

AN ANALYSIS OF A NEGRO RELIGIOUS SECT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PART I	
STATEMENT OF THESIS	1
Assumptions and Definitions.	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE SECT.	27
THE WHITE HORSE RIDER	31
The Rise of a Charismatic Leader	31
SUCCESSION OF A NEW LEADER.	53
GOING FORTH TO CONQUER.	63
The Ministry.	63
THE DEACONS AND THE ELDERS.	66
Lay Leaders.	66
SAINTS AND SINNERS.	71
Sect Membership.	71
THIS IS THE WAY THIS IS THE LIGHT	76
Doctrine	76
a) Baptism	88
b) Footwashing and Communion	90
Rules and Regulations.	93
MASSES 'N MEETIN'S.	111
ONE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.	119
A Social-Psychological Study	119
PART II	
CONCLUSIONS	136
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	167
Appendix	

PART I

STATEMENT OF THESIS

Assumptions and Definitions.

This study is concerned with a Negro sect which offers the opportunity to observe a group which is founded on the principles of the American Creed and Christian brotherhood, but which in reality has set itself apart from both other Negroes and Whites in the community at large.

We shall see the ramifications of these attitudes and particular traits of conduct manifested in an ambiguous and problematic type of adjustment to White society resulting from this inconsistency between doctrine and overt practice. We shall notice the parallels between this sect's philosophy and position and the philosophy and practice of the American superordinates, a contradiction which Gunnar Myrdal has called "The American Dilemma". We will not be able to ignore the dramatic similarity both in purpose, and in means used to accomplish this purpose, between this sect and the white group.

It is believed evident that this Negro sect exists for the purpose of providing its members with a status striving vehicle on which these underprivileged people may hope to achieve a status position equal with their White superordinates and perhaps, if their Utopia is realized, to be recognized as superior, "par excellence", of

any people, ethnic or religious group, on earth. To achieve such superiority and leadership, the sect is provided with a special way of life which is constructed in form and content in such a way as to beat the Whites at their own game. By taking over the most obvious of the White's puritanical middle-class mores and customs and incorporating these with little re-adaption into their lower class Negro value structure, this sect endeavors to prove by example that Negroes can be as good, as moral, frugal, dependable, and refined, as any member of the White superordinate group.

Along with this stylized "way of life" the members of this sect further attempt to convince others and themselves, that they are "different and better" by withdrawing from the Negro and the White community. Thus by remaining aloof and apart they believe that it is impossible for them to be associated with the generality, the stereotyped lower-class Negro.

Of course, this withdrawal serves also to impose upon the community of non-members a sense of inferiority, a self-consciousness in their own weaknesses and downfalls and simultaneously boosts the "self-image" of the sect's members to ever-mounting heights of glory and superiority. At the same time it prevents these Negroes from assimilating

into the larger society.

It is possible, thus, to see the similarity of rationalization mechanism used by a minority as a means of self-defense against persecution and ridicule; where religion and a religious way of life which is different has served to convince the persecutor and the persecuted alike, that the latter have a special mission in life, are a chosen people, and thus by implication, if not assertion, have indicated that those who are doing the persecuting are actually debase and inferior. We recall the Puritans, the Calvinists, the Mennonites, the Southern aristocrats, and to this day the prejudiced, discriminating "Gentile" White, who defends his insecure position of superiority with a body of rationalizations and a "race theory" and etiquette which serves to reassert symbolically his inherent superiority over the Negro and other stocks, as well as other religious groups. Yet we find this body of prejudice and pattern of discriminate behavior thriving alongside an idealistic political and religious philosophy of freedom and equality for all, with the Bill of Rights, the Brotherhood of Man, and the American Ideal. Such a contradiction of philosophy and rationalized status-striving behavior will be the principal level of focus in this study.

In addition we shall see how this Negro religious

sect is oriented toward the function of providing this underprivileged minority with the opportunity of achieving new experience, and a sense of security and belongingness. Any group and in a larger sense any institution must have a body of theories or rationalizations and customs which may serve to satisfy a basic need for the participating members. Any group, any membership, must have a common base of interest around which this group and this membership is oriented. It is hoped that by examining the doctrine, the body of rationalizations and customs which are embodied in this group, a religious sect, "The Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army", it shall be demonstrated beyond argument that the struggle for new status and recognition, combined with the new power and new confidence achieved through group unity and association is the basic attraction, the common base of interest, which holds this voluntary association together. It is such fundamental motivations which built the sect in the past and maintains it as an existing and thriving group in the present. Having exposed the group interest, the group's motivation, it is hoped that we may gain a better understanding of the psychology of this underprivileged minority among us.

Under the circumstances thus described it will be our

objective to demonstrate: (a) that the elaboration of the religious symbols, and their direction can be understood in terms of their status reference; (b) that the ramification of attitudes and the peculiar traits of conduct of sect members lead to an ambiguous and problematic adjustment to White society resulting from the inconsistency of their spirit of separatism being propagated along with claims regarding the equality and universality of their theological doctrine.

First let us clarify our frame of reference. We must address ourselves to the sociology of religion and briefly define the concepts of sect, sect leadership and charismatic authority. And since we are dealing with a group involved in the power struggle between dominant and subordinate group in our society we must also define certain terms of social stratification. Thus the terms status group, status system, class occupation, social distance and discrimination will be relevant to our discussion.

1. The term sect "has come to denote a religious conflict society which arises in opposition to an institutional church; based on the definite commitment of mature individuals to a definite set of principles, such an association is a contract society rather than an institution..... the sect is exclusive, critical of prevailing institutions,

and emphasizes discontinuity rather than continuity, in marked contrast to the church." The former "finds its support most frequently among the politically disenfranchised, economically weak."¹

2. By charismatic leadership we imply a type of authority which arises on the basis of a claim to legitimacy through special talents, powers, or missions...These leaders are self-appointed and are followed by those who are in distress and who need to follow the leader because they believe him to be extraordinarily qualified. This charismatic quality of the leader has to be "proved" by being

1. Niebuhr, R., Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. XIII, pp. 624-30.

See also: Max Weber regarding Protestant sects in Essays in Sociology, ed. and trans. by Gerth, H. and Mills, C. W., pp. 307 ff. Also: The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. Parsons, Talcott, Oxford University Press, 1947, pp. 152-7.

For a discussion of the "Protestant ethic" refer to The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. by Parsons, T, Oxford University Press, 1930, p. 254 ff. Troeltsch, E. adapts Weber's classification of sect, etc., in The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches trans., Wyon, Olive, Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1947.

For a discussion of distinctions between stages of religious group development see Park, R., and Burgess, E., Introduction to the Science of Sociology, pp. 853 ff., and p. 50. Here a sect is distinguished from a denomination on the basis of the degree of conflict or accommodation in which the religious group is operating. The ideal type construct of Howard Becker of the cult, sect, denomination and ecclesia, of course is a neces-

recognized as genuine by his followers. It is important to point out the distinction which Weber makes between the ordinary "democratically elected" leader chosen by the will of the followers, and the charismatic leader who rather expresses the duty and obligation of the followers. This type of authority is usually in conflict with the bases of legitimacy of an established, fully institutionalized order.

"The charismatic leader is always in some sense a revolutionary setting himself in conscious opposition to some established aspect of the society in which he works... The deviance of the charismatic leader is not, however, by any means either mere eccentricity or the indulgence of purely personal wishes. He introduces, rather, a pattern of conduct conformity which is treated as a definite duty. By virtue of it the leader claims moral authority and hence legitimacy for giving orders to his followers, or whoever falls within the scope of the pattern."²

It is significant also to point out that charismatic

1. (Cont'd) sary reference to this general discussion of religious groups since it represents in many respects a composite of concepts. Mr. Becker's systemization can best be found in the Wiese-Becker volume, Systematic Sociology, New York, Wiley, 1932, pp. 624-42.
2. Weber, Max. The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. by Parsons, T., pp. 65-68.

authority by its very nature, cannot itself become the basis of a stabilized order without undergoing profound structural changes.³

Low status groups who often flock to a charismatic leader, suffering as they often do, under a yoke of discrimination and denied privilege, when turning to religion, tend to crave for symbols to fit their demand for dignity and honor. As the empirical situation withholds satisfaction of such demands the religious promises and hopes focus to a future in which these demands for dignity and honor will be satisfied. Such demands may be associated with compensatory projections as expressed in the sentence: "The first shall be the last--the last will be the first."

The underprivileged group is unlikely to feel that God has blessed them in this world, hence that there is no great incentive for thanking their Lord for what they are and have. On the contrary, the form of religiosity is more likely to take the course of holding out goals of aspiration for the future for which special action is required or demanded by God. Religious imperatives are apt to be enforced by the leaders and bring about a

3. In our examination of the life and work of the founder of the White Horse Army sect it will be noted that the "ideal type" here discussed closely parallels empirical reality. See p. 21 ff., in regard routinization of authority and succession of authority as encountered in this sect.

distinct pattern of behavior under religious sanctions against breaches of discipline.

The formation and enforcement of religiously sanctioned group disciplines is apt to produce attitudes of in-group and out-group differences. The extent of such attitudes and codes will depend on the values which are defined to be religiously significant such as chastity for women and men, loyalty of married partners, obedience of children, fulfillment of contractual obligations in business life, or non-violent behavior regardless of the demand of the nation state. The sense of dignity of the negatively privileged strata naturally refers to a future lying beyond the present and whether it is of this life or of another. "In other words, it must be nurtured by the belief in a providential "mission" and by a belief in a specific honor before God."⁴

3. When we refer to status groups we will mean "communities, often of an amorphous kind, which exist on the basis of social honor or a lack of it, and are conditioned and expressed through a specific style of life. This style may require a certain profession (for instance,

4. Weber, Max, Essays in Sociology, Gerth, H. and Mills, C.W., p. 190. Here Weber makes reference to Jewry motivated by a spirit of having been singled out by God to be avenged and to be saved.

military service), but the nature of the occupational service resulting from the claims of a style of life always remains decisive. A status group can be closed 'status by descent' or it can be open."⁵

4. A status system or status structure consists of the hierarchy of status groups and the principles determining primarily the status differences (political: Russia, or wealth and descent: United States, or religious affiliation: Puritan theocracy).

5. A class or classes "are groups of people who, from the standpoint of specific interests, have the same economic position. Ownership or non-ownership of material goods or of definite skills constitute the 'class situation'."⁶

6. Occupation can be defined as the activity of practicing a specialized skill for pecuniary returns. (It is apparent that some people are not qualified even for "unskilled" labor for physical or "mental" reasons).

7. Social distance can be defined as the absence of social contacts whether due to class or status or attitudinal reasons.

5. Ibid., p. 405. See also, Goldhammer, Herbert and Shiels, Edward, "Types of Power and Status", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 45, #2, Sept. 1939, pp. 171-82.

6. Weber, Max, Essays in Sociology, p. 184 ff.

8. We shall refer to segregation "as that form of isolation in which social distance is based upon physical separation." Such separation is often enforced through the power-conflict process engaged in by the dominant and subordinate groups in a society. Segregation, on the other hand may be self-imposed as among sects which withdraw from the rest of the world to lead ascetic lives apart from the "sinful masses."⁷

9. Discrimination is a behavior pattern of a super-ordinate status group which serves to deny to the subordinate status group equal access to opportunities which the subordinate group believes to be "by right" available to all.

Such patterns of discrimination may and may not go

7. Wirth, Louis, Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. XIII, p. 644 ff.

"Segregation is both a basis and a product of social isolation.---Through competition and conflict natural and social selection goes on and in its course each individual and group acquires a habitat, a function in the division of labor and a position in the social order. The selection proceeds on the basis of individual and group differences and through the resulting specialization and segregation the distinctive characteristics of each are accentuated and reinforced. As a final result of this struggle social types emerge.

"Race, culture, religion, mores, status, language, caste, class, wealth, occupation, sex physique, and mentality, talent, taste, attitudes, interests, in fact any set of characteristics in which the member of a group may be similar to one another and different from outsiders may become the basis of segregation."

together with conflict. The subordinate group may resign themselves to their "assigned" place. Hence a balanced structure of power distribution may exist.

Having defined our terms we shall utilize them in dealing with a special religious group among the Negro minority. We wish first to focus our attention on: (a) some attitudes going with an underprivileged status situation; (b) the connection of status determined attitudes with the elaboration of religious symbols and organized practices; (c) the ramifications of religious belief and organization for the formation of a special way of life of the group in the community at large; (d) and the bearing of such a way of life on issues of social distance between Negroes and Whites.

We may bring the issue into sharper focus by orienting our questions by means of two schemes of types based on possible attitudes and practices of Negroes and Whites with reference to prejudice and discrimination.

Robert King Merton has constructed a typological paradigm for the White population with reference to the acceptance of and adherence to the American Creed. As he points out, so far as the beliefs of individuals are concerned, two types may be identified: those who genuinely believe in the creed and those who do not (although some

of these may, on public or ceremonial occasions profess adherence to its principles). Similarly, Merton points out, with respect to actual practices: conduct may or may not conform to the Creed. Not only this, but most important: "conduct may or may not conform with individual's own beliefs concerning the moral claims of all men to equal opportunity." As Merton declares attitudes and overt behavior vary independently. "Prejudicial attitudes need not coincide with discriminatory behavior."⁸

The paradigm is constructed in the following logical syntax whereby the variables are arranged in diverse combinations.

TABLE I
A Typology of Ethnic
Prejudice and Discrimination

	Attitude Dimension: * Prejudice and Non-prejudice	Behavior Dimension: * Discrimination and Non- discrimination
Type I: Unprejudiced non-discriminator	+	+
Type II: Unprejudiced discriminator	+	-
Type III: Prejudiced non-discriminator	-	+
Type IV: Prejudiced discriminator	-	-

* Where (+) = conformity to the creed and (-) deviation from the creed.

8. Merton, R. K., "Discrimination and the American Creed" Reprinted from Discrimination and National Welfare, Harper & Bros., 1949, p. 102 ff.

"By exploring the interrelations between prejudice and discrimination, we can identify four major types in terms of their attitudes toward the Creed and their behavior with respect to it. Each type is found in every region and social class, though in varying numbers", Merton adds.

Type I is described as the racial and ethnic liberals who consistently adhere to the Creed both in belief and practice. Persons of this type are neither prejudiced nor prone to discriminate because of race, color, or nationality. They abide by their beliefs regardless of their enviroing situation. Merton calls them the "All-Weather Liberal".

Type II, as is evident from the table, like Type I is unprejudiced. In behavior, however, Type II is inconsistent with his attitude. Although he does not believe that one should prejudge a man because of his inherent skin color or cultural soil, Type II feels that "when in Rome do as the Romans do". In order to live successfully, peacefully, and profitably Type II believes that it is necessary to conform to the prevalent sentiment of the environs. This "Fair-Weather Liberal" follows any overt

behavior pattern which is expedient. "This is the expediency of the timid: the liberal who hesitates to speak up against discrimination for fear that he might lose status or be otherwise penalized by his prejudiced associates."¹⁰

Type III is the direct counterpart of Type II. Here prejudice is deep seeded in the attitudes and value system of the individual. This is the man who was born and bred in the "Deep South" where the American Creed is subjected to an "institutionalized evasion", a cultural rationalization, so that the individual growing-up in such an environment and then being transplanted to a Northern community must bury his prejudice and discriminating practices under a cloak of benign cordiality. He often resorts to patriotic platitudes and ceremonial crusades transferring his former aggressions and rationalizations to new scapegoats such as "Reds", "radicals", or "Luke-Warm Americans". He is publicly a "defender" of the people, but in the privacy of his closet he has been known to denounce the "rabble". The "Fair-Weather Illiberal" like the "Fair-Weather Liberal" is a reluctant conformist; the timid bigot conforms to the Creed only when there is danger or loss in deviations, just as the timid liberal deviates from the Creed only when there is danger or loss in conforming.

10. Ibid., p. 106.

Type IV might be labelled the "principled bigot" as Type I is the "principled liberal". Type IV is the consistent prejudiced discriminator. As Merton describes him "he derives large social and psychological gains from his conviction that 'any white man (including the village idiot) is better than any nigger (including George Washington Carver)!'."

"The ethnic illiberal is as much a conformist as the ethnic liberal. He is merely conforming to a different cultural and institutional pattern which is centered, not about the Creed, but about a doctrine of essential inequality of status ascribed to those of diverse ethnic and racial origins."¹¹ The American Creed, on the other hand, as announced by the fathers of the Constitution and eminent leaders such as Lincoln would assert an equal worth to every American regardless of race. That is a White man and a Negro should be judged on their personal merits not on ethnic ground. As we have seen, such a paradigm as above, could be utilized to measure the degree to which a population conforms in belief and in behavior to this Creed. A similar scheme for classifying Negro attitudes and behavior patterns toward Whites (in a community) may be constructed as follows:

11. Merton, R. K., op. cit., p. 109.

TABLE II

A Typology of Negro Attitudes

		Attitude Dimension: *	Behavior Dimensions: *
Type I	:Consistent	Submissive	+
Type II	:Inconsistent	Submissive	-
Type III	:Spurious	Protector	+
Type IV	:Sincere	Racist	-

* Where (+) equals conformity to their subordinate role; (-) deviation from the existing status quo, i.e., realization of their "right to equality".

Type I would be represented in such a paradigm as the popularly termed "Uncle Tom" type who professes that the Whites basically mean well only may not be "enlightened". This type accepts at face value the White Man's professions and in behavior accommodates himself to his assigned place without protest.

Type II would be represented by the Negro, who because of past conditioning, attitudinally accepts the White man as his superior, yet overtly protests the latter's superordinate position by supporting movements to boycott White men's stores, and professions, and works cooperatively in the Urban League and in all-Negro religious movements. Such an attitude is often displayed among upper class Negroes, who as St. Claire Drake points out tend to choose lighter skinned mates, and assign mulattos a higher status than the purer Negroid. Gunnar Myrdal in his The American

Dilemma, also cites this prevalence of Negroes among the middle and upper classes aspiring to imitate and approximate White behavior and appearance, while simultaneously supporting "racist" campaigns.

Type III, in behavior is a conformist, in speech protests. At the bar, in his own living-room, or at the local NAACP meeting, Type III curses the "White boss" and constructs vivid fantasies of the day when the colored races, the black and the brown, will rule the world. Back at work, or on the street, however, he is prompt in touching his cap and executing his "yas suh's". Type III is often represented in the South or in smaller communities in the North where there is frequent White-Negro contact.

Type IV protests his people's position verbally and is "militant" against dominance of the Whites in employment, the professions, and the "money rackets". Politically such individuals are usually radical, voting for some Negro leader who promises a Negro Utopia. Economically they aspire to make the Negro self-sufficient. "Patronize your own Stores" is the slogan of such racists. The "Back to Africa" movement and other such "brain storms" which crescendo and as quickly fade into the past on the streets of Harlem and the levees in Baton Rouge are conceived by rabid, imaginative, idealists or materialists,

most of whom would be classified under Type IV in our schema.

Other paradigms of types are possible. One might compare Negro religious groups within a similar structure. Such a schema is very useful in demonstrating the "principled" social direction of the religious sect known as the Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army, which is the subject for this paper, in contrast with certain other Negro religious sects. Such a table is valuable in dispelling impressions that the sect under examination is "just like all the rest". Since our main hypothesis in this study is directed toward the Israel of God sect in relation to its position regarding White discrimination and prejudice and the sect's effect upon subsequent Negro-White relationships and association, it might be feasible to construct the following paradigm of types:

TABLE III

Types of Religious Group Attitudes	Religious Doctrine	Behavior Pattern
Type I : "All Men are Brothers"	+	+
Type II : "The Black Man's Burden"	+	-
Type III : "Live With Them, But Not Of Them"	-	+
Type IV : "We're God's Chosen Ones"	-	-

* (+) = a doctrine of Christian Brotherhood and equality;
 (-) = deviation from existing power relation and emphasis upon separation and withdrawal.

Type I would be characterized by the religious sect which stresses Negro-White equality and wherever possible provides for intergroup association and relationships. Such groups might still abide by the taboo against intermarriage, but in every other way encourage neighborliness, sociability, and interracial cooperation. Certain Southern Catholic experiments are examples of Type I, where Negroes and Whites not only belong to the same faith, but actually worship and socialize with one another.

Type II religious group is characterized by the presence of doctrine which verbally champions racial and religious equality yet coincides with a record of self-willed segregation and maximization of social distance.

The cult of Father Divine with his Peace Mission Movement offers probably the most startling example of this latter classificatory position. The basis of Divine's "theology" and his program for the "World" can be condensed as follows: (a) that the entire race is essentially one; (b) Peace in the human is to be established by eradicating prejudice, segregation, and division among people and promoting the welfare of every living creature; (c) equal opportunity must be assured for every individual without regard to race, creed, and color. Such a social program should of course be indicative of a policy of tolerance

and cooperation. In reality, however, such a policy does not exist. The sect represents the opposite extreme. By the creation of numerous "heavens" in Upper New York State and in Harlem, the man who calls himself "God" has constructed isolated peace Mission havens for his members where they may seclude themselves from the sinful outer world of competition, discrimination and inequality. In addition to these "protectionist" religious retreats, Father Divine has initiated and financed numerous business ventures which enable the cult to exist as an almost completely self-sufficient microcosm, within the world but apart from it. Thus the followers of Father Divine represent a movement closely approximating "pure" Type II. There have been claims that up to 21,000,000 white and black "angels" believe in the explicit divinity of this insignificant-looking little brown man. Of course, since the cult does not officially number its members it is uncertain just how large a following Father Divine really has; journalists and social scientists visiting the Harlem Peace Missions note that the number of Whites present has been very nominal. It is believed that many Whites who are present at the Peace rallies could be classified as spectators rather than participants. Of course, it is difficult to draw an accurate distinction.

Further religious groups which would be located within this classification are the numerous Negro branches of the larger Protestant denominations such as the Negro Baptist, and African Methodist churches. Such groups have become so highly institutionalized both in the North and the South that they now conduct their own separate conferences and maintain separate ecclesiastical hierarchies. The Episcopalians and the Lutherans have also been active in proselyting among the Negroes, but like the former groups, they seldom have invited significant numbers of Negroes to worship and participate socially within the local established (White) congregations. It is more customary for these denominations to set up separate "mission" stations or chapels where the colored converts may worship apart from their paternalistic denominational brethren.

A Milwaukee paper recently publicized the ordination of a local Negro to the Roman Catholic priesthood. It is significant that it was deemed necessary for the young priest to travel to Chicago to perform his first high mass at a Negro parish church in that city. It is apparent that the discrepancy between principle and practice is not confined to Protestantism alone.

It should not be supposed that this apparent contradiction of religious philosophy and religious behavior as

Type II represents, is enforced and maintained exclusively by the White religious hierarchy. It is a well-known fact that the majority of the membership in these Negro branches of established denominations prefer to worship apart from their White fellow members. (Such opinions were often expressed to the author during research for this thesis).

Type II is especially relevant for our study of The Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army; this sect would best be classified under this heading. The striking inconsistencies between principle and behavior manifested by this group will provide us with our principal problem.

A sect in which anti-White prejudice has been incorporated along with more traditional doctrine--where Christ has been portrayed as a Negro rather than White; where David, Jacob, Jeremiah, and other Old Testament figures are "proven" to have been black, and where claims are made that the Negro represents a chosen people and predestined to play a unique role of leadership and authority over the rest of the world--to such doctrine and to such a religious group we will attach the classification: Type III. Many such Negro sects and cults exist similar to the above pattern, where an anti-White prejudiced religious philosophy coincides with a record of long-standing compromise and settlement with White individuals and groups. Certain of

these sects are described in Fauset's, Black God's of the Metropolis, as well as Elmer T. Clark's study of The Small Sects In America. In overt behavior many of these sects encourage segregation and maximization of differences and social distance in their written and spoken codes, but for economic expediency they are obliged to deal with their White neighbors, in many cases subsisting from profits directly acquired from Whites and other Negroes. In a situation where the sect members are encouraged to despise and protest against the White "robber barons", where passions are enflamed against the omnipresent White merchant, landlord, policeman, priest, and official, frustration, prejudice, aggression, and eventual conflict appears inevitable. It is for this reason that sects and cults with an attitudinal and behavior structure, as is characteristic of Type III, are frequently fluid and transient. Religious associations falling under this category (where anti-White prejudice is flourished, but effective discrimination against the White is obviously impossible) rise and fall, succeed and fail in rapid succession as it becomes obvious that the group leader's charisma provides no ready solution to their dilemma.

Type IV differs from Type III in that the principle of anti-White prejudice has been resolved in a direct

discrimination and protest program. Such a campaign usually results in withdrawal from the White dominated society and an attempt at the creation of a self-sufficient economic and social system which will enable the Negro members to free themselves from the yoke of White domination.

Although, apparently no such Negro groups yet exist in the United States (although it can be seen that Father Divine's cult has attempted and appears to be striving toward such an ultimate goal) ideally speaking Type IV would be represented by an anti-White Negro group which would aim at building up a "closed" Negro society which in the "pure" case would segregate itself socially, religiously, politically, and economically, to such an extent that no White-Negro contacts could exist, or that these contacts would only be conducted on a highly impersonal plane. Garvey agitation for an exodus to Africa, or the establishment of a Forty-Ninth State for Negroes in the South might illustrate such a constellation of values.¹² (Naturally, urbanism and modern technology and the existence of the army draft during war time, as well as income tax collection, police, and compulsory schooling make such aspirations "utopian".)

12. Myrdal, Gunnar, The American Dilemma, Harpers, New York, 1944, pp. 746-50, 812-815.

In order that we might place this Negro sect within the context of our construct and paradigm, it will be necessary to observe the life and character of the charismatic leader and the ideology which he developed and preached. Having knowledge of the content of the ecstatic experiences upon which the leader justified his special doctrine and attraction will be essential to our understanding of the sect's own character and aspirations.

Following a historical description, we will concern ourselves with the development of the organization from its "cultic" steps through the early 1900's when it emerges as a "full blooming" sect. Since one of the characteristic traits of a typical sect is a doctrine of social and moral rules which tend to make it more or less exclusive from the "world", we will spend some time investigating the ascetic regulations of the sect in detail.

Following a brief social-psychological case study which enables us to observe the real impact of the sect's way of life on one of its members, we shall attempt to place the sect's conservative way of life into the broader context of the complex, competitive, contemporary secular society - to see the type of adjustment which the sect members have made and the dilemma which exists due to the inherent contradiction between the doctrine and practice of the group.

"Jacob is God's servant
And Israel His Elect;

We are God's Chosen people
And for us he has respect."

-From "Beautiful Crown"
A Hymn
Written by a Sect Member

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECT

The Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army represents a protestant sect arising and growing within the milieu of a maturing racial minority. This sect reflects the growing dissatisfaction, unrest and resentment of a group of Northern urban Negroes struggling with the anachronism of modern technology and science existing within a medieval social class and caste system.

This religious movement was founded by a prophetic leader, who claimed divine inspiration. It formed in the tradition of 19th Century Revivalism and developed into a tight-knit, exclusive, autocratic, religious association of about 600 members.¹ This organization is controlled by a nucleus of approximately fifteen "clergymen" under the final authority of one man, the "archbishop". There are eleven organized congregations scattered over the South and Middlewest from Paris, Tennessee, to Detroit, Michigan. Besides these congregations there are also individual families and single members scattered throughout thirteen of the United States.

The sect desires to establish the Kingdom of God on

1. This estimate is based on personal inquiries. No mention is made of the sect in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies, nor are the sect's leaders anxious to divulge membership figures.

earth, a heaven of religious unanimity of Man, of equal economic and educational opportunities, of perfect social and political freedom. The sect pursues the ideal of a theocratic government. In this utopian state the minority races, (especially the Negro) presumably would share full and equal benefits and responsibilities. The group attempts to practice and preach morality and justice to anyone who will watch and listen. The members strive with sincerity and vigor to accomplish what numerous rationalists have challenged: that the Negro must help himself.

The Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army is waging its campaign in the field of morality, economics, health, and education, in an effort to drag its faithful followers out of the quicksand of racial prejudice, inequality and discrimination. The leaders proclaim that the "American dilemma" has been "self-imposed". They preach that the Negro in Africa represents one of the ten-and-a-half, Lost Tribes of Israel, sold into bondage, despised and abandoned by God because of their sin and atheism. Like the Jew, the Negro, allegedly is responsible for his economic, educational and social degradation; and only through an ardent revival of monotheism in theory and practice can he win his "rightful" place and favor with God.

Whereas for Catholicism and most fundamentalist Protestant churches the prophetic age of personal revelations of God is historically remote and closed, enshrined in the Scriptures, the Israel of God's Church upholds a recent prophet and believes in his revelations. In this the sect is similar to Mormonism, Christian Science, Father Divine's Peace cult, Jehovah Witnesses; these all believe in the authority and interpretation of their various charismatic leaders. Biblical fundamentalism receives a special form in the hands of the Israel of God's Church. By means of a rather unique interpretation the Scriptures are made to answer contemporary problems of the Negro. Besides the Old Testament, the Israel of God's Church emphasizes the teachings of their leader, the "Apostle" George W. Flowers. Apostle George directs his followers to presumably divinely inspired tenets which he derived from continuously experienced "talks with God".

Since the leaders of this sect believe to be "lost children of Israel" they feel that this reliance upon direct personal revelation is crucial. "Christ came to save the Gentiles"; "Christ was rejected by the Jews (by us); therefore we had to remain in darkness and despair until God again revealed Himself to us". That time has come according to the spokesmen of the new faith, and God

has revealed Himself, His Truth, in the person of the sect's Visible Founder, the Apostle George. He is the spokesman of God for the present generation of the "Lost Tribes."

"Apostle George brought the bread of life,
to rid our souls of sin and strife,
Christ mounted him on the milk white steed
with food to supply our every need.

Through him I live, through him I live,
Through him I live forevermore."

-From "Bread of Life"
A Hymn
Written by a Sect Member.

THE WHITE HORSE RIDER

The Rise of the Leader.

Since there are no published data regarding the early life of George W. Flowers, the founder of the Israel of God's Church, the following paragraphs are based on prolonged interviews with various sect members and other informants who were acquainted with G. W. Flowers. [Especially helpful were the Reverend Mose Hicks, the Apostle's personal and the organization's national secretary, and Mrs. Louella Sparrow, the Apostle's stepdaughter. She is a devoted member of his sect.]

[According to Mrs. Sparrow,] George Flowers was born a slave in Pudham County, Georgia, February 22, 1854. Legend has it that he was born unassisted to his mother down by a river where she had gone to wash clothes. George evidently loved his mother dearly. As a young boy he allegedly attempted to kill and punish his master for the latter's harsh treatment of his mother. Later he took his revenge by burning his master's house. He lost his father in infancy and after his mother's death he lived with his uncle who had a large family. When his uncle died also, George, now about twelve left home declaring that he would make his own way in the world. He hoboed to Chicago and although he had "deserted family and relatives" he was

evidently able to make his living. According to Rev. Hicks, young Flowers joined a Methodist missionary and accompanied him to Africa. He later related his astonishment at the primitive living conditions of his native ancestors and African brothers. He remained in Africa only briefly to return to Chicago where he had originally found haven from the primitive conditions and fate of the Negro in the South. In Chicago Flowers embarked on a varied and vigorous 'campaign' to achieve the title of a "self-made man". Having had no formal education Flowers had to take to the characteristic menial jobs of the Negro; dishwashing, shoe shining, paper delivery, etc. Finally he established his own business. He ran a retail coal business, a hand laundry; and according to some of his followers he once served as a policeman. Flowers also joined the army for a time and served in the 9th Cavalry Division. He was shocked with the low moral standards of the Negro, his meager education, poor health, and miserable economic situation. He frequently expressed his views about his own race and threatening doom of his people.

Although Flowers had been a member of the Missionary Baptist Church from the time he was twelve, religion did not become crucial before his thirtieth year. At about this age he began to experience hallucinations or super-

natural visions. He later related to have seen King Solomon and the whole host of the children of Israel coming to him. Flowers became so disturbed by these frequent dreams that he finally left Chicago for New York. He visited a "mental physician", who assured him of his mental health. He stopped in Ohio on his way back West and entered a business there. Later, however, he returned to Chicago.

Some of the ministers and elders who knew Flowers relate that he prayed to God for three things: a wife that he could live with in peace for the rest of his days; some way that he might help his fallen brethren of African descent; and finally, assurance of the salvation of his soul.

His first request was answered in 1885 when God inspired him to go to a particular home in Chicago and there he would find a particular widow named Fanny whom he would marry. Flowers found her as directed by God, and they were married the same day, according to the legend. Fanny had one son by her previous marriage and bore the Apostle a daughter, Phoebe. These two women were very active in the sect until their death. Phoebe married a white man named Baker and resided in Chicago until her death in 1924. Mother Flowers died in 1915, thirty-four years after her

marriage to the Apostle.

The Apostle was married to another widow from Danville, Illinois, about a year later. This widow's daughter, Louella, a member of the sect in Danville, had been ordered by the Apostle to move to Sycamore where she could work in the congregation's headquarters. She obeyed him and later brought her mother up to live with her. The Apostle met her there and married her.

Flowers began to realize the fulfillment of his second petition to God; namely, that he be able to help his fallen brethren of African descent in the year of 1887, when in the evening of January 16th he experienced another vision, this one more elaborate and compelling than any he had yet experienced.

This vision was frequently described and reinterpreted by Flowers before his followers and before the young men whom he was training for the ministry. One of these young men, Moses Hicks, who was personal secretary to the religious leader when he was failing in health, recorded an account of Flowers' January 16th vision as follows:

"In the year of 1887, on the night of January 16, which was the Lord's Day, I was caught up to the third heaven visionary,¹ and the dark veil was withdrawn from

1. The third heaven visionary represents the third degree of grace, or the greatest revelation privilege which God grants: to view Paradise. This vision is quoted di-

before my face,² and I had a clear view of the city and I saw angels ascending and descending in the same like manner that St. John saw them.³ They were singing and making beautiful music, but I could not understand them because it is written that no man could learn that song. I fell upon my knees and looked up into the air of airs to see no building therein, so while I was looking for the building I saw a throne in the east part of the city, I was at the West gate looking in and one that sat thereon was to look upon as a Jasper or a Sardine stone (he shone just above that brightness) and around about the throne I saw four and twenty seats, and upon the seats four and twenty elders (ministers of the Gospel) and they rose up and cast their crowns down before him that sat upon the throne, with a great muttering of voices, but I could not understand what they said; and in the midst of the four and twenty elders I saw four beasts rise up in the likeness of men,

1. (Cont'd) rectly as the Apostle recorded it.
2. The dark veil spoken of here represents the "Unknown", the wisdom which is withheld from Mankind by God because of the sin of Adam and the curse placed upon all his successors. This barrier between God and Man was taken away that the Apostle might understand the Mysteries of God.
3. Rev. 4. The account which the Apostle George gives, corresponds in many instances with the vision of St. John. Evidently the Apostle had labored over this particular book of the Bible.

and they cast their crowns down before him that sat upon the throne, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God Almighty";⁴ and in the midst of the four beasts I saw a young man and he stepped up to the right side of him that sat on the throne and took a book out of his hand and he came straight to the gate where I was standing and these four men in the likeness of beasts followed him and he said unto me, "Do you want to come in?" and I answered and said, "I do", and he said, "You can't come in yet, I have a work I want you to do", and immediately the gate flew open and the young man came out to the place where I was standing, and the four men in the likeness of the beast surrounded me and put the hands of presbytery on my head, pointing North, East, South, and West, and I looked up and saw apparently four crowns of gold setting above my head, the young man with the large pure golden bible, opened the book before my eyes, and he hoist his right hand up to heaven (His eyes were as a flame of fire and I saw he was the Son

4. The description of the throne of God is identical with the vision of St. John. "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone", "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats--", "And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." These beasts each had six wings, and they never ceased worshipping and glorifying God. There is another reference made to them in Ezekial 1.

of God) and he said, "Take this book and mount ye the milk white steed and go into all the city and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth you and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth you not shall be damned, and at every house you go to you shall find the dead lying right in the door, but preach the gospel right over the dead to the living for just on the other side of the dead is the living, and check not the reins for the more you preach the faster the horse will run."

"At one flash of his eye I saw heaven open and behold a milk white steed coming out from under the Altar of God. His regalia was a milk white saddle and a milk white bridle. He came directly from under the throne out of the gate up into the place where I was standing and stood at my right hand side and these four men in the likeness of beasts mounted me on the horse and into the saddle, and one of the men delivered the reins over the horse's head and into my hand and I laid the reins on the horn of the saddle, (because I was not able to guide the horse, the horse had to guide me) and the young man delivered the Bible into my hands and cried out: "Go West to St. Louis", and at the word "go" the horse went across it as he was going on dry land, and when I crossed the river I saw the dead lying

right in the door,⁵ and the living standing looking over the dead looking with amazement, and I preached right over the dead to the living, saying repent and believe the gospel and the same shall be saved.⁶ I went to the West as far as the city goes making the same cry and back East again making the same cry and when I came to it was 7 o'clock in the morning and I was at No. 40 N. Palina St., Chicago, Ills."⁷

Obviously this dream or revelation affected George Flowers markedly. It is reported that his wife, Fanny, awoke the night of the vision to find her husband out of bed, sitting in a chair, staring fixedly into space. He evidently revealed a part of his vision to his wife at that time for she was convinced of his charisma from the start, worked with him, and proselytized in the name of his new faith.

5. The "dead" referred to in the vision is interpreted as meaning the "unbelievers". Metaphorically, then, the living are those that believe.
6. See Rev., Chs. 4 and 6.
7. This vision was quoted verbatim from the record of the Apostle as dictated to his secretary, Rev. Mose Hicks. The author felt that a great deal of the mood and psychological implications of the vision would be lost had it been condensed and rewritten. The Steinishness of style, with repetition of phrases, rhythm, and concentration of images provides one with an emotional immediacy to be re-experienced only by attending a service of the sect, listening to the minister and

After this major revelation Flowers knew that God wanted him to do something, but he was uncertain how to start. He continued to have subsequent visions when for four and a half years an "angel from heaven" taught him how to read, write, and further discern from the Scriptures new lessons, "from Genesis to the book of Revelations." According to the account told by his followers, the angel was invisible, but he felt his presence constantly at his right hand. During all this period Flowers continued to attend the Baptist Church on Olivet Street in Chicago and participated as an active layman in the congregation. He eventually made his revelation known to these people for he felt compelled to begin preaching on every possible occasion.⁸

In 1888 having gained considerable attention among the members of his church, as well as the newspapers,⁹ it was decided by some of the elders that he might qualify for ordination.

7. (Cont'd) members wander through the Word in an emotional accord unparalleled through any other drama medium.
8. It is important to note that Flowers visions and preaching inspirations first occurred in the 1880's when the Great Revival was in full swing. With this in mind the unique character of his visions and aspirations becomes almost normative behavior.
9. The Apostle supposedly received great press publicity. This is a legend. The press took no notice of Flowers. The only record of Flowers at this early period was reference made to him in the Chicago Directory for 1889: "George W. Flowers, nuts. 18 Walnut Street."

Shortly thereafter four of the church's deacons called on "Brother Flowers", inviting him to go with them to the church that evening where he would be ordained in the Baptist ministry. Flowers joined them eagerly, anticipating his ordination with great joy.¹⁰

When the men reached Wood and Fulton Streets, in Chicago, on the way to the church about six blocks from Flowers' house, God spoke to him and said, "My Church is not named Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, nor Catholic, or nothing they have got named", and it is said that Flowers fell back with astonishment and asked, "O, Lord God, what is the name of your church if it ain't named Baptist?" and God replied, "My church is the Israel of God, and that means every new creature in the heart, Now go back and read the Bible and see if you can't find it there." Flowers retorted, "Lord, I have read the Bible and studied it and can't find such there." But God said, "Go back and read, it is there."¹¹

The deacons that were with him did not hear what God had said to Flowers but they could hear Flowers talking,

10. According to the account as told by the followers the deacons came to Flowers' house to inform him that they thought they could railroad him through and get him ordained. This is evidently an attempt to bare the Baptists as racketeers.
11. This vision, again is quoted wherever possible directly as told by the Apostle and recorded by his "scribe".

apparently to himself, and they were astonished. According to the legend, God brought darkness between Flowers and the Baptist Church where they were headed and they could not see their way. The deacons prevailed upon Flowers for thirty minutes to continue with them but he refused. He replied that he could not even see his way to the Church even if he wanted to go. Instead he turned back toward his home where he could see the windows lighted and there he studied for another six months and found references to "Israel of God"- "from Genesis to Revelations as God had said." The present leaders of the sect draw an elaborate parallel between this vision of their Apostle and the occasion of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Saul, too, was blinded, was accompanied by men who did not hear God's voice, etc.¹² At the end of the six months Flowers returned to the Olivet St. Church and preached a farewell sermon declaring his new faith and denouncing the Baptist Church and other denominations as not being representative of God and His Will.

Following a third period of study, after the "Angel of God" had taught him for four years, he was told by the angel, "at exactly twelve minutes past twelve o'clock" to arise and go to St. Louis. According to the legend,

12. Acts 22, v. 5-11.

the inspired man boarded the C. & A. at the Chicago and Alton depot and did as the Lord commanded. A miracle is also related in connection with this episode for when Flowers started walking down to the depot, penniless, wondering how he could ever get to St. Louis, he found on the street before him the exact fare to take him to his destination.

Accordingly, he preached "in every hole and corner in St. Louis." And his first congregation was organized on Gay Street, of that city, fifteen months after his arrival. He named his following, "The Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army."

After preaching his "Unity" doctrine in St. Louis and not drawing impressive numbers, Flowers made a dramatic prophecy by declaring that a tenth part of the city would be destroyed for its wickedness and refusal to accept God's Word. When shortly thereafter a cyclone did strike St. Louis causing chaos and destruction the prestige of the religious leader, Flowers, was greatly enhanced.¹³

This episode served to enhance the leader's prestige for many years. One of the non-members who knew Flowers

13. Rivals of the sect have reported that Flowers was driven out of St. Louis, tarred and feathered, for his curse on the city. This rumor is strengthened somewhat by the conference bulletin of 1901. No minister was assigned to St. Louis for that year.

described him as a man endowed with great prophetic powers. Flowers' stepdaughter praised her father's gifts as follows: "If the Apostle said somebody would be walking in three days, he was, and if the Apostle said that the hearse would be at a house in three days, it was!" She also related the account of her own marriage to a white member of the sect: "The Apostle called me over one morning and said, 'Louella, I dreamed last night that you are going to marry Frank Sparrow (the white man) before two years.'" Louella protested this prophecy, but later had to revoke these protestations for returning from Chicago, a year later, she married the white man, Frank Sparrow. "That's just one example of how great the Apostle was and how what he said was true--was true!"

Prior to 1894, "churches" had been founded at Litchfield and Bunker Hill, Illinois, and then later in Chicago. During these early years Flowers had no male assistants and had to depend solely upon the help of a few women who were attracted to him because of his persuasive preaching. By 1901, however, in the Report of the Proceedings of the 4th Annual Conference of the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army, convening at Chicago; Flowers styled himself as "presiding bishop", a title which was later altered to "archbishop".

By 1901, according to the annual report, ten clergymen attended the conference. The sect was already taking on an aura of exclusiveness, for five of these ten ministers were dropped and one was placed on probation for negligence or inaptitude. At the close of the conference there were appointments made to the congregations at Bunker Hill, Illinois, two appointments to the Chicago group, and an additional minister was named to establish another body on the west side of Chicago, besides the appointment of a "bishop" to Michigan and Ohio "to organize and establish churches throughout his "diocese"; he was authorized to collect money from the public at large, throughout his diocese to support his work and his family." Evidently the latter prescribed right was one of the privileges of the bishop's office for Flowers, too, is explicitly granted this same right.

'Sister' G. W. Flowers, the wife of the leader, was assigned to general missionary work at the headquarters at 169 E. 19th St., Chicago, by the conference.

It is significant to note that Bishop Flowers himself said, in the body of some biographical material being recorded by his "scribe," Reverend Hicks, that his first significant help did not come until ten years after he first began organizing his followers. This help came in

the person of a John H. Arnold who was responsible for winning many converts and proselyting many young men for the religious vocation.

When one considers that Bishop Flowers was working among people who had not been much more than fifty years out of slavery it is not surprising that he had the difficulty which he apparently had in finding and training dependable, intelligent, somewhat educated, and highly moral lieutenants. There was evidently quite some turnover among Flowers' co-workers since, if one goes through the annual reports which are available, one cannot find a single name present in the earlier reports of 1901 and following who was still active in the organization after the original leader's death some twenty years later. It is a tribute to Flowers' persistency and patience that he continued to endeavor to establish and spread his faith despite these formidable obstacles.

After establishing his headquarters in Chicago he began to hold revival meetings over a wide area throughout Illinois, northern Missouri, and Indiana. He established 'churches' temporarily in Springfield, Illinois and Peoria. The thing that still drew much attention to him was his previous prophecy of the St. Louis storm, and secondly, his radical pronouncements in a paper which ^{was} published in

Litchfield called The White Horse Record. Allegedly he published this paper for two years, and his radicalism is said to have created quite a stir in the area.¹⁴ His popularity grew so significantly that the group at Bunker Hill at one time reported 102 "white" members. It however later collapsed.

In 1908, according to the Bishop Flowers' records, the congregation in Chicago was doing fairly well, and Arnold was sent to Danville to establish another "church". This group grew to significant proportions because of Arnold's (bishop) exceptional revivalistic preaching ability. At one time it had two hundred members. Flowers frequently joined Arnold in Danville and in adjoining towns in organizing revival tent meetings and Bible study groups in private homes. It was at one of these revival meetings at Danville that William Jones, the sect's present leader, was converted to the Israel of God faith.

It was in this same year that Bishop Flowers, on one of his many and widespread solicitation trips came to Sycamore, Illinois. He was riding on the train with a Baptist minister, so goes the story, who was also bound for Sycamore to preach at a revival meeting among the colored people in town. According to reliable reports the

14. No copies were obtainable.

two went to the revival meeting which was being held in a private home of one of the Negro families and contested one another in debate. The Baptist preached his gospel, and Bishop Flowers preached his philosophy based on his visions with special emphasis upon the doctrine of Unity. This doctrine embraced all phases of social and spiritual living, including the emphasis on interracial relationships and "non-denominationalism".

According to Dixie Simms, retired proprietor of the oldtime tavern, restaurant, and gambling house, the "Dixie Inn", in Sycamore, a committee made up of the interested people in the small Negro community were chosen to decide which preacher they would like to have preach to them again. Simms reported that a majority of them favored Flowers since the community was made up of people from many different denominations and Flowers did not preach "denominationalism". He was invited to return to Sycamore where a tent was erected for him and he preached his religion to the faithful and curious alike. Both white and colored came to hear him.

Flowers found his visits to Sycamore quite encouraging and lucrative as well. He would always solicit for the work of his sect in Chicago and made more and more frequent

trips to Sycamore, first preaching in a tent, then in a store front. Finally he moved to Sycamore with his family; his wife, stepson, and daughter Phoebe. Shortly after this move a building was erected for worship, as well as a home for the Flowers family. The headquarters of the sect was moved immediately to Sycamore and the Sycamore Negro community became the spiritual capital for the then thriving religious sect. The membership at this local unit reached a maximum of 100.

Stories are told concerning the Bishop, now having assumed the title "Apostle", and his travels around the territory of southern Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana soliciting funds for his growing flock. A Baptist minister in the area mentioned the rumor that the Apostle frequently had led the people he solicited to believe that he was raising money for a Baptist congregation in Sycamore, and after obtaining the money would add it to the coffers of the White Horse Army. It should be noted, however, that this statement comes from the leader of a competing congregation.

Another reported technique which he utilized to gain support for his organization was to contact immediately any visitor or new resident in Sycamore, especially in the colored district, invite them to dinner, loan them money

or food and help them in any way he could conceive their particular needs. After having won their confidence and gratitude he would discuss religion with them and attempt to convert them to his own faith. It is quite reasonable to assume that these persuasion tactics were frequently successful especially when the people contacted were often from the very lowest educational and social strata, eager to be accepted and recognized in a new community. Since this new religious philosophy was being preached to illiterate or semi-literate interstitial people, it is understandable that Flowers probably did not face much competition from other religious groups in the community since these groups would not be especially desirous of recruiting new members of such "quality". Since Sycamore is largely a middle-class community its churches too are of the middle-class Protestant variety. Outsiders frequently would describe the W.H.A. as a "bunch of mis-fits". The leaders of the sect immediately reply: "Christ came first to save the lowly"!

The Apostle, it is related, loved to eat and would visit his faithful regularly remaining for a meal. Dixie Simms and his ilk nicknamed the Apostle, "Bishop P'ok Chop". He was quite tolerant of Simms and his gambling buddies and would often visit their favorite haunt up above the

Dixie Inn. An announcement "We'll now have twenty minutes for the Lord", followed by some preaching, passing of the hat, and promises to attend the next Sunday meeting, was a frequent event at the Dixie Inn. A word with the Bishop and the game would resume.

The writer never encountered this type of familiarity in any of the interviewees regarding the present leader, Bishop Jones.

In 1910 the Mt. Zion, Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army was organized in Terre Haute, Indiana. This group prospered and numbered more than 100 members in a short time after its organization. This congregation has remained quite the same in contrast to the drastic drop in membership in many of the other groups. A second congregation was formed in North Terre Haute in 1914.

In 1915 a "seminary" was opened in Sycamore, and the Apostle began to urge his people to buy lands and build homes for he predicted that Sycamore would become the heart of the new faith-"a City of the Living God".

Other units were brought into being in Tuscola, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Henderson, Kentucky; and Paris, Tennessee. In 1921 congregations were also founded at Georgetown, and at Rockford, Illinois; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Racine, Wisconsin. The latter three were founded in 1923.

During the spring and summer of 1923, the Apostle George began to fail in health and during the latter part of the summer was confined to his bed. On October 2, 1923, he died. A majority of the ministers, elders and deacons had remained in Sycamore after the annual conference that they might be near when their leader died. A very ceremonial funeral was conducted in tribute, and their Apostle was buried beside his first wife in the Sycamore cemetery. Their bodies were later exhumed and moved from the colored section in the cemetery to another area in the same cemetery where the older and more noted pioneers in the Sycamore community were resting. A very inconspicuous stone marks the grave with the inscription:

"Apostle George W. Flowers, 'Visible Founder of the Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army, October 2, 1923'".

The Apostle's daughter, Phoebe died in 1924, and his second wife, Alma, in 1934. They were both buried with him in the Sycamore cemetery. No markers can be found at their graves. The sect places so little emphasis on the hereafter that they do not feel that the customary burial rituals and symbols are important.

Max Weber in his essay "The Meaning of Discipline",¹⁵

15. Gerth, H.H. and Mills, C. Wright; From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, p. 253.

discusses the crisis created in transferring the function of authority based on personal charisma, as this was, on to a successor without this specific grace of the deceased leader. This problem is very crucial since a charismatic leader exercises his authority on the basis of his own proven special talent or grace--the Apostle had proven his divine endowment and no one else in the sect had appeared to be able to take over by his own special works or deeds. No one had performed miracles or made dramatic prophecies. No one had experienced visions or had talks with God. Nevertheless the transference of authority and leadership in the Israel of God sect was done with considerable finesse and a minimum of conjecture.

SUCCESSION OF A NEW LEADER

Upon the death of the Apostle George, the council of ministers, elders, and deacons met together and voted to choose the man who they felt would most ably fill the position of the leader of the church. They unanimously elected the Reverend William R. Jones who had been serving the church in Detroit as well as functioning as sort of Bishop's emissary throughout the entire connection.

Reverend Jones had been converted to the Israelite faith through the influence of the noted Bishop Arnold of Danville, Illinois. Jones had gone to Danville to work in the mines with a friend during a rest leave from college. Rev. Jones' brother was a Baptist minister and Jones had been raised in the Baptist faith himself. He was won over to the new faith when Arnold and another clergyman proved to him that the Baptist church was a faith teaching contrary to the true doctrine of the Lord as revealed by the Bible and further by the Apostle George. Arnold won Jones' confidence, and he was accepted into the faith. Jones later was chosen, due to his leadership qualities and more advanced education, to attend Seminary study in Sycamore under the tutelage of the Apostle. It seems somewhat apparent that he was the natural successor to the Apostle, but despite the obviousness of the council's choice divine

significance is attached to this event.

It appears that the last time that the Apostle had talked with Jones he had instructed him to carry on and to continue the spreading of the word of the White Horse Rider. Jones, insists that he did not mention the Apostle's decision to anyone. Not until after the Apostle's passing and following the election of Jones as Archbishop, did Jones reveal that he was the Apostle's choice. The coincidence, however, obviously irrational any alternative action might have been, was interpreted by Jones and other members present as direct intercession on the part of a divine power, a super-human hand, carrying out the will of predestination. "Thy will be done".

The new bishop was apparently accepted willingly by a majority of the church members. He already had connections with the congregation in Sycamore through marriage. Jones has been married four times. Very little is known of the first marriage, but each of his three later wives was a member of the Sycamore congregation. According to information acquired from numerous sources in the community, the Bishop was married prior to his entering the church, or at least prior to his coming to Sycamore. Desertion is inferred by some; however it is impossible to verify this. Jones also married a Caldwell girl (her brothers have since

left the church), a Jackson woman, and has somewhat recently married a young woman, some thirty years his junior whom he had helped to rear from early childhood. He has only one child, a daughter who has estranged herself from him.

The Bishop is a portly figure, business-like, and holds himself somewhat superior and aloof from his congregation and acquaintances. He wears a mustache and many claim that he resembles the Apostle remarkably. Whether he deliberately imitates the Apostle George is unknown, but it is evident that this resemblance has a very positive effect on the entire church membership. The Bishop dresses in black or dark gray and most frequently wears detachable white stand-up collars sometimes of the Roman type or the old-fashioned, wing-point variety. He frequently removes his collar in the midst a period of strenuous oratory.

The Bishop (Archibishop is his official title) in his capacity as leader of the church represents authority and infallible revelation. In his role of guardian of the flock he acts as a check on every phase of activity of the members of the church from family discipline and control to economic advice. These duties are handled by the local ministers in the individual churches, and whenever

they are unable to solve a problem they call upon the Bishop for advice. He spends a considerable part of his time visiting and preaching in the other churches in the "connection". During his absence the church services and other duties are handled by the senior elder of the congregation. Another duty of the Bishop is to train young men for the ministry. If he discerns any promising man in any of the congregations who seems to have an aptitude for church service, he will encourage him to enter the vocation. If a positive decision is reached the young man enters the family circle of the Bishop and spends an indefinite length of time assisting the Bishop as secretary, studying the Bible and the doctrine of the Israel of God's Church. Eventually when he is judged efficient and has proven his loyalty and fire in the faith he is given a local license to preach. This training is called seminary training. The Bishop is the only teacher and authority consulted. If the student continues to bear up under the scrutiny of the Bishop, he is ordained so that he may baptize and perform marriage and issue sacrament. The sole and final authority for judging the ability of these novices rests upon the Bishop, and he has complete control over appointment and withdrawals.

The contrast in attitude displayed by both members and

non-members toward the present bishop and Apostle George is very marked. Both white and colored seem to have had a much warmer affection for the Apostle than for Jones. It appears that the Apostle was a more tactful judge of human affairs and more understanding of human failings. In contrast, the present bishop is judged as presumptuous and very dictatorial. Such an opinion, however, is seldom expressed by any sect member to an outsider. Jones frequently rebukes members publicly and often takes over entire responsibility in any problem which involves a member of his church.

An example of this was made evident during the school year when a sub-normal high school girl belonging to one of the leading families of the entire group was involved in a scandal and was taken to the Geneva School for Girls, a state institution, on the advice of the Bishop. Many others felt that her case was one for psychological treatment and resented his interference.

Jones is what Myrdal terms "the white-appointed 'leader' of his race".¹ Often the white population is eager to find some Negro who is accepted by a majority of the members of his own group whom they may use as intermediary or contact

1. Myrdal, Gunnar: An American Dilemma, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1944, p. 683.

man. The Bishop it appears serves that purpose. He is anxious that his flock be successful employees, that his youth be diligent students, that the adults in the congregation develop a reputation for being dependable, sedate, conservative, family people leading quiet and ideal middle-class lives. If a member of the church loses his job, the first visitor the employer will have is the Bishop inquiring as to the cause of the discharge; and if it is evident that his man has been a shirker, the Bishop is quick in giving a stern reprimand.

This same responsibility of acting as "Big Father" to all the members of the group is exercised by the Bishop where unmarried couples are living together, where the young are acting boisterously, in family discords, or where a family is living beyond their means. In every case the Bishop feels it to be his duty to work out a prompt and quiet settlement. The members and the leaders of this sect are most anxious that unfavorable publicity be avoided. The sect is striving for what might be labeled "middle-class respectability". They are eager that none of their members be involved in any unlawful activity. As will be pointed out later, the means used may not be legal, but the thing that is held as most important is a quick solution before anyone outside the sect learns of the deed. When the writer

was discussing the problem of marriage and divorce with the Bishop this above-mentioned attitude was exposed. The Bishop related the case of a woman and man who had belonged to the sect had come to him and confessed that they had been living together secretly although the man had left a wife in the South. The Bishop proudly related how he asserted his authority and told them that they must get married immediately. When the couple did not marry as quickly as the Bishop had advised and yet continued to live together he refused to consider them further. By this time the whole community was aware of the scandal and the Bishop "refused to get mixed up in it." It was the public opinion which the Bishop was concerned about.² The moral issue per se, the illegality of a man already married marrying another woman,--this was not the problem-- it was the reputation of the sect and its members which was important in the mind of their leader. This unconcern for the law as law may well reflect the lower class origin of the group and its leaders.

2. See Burgess, E. W. and Locke, H. J., The Family From Institution to Companionship, American Book Co., 1945, "The Negro Family", Ch. V., O. 159, "In the cities the Negro is learning that prior to a legal remarriage he must go through the formal procedure of securing a divorce, consequently he resorts to the divorce courts to avoid trouble and punishment."

The Bishop is paid by his local congregation for serving as pastor in Sycamore, and in addition by each group in the connection according to the size and means of the congregation. During 1948 Bishop Jones received \$600 from the national treasury, traveling expenses and salary from the local congregation amounting to \$1200. In addition he was given \$247 in individual group donations during the same year. These donations were usually presented to him during his frequent visits to the different congregations. The Bishop is also provided with a large home, fuel and lights, a car, and personal gifts as well as marriage fees. As a result he is one of the more prosperous members of the colored community in Sycamore.

As has been mentioned, the members do express personal resentment against the Bishop to one another, but are very reticent about doing so in the presence of an outsider. They are also very prompt in acquiescing to most any demand he may make upon them. The Bishop recently married a girl whom he had helped to raise from childhood and who is approximately thirty years his junior. The members of the congregation were covertly shocked, but to all outward appearances seemed to accept his action without doubt. When outsiders questioned the members about this unusual action, they would meet often the reply, "The Bishop knows

what he is doing. It must be all right or he wouldn't do it." Jones himself quite diplomatically handled the situation by pointing out to his congregation the signs of God's will being fulfilled in that this girl had been sent to him to care for during his wife's previous illness, and having been with him during that time she thoroughly understood his needs and was exceptionally well qualified to care for him and to serve as a devoted and efficient wife. This rationalization was evidently accepted by the council of national officers, ministers and elders, since they gave their unanimous endorsement to the marriage contract. The most unique feature of the action is that another man in the congregation at Sycamore was interested in the young lady prior to her marriage and had asked the Bishop, her guardian, for permission to marry her. The Bishop reprimanded the gentleman for courting a girl younger than he. The gentleman complied and the Bishop proceeded to marry the girl himself. This romantic triangle created considerable comment throughout the Negro and white community.

During an interview the Bishop was asked how a successor would be chosen at the time of his retirement. He gave assurance that he would be largely responsible for choosing the next leader of the White Horse Army, but that an election would be conducted among the National officers

and ministers. He inferred that he felt sure that a divine hand would be instrumental in choosing the next leader as it had been decisive in choosing him to succeed the Apostle.

As is rather obvious from the discussion, little real power lies in the hands of the clergy, none at all in the hands of the lay leaders. The pastors in the connection are prodiges of either Bishop Jones or were chosen by Arnold and trained by the Apostle and have remained in the sect's ministerial positions ever since. Only two of the present pastors were recruited and trained by the present leader. All the rest of the pastors were inspired and trained by the Apostle before 1923. In other words it appears that either the present archbishop is unable to recruit new clergymen or if he does persuade others to choose religion as a vocation they are evidently forced out of the sect due to incompetency or disinterest. A majority of the ministers have to work in other occupations to supplement their incomes; and with the frequent number of services required during each week, it is understandable why young men might not flock to the seminary for career opportunities.

"If we have not heard the Bishop say,
We know it is his heart's desire,
To have a host of strong young men
Who are able to go through fire.

He will not have "just anything,"
Because "anything" won't do,
They must be able to see through the smoke
Or else they can't pursue."

-From "Young Men"
A Poem
By Anna Belle Caldwell
Sect Member

GOING FORTH TO CONQUER

The Ministry.

A majority of the ministers now serving the churches in this organization were brought to the sect by the bombastic preaching of the Bishop Arnold of Danville or the Apostle himself. The ministers are all anxious to tell of their conversion experience. In almost every case only a very short interim elapsed between the time of conversion to the sect and induction into ministerial training.

The ministerial candidates spent from six months to over a year studying the Bible and the doctrine of the White Horse Rider at the so-called seminary at Sycamore. As before mentioned, the usual procedure in training the pastors included practical experience under a license, followed by ordination when they had proven themselves to be "true" and "fired in the faith". Bishop Jones stated that the greatest problem was that of worldly temptation becoming too great for the young men and their succumbing to either sexual or pecuniary misdemeanors.

The functions of the pastors are: to serve in the local areas, helping to solve the needs of the members, preaching five times weekly, and supervising the renting or upkeep of the church hall.

Most of the ministers take a very personal interest in their members. If any minister discloses the confession of a member he is turned out of the ministry. Pastors serve as moral, economic, political, religious, marital, and vocational advisors. And as does the Bishop in Sycamore, each pastor acts as contact man for the white man's convenience.

Many of the ministers in their programs demand the report cards of their members' youngsters. They report that they pay most attention to the discipline grades or comments made by the teachers. Constantly they strive to make the children of their group shining examples of good behavior, and they place stern emphasis on discipline in all its manifestations. One pastor reported that the child who receives low grades will frequently blame the teacher saying that he is prejudiced against Negroes. The minister does all he can to dissuade the child from this rationalization for in the first place he says it is seldom true, and secondly, such a practice is considered dangerous to the child's development.

Actually the ministers in the local meetings do not have to tackle very complex theological problems for in the first place a majority of the members do not ever challenge statements made, and if they did, any controversial

issue can be, and often is referred to the Bishop.

The ministers have the additional duty of deciding when to administer financial aid to members of the sect or other members of the Negro community. They are also instrumental in the donation of money to charities or community organizations. The ministers are quite proud of the strong support which the Israel of God's Church gives to Community Chest, Red Cross; etc.

In reward for their services the ministers are paid annual salaries by their own groups. The salaries averaged \$1100 in 1948. In addition they are usually furnished housing, most often in the basement or some other part of the church building. They are given traveling expenses and frequently are assisted in buying a car. Most of the local pastors supplement their incomes with factory work as either semi-skilled or skilled laborers. Evidently they are dependable and stable workers because a majority of them have held the jobs as long as they have remained in the community in which they have preached.

A majority of the ministers are married and have families. Their wives come from either Sycamore or Danville, since these towns represented the centers of Israel of God's activity during the initial growth of the sect.

THE DEACONS AND THE ELDERS

Lay Leaders.

Besides the ordained local ministers there is also a presiding elder for each district in the connection. There are two presiding elders at present; one for the Northern and the other for the Southern District. It is the duty of this officer to act as superior administrator over the ministers in the district; he also has special ceremonial tasks, administering the Sacrament of Communion and the foot-washing ceremony. The presiding elder travels about regularly in his district and serves as assistant to the Archbishop. A record of every member turned out of the church is kept and reported to the presiding elder every three months. In the early days of the sect the Apostle appointed two or three bishops to be his assistants. However, the elders now do many of the tasks which the bishops were formerly required to do. The ceremonial duties have always belonged exclusively to the elders, and even the Bishop does not administer communion in his own church.

In interviewing all group leaders, lay and clergy, it is evident that all are devoted disciples of the Apostle. They look upon him as almost a saint. They speak of him in

terms that the author observed as characteristic among the followers of a Capuchian priest in the mountains of southern Italy; a priest allegedly endowed with miraculous powers who had become famous and had attracted so many disciples that an entire town was created to provide residence for them. In talking to these Italians one could distinguish a devotion which extended itself into every phase of the leader's life and activity. The followers seem to acquire a sense of proprietorship over the leader. This same attitude can be found among the followers of the Apostle. They look upon him as their patron saint, their own personal monopolistic source of "grace". In talking with them one notes the tone of solicitation, humility, and holiness which they call forth in answering any question concerning the Apostle. One might say he is their rich uncle whom they must regard with proper awe and obsequious concern; that they must humor to be included in his legacy.

In addition to the presiding elders and ministers, there are also elders whose responsibilities are to assist in the administrative tasks facing the minister and the congregation, and to conduct the services and preach the sermon during the absence of the minister. The elders have all received considerable training from either the Apostle or present Bishop. A majority of them did become active

during the days of the Apostle and are eager to relate incidents pertaining to him.

The elder at the church in Sycamore is the leading elder in the sect. Elder W. first came into contact with the Israel of God's Church while working in a hotel in Terre Haute, Indiana. He was encouraged to attend one of the revival meetings being conducted by the Apostle George and became vitally interested in his program of non-discrimination and Oneness. He became so interested that he left Terre Haute and went to Sycamore where the Apostle was building up a colored community. The Apostle assured him that he would help him find a job. Thus attracted, he came to Sycamore in 1915. He was able to find a job as janitor, window washer, and carpenter. He married, bought a house and began to raise a family. All during this time he was a faithful worker in the sect in Sycamore, attended every service that he might hear more of the White Horse doctrine, was sent by the Bishop to the "seminary" classes and soon became an authority on the practices and beliefs of his religion. Today he has raised a family of eleven children. All of them are either now in high school or have graduated and have gone on to college. One of them is an architectural engineer, another a laboratory technician, and two more are in college doing exceptional work

in music and one in law. For his loyalty to the doctrine and his energetic interest in the sect he was rewarded with an appointment to the responsible position of National Treasurer, an office which he has held for many years, besides holding his office as elder of the Sycamore church. This latter office is very responsible too, for whenever the Bishop is away from the Sycamore group it is the duty of Elder W. to conduct all the services and take charge of the Sunday School. Elder W. is considered another spokesman for the group and is recognized for his dependability and intelligence by many of the leading whites in town.

The lowliest office in the sect is that of "deacon". This office is reserved for those men who are especially active and willing to take over some of the responsibilities of running the local organizations. In addition to their willingness to work they must also be very loyal in attendance at all the group services. Since each congregation has a total of five services a week this latter requirement is definitely a test of a member's quantity and quality of interest.

The deacon's duties are to help collect money from the members, participate as an audience leader, and to be responsible for more routine tasks such as caring for the

sect's buildings and utilities. Both the deacons and the elders assist in distributing the elements at Communion as well as organizing and acting as assistants at the foot-washing and baptismal ceremonies.

There are usually two or three deacons in every congregation and one elder. All of these officers are looked up to by the other members of the congregation for the Bishop attaches considerable prestige and exclusiveness to these appointments. The offices are all lifetime unless an individual is disqualified because of disloyalty to the faith.

SAINTS AND SINNERS

Sect Membership.

The rank and file of the White Horse Army consists of unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. For example, in the Sycamore group there are truck drivers, handy-men and gardeners for white families; laborers in the local Anaconda Wire & Cable Company; painters; a janitor in the local bank and post office, and other such occupations of a non-professional and largely unskilled nature. There are three or four colored people in the community who are teachers but they do not belong to the sect, nor do they teach in the community.

In addition to these male occupations many of the women in the sect work as maids, wash women, and practical nurses. One young married woman works as a linotype operator, half-days, at the local press.

Contrary to the usual rule, this sect is of a predominantly male composition, in number and in status structure. This phenomenon can probably be explained by pointing to the great emphasis that is placed on practical economic problems within the sect's doctrine. The patriarchal structure of the sect would also have especial appeal to men. Only in the Sunday School, where they may teach and at the annual conference, are the women allowed to make

any very effective contribution to the sect; even here, in every case, they are given subordinate duties.

The children have no responsibilities, nor program separate from the adults. They appear only to serve the role of being seen but not heard. The story is told of the embarrassment which the young people of high school age, in the Sycamore congregation, felt whenever any visitors came to visit their Sunday School class. Their teacher was a very old and illiterate lady and no match for the frequent queries which might be made during the class hour. If anyone would raise a controversial point the teacher would reprimand ~~him~~ and refer ~~him~~ to the Bishop. She didn't seem capable or willing to interpret for herself. As a result, of course, the young people either didn't attend Sunday School; or, if they were forced to continue, they merely sat and listened to the old woman talk aimlessly for an hour.

Since the sect originally was organized among illiterate freed slaves and some are still alive and active in the sect, it is possible to discern a very wide difference between the older generation, the middle group and the younger generation. This situation creates rather a severe strain in the group, especially since the authority and control still remains very definitely in the hands of the

older stratum and the more conservative middle-aged group. It is quite natural that resentment results from such an unreasonable dichotomy where the semi-illiterate are endowed with the absolute authority to control and censor high school and college graduates. Consequently, this latter fact combined with the complete lack of a constructive and appealing program for the younger people, has resulted in the loss of a great number in this age category. This loss is noticed especially among "the young married couple" category. Those younger than the latter of course are still under the control of their elders and are often forced to attend the sect's meetings regardless of their personal attitude.

In the Sycamore congregation, the only group which was observed consistently by the author, only one young married couple (28-35) attend the meetings. Their case is exceptional since the wife is the daughter of the national treasurer and lives at home with her father, while her husband, several years her junior, is attending trade school in Chicago. The young woman, as long as she remains in her father's home must attend the weekly services for it is his obligation to demand this obedience from her.

Since the sect represents a separatist group, social intercourse is definitely restricted to members. There

are very few occasions for social relationships since many of the generally popular gatherings such as dances, card games, bridge clubs, etc., are taboo. The older adult members do get together about their neighborhood for evening visits, but a majority of their associations take place in the local church where they share one another's anxieties or personal triumphs in sincere and open testimonials during their weekday meetings. Considerable exchange of gossip and opinion transpires before and after the meetings so that everyone remains quite thoroughly informed about his "sisters" and "brothers" welfare and activities. Since endogamy is licensed, intermarriage within the congregation is prevalent. The weekly meetings at the local church or at the larger conference therefore serve as occasions for family reunions, and are looked upon as very exciting social events. These district conferences and the annual conference in late summer are anticipated throughout the year by all the members.

It is very difficult to perceive any general political unity expressed by the members. Although the sect does not have any concrete political program, it might seem reasonable to expect some similarity of political prejudice since the group consists of practically a homogeneous economic class. Although there was some indication of a

liberal Democratic sympathy on the part of some of the Negro high school students it is impossible to determine how accurately they reflect the attitude of their parents. A general survey indicates that on the contrary the adult population appears to support the conservative Republican program most unanimously. It can be presumed with a degree of validity that the other congregations scattered around the Middlewest probably also reflect the political sympathies of the area in which they reside.

One can more feasibly suppose this since there is considerable lack of political participation or influence along political lines exerted by the leaders themselves. It seems rather surprising that the leaders have refrained from taking any definite position regarding national, state, or local politics for it is certain that they could wield considerable influence in either changing the political attitudes of the sect's members or directing them more positively along the attitudes which they already uphold as a group. Instead the leaders often discourage their followers from even voting in elections where the leaders do not feel the candidates are cognizant of the sect's own particular objectives.

THIS IS THE WAY - THIS IS THE LIGHT

Doctrine.

The basic doctrine of the White Horse Army was formulated by the sect's first leader, the Apostle George Flowers. The main emphasis of his newly declared faith centered around the idea that there was good news for the human race, especially good news for the remnants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. This good news was that God had revealed Himself in personal revelation to the Apostle and had given him the book of the seven seals--the book which no man could read.¹

God chose the Apostle George as his spokesman for the present generation and broke the first seal and revealed the first three mysteries to him. The first mystery revealed that God's Church and His people were called the Israel of God. It is upon this first revelation that the Apostle abandoned his work in the Missionary Baptist Church and began to form his own group under a new name. He added "The White Horse Army" to commemorate his vision of Paradise and the mission on which he was sent; i.e., to teach God's message guided by the White Horse, the Spirit of Truth. This Spirit of Truth is commonly called the Holy

1. See Revelations, Ch. VI.

Ghost or Spirit in other Christian denominations and sects.

The second mystery which was revealed beneath the broken seal was that Christ's Second Advent had already been accomplished.² This theological hypothesis was proven by pointing to the prophecy that Christ would not come in the body of a man but would come "in power and glory". In 79 A. D. Titus Vespasian and his Roman legions defeated the Kingdom of Juda and carried away most of the people as slaves, scattering them throughout Europe where they can be found today in almost every part of the Old World. It is this event, when Jerusalem fell captive to the Roman armies, that the sect interprets as the second coming of Christ. These captive slaves who were scattered throughout Europe, according to the Apostle's interpretation, are the ancestors of the present-day Jews. The fate of the remainder of the lost tribes was revealed in the third mystery.

According to this revelation the present Ethiopian race is the direct descendant of the fallen Israelites of Samaria who were carried away captive 750 years before the coming of Christ. They were scattered among 127 different provinces from India to Ethiopia.

2. This interpretation of the advent of Christ differs considerably from that of the pre-millenarians and the post-millenarians. E. T. Clark, in his The Small Sects In America discusses these various interpretations, pp. 31 and following.

As explained by an elder of the sect there were two and a half tribes of David who lived in the kingdom of Juda. They were called Jews and had sprung from David's line. Christ was born into this segment of the tribes of Israel. Jerusalem was the capitol of this kingdom.

The remaining ten-and-a-half tribes were governed by Samaria and were consequently called Samaritans. These people were carried away as captives before Christ's coming. According to the vision the present Ethopian race descend from these Israelites of Samaria, and represent the fallen tribe or race of Israel.

No attempt will be made to restate all the chapter and verse references and interpretations presented by the Apostle and the present leader regarding this geneological doctrine. It is necessary to point out, however, that on the basis of this last revelation any reference which is made to the "Israelites", or the "fallen or lost sheep of the House of Israel", is accepted as a reference to the Negro race, i.e., descendants of the Ethopian civilization.³

Accepting the premise that the Negro race represents the fallen tribe of Israel and turning to the Book of

3. To substantiate this account the elder pointed out that Ethiopians came to Jerusalem to worship; they came as all Israelites would, to Jerusalem, their spiritual capital.

Deuteronomy, chapter 28, one finds there a vivid prophecy depicting the curses which would fall upon the Israelites if they were disobedient to God's commands—the Hebrew Law. The parallels which can be drawn to the present day, or the near past, in regard to the American Negro, are almost uncanny. It is understandable in this light why the preachings of the Apostle were accepted and re-preached so fervently at the beginning of this century.⁴ The conclusion that is reached of course, is that the Israelites did not follow the Hebrew law and the original commandments of God as revealed in the Old Testament and were thus subjected to the curses above mentioned.

4. Deuteronomy, ch. 24.

V. 16: "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field;

V. 30: "Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her;

V. 33: "The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always;

V. 64: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone;

V. 68: "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondsmen and bondswomen, and no man shall buy you.

(This latter verse is interpreted by the sect as direct reference to bringing of slaves from Africa in ships to be sold in America).

The conclusion then leads to the remaining doctrine of the Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army, which holds that the Apostle George Flowers is by divine authority the present-generation-prophet of God and that as such it is his mission to show "the way" to the fallen Israelites that they might realize the fulfillment of God's promise and be restored, experiencing eventually a state called "Paradise".

Like the Kingdom of Father Divine this "Paradise" is to be realized here on earth. If the fallen Israelites then can be convinced of the validity of the Apostle's doctrine, they may thus be assured salvation.

Following upon these declarations of authority, as spokesman of God to the present generation of the fallen house of Israel, the Apostle George continued to build up his new doctrine of faith and practice.

The following is quoted from one of the few printed declarations of faith available to the White Horse followers. This tract is called "True Faith of the Apostolic Church, White Horse Army" by the Apostle, G. W. Flowers". It is dated November 1, 1910 and was printed at the spiritual headquarters of the sect, Sycamore, Illinois.

"The True faith of the Apostolic Israel of God Church (W.H.A.) teaches that there is but one God, who is infinite

in knowledge and power, in goodness and in every other perfection; who created all things by His omnipotence and governs them by His providence. In this one God there are three distinct persons----the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, who were perfectly equal to each other. We believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the blessed Trinity, is perfect God and perfect Man, for He is over all things."

He goes on to declare belief in the Immaculate Conception; Christ's Universal Martyrdom; His choosing of the Apostles and His "teaching, healing and raising mortals from the dead".

In the second section of this tract the Apostle goes on to describe what is meant by his doctrine of Unity: "Now we the Israel of God, the W.H.A. are one unit. By unity is meant that the members of the true church must be united in the belief of the same doctrines of revelation and in the acknowledgment of the authority of the same pastors. Hearsay (heresy) and schism are opposed to Christian unity. By hearsay a man rejects one or more articles of faith; by schism he spurns the authority of his spiritual supervisors."

The Apostle continues to prove the divinity of this doctrine of unity by declaring that Christ commanded it

and prayed that "His followers may be united in the bond of a common faith, as He and His Father are united in essence. He points out that St. Paul ranks schism and heresy with the crimes of murder and idolatry and he declares that the authors of sects shall not possess the kingdom of God. In other words, the Apostle George would deny the labelling of his group as a "sect" even though in actuality he represents the leader of a separatist religious movement with all the uniqueness and limitations in size and organization which characterized such a constructed type.

The Apostle continues and defends not only unity of doctrine but unity of organization. He substantiates this tenet by pointing out that Christ never spoke of churches, but "upon this rock I build my church." The tract continues "From which words we must conclude that it never was His intention to establish or to sanction various conflicting denominations, but one corporate body, with all the members united under one visible head, for as there is a visible body it must have a visible head." Thus, George Flowers proclaims his own infallibility and divine role as the Visible Leader or Head of the Israel of God's Church.

The self-made, self-styled, religious leader then

further stabilizes his position by proclaiming the infallibility of his own leadership. "The church has authority from God to teach regarding faith and morals and in her teaching she is preserved from error by the special guidance of the Holy Ghost. She is of course, essentially unerring in her doctrine, for what is one, Holy and unchangeable must be infallibly true. We never question the Truth of the Apostle's declarations. They were, in fact, the only authority in the church for the first century. There is no just ground for denying the Apostolic teachers of the Twentieth Century in which we live. A prerogative clearly proceeds from the first century, especially as the divine word nowhere intimates that this unerring guidance was to die with the Apostles. On the contrary, as the Apostles transmitted to their successors the power to preach, to baptize, to ordain, to confirm, etc., they must also have handed down to them the no less essential gift of infallibility. God loves us as much as He loved the primitive Christians."

Concluding, the self-ordained Apostle presents his "Big Ace". He declares, "It will not suffice to tell me we have an infallible Scripture as a substitute for infallible Apostles of the first century, for an infallible book is of no use to me without an infallible interpreter,

as the history of Protestantism too clearly demonstrates." This one statement states Flower's position regarding his own infallibility through divine revelation. He becomes the 20th Century Apostle--the divinely inspired leader as unmistakable, as God instructed, as the Gospel writers themselves. He thus constructs a pedestal which no critic may destroy. As long as he can demonstrate explicitly his previous charisma to attract and hold believers, he can interpret and lead in any way he desires and no man can attack him. He is infallible; he is Christ's Third Coming. As the present leader declared: "Moses came to save the children of Israel and to lead them out of bondage in the early days; Christ came as a light unto the Gentiles; and the Apostle George, the White Horse Rider, came to lead the present-day lost children, you and me, out of bondage--that whosoever believeth him and is baptized should be saved and whosoever believeth him not should be damned."

The White Horse riders have faith that if they believe in the revelations which their Apostle and his Successor declare they will be saved and will share the joyous experience of grace. This new life is "heaven". As the elder of the Sycamore congregation phrased it, "we believe not in a heaven beyond the sun, moon, and stars, but a heaven, here, today. We believe in a civilization where

the lost children will be saved from their present state of degradation. We believe in a heaven in our time or in the time of our children." Like Father Divine's cult their salvation is a sensory, material experience.

Lionel Levick, in his article, "Father Divine Is God", punningly remarks that what Divine's angels are looking for is a "Garden of Eating", not a "Garden of Eden."⁵ There is a certain parallel in objective between the Father Divine cult and that of the White Horse Riders. The latter also places considerable emphasis on the principle of "human dignity", "pride", and "equality".

There are other similarities between the sect under examination and the Father Divine cult. Both of the groups have entered business as a means of support as well as a means of avoiding exploitation. Father Divine has immense real estate holdings in the East and scores of business ventures. Fauset lists the following: "automobile accessories, garages; cabinet makers, coal, ice and oil distributors; barbers, free employment agency, express and hauling; food distributors; jewelry; women's wear; laundries; notions; radio repairs; restaurants; shoe repair; tailors and cleaners."⁶

5. Forum Magazine, October 1934, pp. 217-221.

6. Black Gods of The Metropolis, Philadelphia Anthro. Assoc., 1945, pp. 94-109.

Other similarities appear when examining the two groups simultaneously. Both emphasize racial equality and both attempt to indicate a material solution to the racial dilemma:

- (a) The entire race is essentially one;
- (b) Peace in the human race is to be established by eradicating prejudice, segregation, and division among people, and promoting the welfare of every living creature;
- (c) Equal opportunity for every individual must be assured without regard to race, creed and color.

An additional similarity might be presumed in comparing the Peace cult with the White Horse Army since the two groups both make their appeals to both white and black and yet neither are very successful in providing much attraction for the whites. Yet both exaggerate the fact by exploiting overwhelming statistics regarding the number of whites who have flocked to their tents. Today, however, in the W.H.A. the white membership in the entire connection would not exceed ten; a majority of these are women.

One of the women who used to attend the meetings of the Sycamore congregation was married to one of the prosperous businessmen in the community. It was not until her husband threatened separation and divorce that she finally discontinued attending the services. In this case she was infatuated with one of the Negro members in the

group---or so the story goes.

It is apparent that the present leader of the sect does not have the dynamic appeal which crosses class and color barriers, for in Sycamore there are only two white women, sisters, who attend the services and although they are frequently present they do not seem to be able to release themselves emotionally as do their black brothers. Both of the sisters are reluctant to be identified with the sect and resorted to elaborate subterfuges to avoid encountering the questioning writer. A third sister also resides in Sycamore and resents and is ashamed of her sisters' connection with the colored group.

In the Father Divine cult material salvation is provided to anyone who is in great need or wished to withdraw from the worldliness of a frustrating society; the Israel of God's Church desires to preach its belief in the "Unity" to anyone who will hear. Without the abolishment of discrimination in respect to color, nationality, or class, the leaders say, there can be no real Unity. Without Unity the Israel of God does not exist. Both of these groups are directed to the same ultimate end--raising up of the Negro from subjection and breaking free from the caste. As we shall discover in Part II, however, different means are used. Where the Peace cult exploits the method of

providing its members with needs--food, clothing, it creates a microcasm completely apart from the world; the W.H.A., on the other hand, creates a microcasm to protect and provide its members with a way of life, toward the ultimate end that they may be recognized and accepted by the rest of the world. The White Horse Army directs its efforts to acquire prestige by the accepted economic and social standards, finally to become so refined that the legend and myth about their race can no longer possibly exist. Like the Calvinists of the 19th Century, the Israel of God's Church is a sect dominated and constructed by a philosophy of "inner-worldly asceticism." This Negro sect, however, differs from these Calvinists not so much in means used, or in "way of life" as they differ in ends sought. The Israel of God's sect is striving for mortal salvation, while the Calvinists were intent on building up "treasures in heaven".

A. Baptism.

The baptism ceremony, as in many sects, has a particular significance for members and for those about to become members. Because of the voluntary nature of the sect, adult baptism has profound meaning as related to the entire value system and social structure. In an ecclesia or denomination where child or infant baptism serves as only

a function of differentiation or formal integration within the life process, one seldom finds the genuinely "heart-felt" meaning in all its personal and human ramifications as in the adult baptism, especially within a small, fairly "raw" sect. The baptism ritual for the W.H.A. has all of this latter meaning and is usually conducted on the banks of one of the nearby rivers, or in the abandoned stone quarry near Sycamore. The sacrament is performed only once a year, except by special dispensation, at the annual conference. In this way everyone in the connection is present for the ritual and the whole ceremony is thus more intensified and impressive.

About two hours are set aside for the ceremony on one of the two Sundays during the conference. Instead of the usual afternoon meeting everyone drives out to the appointed place to participate in the service. Several songs of a highly emotional and meaningful content for the participants are sung by the entire group, the Bishop and other ministers preach "inspiring" messages fitting to the occasion, and when the entire group has been joined together in an emphatic unity, the climax, the baptism itself, takes place.

The symbolic technique employed by the sect is immersion and the dipping in the stream represents the burial and the rising again of a new person. In order to carry

through the analogy the convert must be laid in the water on his back, submerged, and at the proper word raised up again to his feet. Thus, allegorically, the convert has been dead and buried an unbeliever and resurrected and living--a believer. This interpretation ties in with the Apostle and his vision where a similar reference is made regarding the living and the dead and believers and non-believers.

As in many of the small sects, baptism is given primary emphasis over any of the other sacraments. Herskovitz points to this common borrowing of the small American sects, especially the Negro sects, in the immersion baptism ceremony and the popularity of the Baptist ritual as an harkening back to the Negroes' African past and to their primitive "living water" rituals.⁷

B. Footwashing & Communion.

The ceremonies of footwashing and eating of the Lord's Supper are performed in a very informal atmosphere in the meeting places of the sect and are conducted only upon the occasion of the presiding elder's visit to the congregation. Appropriate songs are sung, and since there are only two or three alternatives, they are very familiar and everyone

7. Herskovitz, Melville, The Myth of the Negro Past, Harper Bros., 1941, p. 207.

joins in enthusiastically. The rest of the communion service is conducted in a fashion similar to the Baptist denomination. The elements are passed around to everyone seated in the pews or chairs and everyone partakes of the meal together. The latter is to symbolize the Unity of Spirit. The sect, however, has added its own variation of the Baptist form by serving wine instead of grape juice and unleavened bread rather than common leavened bread.

Immediately following the communion service the men and women separate and go to opposite ends of the meeting room where they participate in the foot-washing service. This ritual harkens back to the New Testament account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet as recorded in St. John. This ritual has little more significance than that of commemoration, and functioning as an overt act of humility. Glass wash bowls are used and two men and two women usually perform the task to their respective sex to the accompaniment of a traditional memorial song.

By subscribing to these ceremonies and their symbolic meaning, and by participating in them, an individual becomes an accepted and active member in the voluntary association of the White Horse Army. Through joining with the members in their ceremonies one feels a sense

of unity-a belongingness. Such a feeling of Oneness and Belongingness holds primary value for confused, discriminated against, and unwanted people. It is understandable that the sect holds strong ties on its members to the extent that they are willing to sacrifice considerable freedom of thought and action as well as a large percentage of their income that they may remain inside the group and continue to experience this psychological belongingness. The ceremonies and regulations in most cases do not serve as motivations in themselves but more principally as disciplinary techniques which tend to highly exclusivize the sect and in turn tend to build up further consciousness in the minds of the members of being different from the outer world. This accumulated, exaggerated "I am different from others" complex, of course, only intensifies the desperate psychological drive to remain on an acceptable position within the group. Excommunication is envisioned as a constant, real threat, not only to the spiritual security of the member, but as an instrument which might well cut off all human relationships leaving one an out-cast, unwanted by the sect-and unknown by the rest of the world. Such a doom can be paralleled in a modern communist underground in this country-where one feels intense conviction in the group's integrity yet fears isolation from

the group and persecution or shunning from the "outsiders". Even though these individuals feel that they are right and better than the "sinner" or the "infidel" still many do not have the perseverance or the courage to face the world alone and shout, "I am God's One--Spit at me and I shall believe all the more." There are martyrs and there are cowards. Thus we see how this struggle for status position can intensify the great need for renewed security and belongingness within the protesting group.

Rules and Regulations.

Before considering the individual laws and regulation of the sect it is important that the fundamental goals of the religious philosophy are explained thoroughly. In summary: the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army, represents a protestant sect having developed from the visionary inspiration of an ex-slave and self-made man, George W. Flowers of Chicago who preached his inspired doctrine of "Unity" throughout the Middlewest. This Unity doctrine emphasized that there is but one church recognized by God, the Israel of God's Church, that all who would accept his theology and recognize him as their spiritual leader and be baptized would be saved regardless of color, nationality or class.

His doctrine further proclaimed that God's kingdom (Heaven) was to be founded here on earth--and all who would follow the way of the Israel of God's faith would be eligible to enter this heaven. This "heaven on earth" would be created by following the basic Hebrew Law, the preaching of Christ, and the preaching of the Apostle George--a new civilization would supercede the present crumbling so-called "modern society"; anyone who did not accept the doctrine, or further discouraged and opposed it, would be doomed to Hell--also on earth. The Negro race (the actual Lost Tribe of Israel), have been in Hell ever since the curse of the Lord was put upon them. Racial inequality, poverty, slavery, and the lack of progress are pointed to as examples of this Hell on earth. Heaven on Earth will be established if and when the people of the world accept the doctrine and program of the Apostle George and join the army of Saints--and at such a time these Israelites, or Riders of the White Horse, or believers of the leader George Flowers, will become the rulers of the world. The present world civilization ruled by the White Man will collapse and the New World will emerge run by the Saints of the Israel of God and Heaven will Be.

The Apostle George and his successor Bishop William M. Jones have through the years issued a great number of

regulations or methods which they have considered as essential prerequisites to the establishment of a heaven on earth. Most of these regulations have been published at some time or another in the annual reports down through the years.

The sect still remains a sect rather than a denomination partially due to the fluidity of its regulations. Few of them have been retained or were created at the time that the first congregation was organized and the first conference was held. Only the sacraments have been retained, but they too have undergone considerable revision: significantly the sacraments receive very little emphasis in the church's teaching and only the sacrament of baptism is held essential for salvation. Actually the remaining ceremonies which are usually called sacraments are mere commemorative ceremonies providing the congregations with a little variety in their service. Since these ceremonies take a secondary role we shall not consider them at present, but will focus our attention on those regulations and practices which are necessary for membership in the sect.

At present the following rules of conduct are held essential for membership and communion in the sect. They are: (1) All members must pay their debts unless inability is proven. Any person having an outstanding debt may not

join the church until he has paid it; (2) No member of the Israel of God's church is allowed to marry a sinner; (3) All members must pay tithes; (4) In addition, they must all be willing to contribute to the Saint Fund; (5) All women must dress as becometh saints; (6) and, women and girls are not allowed to smoke cigarettes. All of these requirements are demanded of members and would-be members and enforced with the threat of excommunication.

Since qualification for membership is an essential factor in Weber's classification of a sect - and since this religious association is being studied in the light of Weber's generalizations, it is important that we examine the exclusive quality of the membership rules and standard of habits enforced by the White Horse Army.

According to Article XII of the bylaws printed in the bulletin of the annual conference, 1948, and going back in origin to a time prior to the 1920's, the minister in charge of each local church, while taking any member in the church is exhorted to ask any sect aspirant: "Are you willing to pay Saint Fund?" And if the applicant is not willing to do so, he or she will not be admitted to membership. For persons who are already members of the church Article XI states: "Each local church must have a Saint Fund for the purpose of relieving its saints. All

members who will not lay by him or her in store as God has prospered them, and bring it on the first day of the week and put it into the Saint Fund shall be excommunicated from the church."

The Saint Fund was first instituted in an effort to help the poverty stricken Negroes who belonged to the sect to bury their dead. The "burial and embalming racket" had bled thousands of the illiterate minorities of their savings and forced them into life-long debt. This condition was considered by many of the Negroes as one of the worst abuses thriving in their society.⁸ The Saint Fund was instituted in an effort to combat this racket and to save the members of the White Horse Army the burden of individual burial responsibility. As the by-law stated a voluntary weekly contribution must be made by every adult member to the Saint Fund if he has earned a wage during that week. Collection for the Saint Fund is held each Sunday morning at the morning service, counted, and the receipts are announced to the congregation present at the service. Fifty per cent of the local Saint Fund collections are then sent into the National Treasury where a National Saint Fund is maintained in charge of the National Secretary and the National Treasurer, both of whom reside at the headquarters of the sect in Sycamore,

8. Frazier, E. F., The Negro In The United States, Mac-Millan Co., New York, 1949, Ch. XV, "Mutual Aid and Fraternal Organizations", pp. 367-ff.

Illinois. All expenses for the burying of the dead are paid out of the National Saint Fund. Contracts have been made by the National Secretary, at special "wholesale" rates, and if any member in any local church dies the undertaker is called and the entire complex technique of embalming, funeral, and interment is conducted like a blessing from Heaven. When the last rose petal is crumpled the undertaker sends the bill to the local congregation and this bill is forwarded on to the National Secretary. The bill is settled and the report is recorded on the National Saint Fund account which is published and announced at the August conference.

In 1948, money raised for the Saint Fund totaled-	\$2,576.08
Brought forward from last conference-----	8,020.59
Paid Out-----	1,019.65
Cash on Hand Saint's Fund-----	9,577.02

In 1921, money raised for the Saint Fund totaled-\$	626.88
Brought forward from last conference-----	1,176.98
Paid out for funerals and relief-----	373.72
Cash on hand in Saint's Fund-----	1,430.14

In 1921 the National Saint Fund was used largely to assist in paying funeral expenses and relief for those people who were residing in a community where no local congregation existed. At this time the local Saint's Funds were responsible for burying their own members. It was not until the 1930's that the present centralized system was instituted where the local churches submit 50% of the money

raised for the Saint Fund to the National Treasury and thus relinquish their responsibility for taking care of their local members.

The Annual Saint's Fund report for the year 1937 when the 50% method was first being employed is worth itemizing for one can there observe the growth in total funds raised, annual amount raised, as well as discern how individual funeral expenses were met.

Raised by the 50% method and freewill offering	--\$1,512.15
Refund	----- 30.00
Received at Conference	----- 39.55
Brought forward from last Conference	----- 1,289.70
Total collected	----- 2,905.96
Paid out	----- 1,045.26
In Bank	----- 1,860.70

Paid the following:

Funerals

Sister Hall, Galesburg	----- 80.10
Bro. Childs, Detroit	----- 165.30
Rev. Wm. Jackson, Galesburg	----- 140.00
Sister Hull, Detroit	----- 170.40
Sister Graves, Terre Haute	----- 50.00
Baby Coleman, St. Louis	----- 40.00
Bro. Nesbitt, St. Louis	----- 145.33
Baby Smith, Indianapolis	----- 25.00
Sister Thomas, Detroit	----- 229.13

Total Paid Out	----- 1,045.26
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Besides meeting the expenses of burial the Saint's Fund also assists local groups in buying burial lots; and where discrimination is shown in the community as to burial locations for the Negroes, the National board attempts to buy up land and establish their own cemeteries. They have a

cemetery established in Danville, Illinois, where the churches from that whole area bury their dead.

The National Saint's Fund is used for burial expenses, and the remaining 50% raised annually in the local churches and retained by them is used to assist families of the bereaved. Frequently orphans are left and the local groups meet their charitable responsibility by assisting other families in the group or in the connection to care for these wards. The Saint's Fund is also used to help in other material ways the family left after a death.

Decision as to what extent the local group may help the families is reached through mutual agreement of the local boards over the recommendation of the local minister. How liberally the fund is used depends on their own interpretation. Frequently the local units help members bury destitute relatives or motherless or fatherless children who live in the Negro community but are not members of the sect. The extension of such generosity, of course, has a positive effect in shaping opinion and attitude about the sect in the minds of outsiders.

In addition to the Saint's Fund the members of the sect must give 10% of their earnings each week to the sect. A portion of this tithing money goes to the National treasury and the remainder is used for paying the local

minister's salary, expenses in maintaining the local buildings and paying for utilities. The local groups all contribute to community charities such as the Scouts, Community Chest, and the Red Cross. In addition to these organized charities, as has been pointed out, they also have their private charity projects. Coal, clothing, rent, medical supplies, and food are contributed to needy families inside and outside the corporate group. All these projects are supported and maintained with funds from the local Saint's Funds. This service which the organization provides for its people and to the entire community is one of its most positive contributions to the larger community as a whole. Where they refrain to participate in other community affairs they do in some measure compensate through their charity work. Hence they are an asset to their society rather than a total barrier as so many ethnocentric religious sects and denominations sometimes appear to be.

One cannot appreciate the extent to which the local groups are a contributing charitable influence until one is made aware of the amount that is raised in one congregation through tithes and freewill offerings. For example the association at Sycamore totaling fifty adult members, raised \$6,036 during the 1947-48 fiscal year. In addition

they received more than \$900 from other sources of income, from interest on invested money, etc. The Sycamore local unit had a total balance in their treasury of \$14,782.86.

The group at Detroit, Michigan with approximately 95 members raised \$8,487.98 from free will offerings and tithes and in addition received \$3,620 in rent for the same fiscal year. With such financial backing it is obvious that in time of crisis the groups could serve a very formidable function for their own members or for others.

The sect finds little need for helping poverty cases since the Negro laborer today, along with the rest of the nation, is enjoying marked prosperity with almost full employment. In 1928, however, the Detroit congregation contributed \$786 for the relief of Saints. In addition to their responsibility for burying the dead the local group also contributed \$916, to the National Treasury through tithing, free will offerings, and Saint's Fund. At this time there were 146 members in the Detroit congregation and 18 had been excommunicated.

In the association at Sycamore with their 50 members, (seven of these 50 listed as junior members) an average of \$170 was contributed by each member. It appears that the tithing rule must be closely adhered to in order to raise such a large sum of money per head. This is especially

remarkable when one considers that these members are still a part of the lower income class. Such diligent support of the Church is by no means characteristic of Negro lower class groups as observed by Myrdal, Woodson and Drake.

Since there is no activity foreign missionary program nor any aggressive home campaign, the sect might be considered almost a closed corporate group. Actually the sect is not closed to new members. However, it does seem more intent on serving its present members than marching the streets for new converts.

Those who do remain in the sect are closely checked and if anyone does not tithe and contribute to the Saint's Fund he is immediately reprimanded. If they have been in a position "to lay by in store as God has prospered them, and have neither brought it to the Church regularly, or if they are non-resident members and have not sent it they are excommunicated from the sect." One of the duties of the presiding elder is to keep account of individual contributions.

This emphasis on money and the collection of money in the sect or cult and usually during the worship service is also mentioned by Myrdal. He states, "In the Negro church the collection of money becomes of pathetic importance and a good portion of the time during an average church service

is taken up by it."⁹

Fauset also mentions this emphasis on the collection of money in the Negro cults which he studied.¹⁰ The Church of God (Black Jews), the followers of Prophet Cherry; as well as the United House of Prayer, of Daddy Grace; both spend considerable time exhorting and inducing their members to take up their blessings and give to the church. Campaigns for a new car for Daddy Grace, or a call for a collection after a highly pitched emotional orgy often provide the occasion for overwhelming Fund contests. Bugles blare and drums deafen the senses and elation rises that the local group has been the Champion Bringers Home of the Bacon for whomever is acclaimed the leader, or the God.

The W.H.A. is not exempt from such practices. Collections are made for the Saint's Fund at every worship meeting. Since meetings are held five times weekly it is not surprising that the coffers swell. Despite the suspicion of a racket, however, there has been no evidence of fraud, with the exception of one case several years ago when the national treasurer was excommunicated because of "dishonest dealings". In the tradition of the sect the

9. Myrdal, Gunnar, An American Dilemma, Harpers, 1944, Vol. II., pp. 867-868.

10. Black Gods of the Metropolis (in toto).

scandal was kept within the confines of the group, and its own sanction was enforced.

Another regulation which has a significant influence not only on the nature of the sect, but also in the outer world is the rule stating that "no man or woman who is a member, or desires to become a member of the Israel of God's Church may be indebted." Since this regulation is adhered to very closely it has a marked effect on the communities' attitude toward the sect. Through such a regulation the sect has acquired a very substantial credit for itself. A high credit rating among lower income Negroes, of course is a rarity, and since belonging to the sect does insure such a personal reputation its members are subject to considerable envy on the part of non-member Negroes.

Various business and professional men interviewed in Sycamore testify to the thoroughness and emphasis with which this regulation is enforced. They feel sure that they can depend on the sect's leaders to see to it that any obligations to them are met promptly and they have demonstrated from past experience that such be the fact.

A young doctor in the community mentioned how the Bishop drove up in his big black car to the doctor's office. Dressed in a black suit and hat, the Bishop, with

considerable formality, requested that the doctor "see to it that all his members were taken care of and in return he would see to it that the doctor would be paid promptly." The doctor declared, "The White Horse Army's as good as gold".

Bishop Jones, as minister of the local church, checks frequently at all the stores in town to see that none of his members are shirking their duty. The business men are therefore always confident of any member of the sect and frequently remark that they wished more of their white customers were as reliable.

The Apostle evidently held this rule as a matter of very strong principle. Louella Sparrow, interviewed in Wheaton, Illinois, said that when her stepfather, the Apostle, died he instructed his wife and her to sell their home to the sect immediately so that the \$500 debt which he owed the sect might be settled. The congregation and the board of the local group protested when the Apostle's women attempted to fulfill his request and were willing to cancel the debt in gratitude for the Apostle's years of service to the group. Nevertheless, the women insisted and sold their home to the sect. It still owns the property and rents it to members.

Another requirement which is enforced strictly is

that no member may marry a sinner. "Sinners", of course, are people who do not belong to the White Horse Army. Thus, the sect makes itself an exclusive, endogamous, and as has been mentioned, almost a closed corporate group. Thus, although in principle the sect claims that it resents discrimination it actually practices it. Discrimination between the "sinner" and the "Saint" is constantly practiced. In the earlier days of the organization the regulation read: "No member of the W.H.A. is allowed to marry a Gentile or a Babylonian." But with the greater emphasis throughout society against the use of a term such as "Gentile" they have abandoned it and replaced it by the more socially acceptable label "sinner". One must not suppose that this compromise on labels means an addling of theology! Unless an individual belongs to the Israel of God's Church, he is a "sinner". The "Saints of the Lord" do not associate with "sinners"--the sheep should not mingle with the goats.

This strong position regarding endogamous marriage maintained by the sect's leaders not only makes the sect highly exclusive but highly mixed-up geneologically. Families must intermarry because of the limited membership; young girls must marry middle-aged widowers for there are so few eligible or near-eligible bachelors. For example,

the young girls in the Sycamore church have approximately four possible courting mates. Two brothers just graduating from high school were granted diplomas because they had been around school too long; the two other fellows are in their twenties, have been through the War, are now attending college, and to all appearances do not intend to marry for some time; they are career men. The only other possibilities for these young girls are members of the sect in other towns. However, the only way they may meet these fellows is at one or another of the district or annual conferences. In the annual report in 1937, this reference was found relating to behavior. "The Bishop publicly reprimanded mothers for bringing boys and girls to the conference who were not under the subjection of their parents as they should be, and he spoke very harsh against boys who had the spirit of, and tried to act as men."¹¹

The militant discipline of parents makes courtship very difficult for young people, and as a result it becomes highly emotionalized and melodramatic.

The strict endogamous code creates constant conflict. The young women must either enter the competition for one of the few eligibles in their group or resort to proselyzing

11. Annual Conference Report, 1937, p. 7.

among eligible non-members. If a girl is unable to convert a man who is interested in marrying her she must either give up the man or the sect.

For men the marriage problem is more simple since there is an abundance of young eligible girls.

Having met the above requirements regarding debts, subscribing to the principle and practice of tithing and the Saint's Fund, and having conformed to the endogamous marriage regulations, an individual may be baptized and admitted to membership in the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army. As in a majority of the small sects, one must undergo a particular conversion experience before becoming officially accepted by the group. Along with the majority of other sects which have existed for any length of time this conversion experience has been considerably modified and "watered down" to the extent that it is meaningless and almost impossible to verbalize. No personal revelations or visions, no speaking in tongues, or orgiastic trances are demanded or encouraged. This reluctance to "let go" is again a reflection of the adoption of this middle-class respectability and an aversion to rowdy demonstrations.

The members do testify to a personal conviction in the doctrine of the White Horse Rider but their testimonies

are generally vague such as, "I thank the Apostle George for revealing to me the doctrine of the White Horse Rider. It is a comfort to me for I know that the doctrine of the White Horse Rider is the only true faith and that the Israel God's Church, White Horse Army is the only true church. I want to thank God for opening my heart so that I could hear the doctrine of the White Horse Rider that I might have the opportunity of believing and being saved." The testimony is given in a very slow, recitative manner such as a child would present a Christmas verse. Nevertheless one can detect a feeling of deep sincerity and meaning which is often undiscernible in more sophisticated declarations such as Clare Booth Luce published in a woman's magazine entitled, "Why I Joined the Catholic Church".

"Now these afore-mentioned signs, point to our world and
its end
It is all because of unrighteousness, which God calls sin;
This evil, back in the days of Adam did begin
And God keeps telling man, by this method you cannot win.

Christ said pray for your friend, and pray for your foe
This includes those whom you love, and also Bilbo:
It may seem to you, that you are pushed to and fro
But one thing is certain, you don't have to reap if you
do not sow.

Let us remember Christ, while on the cross
Looked back and said, all is finished, there is nothing
lost;
But to his component on the cross he said, this does not
seem so nice,
But I will meet you today in paradise."

-From a Sermon
"The Signs of Our Times"
By Bishop W. M. Jones
Delivered at Annual
Conference, 1947

"MASSES" 'N "MEETIN'S"

Religious Meetings.

The religious meetings of the sect are held frequently and follow a consistent pattern. As in the Episcopal churches specific meeting places and times for these meetings are prescribed and followed throughout the areas where the sect has congregations. It is prescribed that there shall be three services on Sundays, "Morning Mass"; afternoon Christian Endeavor and Sunday School meetings; and evening prayer services. The first service is at 10:30; the second meeting is at 2:30 or 3:00; and the evening service is at 7:00. During the week between Christmas and New Years Morning Mass is conducted daily from 6 a.m. through 7 a.m. Special services are also held on the "Feast Day of January 16" commemorating the principal vision of the Apostle when he was commissioned to establish the Israel of God's sect.

All of the services follow the same general pattern except that during the "Morning Mass" on Sunday more formal attire is worn by the Bishop and he, or any other minister conducting the service, remains up on the platform, uses the speakers' stand, and sits in the large leather chair rather than leading the service from the floor of the meeting hall.

At least fifteen or twenty minutes prior to any meeting held at the church, a majority of the members begin to gather. The men remain outside in good weather visiting with one another and exchanging pleasantries with the Bishop or minister. The women, on the other hand, always go directly into the church finding their regular places in the plain, unpadded, theater seats. The entire interior of the sect's meeting halls is very unpretentious. A stranger first entering these buildings probably wouldn't identify it as a "church". There are none of the symbols, paintings, inscriptions, or architectural devices which characterize most religious interiors. A single, black banner with gold embroidered letters proclaiming that the Apostle George Flowers is the Visible Founder of the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army is displayed to identify the group. Even the omnipresent Christian Cross is usually absent in this sect's meeting halls.

Promptly at the appointed hour the men file into the "church" taking seats in the very front rows at one side of the auditorium. Only the young men join their wives; the older men sit together in the front where they can whip up enthusiasm among themselves and the rest of the congregation.

The Sunday morning Mass begins with a song appropriate

for the day. The "choir", a group of the younger members of the congregation seated together in the front and at the side opposite the men, lead out with the song as directed by the minister. Since the sect has borrowed only a few of the most familiar Protestant hymns in addition to the dozen or so songs composed by the sect's official hymn writer, the hymns are always familiar to everyone in the audience. They join the choir in the singing, harmonizing enthusiastically and swaying back and forth to the syncopated rhythm of the song.

Following the vigorous rendition of the opening hymn, the Bishop or minister announces the Scripture reading for the morning. Having brought Bibles with them, all turn to the appointed text and follow the minister in the reading. After a few verses have been read the minister offers a prayer in which he thanks the Apostle for showing him and his followers the way to salvation. This prayer ended the choir almost simultaneously bursts into another hymn. Again the congregation joins in while one verse and two refrains are sung. The reading is continued and after the first chapter is completed another verse and refrain are sung. This pattern of reading from the Bible, prayers offered first by the minister and then by each of the men seated in the front row, with excerpts of the familiar hymn

interspersed continues until three or four successive chapters from the Scriptures have been read. The prayers offered by the lay men are often in the forms of personal or group testimonials, sometimes related to the morning's Bible reading and sometimes not. These testimonials are usually prayers of thanksgiving. God and the Apostle George are thanked for the salvation, comfort, health, prosperity, and understanding which they have provided for the sect's believers to enjoy. These prayers, although always extemporaneous, are filled with familiar cliches and phrases. The individual offering the prayer kneels by his seat and intones in a loud, audible voice, "We thank Thee, heavenly Father that Thou hast sent us the Apostle George, the White Horse Rider, that we might be saved.-----"

Although apparently there is no established order in which the minister chooses to direct the individual men to offer the prayer, each of them is ready and unhesitantly fulfills his duty.

At the conclusion of the reading-prayer-song period the minister launches into a rapid-fire sermon seldom, if ever, related to the reading of the day. The sermon is delivered completely without notes and takes on an appearance of unpremeditated content and organization. What and how the sermon is delivered apparently depends on the

minister's own verbosity at the time, as well as the attitude or mood of the minister and the congregation. The theme grows "like Topsy", becoming more fervent, arduous, and lusty, full of climax and anti-climax-first authoritative, then pleading; conciliatory, then denunciatory. The preacher sings his sermon like a Vacheal Lindsay poem, full of emphatic, repetitive, rhythm; harsh enunciation and foreboding, sonorous prophecy. There is constant interplay between the preacher and audience. One is reminded of a boxing match or a burlesque act where the performer is urged on by the reverberating cries of agreement, enthusiasm, and satisfaction of the emotionally drunken spectator. Certainly these rhythmic, primitive, high-pitched exhibitions provide the emotionally and socially repressed sect members with an effective catharsis; a reward breeding a drive to return again and again for renewed satisfaction.

Occasionally the minister is inspired to "open rebuke" of individual members of the group, thus clenching his sermon theme more dramatically than any abstract comparison or reference to "outsiders'" behavior. In the Sycamore congregation the Bishop has rebuked upon occasion; a high school girl for putting homework before Wednesday night meeting; a woman member for smoking; school youngsters who

were seen acting boisterously on the street or not dressing in the conservative fashion demanded by the sect; adult members for propagating friendships or seemingly to associate with "outsiders"; and members who have been seen attending other churches when services are being conducted in the Israel of God's.

In addition to this individual disciplining before the group, the ministers also spend considerable time relating current community problems, such as voting, carnivals or money-making public affairs, or public scandals; to the doctrine of the Apostle George. Although an actual count was not made, a considerable proportion of the sermons observed was devoted to the racial discrimination issue. References were made to intermarriage; to Negro statesmen such as Ralph Bunche refusing to live in Washington because of the Jim Crow folkways; to the financial or social prestige which various members of the Race have achieved. The observer cannot help but feel the crescendo of enthusiasm and unanimous unity when these latter references are made by the minister or the Bishop. (The "Amens", and the "Yes, Indeeds!" significantly are intoned with greater enthusiasm and conviction when the Negro vs. the White is openly condemned than to most other controversial subjects referred to by the sect's leaders.)

Immediately following the sermon and the chanting of the Lord's Prayer, the Saint's Fund and Tithes collection is made. This task is executed with considerable alacrity and informality. The ushers are prepared to make change and they often go about talking and joking with members to "throw in another dime", etc. Time is taken out for the local secretary and treasurer to count the total offering and the sum is announced with due pride and regard.

The Doxology, an almost unrecognizable adaption to a slow, drawling, chanting melody similar to the previous prayer, marks the close of the service. Just before leaving the meeting place the elder of the local congregation steps before the group, and with the congregation raises his right hand, and the benediction is said in unison. The members retire immediately to their homes to eat and prepare for their return in the afternoon or evening.

The repeated services, of course, tend to exclusivize the sect all the more since attending services is compulsory. The members are prohibited from participating in any other social activities. Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays are occupied in attending services; few of the members have much remaining free time to meet others and engage in outside sociability. Consequently, they become even further

set apart and looked upon as "different and morally strict". Since they are prohibited from entering taverns and attending dances they assume an exaggerated position apart from the stereotyped low-class Negro in the eyes of both other Negroes and Whites as well.

ONE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

A Social-Psychological Study.

An individual case serves to illustrate the impact of the White Horse Army and its doctrine upon its members. A high school girl, a junior, known to the author, may serve to bring out more intimate aspects of this sectarian way of life.

Louise may not be regarded as "typical" since first, she is the daughter of one of the leading lay members of the sect and thus subject to more stress and pressure of the sect's way of life than a majority of the sect members; and secondly, her family might be termed a marginal group in that they maintain much wider associations with the white people in the community, both socially and occupationally. Louise's father is a leader in the Negro community and is looked upon by the whites in town as is Bishop Jones. He has a reputation for being one of the leaders among his own group and is frequently called upon by whites to serve as spokesman or influencer of public opinion among the Negroes. He is not, however, what Myrdal calls a "white-man's nigger",¹ one who submits to excessive subservience and takes orders and carries them out even

1. Myrdal, Gunnar, An American Dilemma, Vol. I, Harper and Bros., New York, p. 682.

against the interests of his own caste. On the contrary both he and the bishop serve as contact men in a very restrictive sense, holding themselves aloof from both white and Negro, continually conscious of their exemplary (rather than prophetic) role. They represent a personification of the sect's ideal intent on not only being recognized but respected by both groups.

Louise is the sixth child of a family of eleven. Her father is a national officer of the Israel of God's Church, White Horse Army, and holds several odd jobs in the white community. He might be considered a "jack of all trades" and seems to be quite successful in earning a livelihood for his family. He owns his own home, a large frame house on North Street in Sycamore, the main thoroughfare in the small Negro district across the track from the rest of the town. He is enlarging his home, installing a bathroom, drives a Packard car, and has helped to send all but one of his children through high school and college. One of his daughters is a laboratory technician, another is a linotype operator, a son is an accomplished musician, another an architectural engineer, and a third son is studying law at Lincoln University in Philadelphia. Louise is planning to enter nurse's training at Rockford hospital upon graduation from high school.

Tall, graceful, and extremely handsome, Louise is on the "B" honor roll, an officer of the Junior class, and well-liked by students and teachers. One teacher did remark that Louise was one of the less brilliant and trustworthy in comparison to her elder siblings, and that she had upon occasion resorted to very involved tales in an effort to get herself out of scrapes with the teacher. The author found her of great assistance in extra-curricular activities, and a fairly conscientious pupil. Her principle fault was the inability to organize her work; she was often too intent on helping her classmates and in visiting with them to be an outstanding student.

Louise's fine spirit and cooperation was brilliantly demonstrated in her work in the school library. She was the librarian's main helper, going about collecting books and fines from non-resenting students and staying after school to straighten the magazines and book shelves.

Students had great respect for her and would have been less inclined to subject her to their stereotype or prejudice than any of the Negroes in school. She was chosen to present the choir director with the customary roses at the annual spring concert, and she did so graciously and composedly.

A crisis arose during the first part of the school

term which threatened to destroy considerable respect and prestige for her had the student body held less sincere faith in her. Louise's younger sister, a sophomore, and retarded pupil, began to create disturbance about school, in the study hall, on the recreation field. The girl was found guilty on several occasions of stealing money and other articles from shower room and hall lockers. She would deliberately fabricate elaborate subterfuges, but never seemed clever enough to be able to clear herself of the charges. The principal was finally forced to call the girl's father to school, and after several of such incidents the girl was removed from school and taken to the Girl's Reformatory. It was rumored that this drastic action was taken at the insistence of the Bishop who is always alert to any scandal which might involve the sect in any derogatory situation. Such an incident of course was highly publicized throughout the school, and must have caused Louise great mental torture and humiliation. Nevertheless, Louise seemed to maintain her remarkable composure, and probably this very mature reaction had a marked influence on the action of the student body toward her.

Overtly, Louise always remained aloof from such emotionally charged events. It was very seldom that she would verbalize any dissatisfaction or anxieties to the

author while he was in the community. Even during interviews Louise would insist quite emphatically that no sense of "difference" bothered her. It was not until later, when the author left town, that she began to open herself to him in her correspondence, and he began to realize that her outward composure was a consciously developed protective mechanism. She would write to him frequently and her letters evidently served as a mild catharsis, and they were filled with comments about the insidious gossips on North Avenue, boredom and lassitude toward the whole summer vacation, and an unexpressed but implied desire to be either somewhere or someone else.

Louise had evidently been trained not to look for race prejudice as a way of explaining away personal problems. Hence when she was questioned regarding her own experience with race prejudice, she naively expressed the opinion that she didn't think there was any in Sycamore. At the same time she admitted that only one of the girls at school had invited her to join her socially: Sandra had taken her on a trip to Champagne, and she had felt a little strange when they went to a restaurant. The restaurant experience was unique since the family didn't go to restaurants either at home or on trips; the discrimination at the theater didn't bother her because she was never permitted to attend;

she just didn't go to the swimming pool, so how was she to know whether Negroes were welcome?

To everyone it was noticeable that Louise preferred white company to the Negro school population. It was true that the number of Negro boys in her school was very limited--there were only three in the high school besides her brother, but there were several Negro girls of her own age group, and one of these was as outstanding scholastically as she. Louise would never identify herself with any of these people despite the fact that most of them were her proximate neighbors. On the other hand, while school was in session during the day, Louise would always be with one or another white female companion. When the school day was over Louise would remain later to work in the library, loitering as long as possible, obviously not anxious to reenter her family role. No doubt that is why she was very sad at the closing of school and expressed a desire for school to continue all year. Her association with whites closed with school and at best was on a temporary basis.

Louise was not shy about her crush on the only single male teacher. All the school students knew of it and teased her, but she seemed even to enjoy it. Mention was made of it in the school newspaper and annual. For the

teacher the situation became embarrassing. Louise would each afternoon wait to walk home with him; she called him frequently at his home, much to the annoyance of his family; when he was forced by illness to miss school he was deluged with expensive get-well cards and notes, and the family was frequently called with inquiries about his recuperation.

It was this unusual and very conscious behavior on the part of Louise which first attracted the author's curiosity. Although teen-age crushes on young high school teachers are common, Louise's open interest in the gentleman was considered by white society as exceedingly brazen, or naive and she pursued her aim with obvious intent and deliberateness. Louise longed for social relations with whites, especially white men, and was denied such an opportunity by the prejudice and mores of the very group she was striving to be identified with. Contrary to a majority of the other Negroes in the community who were satisfied with their social situation if not their economic, and political, Louise wanted white friends. The Negroes in the neighborhood disgusted her; she considered them vulgar, insidious, and except for the members of her own sect she felt that a majority of the Negroes were immoral. It was the value system, as she interpreted it, of the

Negroes who resided in her town which she resented the most. Whites held prestige for her; their values she appreciated, except for her skin she was a white girl.

During interviews with her, an attempt was made to learn or at least receive some verbalization regarding her social situation. She was asked what her opinion and feelings were regarding her not attending the Junior prom when everyone of her school friends were talking of nothing else. She replied, "I don't get too upset about it. I know it's an impossibility."

Her replies to other questions directed toward her social nonentity illicited the same sort of response. To her interviewer at least, in whom she had considerable confidence, she refused to explicitly admit her dissatisfaction and frustration.

Louise insisted that she found comfort, and a definite place for herself in the sect to which she belonged. In a written statement to the author she stated, "I haven't found a better solution for the difficulties and problems of today than the sort of teaching I get at the church. The other alternatives which I have heard have looked good to me, but I have found that they weren't based on a strong enough foundation. The ministers of today don't seem to practice what they preach. For instance, the observation

I have with the Catholic priest of our town. I have seen him a number of times coming from the tap room of the local hotel, being elevated too highly for being a Catholic priest. In the large cities is where you will find leaders in the religious field not living up to their standards. They will do everything on Saturday night that the devil will give license to, and then on Sunday their shoe just about fits the foot of Jesus Christ. I can honestly say that that sort of participation is not carried on in the church to which I belong. Anyone else will tell you the same thing.

"Ever since I was a child I was taught that the Israel of God's Church was the only church that was right. It didn't seem queer to me because I wasn't acquainted with any other religion but my own. I wasn't ashamed of it either. When I became about the age of ten years I began to realize that the name and doctrine of the church seemed quite odd. Many children my age had never even heard of it, therefore they were tempted to make fun of it. Of course my mother always told me to ignore the fun-making, but for me that was pretty hard to do.

"Right at the present time I don't care too much for the spiritual side of it. I really haven't stopped long enough to form any opinion about it. A lot of it I don't

understand, and therefore it doesn't appeal to me. I wasn't born very spiritual minded anyway. As for the rest of the members of my family, there have been three of my oldest brothers break off from the church. From all indications, the rest of my sisters would if they were boys. However, my brother that goes to Lincoln University likes the church, and he seems to be getting along better than any of them. I'm not saying that that is true in all cases."

Her closing observations are even more illuminating, "The attitude of the people on the outside is very critical. They say that the members of our church think they are better than anyone else. Our next door neighbor doesn't even speak to us unless we speak first. Every time we do something to better our living conditions they gossip about it and wonder where we get the money because dad doesn't work as hard or as often as they do. I have even had a woman come to me and say that she heard that my father fell heir to some lots in Michigan and we were going to move this summer. My father does own some lots in Michigan but how they ever found out, I don't know. My dad works in the bank and we were accused of stealing money from it to buy our car. Now that is the conditions we have to live under on North Avenue. Thank God we are used to it."

In a letter Louise wrote during the summer she said, "Before we left to go to Philadelphia, it was rumored that we were going to move. The day before we left a couple came to our house and asked to buy it. Where they ever got the idea, I don't know. When we returned home, we were snubbed and quizzed as usual. If I weren't used to it, I wouldn't pay 10¢ to live on North Avenue. We have quite a time trying to live peaceably and quiet. When my sister was home during our high school days, she and I, to the neighborhood's estimation were expecting for two years. Since my sister is gone I'm carrying all of the load."

It is apparent from the above comments that although Louise has accepted the tenets of the White Horse Army, she is nevertheless consciously aware of the inhibitory aspects of the faith and the uncomfortable position in which she is placed by belonging to it. It is evident that her aloofness, which is quite characteristic of the entire family is resented not only by non-members but also by members of the sect. More concerning this latter aspect will be presented later.

When Louise was questioned concerning her attitude toward the church she expressed strong approval of its fight against racial prejudice. This tenet seemed to her

the most conspicuous and important phase of her faith. Such an attitude is understandable to the author upon successive visits to the sect's services. He observed that at every service considerable time was spent in the sermon and in the individual testimonies to the subject of racial inequality. In every case the doctrine of the White Horse Army was lauded as the only solution for the racial dilemma. Repeated references were made to the "oneness of mankind", to the undesirability of racial persecution, and to the aim and goal of the Apostle George's program where a heaven on earth might be realized where "races" did not exist, but man mingles with man in "unconscious" rather than "self-conscious" brotherhood.

Parallels to the inequality shown the colored people were portrayed by reference to the censorship of Moses by the Israelites when he married a "foreign" woman and to, the story of Christ at the well receiving water from a woman not of the Hebrew faith and thus being criticized by the disciples. Is it surprising that Louise, long-nurtured in this bi-racial doctrine should attach prestige to inter-racial association and express a desire to inter-marry?

It is conceivable that she would have very willingly risked considerable censorship in order to have more personal relations with the teacher on whom she had a

"crush", if at any time he had indicated anything more than mild positive concern toward her. It is also conceivable why Louise never appeared to realize or be embarrassed about the alarm she was creating in the mind of the shy, and very conventional, and unwilling suitor. Only on one or two occasions did she seem to be aware of any negative attitude in regard to the relationship which she was trying to foster. Manifestations of such an awareness were indicated when she felt rebuffed by some very insignificant and unintentional act by the young man toward her. On these occasions Louise was obviously hurt and would continue in a state of visible depression for several days.

This case study has been drawn out and elaborated upon with deliberate intent to demonstrate through the wishful fantasies of this teen-age girl, the dilemma which is created in the attitudes and values of an individual indoctrinated with the aggressive, idealistic, equalitarian, religious discipline of the sect juxtaposed as it is against an equally strict, inhibitory caste structure.

In summary we can arrive at the following generalizations regarding this individual member:

Louise is a member of a high status family in the small Negro community. This status is based upon (1) family property and father's income; (2) the family's high educational training record; (3) prestige from "out of state" contacts and operations (lots in Michigan "role of absentee owner").

It is evident that this status position is somewhat ambivalent since: (a) "they would talk to us only when addressed"; hence it appears that a fairly rigid social distance is established between the high and low status Negroes. This social distance represents a maximizing and an exaggerating of the cultural elements of the white culture (snobbism). This snobbery in turn is countered by gossip and rumor which bespeaks resentment on the part of the low status Negroes toward Louise and her family. This resentment in turn is likely to cause increased tension resulting in more snobbish behavior on the part of the family thus over compensating for this anxiety and breeding a striving for "perfectionism".--In this way Louise and those of her status attempt to never lay themselves open for criticism from those who resent her.

For the school girl there is additional liability: (1) the high school society with its segmental environment allows for equality of pupils in their roles as pupils and

hence offers great premium to socially ambitious Negro girls such as Louise. She is provided with a vehicle for identifying herself with whites. She feels that she is justified by the democratic ideology and Christian legacy which proclaims her right and share in the promise of equality of human creatures in the eye of God, as well as the inherent equal worth of citizenship, regardless of creed, race or color.

(2) In addition the purely personal factor: "beauty" and "glamour personality" in white school society as indicated by the honorific functions at school ceremonies functions as a further frustrating factor for the young Negro girl and others like her. These honorific roles accorded Louise are purely "representative" and inconsequential for enduring and organized relations between white and Negro groups. Nevertheless, for an individual imbued with the unrealistic idealism of her sect, such situations must serve to reinforce her status ambitions and provide her with illusory notions about "openness" of white society to ascending Negroes. In the case of Louise, her honorific distinctions are not based on the avenues open to glamour personalities, nor on the basis of glamour achievement: dance, song, (in the case of Negro men: boxing, track, or football). Instead these distinctions apparently

are made on the basis of "social accomplishments": like helpfulness and concomitant popularity among fellow students who may exploit her help; or upon personal charm. As these assets proved successful, it is natural that Louise felt encouraged to believe that "femininity" and general personal attractiveness were enough to continue her status advance. The next step is obvious: by striving for the next role which her maturation and our culture generally suggests, she would become intent on winning a husband; in her case, a white husband. It is evident that this religiously underpinned goal of status aspiration manifested in the actions of this glamorous high school girl is aggravating and might well be the basis for subsequent anxieties, active manifestations of insecurity, and emotional and social conflict and breakdown.

The White Horse Army doctrine with its emphatic program for racial equality, alongside its aloof, withdrawal policy (Type II of our paradigm) has not provided its members with the opportunity for gradual constructive experience in egalitarian mature, white-Negro relationships. The sect is verbalizing an idealistic social program in which it is not overtly and realistically training its members. Thus its program ceases to be revolutionary and becomes "Utopian" and contradictory. Overtures to the whites for

racial cooperation and inter-group activity have not been forthcoming. Racial equality is being preached but not experimented. The sect's members, like Louise, are prompted and aggravated into social situations for which they are totally inadequate. They are unable to conceive or construct a relativistic "expectant response". The pre-conceived covert situation evaporates in the face of the actual overt social situation. The expectant social role and the actual social role of the other party and the sect member when brought face to face are out of tune. Like the German Youth in the late 1800's, these Riders of the White Horse have been trained and indoctrinated in a value structure which does not exist; maladjustment, frustration, flight, or revolution can be the only consequence.¹

1. Becker, Howard, German Youth Bond Or Free, New York, Oxford, 1946.

PART II

CONCLUSIONS

The descriptive historical study of the Negro religious sect has been presented as a means of assisting the reader in reaching an empathetic understanding of the group. An attempt has been made to fulfill the first requirement in Weber's theory of understanding; namely, a "feeling into" the total context of the structure being studied.

In Part II it will be my purpose to complete my task by examining the sect in terms of methodological ends, or means-end relationships. The general hypothesis which will be presented is as follows: the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army serves as a status conferring agency to its members, existing as they do, in, but not of, a predominantly white competitive society.

In reviewing the social position of the sect's members it has been observed that these members are drawn largely from the lower economic class. Very few of the members are independent workers, instead they are largely unskilled and semi-skilled factory laborers.

Housing for the group is confined to marginal and sub-marginal areas and socially the members are almost non-entities to the whites in their own community.¹ In school,

1. See Powdermaker, Hortense, After Freedom, Viking Press, 1939, p. 13, for description of typical Northern Negro settlement.

the community service and social clubs, in the commercial clubs, the churches, and the veterans groups, the Negroes of this lower economic class are excluded. None of the sect members in the specific local community of Sycamore had even attempted to join any such community organization although a majority of them were known personally throughout town.

No Negroes whether sect members or not were holding any public office in the communities which the writer visited. No qualified Negro teacher applied for a position in the community schools even though vacancies did exist and qualified Negro teachers resided in the town.

Prejudice and discrimination was practiced in the small as well as the large Northern cities, areas often considered "good places for the Negroes". Tolerance does exist; the kind of tolerance which is expressed in the spirit of "we agree that they're human and should have a place in America---BUT---who'd ever want to live next door to one."

It is important to reiterate that throughout the paper emphasis has been placed on the class distinctions as well as the larger caste stratification or color line barriers of the Negroes being studied. The distinction between class and caste, or status group, is important.

(1) Class stratification refers to the non-rigid status group from which an individual member can rise or fall.² Class stratification includes a "sense of interest solidarity" (Marx); and "the largest group of people whose members have "intimate social access" to one another classification of Warner in addition to the differentials of income, occupation, home ownership, education and wealth. Classes and class differences in America are thus conceived of as the result of restriction of free competition, thus lack of full social integration.

(2) Caste as distinguished from class, consists of such drastic restrictions of free competition in the various spheres of life that the individual in a lower caste cannot, by any means, change his status, except by secret and illegitimate "passing". This is largely impossible for only a few have the physical appearance of members of the upper caste. Within each caste, people also feel social distance and restricted free competition, so that each caste has its own class system. The dividing line between two castes is by definition clear-cut, consciously felt by every member of each caste, and easily observable. No arbitrariness is involved in drawing it.

2. Weber defines a class as any group of persons having the same class status. Classes may be grouped according to the various foci of class status, e.g., property, acquisition of the market, or social differentiation and deference.

The class lines, on the other hand, are blurred and flexible. The very fact that individuals move and marry between the classes, that they have legitimate relatives in other classes and that competition is not nearly so restricted in any sphere, blurs any division lines that are set. Lines dividing the classes are not defined in law or even in custom, as caste lines are.

Class lines are usually drawn in a three-fold manner: "upper class", "middle class", and "lower class". Of course, sub-divisions can be made such as "upper-middle class", etc. The Negro regardless of education, home ownership, occupation, wealth, or family background is subject to status or caste discrimination, while the criteria of class is utilized by the Negroes within their own status group to differentiate between one another within their total group.

Very little class distinction is extended by the whites in reference to the Negro. Such loose labels as "high class nigger", "high yaller", etc., but, the more accustomed differentials are maintained by the whites for their own groups and little respect is extended to the Negro regardless his real class status. This practice is just another technique utilized by the whites as a prestige-holding group to demonstrate their refusal to distinguish

between a Negro as an individual and Negroes as a "racial group". The caste line--or as it is more popularly known, the color line is not only an expression of caste differences and caste conflicts, but it has come to be a catalyst to widen differences. To maintain the color line has, to the ordinary white man the function of upholding the caste system itself, or keeping the Negro in his place.³

The Negro, from his side is even more aware of the color line than is the white man. The Negro usually has more contact with whites than the whites have with Negroes; the contact usually means more to the Negro; further: the Negro talks and thinks more about his caste position than the white man, especially in the North, and thus has many more caste experiences in his imagination. For example, as has been mentioned previously, in every sermon listened to by the writer the issue of racial inequality was referred to in a derogatory fashion at least three or four times, and, in fact, several times it served as the core of the message preached by either the Bishop, or some other preacher. Since the color line restricts the Negro without providing him with any compensating advantages, he feels it not only surrounding him but holding him back.⁴

3. Wirth, Louis, "Segregation", Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. XIII, pp. 643-ff.
4. Frazier, E. F., The Negro In the United States, Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1949, pp. 673-674. See also the discussion

It must of course be added, however, that the Negro "caste" system is losing many of the features of an orthodox caste structure. As Frazier points out "the variations and contradictions in the patterns of segregation are so great as to preclude the logic underlying a caste system. The taboos and restrictions placed upon the relations of the races and etiquette observed vary not only according to areas and classes but according to the education and economic power of Negroes. Moreover, the so-called caste restrictions are more effective in the rural areas and small towns than in the cities where there is greater enlightenment and mobility." What is more indicative of the breakdown of the caste system, however, is the realization on the part of the Negroes themselves that a discrepancy does exist between the American Creed and their treatment by the Whites, with the ambition to abolish these caste or color restrictions in the not too dim future.

Since the Israel of God's Sect is preaching a doctrine of "race freedom" we can generalize that this institution is serving an evolutionary or revolutionary function, attempting as it is, to hurry up the process of this caste disintegration.

4. (Cont'd) of Warners discussion of caste as criticized by Frazier as footnoted p. 273.

In addition it must be seen that in response to the white solidarity and caste barrier with its accompanying insults and disparities, the Negro frequently creates the "protective community"; the Israel of God's Church also serves to provide its members with such a sense of security.

Protection, however, is not the only goal of the sect for the sect not only makes itself exclusive and apart from the world as a monastic asceticism, but, also as just noted, it entertains highly complex and aggressive dreams regarding a future "heaven on earth" where joy, health, prosperity, and equality will be guaranteed. It is important for the reader to realize the distinction of function: seeking of security and the status striving. One is introvert, the other extrovert; one is projected outward, from the group, the other inward, toward the group.

It is interesting to notice that this two-fold purpose simulates the two-fold historical development of Negro religions throughout America. Large groups of Negroes after having accepted the basic tenets of European Christianity (almost exclusively the Protestant form) broke away from the established white churches to form churches of their own. The initial reason for the split was the reluctance of the whites to accept Negroes in the established

churches on a plane of equality. The Negroes desired to worship in churches where they could feel free to express themselves in the manner and with spontaneous abandonment and need for release which they desired. By the time of the Emancipation numerous denominations had been created, among them and they continued to grow after the Civil War.

The second phase was co-existent with the doctrinal splitting up of these denominations where there was a tendency to form groups which showed pronounced "nationalistic" characteristics. These tended to emphasize the racial qualities of the communicants, sometimes with the almost complete exclusion of any preoccupation with the Deity, Christ, or the Trinity.⁵

The sect being studied has demonstrated precisely such characteristics. Riders of the White Horse segregate themselves for protection and in the meantime wage an aggressive nationalistic campaign to improve themselves by themselves (and the help of God) that they may rise to a position of pre-eminence. Beyond this striving for status their ethnocentric illusions become almost megalomaniac--they share visions of being the "top gods" and

5. See Fauset, Black Gods of the Metropolis, re: "Black Jews". Also, Frazier, E. F., op. cit. pp. 334-366.

frequent reference is made to the day when the white man vs. Negro roles will be reversed.

In an effort to make their doctrine more tolerable to the Christian principle of "brotherliness" it has been pointed out that the leaders claim a Universalism of Unity-where all-regardless of race or color- shall share in the New Heaven. Their only pre-requisite would be a belief in the True Doctrine of the Apostle George. Of course, it is understandingly obvious that the leaders are interested in their own kind first. Negroes cannot help but have Negro loyalties anymore than Americans can help but have American loyalties if socialized in such environment.⁶

As has been stated, then, the sect under investigation serves primarily a two-fold purpose: as a protective community and as a means for status-striving.

6. As Ira Reid points out: "There are indications that a new church is arising among the Negroes, a militant church, one that is concerning itself with the problems of the masses. Its leaders organize and take part in aggressive social movements for the public and the race's welfare. Led in a few urban and rural centers, by outstanding men who are trained and practiced in religious thought as well as in economics, this church is vital. Yet it cannot be said that today even this church is an influential factor in the lives of the whole Negro working population."

Fauset in his Black Gods of A Metropolis discusses the aggressive nationalistic spirit of the "Church of God" and the "Moorish Science Temple"; both which make explicit aggressive appeals of a nationalistic nature.

The methods exploited toward the first end are similar to those being utilized by the Kingdom of Father Divine. As Cantril points out in his analysis of the Father Divine cult, "The world that Reverend Divine has created, the world in which he is God, the world in which his commands are obeyed, is essentially a microcosm within a larger world organization. It has its own standards and norms."⁷

This creating of a microcosm within a larger world organization, as discussed by Cantril, is quite the same device used by the leaders of the sect under discussion. The sect espouses withdrawal of the members from the world, in a social sense, demanding that the members hold themselves aloof from all "sinners". Since "sinners" is a label which can be attached to any individual or group outside their own sect, this withdrawal practice in reality makes social snobs out of all the sect's members. Out-group individuals referred to this exclusiveness and "un-neighborliness" most frequently when interviewed by the author. Several Negro women in Sycamore pointed disdainfully to the sect's members as "folks who go around thinking they're better than everybody else". As is true of any sect which supports this type of "superiority" attitude regarding

7. Cantril, Hadley, The Psychology of Social Movements, Wiley & Sons, 1941, pp. 129, ff.

outsiders--a reciprocal attitude of dislike and resentment is often entertained by the outsiders toward the sect and often serves as a hindering factor to the extension of the sect.

This illusion of microcosm is further stimulated by the frequent meetings (attendance at which is obligatory) and where the members are kept overtly together by the simple words of the songs, the simple melodies of their particular variety of spirituals, and above all, by the simple rhythms which instill the behavioral accompaniments of clapping and swaying. Following such "singspirations" the Bishop, or other "preacher" will frequently exhort the congregation to remain apart from the world--"live in the world but be not a part of it"--warning them that eyes are always upon them eager for criticism.

The attitude of the sect toward self-segregation is typified by testimonial made by one of the members, a Mattie Winfrey. She declared: "We as White Horse Riders cannot associate with the people of the world and continue to be true White Horse Riders. Segregation is very essential in our lives. If we run hand and hand with the world we are not any better than they are. We should be a sample and example for the boys and girls in the world. If we are always with the people of the world we are either doing the

things that they are doing or they are coming our way. It depends upon who has the greatest influence.

"We are known by the associates we choose. If we are always seen with those on the outside, if we are weak we will be going the way they are. As the saying is "Two cannot walk together except they agree". The world thinks they have drawing cards for us, such as dancing, playing cards, and numerous other things, but we should not think of such things. We cannot do the things that the other men and women in the world do and get away with it; because they do not know the truth and we do. If we do everything that they, the people in the world do, they will say, 'they belong to the White Horse Army church and they do everything that we do. They are no better than we are'--which is all very true. It seems hard to separate yourself from the world, but it will be to your own benefit."

The White Horse Riders, again like the Father Divine cult and the lesser-known Daddy Grace United House of Prayer, concentrate implicit faith and thought around the personality of their leader. This polarization around the concrete symbol of the Apostle George is demonstrated most concretely in the weekly testimonials where repeatedly thanks is extended to the Apostle. Bishop Jones receives repeated praise and thanks also, but the original leader definitely would be termed the "polarization symbol".

The particular services which the sect provides for its members through the Saint's Fund and relief, of course also serves as a protectionist function of the sect. Members, who might have to depend on public relief, or would have to subject themselves to the racketeers in the embalming profession, are protected from such humiliation or financial loss by their own sect's services.

The help which the sect provides its members in housing for themselves and their families of course too is an effort to save the exploited caste from the exorbitant rents as well as the restrictive covenants which prevent Negroes from buying homes in desirable locations.

We can see that the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army serves the function of a protectionist "way of life" through: (1) Social withdrawal from the world of sinners operating as a protective mechanism to minimize the socio-psychological chasm which exists between the Negro and normal white social activity. In a sense the practice follows the reasoning: "if you don't know about it you won't miss it". This withdrawal from social relations with other Negroes not belonging to the sect as well as from whites alleviates the burden of sense of inferiority as well as the potential threat of insult. (2) Protection from material hardship--in a sense a search for economic

security. The Saint's Fund which provides burial for the members of the sect, as well as the various relief services which the local congregations provide its members with a sense of security as well as a protection from either White or Negro exploitation. The plan for home ownership also takes another problem out of the hands of the installment-buying rackets where as much as 36% annual interest can be demanded. The sect, as noted, does not charge interest, and when it rents houses to its members very nominal fees are demanded. (3) The Bishop and other leaders serve as Father images, both psychological and materially helping and advising, reprimanding where necessary, and acting as intermediaries and cushioners against the "white man boss". (4) And finally the sect provides a sense of solidarity against aggressive and discriminating out-groups.

As was indicated earlier in the paper, the religious sect also serves the function of providing the Negro members with status-striving media in their highly competitive class situation as an attempt to break down the almost insurmountable caste lines. The sect, made up of members who feel a strong urge to raise themselves out of their static position of subservience, is embarked

on a vigorous program of self-betterment. By raising their standards economically, morally, and educationally, it is believed that they may win back the favor of a revengeful God who has banished his Children of Israel to these years of slavery and subservience because of their own despicable behaviour. Hence: a strict, regulative life embracing rules of health (abstinence from pork and other unclean meat) as well as emphasis on cleanliness of home and person; thrift; striving for high scholarship as well as extensive education especially in professional fields such as teaching, nursing, engineering, and other white-collar jobs where training is available. Morally, the members are restricted. They have strict regulations on marriage, divorce, dancing, drinking, gambling, or excessive behavior of any sort. The economic aspect of such behavior is also taken into consideration regarding the over-indulgence in any of these forms of participation would not only be "bad" but expensive!

And what is the end of all of this? Mere fondness for regimentation and authoritarian disciplining? Gunnar Myrdal in his discussion of the Negro class structure has attempted to define the class ideals or aspirations of the three-fold classification. It is significant that he mentions "In the upper levels of the lower class, there

are many persons who have definite ambitions to better their own, or at least their children's status. These people will take care not to let their insurance lapse; they will have more permanent affiliation with churches and lodges; they will try to keep their children in school."⁸

To what value structure does this sect aspire? If it desires to better the status of its members, or at least its members' children, from what group does it borrow means to achieve its ends? Here again parallels can be drawn from Myrdal's construct.

In describing the upper class Negroes, he says, "Often family background is stressed in this class. The family is organized upon the paternalistic principle; legal marriage is an accepted form, and illegitimacy and desertion are not condoned. Children are shielded as far as possible both from influences of the lower class Negroes and from humiliating experiences of the caste system. They are ordinarily given a higher education and assisted to acquire professional training. As Negroes are commonly

8. Myrdal, Gunnar; An American Dilemma, Vol. II, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1944, p. 702. Also: Drake, St. Clair, and Cayton, Horace; Black Metropolis, Harcourt Bruce, 1945, pp. 526-563, for another discussion of the upper-middle and lower class value system among Northern urban Negroes.

believed to be loud, ignorant, dirty, boisterous, and lax in sexual and all other morals, good manners and respectability become nearly an obsession in the Negro upper class.---Negro upper class will often adhere more closely to strict puritanical standards of conduct than the white upper or middle class." And further he emphasizes, "The Negro upper class is characterized by many of the traits which are in complete contrast to those of the masses of Negroes in the lower class. Their social ambition is to keep up this distinction. In private they are often the severest critics of the Negro masses. Their resentment against the "lazy, promiscuous, uneducated, good-for-nothing" lower class Negro is apparent to every observer." Contrast the restrictions on marriage and courtship within the Israel of God's Church with the lower class courtship and marriage cycle as described by Burgess and Locke: "(1) attraction to each other; (2) engaging in sexual relations; (3) drifting into common-law marriage; and (4) temporary or permanent separation for the purpose of living with another."⁹

These authors go on to describe the lower class Negro marriage pattern as an agreement which is broken as casually

9. Burgess, E. W., and Locke, H. J., The Family, American Book Co., 1945, p. 168.

and as unceremoniously as it is entered into. Getting a license and being married by a minister, however, is more common today than a few years ago. "Economic independence and the possibility of mistreatment by a man to whom one is married restrain some lower class and middle-class Negro women from forming legal unions. The attitude is frequently expressed as follows; 'He's nice all right, but I aint' thinking 'bout marrying. Soon as you marry a man he starts mistreating you, and I'm not going to be mistreated no more.'

"One can see close parallel rather than strong contrast however, in Burgess and Locke's description of the middle-class family institution.

"Ceremonial marriage is a mark of social status and serves the purpose of enhancing the prestige of the middle-class family. In fact the middle-class is often differentiated from the lower class on the basis of legal marriage. Virginity is highly prized by upper-class mothers who sometimes send their daughters to a church school to safeguard their virtue."¹⁰

Yet, one must keep in mind that despite the adherence to middle and upper class courtship, sex, and marriage mores by the members of the W.H.A., still these people

10. Ibid., p. 169.

belong to the lower-class in almost every other respect. One sees then, most vividly, the status-striving function of the sect, enforcing as it does, in every area possible, middle-class mores and values. One sees identical parallels with the ideals of the upper classes as sketched by Myrdal and these other writers. Because of the simplicity of description employed in Part I of this paper it should not be necessary to resort to repetition to make these parallels between the doctrine and regulations of the sect and the "social doctrine" embodied in the upper class value system. The frame of reference is almost synonomous within the group and the abstract collectivity, using Von Weise's terms. A very brief, and simplified table should suffice to crystallize this comparison, and is included in the Appendix.*

It is evident that the sect leaders in their desire to realize an elevation of status have taken over the values of their superiors, the Whites. The "caste system" forces the Negro to become an exaggerated "American", and when the lower class borrows from the upper class this exaggeration becomes even more intense.

One might ask a further question: Why has this status striving polarized around or within the social structure of a religious group? Why haven't these desires, this unrest been expressed in a radical political movement

See Appendix pp. xxxiii-xxxv.

instead? Mays and Nicholson, in their analysis of the Negro Church make the following observations which appear to point in the direction of such a question. In describing the Negro church as a social structure they say: "The Church is owned and controlled by Negroes. It is one of the few institutions outside the family which is controlled by the Negro himself. This ownership and control provides an opportunity for the "Common Man". The opportunity found in the Negro Church to be recognized, and to "be somebody" has stimulated the pride and preserved the self-respect of many Negroes who would have been entirely beaten by life and completely submerged. A place where one has freedom to relax from strains of racial persecution." And later they add, "Part of the genius of the Church is that it is owned by a poor race, supported by its members, and further, that this fact alone gives the Negro minister an opportunity and freedom in his Church life that ministers of some racial groups might covet. Because of this high prestige position and degree of freedom the success and potentialities of the Negro Church depends upon its ministry."¹¹

The fact that the Church as an institution has long

11. Mays and Nicholson; The Negro Church, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1933, p. 238.

been freed of white man dominance and was one of the few social structures permitting almost unrestricted freedom for the Negro within the caste made it almost necessary for the social malfunctionings, the disorganization, the restlessness, the social striving, to be manifested in this religious group rather than in a political or fraternal organization.

Another writer expresses it this way: "The Negro Church, was from the beginning the logical center for community life. Going to church is an outlet for the Negroes religious emotions; but not the least reason why he is willing to support so many churches is that they furnish so many agreeable activities and so much real enjoyment. He is willing to support them because he has not yet, and will not have until there is greater economic and intellectual development and social organization, any other agencies that fill this place."¹²

Fauset, too, comes to somewhat the same generalization. In a summary of his findings he says this: (1) "The apparent over-emphasis by the American Negro in the religious sphere is related to the comparatively meager participation of Negroes in other institutional forms of American culture such as business, politics, and industry, a condition which

12. Johnson, James W., Black Manhattan, 1930, pp. 165-166.

is bound up intimately with the prevailing custom of racial dichotomy which restricts the normal participation of Negroes in many avenues of American life.

(2) The church thus serves as a mechanism for leadership-- not only along spiritual but many other lines. These men might have worked outside the religious circle had the Negro an opportunity for leadership in other institutions.

(3) Negroes are attracted to the cults for the obvious reason that with few normal outlets of expression for Negroes in America due to the prevailing custom of racial dichotomy the cults offer on one hand the boon of religions with all its attendant promise of heaven either here or above, or both; and on the other hand they provide for certain Negroes with imagination and other dynamic qualities in an atmosphere free from embarrassment or apology, a place where they may experiment in activities such as business, politics, social reform, and social expression; thereby these American Negroes satisfy the normal urge of any member of our culture who wishes to contribute positively to the advancement of the group."¹³

The sect, intent on acquiring recognition from the other Negro classes as well as from the Whites, has also

13. Fauset, Black Gods of The Metropolis, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944, p. 102.

made prestige borrowings from the older Christian white denominations. These borrowings are extremely heterogeneous in origin, but in every case they represent an attempt to attach an air of prestige, importance, white middle-class religious life, and authenticity to what in reality is a rather crude, and thoroughly lower class function or organization. For example: archbishop, bishop, deacon, elder, Christian Endeavor, Sister and Brother-----, saints, mass, chant, doxology, etc., represent borrowings from many different and in many cases entirely polemic religious structures. In addition the practice of foot-washing, tithing, burial of members, episcopacy, assigning military rank, offering testimonial, endogamous marriage pattern, temperance regulations, baptism by immersion, eating the Lord's Supper but employing unleavened bread and wine as elements, paternalistic family structure and male organizational authority; all these rules, mores, ceremonies and rituals represent such a polyglot background that it is inconceivable that the sect's leader was a Southern Baptist Missionary all his life. Flowers' experience in the army offers almost the only possible channel as source for material for the sect as it operates today. In addition to Baptist vocabulary and paraphernalia one can discern obvious take-offs from Catholicism,

Methodism, Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, Holiness cults, Salvation Army organization, plus some conservative American sects such as the Mennonites, and Perfectionist and Pessimistic groups.

This heterogeneity of value, attitude and ritual embraced by the sect is some indication of the frustration and confusion which must have existed, especially during the embryonic phases of the sect's development. This complexity of assimilation, and randomization of focus would appear to be a manifestation of the blurred objective existing in the minds of these early leaders and followers, unable to verbalize or define their unrest and dissatisfaction or to locate an all-inclusive scapegoat. It is rather surprising that such variety of focus and practice should be embraced into by the sect in its later stage of routinization. One thing is obvious, however, prestige and an elevated status was the ultimate goal.

IN SUMMARY WE CAN CONCLUDE:

(1) That this quest for status distinction and reputation for respectability and dignity represents psychologically an over-compensation in terms of royal symbolism and vicarious imagery of colorful grandeur, for example: White Horse Army, Archbishop, Deacon, Presiding Elder, etc. This is partly suggestive of the general culture complex of

elaboration among fraternal societies.

(2) The colorful vocabulary of military symbolism may be interpreted as over-compensating for "powerlessness". This technique of borrowing status images from diverse prestige sources corresponds with this broad tendency among fraternal secular associations, since the turn of the century. This sect, however, shows in an exaggerated manner what is a general tendency of voluntary associations, especially among the middle-class.

(3) The attempt to draw attention through brilliant symbolism, unique ceremonies and rituals, and deviant and hyperconscious moral regulations is a prerequisite for propaganda appeal. This propaganda appeal is directed toward outsiders in general, and Whites in specific, in an attempt to demonstrate that Negroes can be as "good and better" than the dominant group; hence, should be respected, admired and sought by the dominant group for assimilation, association, and amalgamation into the general society.

(4) Thus, the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army serves as a status striving vehicle to these aspiring Negro southern migrants. Through their religious way of life and their ritual and doctrine these people struggle to acquire middle-class respectability and acceptance by the dominant group.

the dominant group.

(5) Through the Saints Fund, the real estate and housing projects and the mutual aid policies the sect provides its members with a feeling of security and confidence wherein they may face the outside world with an independence which is not usually characteristic of underprivileged minorities. The aged, the orphans, the widowed, the unemployed, are all confident that they will be cared for, or assisted in caring for themselves. Such assurance makes it possible for them to remain aloof from the superordinates for they are not dependent upon them. Such is not the case of most Northern and Southern Negroes living in small towns. Such individuals are usually subjected to a daily measure of White paternalism, or stern despotism.

(6) There is the psychological security of "belongingness" provided these Negroes through the nature of their sect. As has been pointed out the members of a local congregation are like an extended family, psychologically, socially, and in many instances biologically. There is a great deal of value placed upon the individual worth of these members--each member is recognized as a person. Such circumstances of course offer welcome relief to the repetitious White condemnation, or apology "You're just like all the Niggers"--or "I'm surprised, most Negroes are lazy you

know". With this belongingness a race consciousness is created.

(7) There is the climate and the opportunity for leadership and participation in the organization of the sect. These opportunities lie largely among areas reserved for the male members, but of course, the women exert considerable influence even though they may not be provided with official titles and roles. Such opportunities are seldom offered the Negro in the Southern mill town, or the White dominated city-with its administration, institutions and social activities monopolized by Whites.

(8) We can conclude from the factors listed above that the sect, The Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army, through a group awareness and protesting conflict techniques, offers the lower-class Negro migrant living in the Northern cities and small towns, the opportunity for achieving a degree of accommodation with the White beyond the normal superordinate-subordinate status structure which exists at present. Members of this sect demand recognition by the nature of their own exclusiveness and withdrawal. And the sect at the same time pushes the rest of the Negroes who do not belong to the sect and a great number of Whites into a psychological position of inferiority.

The combination of reaction on the part of members

is to resent the sect's members superiority complex- their "putting on of airs" and simultaneously to covertly place these members in a higher status position than themselves. The members frugality, industry, and morality leaves a deep impression on the hostile "White" world. The sect members are always pointed to by both Whites and Negroes as the "better" the more "respectable" Negroes in town.

As was demonstrated by our paradigm and later study, a dilemma is created by the contradiction between the sect's philosophy of "all men are equal to God" and the sect's policy of withdrawal and superiority complex. Adults and school youngsters alike who are members of the sect have a consistent distaste for other Negroes in the community who do not follow their particular path to salvation. These Negroes withdraw, or remain so aloof from the majority of Whites in these communities that very little personal relationship and in many cases not even a nodding acquaintanceship exists between these Negroes and the Whites. As a consequence, of course, the preachings of the sect's leaders about equality, intermarriage and leadership are invalidated. Equality, intermarriage, and assumption of leadership can hardly result from a consistent practice of remaining apart from the World, abstaining

from political participation, and emphasizing religious and moral differences between themselves and the rest of the community.

The sect's attempts to break up the old structure of accommodation by outright conflict techniques and protestations have had little practical effect since the abandonment of proselyting campaigns in the past two decades.

Their policy of withdrawal and aloofness has resulted in the creation of a new structure of self-imposed segregation. In this self-imposed segregation system the members of the Israel of God's Church through strict endogamy, abandonment of conversion campaigns, and the erection of economic, social, and folkway barriers have separated themselves not only from the Whites (as existed prior to the sect's creation) but have withdrawn from the other Negroes in their communities. This self-imposed segregation system is reinforced further by the practice of shunning of the sect members by non-members as a reaction to the former's "superiority" or "snobbishness". The segregation process then is an established two-way process with the sect members ignoring the non-members, and the non-members resenting this practice and returning the "discourtesy" by ignoring the sect members. And so we see the result, the dilemma created by the inconsistency

between doctrine or creed and actual behavior as diagrammed by Type II of our paradigm. Instead of Unity we see an atomization of the Negro community and any Negro-White relationships and contacts which might have existed.

We can see that this Negro lower-class group in its effort to wipe out class and caste barriers has employed the very techniques of the superordinate which they have been condemning. The leaders of the Israel of God's Church, The White Horse Army have built up strong attitudes and prejudices regarding their own superiority and the out-groups inferiority. They have based a great deal of their rationalization system on a doctrine of racial identification with the "Chosen People" discussed in the Old Testament. They have created and imposed on themselves and all around them a clear-cut system of segregation. The sect members have become almost totally isolated, dealing only with the community on the compulsory levels such as paying taxes and sending their children to public schools.

Thus the sect remains as a protesting association of self-improved Negroes who are protesting racial inequality, segregation, discrimination and prejudice. At the same time the sect exists on a body of self-constructed prejudices, discriminatory practices, and a self-imposed

system of segregation. While the sect aspires to assimilation and amalgamation it pursues a daily policy of social isolation which is in direct contradiction to the realization of such a Utopian dream. Like the American White society its "American Dream" of equality, of opportunity and freedom for all---the ideals and the dreams of this Negro sect have been crumpled and misdirected. What was once a movement to dissolve differences and inequalities based on differences, has been turned into a movement which emphasizes differences and builds on these differences.

Like the American Creed--so the message of The White Horse. The plow shares have been melted and fashioned into swords for suicide.

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APPENDIX

The following essays included in this appendix were written by leaders and members of the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army and were presented by their authors before various meetings and conferences of the sect in an effort to apply the Apostle George's religious and moral discipline to concrete phases of their reality. All of the essays are reproduced just as they were written. I have done this deliberately for I feel obligated to provide you as a reader with the opportunity of experiencing some of the lusty style and the psuedo-oratorical eloquence which characterizes the writings, the preachings, and to perceive from primary sources an awareness of the "official" or group front which this sect assumes. From these essays it is hoped that you will be able to grasp a little of the character of the sect; their struggle for respectability which displays itself in every phase of their social behavior and is so vividly reflected in their writing and their sermons. These testimonies, and essays, as well as the three addresses presented by Bishop Jones before the sect's annual conference, will portray the real character and local color of the group better than any of the stilted cliches and stumbling over-worked adjectives which I might use.

OPENING ADDRESS BY BISHOP W. M. JONES

Subject, "The Signs of Our Times."

Unto you, this great congregation; and I do not call you great, because of your number, but I call you great because of the great and noble spirit which you possess; I call you great because of the goal set before you, and because of the highway of righteousness over which you are traveling to attain that goal, yes, I call you great, as said the prophet, "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of you."

It being the pleasure of Almighty God, and the decree of the mighty One of Jacob, our father, that I should come before you, this great body, on this great day, the 26th of August in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty-seven, to bring to you my annual message; yes, I call this day a great day because it is a day in which the Saints of God assemble, a day in which much people in heaven, are saying, "Alleluia, Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God. For he has founded Zion, and the poor of his people must trust in it; yes, I call it a great day because Raphael, one of the seven holy angels which go in and out before the Holy One, (although invisible) standeth by once more, ready to present the prayers of the Saints.

And on this date I wish to address you on the timely subject, "The Signs of Our Times." In turning back the pages of history even to the days of Herodotus who is called the father of history; or you may revert to Ancient, Medieval or Modern history, you may study the philosophy, religion and culture of the peoples of the world, and in all ages you will find that there were some who believed in, and were watching for the signs of the times.

And since you, the Israel of God's church are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles and Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, you will note these men being inspired of God, were not always calling the attention of the people of their day to the past, but were interested in keeping them abreast

of the times, and also unfolding unto them what the future held in store for them, and Who am I that I should stray away from the path of these Godly men? But instead, I shall follow their foot steps, and in so doing, it has resulted in my being before you this day with this subject, Signs of Our Times.

Long before our day and time, the ancient people regarded certain signs as a fore-runner, or warning of some remarkable event which was to take place, indicating the will of the Deity.

An event considered by the Jews indicating the divine will, interposition of the divine power for some special end.

Jesus when asked by the Pharisees for a sign from heaven, said, "When it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather for the sky is red. And in the morning it will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky but can ye not discern the signs of the times.

Jesus in fore-telling the destruction of the Jewish kingdom, or the world that then was; said, "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captives into all nations and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking for those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken. It is true these signs spoken of by Christ have been fulfilled, but the wheel of time has rolled these signs before us again, the signs spoken of by Christ preceded the fall of the former world, and the latter signs precede the fall of the latter world, but as said David, "God is good, and His mercy endureth forever." As a proof of God's goodness, before the fall of the former world, He sent salvation in the person of one man, the man Jesus Christ, and before the fall of this present world He has sent salvation in the person of one man Apostle George; yes, in our day

you know that there is distress among nations, as it was in the former world, and men's hearts are failing, kings and rulers have come down from their thrones, lifted their crowns from their heads, cast them upon the ground, ran to the rocks and mountains seeking a place to hide, this has come to pass in the last decade.

Pharaoh's daughter placed the crown of her father, on the head of Moses, her foster son, whereupon the child threw it down and trampled upon it with his feet, and one of Pharaoh's wise counselors told him that the action of the child was a sign that in time to come, that Moses would overthrow and trample under foot the Egyptian kingdom; there-after Josephus said, his development, his early education and his personality caused the Egyptians to become suspicious of him; wherein the Hebrews saw in the same sign, their salvation, that in time to come they would be delivered from the oppression of the Egyptians.

Before the fall of the Greek and Roman powers, there were signs of their fall, namely a general unrest and debauchery; and one particular phase of the Roman life was the loosing of the family ties, according to Roman history, divorces multiplied, and Augustus Ceasar strove to arrest this downward tendency by edicts and laws; in encouragements of marriage, and in restraint of divorces, but the trouble was too deep-seated in the falling morals and religious life of the times to be reached and remedied by any measure of state.

The decay of religious faith, had been going on for a long time; Augustus did all in his power to arrest this process, he restored the temples and shrines that had fallen into decay, renewed the ancient sacrifice, and erected new temples, not only in Rome, but in all parts of the empire, yes, decay in religious faith, lust of the flesh, lust for power, revelling, banqueting, denial of full citizenship, and the right of franchise to some of its subjects wrought havoc to the Roman civilization.

The Babylonian kingdom became top heavy with the afore-mentioned evils; Belshazzar the king, saw a hand writing on the wall; and Daniel was called in to read the writing. He looked at the writing and turned

to the king and said, "Your father before you was king, he had an exalted spirit, and his mind was hardened in pride, and he was deposed from his kingly throne; and you his son have not humbled yourself though you knew all of this, and that is why this writing is on the wall." After this lecture, then did Daniel proceed to read the writing. At the time the hand began to write, the king with his wives, concubines, lords and rulers were having a banquet of wine. Low morals in high places, bad principles, injustice to his subjects of the lower brackets, overthrew the Babylonian kingdom, you can trace the fall of all kingdoms or civilizations to the same cause.

True enough, Christ came and planted truth and justice in the earth, but as soon as His voice had drifted away on the ether waves, little by little, bit by bit, the people began to drift away from His doctrine, people have been frightened into belief by false prophets that theories were facts, and facts have been twisted, and added, people have been deceived, which has resulted into a multiplicity of so called churches, wherein there is but the one church, namely the Israel of God's church. The multiplicity of churches as they are called, are signs of our times. They show a spiritual unrest, and where there is a spiritual unrest, there is a moral and social unrest.

In the bloody trenches of chapter two, of the world struggle through which the world has just come, or I may say from which the world is trying to emerge, can be seen the magnitude of racial and religious hatred of a people intoxicated with a superior complex, which overthrew them; true enough, that people went down in defeat; but that spirit still lives, and that gospel is still being preached here in America.

Some time ago I called your attention to the Apostles of democracy, of some who had taken to the air and had flown to various parts of the world, preaching the gospel of democracy, wherein it was not practiced on the door steps in our own capital. In the political arena, there are two great monsters, namely Communism and Democracy, with propagandists

of great magnitude supporting each side; these two monsters are on the dramatic stage sparring for a knock-out blow, but neither shall become champion of the world, or I may say champion of the human mind, not even this thing called Christianity, it shall not become champion. Christianity allows and sanctions division, it is tainted with many other evils condemned by Christ. Democracy is discriminating, in rich versus poor, and one of its greatest evils is in pigmentation. Two parties may commit the same crime under the same circumstances, but the party whose pigment of his skin is more dense will get the worse deal at the hands of the law, or to be plain about the matter, the party whose skin is black will get the worse deal; therefore even King Solomon would not be able to agree with these agencies if he were alive today, for he said, "I am black, but look not upon me because I am black."

Today we have with us Talmage, Smith and others, known and unknown. There was Bilbo, he is gone now, but his spirit goes marching on. We also have the K. K. K., the White Supremist; But God forbid that we should allow any evil to enter our hearts because of these evil agencies, we must not fight evil with evil, but we must fight evil, with righteousness, and Godly intelligence; these evil agencies are only signs of our times.

Before our forefathers departed from Egypt, these same evil agencies began to work. Our forefathers began to prosper in wealth and what-so-ever they put forth their hand to, so their enemies decided to do something to hinder them, but the hand of their God was upon them for good, so the heathern began to rage, and the Egyptians began to imagine vain things, but to no avail, for their God brought them out with a high hand, and with a stretched out arm.

What is it that is troubling the enemy of this people whom God has chosen? Once more the enemy sees the prosperity of the people and has decided to do something about it; only a short time ago he held the pick in his hand, but today he has laid aside the pick for the pen. Yesterday, he was in the field obeying laws, today he is in the legislative halls,

helping to make laws. Yesterday, not only his master refuses to teach him, but would not allow him to be taught, but today the Negro is in some of the greatest institutions of learning in America, not being taught only, but some are teaching. Yesterday, he lived in a log hut behind his master's house, but today he has moved out on Main St., and has become his master's neighbor; he has achieved almost unbelievable victories, over almost insurmountable odds; he is becoming a competitor in most all fields of endeavor, he is becoming one of the most advanced figures of his day; and yet greater height should have, and could have been attained. Yes, the enemy seeing these achievements has decided to do something about it. He desires to arrest this onward move, but House of Israel we shall not be discouraged, it is only a sign of our time, and as said Christ, to His disciples, when you see certain signs, lift up your head for your salvation draweth nigh.

I have mentioned some achievements attained by this race and the results of the achievements, but after all the greatest achievements, are yet to be attained, and there is but the one tool by which we must labor to gain this higher height, deeper depth, or the exploration of a greater field, and this tool is righteousness, it is essential, it is imperative.

Now these afore-mentioned signs, point to our world
and its end

It is all because of unrighteousness, which God
calls sin;

This evil, back in the days of Adam did begin
And God keeps telling man, by this method you
cannot win.

Christ said pray for your friend, and pray for
your foe

This includes those whom you love, and also Bilbo:
It may seem to you, that you are pushed to
and fro

But one thing is certain, you don't have to reap
if you do not sow.

Let us remember Christ, while on the cross.
Looked back and said, all is finished, there is
nothing loss;
But to his component on the cross he said, this
does not seem so nice
But I will meet you today in paradise.

W. M. JONES

I See and I'm Satisfied

Orma Jean Joseph

I see as I go through life daily, America struggling for her supremacy. I see various peace conferences convening in order to establish a world peace.

I see great scientists laboring hard, trying to perfect the great atomic energy for the defense of America.

But when my mind goes back to 1619 when the first Negro slave was brought to America, when he was held in bondage for a period of years, they too longed for their supremacy, for their happiness and for their peace. When I think on these conditions and the signs of our times, I see and I'm satisfied.

I see the Negro pledge for faith unwavering, when slavery crushed him with its heels.

"Sad days were those, oh! sad indeed!

I see the man catcher impelled by thirst of gold, as he entraps his simple souled victim in the snares of bondage and death, by use of force or guile.

I see the ocean basin whitened with his bones and the ocean current running red with his blood amidst the hellish horrors of the middle passage.

I see him laboring for two centuries and a half in unrequited toil, making the hillsides of our southland to glow with the snow white fleece of cotton and the valley to glisten with the golden sheaves of grain.

I see him silently enduring cruelty and torture indescribable, with flesh flinching beneath the sizz of angry whip or quivering under the gnaw of the sharp toothed blood hound.

I hear the groans, the sorrows, the sighings, the soul striving of these benighted creatures of God, rising up from the low grounds of sorrow and

reaching the ear of God Almighty, who regardeth man of the lowest estate. But when I think on the words of this song, "Weeping May Endure for a Night but Joy Cometh in the Morning."

I strain my ear to supernal sound and I hear in the secret chambers of the Almighty the order to the Captain of host to break his bonds and set him free.

I watch the Congress as it adds to the Constitution new words, which make the document a charter of liberty indeed.

But still in this great America of today, the land of the free, "the home of the brave," I see the struggle for progress has never taken a straight line, but has always been a zig-zag course amid the conflicting forces of right and wrong, truth and error, justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy.

I see him who was once deemed stricken smitten of God and afflicted, now entering with universal welcome into the patrimony of mankind and I look calmly upon the centuries of blood and tears and travail of soil. I see this, but I am satisfied.

I remember how your fore-fathers and my fore-fathers prayed and asked God to deliver them and set them free and if not, to enable their children and their children's children to see brighter days and be able to serve God in spirit and truth.

Yes, God heard their prayers and in the year of 1887, God gave one of our brethern a great doctrine to raise his fallen brother of African descent.

I see this great man as he started out in this wicked age of race prejudice, denominationalism and political devices, travel ten (10) long years alone.

I see him through the God of Israel touch the hearts and minds of his chosen people and bring them into the knowledge of the truth.

I see him through much sorrow, trials, hardships,

stand firm on faith, knowing that the White Horse Army would increase and the wicked devices of this world would decrease.

Yes, Apostle George our Saviour, prayed a prayer also. It was a wonderful prayer to raise his fallen brethren of African descent. I see after he had fought a hard fight, after he had kept the faith and after he had finished his course, wherein a crown of righteousness was laid up for him, he called another man of God to his bed and told him to take the work and carry it on.

I see the man of God, our great leader of today, say, "Well done, I'll lead all those who'll be led." I see him as he skipped out on the word of God, tell his co-workers in the ministry, "We must toil hard and bring the people back home to God."

I see him over a period of 24 years labor hard with our individual calls, our troubles, our wars. Nights were never too dark, roads were never too rough for him to guide us.

I see him this fifth (5th) month, this fifteenth (15th) day of this 49th year, at this moment still laboring hard with the work Apostle left in his stead.

I see his co-workers in the ministry as they take their various appointments year after year, step out on the faith of God and say, "I'll go, yes, I'll go." I see this and I'm satisfied.

I see nations rising and falling. I see kings, dictators, presidents coming and going. I see christendom crumbling away. I see the morals of this wicked age of today at its lowest ebb. I see the signs of our times. I see the end of this generation at hand.

But greatest of all, I see the White Horse Army as the only way for a man or woman to be saved. To the unbeliever I see it hated, despised, condemned. I see it doubled, suspected, criticized.

But to the believer of this holy truth, I see it

as a lamp to our feet, a standard for childhood, a guide for youth, comfort for the aged, peace of mind and a satisfied heart.

I see this and I'm satisfied.

To know this doctrine is to love it.

To love it is to accept it.

To accept it means life eternal.

I see this and I'm satisfied.

"The Horrors of a Stricken Church

and the benefit of the same to its members."

Rev. Mose Hicks

A few years ago I was sent to pastor a small church that had been struggling for quite some time to overcome the many obstacles that had here-to-fore hindered their progress. After having gained the confidence of the few stalwart members and instilling within them a spirit to labor lawfully and unceasingly toward the goal we so desired, it wasn't very long before our efforts were rewarded with success. However it wasn't very easy nor were there flowers always strewn in our paths. There were many difficulties such as financial insufficiencies, physical impairments, etc.

For instance the church was instrumental in obtaining a home for one of its families who couldn't raise the down payment; by producing the required amount without hesitation. Then the debts against the church were all paid off and a new lot was purchased for the purpose of a larger building being built in the not too far distance.

For awhile things moved along swell. Our physical, spiritual and financial standing were very good and in reality had exceeded our expectations to say the least.

Ah! But there comes a time when some rain must fall and in our case a storm in all its fury descended upon us. One of our young members, a mother of two children already, was rushed to the hospital to bare a third child. Instead of things going well they went the opposite direction. She lay in a coma for two days and her blood pressure proceeded to the point where medical strength was taxed to the utmost. To make things even worse all this happened at the time when our District Conference was convened in the city of Detroit, Michigan and the pastor and officers as well as several members were in attendance at same. When it was made known that a certain amount

of money had to be raised immediately for medical expenses two of the sisters who weren't attending the District Conference went to the bank and withdrew the amount needed from the church's account which was very rapidly increasing. When this transaction was made known to the entire church everyone agreed that the right thing had been done because we all knew this girls life was in jeopardy.

Finally when all hope had been given up, the power of all powers stepped in and took the oars of this human life and rode the crest of the waves to the port of recovery where her child was delivered with joy.

Then one of the Deacon's was critically burned and hospitalized for nine months. We thought this was a terrible blow as he was one of our very reliable members and he was the head of a large family. Naturally things became very dark for his family and again the church proved to be a friend indeed in the time of need. Just as this Deacon began to show signs of a little improvement another Deacon who acts as the assistant pastor, and the Secretary who happened to be the wife of the Deacon who was so terribly burned also became ill and became patients in the same hospital and on the same floor. This was very heart rendering to me as I had never had anything like this to happen to me before. In my position it is expected of me to console the down hearted and to uplift the downcast spirit but I came very near the breaking point myself and had to keep remembering that "The Lord would make a way."

Naturally with all these besetments confronting us the spiritual standing of the church reached its lowest ebb. Clouds of despondency descended upon us and our faith was really tested to the utmost.

Now of one thing there is a certainty. Patience always has its won reward. Patiently we waited for the rain to stop falling. Patiently we awaited the shining of the sun. In our patience possessed we our souls.

The physical, spiritual and financial strength of the church has been restored. The laborers which

were few have been increased to such an extent that the lot I mentioned earlier shall soon be graced with an edifice much longed for, and faithfully deserved.

I smile the smile of appreciation to the God who does all things well when I stand before my people rightly dividing the truth from error; triumphantly praising Him for enabling us to override every opposing opposition and happily echo the joyful tidings that this day we are steadily going forth conquering and to conquer.

Manners and Behavior

Mary Frances Poole

I chose this compound subject because if we have good manners we then know how to behave under various situations.

One cannot get far in the social or business world without knowing the laws of etiquette. You as well as I have often heard the statement "Good manners will take you places that money cannot."

One of our personal characteristics is our type of manners and how we behave. There are individual differences in manners and behavior as well as anything else. We like and dislike people because of the way they behave.

If you give two youngsters a stick of candy; one would say "thank you", the other would offer you no thanks, what would your reactions be toward the two?

When we see children or grown-ups who do not reverence and respect elderly people, or their parents, it is because they have not had the proper fire-side training in good manners and behavior.

Good manners are very important in the business world. Some times a person could secure an excellent position, if he only had proper manners. An employer is always interested in an employee that is courteous and knows how to behave in different situations.

At social affairs a person with no culture is isolated,. Not only are table manners important but also the proper conversation.

If you attend public gatherings, you can easily pick out the trained as well as the untrained. You know how irritable it is to sit near a group who are laughing and talking through a lecture or any kind of service.

One does not need the so-call book education to acquire good manners. Some college and university students do not have as good manners as some persons who have never attended school. Knowledge doesn't come from books only, but through ones culture. So if you have attended the great institutions of learning don't say, "Oh, I don't need manners": because good manners and correct behavior can take you a great distance.

Personality

Mary Frances Poole

Personality is the effect we have on others. We should all have an interest in this subject because we all have one. Whether we are sympathetic, kind, crude, or whatsoever pattern of traits we possess, it is our personality. It is an accepted fact that personality is largely a matter on early training, but they can be cultivated and developed. We should desire self-improvement, because most of us suffer from a feeling of self-satisfaction. We are inclined to set up higher standards of conduct for others than we have for ourselves. The desire for self-improvement depends on self-examination, as there will be no desire for improvement until there is some consciousness of defect. At more or less regular intervals we should take ourselves away from the noisy world and analyze ourselves to find out what equipment we lack.

Self-examination and self criticism will discover the direction for improvement, but real improvement comes through focusing our attention on the ideal which is the goal. A favorable environment does much for ones personality. The selection of the environment is always under our control to the extent that we can always choose the right company.

Personality is so important in the business world we are partly judged by the way we get along with others. Ones education, scholarship, and

professional training doesn't bring him success unless he has the appealing personality. Some people in profession are successful and popular, while others equally well educated, trained, and experienced are failures and wanted nowhere. The one word which covers these differences is personality.

A pleasing appearance is a part of a pleasing personality. It matters whether a man wears a well pressed suit or overalls to do janitor work in.

Imagine yourself being an employer. If you had an ad in the paper for a bookkeeper and if two girls applied for the position. One of them had a slouched position with a sleepy expression and elaborately clothed and wearing cosmetics; while the other is dressed for the occasion, has an alert and business like attitude. Which of the two would you employ? If you were looking for someone to do satisfactory work you would go by the latter's dress and choose her.

In my summary let us all improve our personalities by having a desire to improve, the ability to improve, and a knowledge of how to improve.

I thank you.

Domestic Etiquette and Duties

Esther Parker

The subject I have chosen for this afternoon is very essential. That is Domestic Etiquette and Duties.

Home as well as a larger community should be regulated by well-defined customs. The wife especially devolves the privilege and pleasure of rendering home happiness. We shall, therefore, speak of such duties and observances as pertain to her. When a young wife first settles in her home, many excellent persons with more zeal, it may be, than discretion immediately propose that she should devote some of her leisure time to charitable purposes; But remember that your Heavenly Father who has given you a home to dwell in requires from you a right performance of its duties.

Nothing can be more senseless than the conduct of a young woman who, seeks to be admired in general society for her civility and engaging manners, or skill in music, when at the same time she makes no effort to render her home. Many unhappy marriages has been occasioned by neglect in these particulars. Many a happy home has been rendered desolate by exciting coolness or suspicion, or by endeavors to gain importance in an artful and insidious manner.

Regarding money matters be very careful that you do not spend more than can be afforded in dress; and be satisfied with such carpets and curtains in your drawing room as befit a moderate fortune, or professional income.

How to Keep a Home

No wife acts wisely who permits her sitting-room to look dull in the eyes of him whom she ought especially to please, and with whom she has to pass her days.

Avoid Concealment

We have heard of articles paid for in this manner, for above its value and have heard a poor young woman who has been duped, say to a lady friend "I dare not tell my husband."

Be content with such as your husband can afford and does approve. You can then wear them with every feeling of self-satisfaction, and have a contented mind.

Becoming Conduct for a Wife

Lastly remember your standing as a lady, and never approve a mean action, nor speak unrefined words; let all your conduct be such as an honorable and right-minded man may look for in his wife, and mother of his children. The slightest duplicity destroys confidence.

If we follow these few simple precepts, it will prove to us worth more than rubies.

But if we neglect them we shall soon know sorrow.

I thank you.

Health

Mary Poole

Good health is the greatest of blessings mortals can enjoy. A person is considered in a state of good health when his bodily functions are performed without pain. The subjects: habit formation and cleanliness, have been discussed with you, you were told that habit formation is the basis of a character and it is also the basis of health.

Professor Fisher, of Yale University found through investigation that there are over three million people in the United States who are ill all of the time, and one-half of this could be prevented by cleanliness. Bacteria and germs thrive in dirt and filth; therefore to eliminate so many diseases cleanliness is a good remedy.

The adequate diet is a proper factor in good health. The food should be clean. It should be purchased from clean groceries and stores and sanitary dairies. The diet should be well balanced. A person could live on such a diet as bread and butter or a diet of meat and potatoes but this individual would not receive the best results because these diets lack vitamins a, b, and c which are so important to good health. Vitamin A: is found in green vegetables. The lack of this vitamin causes a bone and eye disease. Vitamin B: is found in milk products, without this vitamin in the diet causes a stomach disease. Vitamin C: is found in fruits, especially oranges and lemons,; this vitamin builds the bones and muscles.

Perhaps some of us wonder why pork meat is not recommended for the diet. Pigs are scavengers on the ranches, they are used to devour the rattlesnakes. Within the body of the pigs lives two parasites. The tapeworm and the trinchina. If the pork is not cooked thoroughly the segments are transported to the body of man where the development is finished and finally causes a disease called trinchinas.

Alcohol, coffee, and tea are not oxidized in the body therefore they are direct poisons upon the organisms; it is better for ones health if they are used in small quantities.

I hope by these few remarks that I have shown to you that to obtain good health the adequate diet is important. It is not the amount one eats, but it is what one eats.

Wordsworth says: "Love, honor, nor power can give the heart one cheerful hour when Health is lost."

I thank you!

Obedience

Lucille Jackson

Obedience being defined as, obeying and being obedient to a logical cause. As we all know obedience was prominent from the beginning of the world when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light. For this cause we should know obedience was in the plan from the creation of the world. Everything obeyed God's command from birds to beast, until woman was made. This was the beginning of disobedience. Throughout all ages of the world, to the present time there are great historical events and the outcome of the obedient and disobedient. Job is an example to us today, because many things were transfigured in his day, through all the trials and hardships he came out more that conquer, why? Because he was a servant of God and was obedient. Not as his wife was disobedient and said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity, curse God and die". Lot's wife who was a very disobedient woman was turned into a pillar of salt. But the wives of today are not repayed as Lot's wife but are low and their names are a record of shame. For as the saying of old it is better to have a good name than the choice of gold. This can only be obtained by being obedient.

Now at this point it brings us down to the children of today. We, the young people, at this age of the world especially in the W.H.A. should take heed to the scripture that says: "Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. That it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth. Another scripture says, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." As it has been said a disobedient child brings death, disgrace, a low standard and failure in life. These things will not come if we are obedient. As we know God is just in all his dealings. God wants all the wicked and disobedient wiped off the face of the earth. It will take the help of the young people in the W.H.A. to do it and to improve the welfare of the unborn generation. In closing I will say, "If we stay in the

W.H.A. and obey the teaching we get from time to time, we will not regret it but will come out more than conquer.

Cleanliness

Mattie Winfrey

I have chosen for my subject this afternoon: Cleanliness, a subject that should be a benefit to us all. Cleanliness means neatness, to be free from impurities.

I am going to try to discuss this subject from two points of view, natural and spiritual.

We should be a clean and pure people. Our doctrine is clean. We as the people of God should be free from filth and dirt. Our conversation should be ones of purity. We should not think of or take part with anything that is unclean.

Our homes should be free from all impurities for whatsoever our environment is determines our character, good things do not come from impure sources. The desires for cleanliness should be instilled in the children. In a family where there are children each should learn how to be neat and to keep things in order. Each should have a household task. A child that is reared in an untidy and disorderly home will be an untidy and disorderly man or woman. An unclean and untidy girl when she marries, her husband will have much trouble on his hands. The house is never clean. When he leaves in the mornings to go to work she is still in bed too lazy to get up and prepare him some breakfast. When he comes at noon she has some food there for him that she has purchased already prepared at the store. There are always dirty dishes piled in the sink. All afternoon she is out visiting and gossiping with her neighbors, where she would be much better off at home getting her washing and ironing done. The house goes from one week to another without being cleaned. There is always dust an inch thick on the furniture. The family lives entirely out of a tin can which only needs a can opener. If he is the right kind of husband she will have to change or get out. The husband and father should see that things are kept clean and in order.

Cleanliness should start at home. Cleanliness

is essential to good health. We should all learn and practice cleanliness.

I will now conclude by saying Let us all practice cleanliness which is next to Godliness, for it will always be essential to our lives.

I thank you.

Temptation

Mary Poole

I feel that this subject is more than appropriate at this age, because there are so many temptations in our environment. To be tempted is to be enticed or persuaded into evil. Satan has been called the enticer; but we have been taught that he is a spirit and does not come in the various forms that we once imagined; but he is found in ourselves, brother or friend.

We younger people are often tempted; we care for pleasure and so-called good times; but when these thoughts visit us we should stop and ask ourselves the question. What benefits will I derive from them? The tempter paints beautiful pictures, and his power is so great that you cannot see the results. But when the deed is performed then comes the reward which is nothing but torment, misery and woe. There has been examples in Israel that have caused me to fear, but being in the house of Israel I now have a chance to escape.

This subject covers such a vast scope. I have only enumerated a few. In my conclusion allow me to quote from one of our poets:

"When you become a White Horse Rider
Satan will torment you that much harder,
And if you don't stay in the field
First thing you know he has you to yield.
He always comes in such cute ways
And if he doesn't get you now, He'll come another day,
White Horse Riders, we must all be alert
Don't let Satan catch us on nothing but our work
Satan torments White Horse Riders worse
His main delight is to get us off of the horse
So when he brings his little trials and temptations too
Just tell him to step aside and get right back of you.

Segregation

Mattie Winfrey

I have chosen for my subject this afternoon "Segregation". A subject that I think should be a benefit to us all. Segregation means to be separated or a division. We as White Horse Riders cannot associate with the people of the world and continue to be true White Horse Riders. Segregation is very essential in our lives. If we run hand and hand with the world we are not any better than they are. We should be a sample and example for the boys and girls in the world. If we are always with the people of the world we are either doing the things that they are doing or they are coming our way. It depends upon who has the greatest influential power.

We are known by the associates we choose. If we are always seen with those on the outside, if we are weak we will be going the way they are. As the saying is "two cannot walk together except they agree". The world thinks they have drawing cards for us, such as dancing, playing cards, and numerous others but we should not think of such things. We can not do the things that the boys and girls in the world do and get away with it; because they do not know the truth and we do. If we do everything that they, the people in the world do, they will say "they belong to the White Horse Army church and they do everything that we do. They are no better than we are"; which is all very true. It seems hard to separate yourselves from the world, but it will be to your own benefit.

Segregation is not only essential for the young people, but the older also. If we plan to ever have success in the world that we are now living in we will have to segregate ourselves from certain classes of people.

I have tried to show you what will happen to us if we don't segregate from the outside world. I will now conclude by saying, Let us all segregate ourselves from the associates whose reputation and acts are not

suitable for a White Horse Rider to associate with.

I thank you.

What the White Horse Army Means to Me

Ruth Williamson

I cannot say as a lot of others, (when I was in the Baptist or Methodist church, I did this or that), but I have been told by my parents that the first time I was brought into a church it was the ISRAEL OF GOD'S CHURCH. For this I should be thankful for several reasons.

First, because this is a perfect way, a perfect church, where they preach and teach a perfect doctrine. That enables me to be a perfect girl if I only obey the instructions that are given.

Second, because I have been started in the right way in early childhood, but I am afraid we who were born of parents who were in the WHITE HORSE ARMY, and those who came in at an early age, cannot appreciate the good advice that is given to us as we should. As it has been said, "A child that is born in wealth cannot be in sympathy with one in poverty."

But above all this, I know the WHITE HORSE ARMY is the only place for a person that wants to do right. I have seen people both young and old leave the church, go out and think they could have success. But to my knowledge they go from better conditions to worse. But by the help of God, I intend to remain in the ISRAEL OF GOD'S CHURCH all the days of my life, doing whatever my hands find to do so that my labor will not be in vain.

Physically Fit: Mentally Wake:

Spiritually Strong

Norval Stokes

Today in our church there are very few who have the education necessary to promote them from a W. P. A. job to a position behind a desk. In our lives it is very evident that a broader education is more of a necessity now than it ever was. The steady complications of business, machinery, farming and living in general bring about the necessity for a higher education.

This higher education involves mental, physical and spiritual education. Mentally in gaining the knowledge at our disposal at the public schools and using it to the best of its advantage; to reach our ideal. Ambition is highly essential because without it there is no desire to get away from illiteracy.

With the proper mental training there will eventually be more of us in better occupations. Mental training however, is of little value unless the individual is physically able to carry out his ideas. In order to be physically able an early decision to refrain from tobacco, which contains nicotine; pork, which God said not to eat; and alcohol which is a narcotic that destroys both body and mind any many other harmful things. Eating, sleeping, working, and resting in the proper proportions is vital to being physically fit.

A man however, who has just mental and physical training can never reach the top of the ladder of success because a vital part of his education is missing: the spiritual side.

So you can see that all three of these traits are vital. Without one the other two are incomplete. We of the WHITE HORSE ARMY have the advantage over our neighbors in that we receive the proper mental, physical and spiritual education.

Allow me in conclusion to quote a simple little
epigram

Good, better, best
Never let it rest,
Till your good is better
And your better best.

The Direction to Heaven

Lula Mae Stokes

As you all know, Heaven is not that place above the sun, moon, and stars about which we have been so misinformed, but it is that blessed and happy state of existence for which we are striving. The journey to heaven can be long, or short, or hard or easy. It all depends on the individual concerned. I will try to picture for you the short way to heaven and the preparations which must be made for such a journey.

Choose a vehicle which has the engine of initiative, the frame of love, the wheels of godliness, and let obedience be your steering wheel. Fill your gas tank to the brim with the gasoline of faith, for how can one reach heaven without faith? Use the oil of godliness so that your bearings will not wear out, since this can be quite expensive. With the broom of justice, brush all the crums of envy, malice, and strife from your upholstery. Next pack your baggage containing meekness, truth and patience into the luggage carrier of understanding. Put on your driving glasses of intelligence, shift the gears of hope and you are on your way. Obey all traffic laws. Don't pick up that hitch-hiker called hatred for he makes trouble for all he comes in contact with. Avoid that professional hobo named laziness. He never has and will help anyone.

You will meet up with bumps and ruts, but you need not fear for peace and truth are your shock absorbers. Pitch your own perfectly ridiculous ideas out the window and you will travel 100% White Horse Power up the road of prosperity, through the junction of success and on to the station of heaven, in the land of perfection.

NEGRO SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Lower Class (66% of Negro pop.)

- *1. More likely to be of Slave origin.
- *2. Lower unskilled and semi-skilled labor. Several family members work. Tenants on farms and agricultural wage workers.

*3. Little education, usually only a few grades in school.

4. Standards of industry low and are contented with their status.

5. Family life disorganized, common-law marriages prevalent. Sexual mores lax. Extra-marital promiscuity and illegitimacy fairly common. Mother dominant authority and stable influence in home.

Middle Class (25-30% of Negro pop.)

- 1. More likely to be of Free Negro background.
- #2. Skilled artisans, better domestic service jobs, clerical or white-collar jobs, Pullman porters, etc. Father main support. Also own small farms.

3. Usually finished grades or some high school.

*4. Trying to move up social status ladder, ambitious and frugal.

*5. Family life conservative and stable. Sexual life rigidly regulated. Child center of family attention. Paternalistic and authority conspicuous. Marriage ceremony as an institution is cherished.

Upper Class (5-10% of Negro pop.)

- 1. Large proportion of Free Negroes and old settlers.
- 2. Substantial business men, professional men, school teachers and government service. Father absolute sole support unless wife is also a professional.

#5. Some college education

4. Ambitiousness is devoted to preserving high status and trying to break down White segregation pattern.

5. Free Negro family background. Emphasis on traditionalism. Slightly more lax in regard to sex mores.

Negro Social Stratification. (Cont'd)

Lower Class (66% of Negro pop.)

6. Tenement living, largely in zones 1 and 2 of the city.
7. Fairly extensive participation in crime, prostitution and petty rackets.
8. Belong to cults and storefront churches of orgiastic, highly emotional content, often of very short duration with no established ministry.
- *9. Very little social participation in organized groups except a few "second-class" lodges.

Middle Class (25-30% of Negro pop.)

6. Two family flats and apartments in cities. Some home ownership.
- *7. Law-abiding and sex mores rigidly enforced.
- *8. Belong to more respectable, established churches, or sects emphasizing traditionalism and "social consciousness".
9. Considerable social participation in lodges, church organizations and occupational unions or clubs.

Upper Class 5-10% of Negro pop.)

- *6. Individual home ownership highly prized.
7. Law-abiding aristocracy with addition of upper-class "Shadies" who run rackets and participate in "white-collar" crime.
8. Belong to Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational and Catholic churches. Religion is considered a class display opportunity.
9. Participation in organized clubs, etc., is almost an obsession. Social life among women highly ritualized and publicized. Urban League and NAACP supported.

Negro Social Stratification (Cont'd)

Lower Class (66% of Negro pop.)

Middle Class (25-30% of Negro pop.)

Upper Class 5-10% of Negro pop.)

10. General acceptance of servile status.

*10. Stress on external marks of culture, respectability and independence.

10. Stress on display of wealth (conspicuous consumption).
Emphasis on manners, "culture" and social ritual. Most assimilated in terms of White culture.

11. Not racially conscious.

*11. Race pride and struggle to "build up race to show the Whites."

11. Very race conscious. Sensitive to discrimination.

12. Considerable resentment of upper-class Negroes.

12. Attempt to disassociate themselves from lower-class and identify themselves with upper-class Negro group.

*12. Antagonism and disgust for lower-class Negroes. Express prejudiced sentiments and attitudes toward them. Are marginal group since they are not accepted by lower class Negroes, nor upper-class Whites.

*13. Tend to be of dark-skinned type.

13. Tend to brown-skinned type.

13. Light-skinned mulattoes except those who represent the "Nouveaux riches" and they are frequently dark or brown-skinned.

KEY

* Represents characteristics and attitudes prevalent among sect members of the Israel of God's Church, the White Horse Army.
Represents characteristics and attitudes prevalent among only the young men and women of the sect, but not of older generation.

APPROVED: Miss H. Gerth

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