



The making of the New Apostolic Church (13)

New Apostles called in Germany

The British Apostles had come to believe that they would prepare a small number of “firstfruits” who would be taken away from this earth. After their rapture no more Apostles would be active, but archbishops bearing the title of Archangels would lead the Church. In 1860 they had once again vetoed the call of new Apostles by the Prophet Heinrich Geyer. Geyer nevertheless insisted that new Apostles should become active.

A party forming in Germany

When Geyer returned from Albury in 1860 he had not kept quiet about his disappointed hopes, but in December, when the Angels (Bishops) received the record containing the approved words of prophecy, they could not read anything about new Apostles having been called. There were those, however, who believed what Geyer had reported and who shared in his frustration. A group of insiders that included Friedrich Wilhelm Schwarz of Hamburg, his brother Gottlieb, who was an elder in Berlin, and the strikingly successful Evangelist Max von Pochhammer were still waiting and hoping for new Apostles. Members of the largest congregation, the one in Berlin, took part in meetings Geyer held without informing Carl Rothe, their Angel.

Secret calls to the Apostleship

Things came to a head because in Geyer a conviction had formed that God had turned away from the British Apostles because they had refused to follow the prophecies and admit new Apostles to their ranks. So he believed that God had turned away from them in order to have a completely new order of Apostles called in Germany.

When he wrote a letter expressing those convictions he had already called several Apostles from amongst Catholic Apostolic ministers. To this day their names have never been divulged but one may surmise that they were known to a small group of insiders. According to Geyer there were several brethren in Berlin and other places who had already joyfully received the newly called Apostles. And the men in question had accepted the call to the Apostle ministry.

Only one of those Apostles, Rudolf Rosochacky, has become known by name, for he publicly appeared as an Apostle in Hamburg in January 1863. He was called by Geyer on 10 October 1862 while Geyer accompanied the Apostle on one of his journeys. While staying in Königsberg in Prussia (now called Kaliningrad) he called the Elder Rosochacky, in whose house he was staying, an Apostle. He then continued his journey with Apostle Woodhouse as if nothing had happened. To justify his secret proceedings he claimed that it was best to avoid disturbing the members of the Church until the time had come for a public appearance of the first of the newly called Apostles.

Rothe interferes

In the meantime Carl Rothe, the Angel in charge of the church in Berlin, had become wary of Geyer's intentions. Rothe wondered what Geyer was up to. In retrospect Rothe explained: "At last a prophecy gave me an opportunity to question him. The prophecy intimated that we would ... see the Antichrist appear. We should not be afraid of this, for the Church would recognise him in his true character."

This prophecy accorded with what Apostle Carlyle had taught about future events, but it opposed the doctrine held since the changes of 1858. According to the new teaching the Antichrist would only appear after the rapture of the sealed ones and after the seventy Archangels had continued to lead the Church to perfection. Geyer uttered his controversial prophecy in a divine service in Berlin on 23 November 1862, which was the first Sunday in Advent. Rothe suspended the Prophet from his ministerial duties and privileges because he refused to acknowledge that his prophecy might be wrong. The congregation was informed of the suspension on the fourth Sunday in Advent, which was 21 December.

Will the bonds be broken?

Two days after this Geyer wrote a letter to four men in the German kingdom of Hanover. Close to where Geyer had formerly taught school there were four of his former colleagues, Ludwig Kenter, Friedrich Kenter, Wilhelm Kenter and Gottlob Schrader, who had been testifying of Apostles in the region for five years before Geyer had called them to the priesthood in August 1861. Apostle Woodhouse refused to ordain them because unlike Apostle Carlyle he felt absolutely bound by the law, which allowed divine services only within the state church.

In his letter Geyer referred to this for him highly objectionable state of affairs. He informed the four men that four new Apostles had been secretly called and explained that they were standing ready to be the reapers who would, together with their Angels, start to bring in the harvest so that at last the bonds might be broken that had long prevented the work of the Lord from making progress. The Evangelist would then joyfully stride through all lands without hindrance.

In these words Geyer refers to the view explained in article 4 that Paul's office as Apostle had been bound or limited and that those bonds would be broken by the Apostles being sent out. That was why Apostle Carlyle had urged that the "holy" number of twelve Apostles must be restored. Geyer had continued those efforts at restoring the full number of Apostles. After he had finally failed in 1860 he felt urged by God to call a new group of twelve Apostles. He assured these four men who had been called to the priesthood that the new Apostles would be the key to solve their problems in the kingdom of Hanover. Like others who knew of Geyer's activities, those men remained faithful followers of their Apostle Woodhouse. They were soon given responsible positions in the Church outside their native kingdom.

Apostle Rosochacky in Hamburg

Events turned out differently in Hamburg. The Angel in charge there, Friedrich Wilhelm Schwarz, the Priest Carl Louis Preuss and some Deacons invited the suspended Prophet Geyer and the secretly called Apostle Rosochacky to their congregation. Apostle Rosochacky appeared in service there on 4 January 1863 and the congregation with scarcely an exception, submitted to his authority as an Apostle.

One gets the impression that the men called by Geyer had expected that God would acknowledge their authority as Apostles in such a convincing manner that the other Apostles would accept their call to the Apostleship. That did not happen and only a few days after his return to his native Königsberg the Apostle Rosochacky submitted to his superiors in the Church and wrote a letter to his adherents in Hamburg asking them to follow his example. Rosochacky continued to serve not as an Apostle but as an Elder in Königsberg. He eventually received the ministry of Angel and was made assistant to the leader of the church at

Königsberg. This Angel happened to be Eduard Schwarz, a brother to Friedrich Wilhelm Schwarz, the Angel in Hamburg who had accepted Rosochacky as an Apostle. In retrospect Geyer declared bitterly that many enticing embraces by his former brethren had weakened Rosochacky's resolve so that he turned apostate.

Like Rosochacky and the nameless brothers who had also believed in their call to the Apostleship the ministers in Hamburg were also offered the chance to repent on condition that they admitted that the call to the Apostleship had been of satanic origin. They refused to do so. The Angel Schwarz, the Priest Preuss and the Deacons except one held fast to their conviction that Rosochacky had really been called to be an Apostle. Nearly everyone in the congregation joined them in this conviction.

Apostle Woodhouse felt that he did not have a choice. He excommunicated the whole congregation. This meant that there was an apostolic church without an Apostle in Hamburg.

Summary

The British Apostles had refused to acknowledge the call of more Apostles, but a group formed in Germany from among whom Geyer called several Apostles to start a new college of twelve German Apostles.

Rudolf Rosochacky, one of the Apostles called by Geyer, was invited to the congregation in Hamburg by its Angel Friedrich Wilhelm Schwarz. Apostle Woodhouse excommunicated that congregation because the members held fast to the legitimacy of Rosochacky's call to the Apostleship.