



The Making of the New Apostolic Church (4)

A Church ruled by Apostles

It is Sunday morning on 14 July 1835. In the Central Church in London a large congregation has gathered, waiting for the Lord to give them the twelfth Apostle. They feel sure that this is the day when it must happen. However, they are kept on tenterhooks for hours.

The date had been appointed by prophecy three and a half years before and recently confirmed. For seven days they had gathered to offer up their prayers in anticipation of the great event. They could hardly wait for David Dow, the twelfth Apostle, to arrive.

Twelve: the perfect number

In June Apostle Cardale had travelled to Scotland to summon David Dow and his brother William to come down to London and take up their places as Apostles. William had readily complied, David was riddled by doubt. He hid from the messengers sent to find him, but news had arrived that he was now in London. Would he overcome his doubt?

In the afternoon of 14 July 1835 the congregation reassembled. David Dow did not join them. Two proven Angels (Bishops of congregations) were called to stand before the congregation. One of them, David MacKenzie, was called to be the twelfth Apostle by a prophecy uttered through Edward Oliver Taplin.

Many events had led up to this day.

Cardale and Irving

After Cardale had performed the first ordinations at Albury on Christmas 1832, he also exercised his apostolic office in his home congregation in London. This was brought about by events in Scotland. In March 1833 Edward Irving was summoned to appear before the presbytery in his hometown Annan and they deposed him from his ministry in the Church of Scotland. In a prophecy he was told to wait for apostolic ordination, which he received through Cardale on 5 April. From then on until his death on 8 December 1834, he was the Angel (Bishop) in charge of the church in Newman Street, London.

Ruled by Apostles

Even before Cardale ordained Irving as Angel of the church, he had laid hands on Taplin and ordained him a Prophet ranking as an Angel. If it had seemed until then that prophets were given directly by God it was now made clear that a prophet also received his ministry through an Apostle.

Cardale's sphere of action did not remain restricted to just two churches, and Drummond's call to the apostleship in September 1833 was the first step in creating an apostolic college. By 14 July 1835 there were 24 churches with Angels who had been ordained by Apostles and submitted to their authority.

The “Seven Churches” as a model

Special importance was attached to the churches in London. Prophecies urged that there should be seven churches in London. They were to be a model demonstrating the order in which people in all Christian nations would soon unite in a church fashioned by the Holy Spirit.

Four ministers with their congregations joined the fellowship of the Apostles. Three churches were still missing, and for them Angels were called and ordained who then gathered members.

The ministers of the Seven Churches assembled as the “Council of Zion”. The Apostles jointly presided there. The ministers making up this council—and many more ministers and members from various places—had assembled when Duncan MacKenzie took up his position as the twelfth Apostle.

The “separation” of the Apostles

Since David MacKenzie was Angel of Islington (just north of Central London) a successor was found and ordained at once. The Angels of the Seven Churches were to perform a special work: they had to “separate” the Apostles. In the evening of this eventful day they laid their hands on the twelve Apostles. By this deed, acted on behalf of the whole Church, they witnessed that from then on the Apostles were “separated”, meaning that they did not owe any obedience to any other Christian authority.

Waiting to be “sent forth”

The Apostles were to be a blessing to all Christians and rule the “Church Universal”. However, after their “separation” they were still waiting to be “sent forth” to all Christians. They expected to receive special and miraculous power through this for what they were to do. They believed that they could not yet be sent forth because they were like a new-born child. They had to be nourished by the Church, symbolised by the Seven Churches of

London. They thought that during that time of preparation they were to remain hidden to the world, residing at Albury.

What were they waiting for? To answer this question we must understand their particular view of the biblical Apostle ministry. They believed that Peter and the eleven Apostles had been given to the Jews. The Jews as a nation, however, had not accepted them. So God had set the Jewish nation aside and turned to the Gentiles.

Apostles must lead the Church to perfection

As the British Apostles saw it, Paul had been sent to the Gentiles and had initially performed his office in full apostolic authority. They believed that he had encountered more and more resistance in the churches he had founded. According to their understanding, Paul's office of Apostle had become "bound" so that he could not perform it to its full extent. As they saw it, after a time of decay God had given the church the full number of twelve Gentile Apostles on 14 July 1835 and they were now to lead the Church to its perfection, making her ready to meet her Bridegroom at Christ's Second Coming.

They believed that the expected sending forth of Apostles would put an end to the bondage and weakness that was still characteristic of the Gentile apostleship. The British Apostles expected a day to arrive when they would at last act in the full power of their ministry and lead a large number of Christians to meet the Lord.

The bonds must be broken

They were facing a formidable task. Would they succeed where Paul (as they saw it) had failed? This was possible, they thought, if at last the "bonds" were broken which had restricted the exercise of the apostolic office since the time of Paul.