomba, stopped at a place called Annie's Lodge and got three rooms for the six of us. It was a beautiful, but old place. It had passable accommodations. We had thought that maybe we would get to hold services with our new contact here, a Brother Mark Zimbiri, who had contacted me several months ago. I had given all the information to Brother Jeff and he made contact with brother Mark. There was some sort of confusion with him about our schedule and he had planned to have meetings at a place called Phalombe the next two days. We would not be able to go to but one of them due to our flight schedule. We thought the meetings would be in Zomba but the place was about two hours away and it was too near nighttime to go out there. We were at first disappointed, but as it turned out it probably was a blessing that it happened the way that it did. Brother Mark said he would come back over after supper and we would talk a good while. Brother Mark went on home and we settled in and had our supper. It was pretty good. Later when Brother Mark came over seven of us gathered on a little porch just off the rooms where we were staying. The electricity went off so they brought a candle for us to set on the floor so that we could see well enough to talk to each other. We started our discussions about 6:30 p.m. just as it was just getting dark. After each of us told Brother Mark a little about ourselves, we asked him to tell us as much as he could about himself, especially about his experience with the Lord. For about 30 to 40 minutes he began to relate to us a most unusual story. His story was (and I am not able to tell all of it as I could not remember it all by the time I got to where I could write it down.). He was reared by parents who are Roman Catholic. When he reached the age of around thirteen he became dissatisfied with their practices. He could tell they were not according to the scriptures. He searched around for a while and finally settled in with a group of Pentecostal Holiness. He stayed with them for a period of about three years. During this time his parents put him out of their house for leaving the Roman Catholic Church. He became dissatisfied with the Pentecostal group mainly on account of their speaking in tongues and the emphasis they put upon it. It was during this time that God began to reveal unto him the doctrines of grace. He also had come to believe that immersion was the only mode of baptism. He had a great zeal given to him to labor to build churches based solely upon what the Bible taught. Thus even though he was a very young man, he began having several people of many different faiths to meet with him, mostly for prayer services. His parents thought he was going crazy. Early on, even though he had quite a number of people to respond positively to his teaching, not many of them would stay very long with him. When asked if he knew why, he said mostly because he was very young and wasn't associated with any formal church body. Some just did not like his emphasis on the sovereignty of God, election, and things like that. He then attached himself to a group of Baptists but the doctrine they preached was completely wrong in his thinking, because it taught the free will of man. He began searching the internet for someone who believed as he did. He came across a web site that originated out of the Carolina's in the USA. For several years I have been receiving invitations to come and preach at Bible conferences in North Carolina and in Pennsylvania and they had put my name and address on

their web site as one of the speakers. When he saw it and I was listed as a Primitive Baptist, it struck a cord with him that maybe I was someone that he could contact. He did and that is the reason we were here. Praise God for His providence. This man is now only 28 years old and is zealous to serve the Lord in Spirit and in truth. He has two ministers that he has schooled in the doctrines of grace which help him with his work. We did not get to meet them. He has built three church buildings out of the material at hand and has several small groups that he meets with. He has more in the nation of Mozambique going than he does in Malawi. We were not able to get there to visit on this trip. We had the time then to ask him very pointed questions about his stand on certain issues. Brother Nathan said he made an A+ on all counts. Brother Jeff was very satisfied, so was Brother Royce and I. Brothers Lackson and Lameck did not say much, being just newly ordained. Brother Zimbiri said he would come to the lodge and meet us in the morning at 7:00 a.m. and we would drive out to the meeting place for services at Phalombe which is about two hours drive. He has not been ordained by anyone. He does not use instrumental music in the worship. He believes in Godly living. He is very humble and intelligent, speaking three languages, including English. He supports himself by trading in rice and corn and other farm crops and selling them through a rented outlet at the local markets. He lives in a very nice house with his wife and small children. Brother Jeff rode over to meet her and see where he lived. After he left and we all settled in and had our prayer service we thanked God for leading us to this place. I told our brothers that it was a shame that we Primitive Baptists have wasted all these years while the wolves out there in false religion are picking off these little sheep while our people in the USA are bickering over minor differences. God help us. The prospects here are great, as I see them (of course I could be wrong). If the Lord will help us to show this brother the true church of Christ, and that the Primitive Baptists in America are still a major part of that, and he would want fellowship with us, he would be able to lead a great number of people into the church. I would not be surprised next year when our men go back there for a longer stay in this area of hearing about anywhere from 200 to 500 people being baptized. Wow! I am so happy as I lay upon my bed that I lived long enough to be where the Lord begins to build the city in a strange place. It humbles me to be a part of such an historical event.

Wednesday 9-1-04 The drive out to Phalombe was closer to three hours than two and about two-thirds of it was on dirt roads. They were not nearly as bad as the one going to Elangeni, but were very dusty. Thank God for the air conditioner on our car so we could keep the window rolled up. My first view of the place was very impressive to me. I will try to describe it here. They had built this building themselves out of materials found there. They had cleared about one acre of land with primitive hand tools. The soil they moved to level the ground was mixed with water (about a 20 minute walk from here to get water) and they made molds and put the soil and water mix in and let it set out in the sun for drying and with these bricks they built the walls of the building. They left about three openings on each side for air to pass through. They had no windows in the openings. They went out in the surrounding woods and got limbs and formed them into the rafters for the roof. They have tall brown straw that grows there sort of like our straw brooms that I remember as a child and with that they made the thatch for the roofing. They went inside and with the same soil that they made the bricks from, they formed the benches for the people to sit on, and they were really done nicely although they had no backs on them. They made the pulpit out of the same material. They had no electricity or running water so it had no heating or air conditioning, no bathrooms nor lighting. I was impressed. They made for our visit a private toilet out of the same straw that they used on the

roof. They also built an arbor type attachment to the building in which we were able to hold our meeting with them. At the morning service Brother Jeff preached about the golden chain of grace from Romans, Chapter 8. Brother Nathan then preached about the T.U.L.I.P. doctrine which contains 5 of our cardinal beliefs.. They then wanted to have a question and answer session. We thought they might have questions about the doctrines of grace, but they seemed to be well established on that. They asked all of their questions about the use of musical instruments and I thought we all did well to explain that by the scriptures. They had scriptures from the Old Testament mostly about David's use of them etc., but we were really ready for that, especially Brother Jeff because he had run into that before. I did not see any dissatisfaction shown about our position. We then broke for lunch and they ate the stuff that we brought out from the market. We ate our stuff that we carried around with us. The stuff that they eat is made out of corn ground very fine. Since they cook on open fires on the ground it looks like a large lump of fine grits. They call it Msima (Sema). They had some fish and greens. I tasted some of the msima to know how it tasted and it had no taste to me. It was very bland. It came up a slight rain (the only time while we were in Africa) so we had the afternoon service in their building. There were something like 70 or 80 people including the children at the meeting. Brother Royce preached and he did not have his usual liberty here. I followed brother Royce and I didn't think I had good liberty either. I was somewhat pinched for time because I was hoping to hear Brother Mark. Brother Lackson closed out and brother Mark didn't want to hold them any longer, so we broke up and drove on back to the lodge. They were wanting us to come back the next day but we just could not do that. We went to bed after our prayer service together and prepared to get up at 4:00 a.m. to head back to the airport at Lilongwe.

Thursday 9-2-04--We got up at 4:00 a.m. loaded up the car and headed for the airport. The road was long and tiring. When we got there after letting brothers Lameck and Lackson off to get on the public transportation back to Mzuzu, the first think we did was unload our luggage and turn the car back into Avis. We had run it 428 KM more than the allotted time making the total cost amounting to \$2,050.00, which almost broke me. We had to pay a tax of \$30.00 before we could leave the country. Brother Jeff and brother Nathan left for Kenya and Brother Royce and I left for Atlanta. The trip home was the most tiring of the entire trip. I kept thinking how good it would be to see my dearest June and that made the long time more bearable. We pretty much reversed everything and lost another day and arrived in Atlanta on time and Brother Jeremy Hunt, my grandson and my son Jerry, Jr. were there to pick me up after being up about 48 hours, I was glad to see them and to be home. The entire trip cost me about \$5,000.00 of which the church at Fellowship gave me \$1,500.00 to help. I was asked when I returned if I thought the work would continue there. My answer is--they have a better reason to think the work there will continue than we who are so complacent in this country will. I thank God for the three things I asked folks to pray for, Spirit, Strength and Safety, which He gave to me all that was necessary. If any who read this ever can go there, by all means do so for you will receive much more than you can ever know.

By Gods grace and mercy

Elder Jerry M. Hunt, Sr. Co-Pastor
Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church