

## **This Past Week's Experiences**

### **God Intervenes**

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I thought that I would recount to you some of the things that occurred surrounding this building and the keeping of the Holy Days these past couple of weeks. It was pretty stressful for those of us who were right in this building working every day. But on the other hand, as it unfolded, it was pretty exciting as well.

Our stress began on the Wednesday evening and Thursday before the first holy day, when we found out that Duke Energy was going to make a large-scale electrical change that was going to impact on perhaps all of the length of Barberville Road out here, and they chose Thursday to do that job—until, I guess, Thursday got pretty close, and then whatever it was, I do not know. But they said they can't do it on Thursday; they're going to do it the next Tuesday. The only problem was the next Tuesday was God's holy day, the First Day of Unleavened Bread, and what they were preparing to do was going to require the electricity to be shut off from one end of Barberville Road to the other end, and of course, that included us.

So as soon as we were able to get working on that, Martin picked up the ball and he started looking for a place that we can hold the meeting, or for first holy day, anyway. He eventually found a place that would be adequate—barely. But in a pinch, we had that to use. On Friday, Richard and I went down there and we contracted with those people, and I put a deposit down on the room, and in return, they promised that they would change every light in that auditorium. I mean, it was that dark, brethren. They were going to put all new lights in.

So we left there, figuring that the following holy day on Tuesday was taken care of. But it was not really taken care of yet, because we did not trust their sound system at all. So we made plans to take our own down there. That's one of the things Richard planned. He looked over the room very well; where were all the outlets, and so forth. Then on Sunday, a group of the men got together and believe it or not, by the time they gathered together everything that we felt that we would need to have two services done there on that one day, we were going to take as much down to Rock Hill as we would take to a Feast of Tabernacles. Pretty close to that if we wanted to have adequate sound and be able to send the broadcast out as well.

We were all prepared, we thought, for that. Then on Monday, the supervisor who was in charge of doing this electrical change-over out here came around to the building. I was at home, doing some work there. They talked to Richard and to David and said, "We think that we can start our work right out here. We'll take care of you, and we will have you back online at 10:30." That's when services start. That was cutting it pretty close. So Richard called me up and said, "This is what they have offered. He's real confident that they can do it." So I said, "OK, let's go ahead." I called the motel up there and cancelled. The man was not happy at all, because instead of just getting a deposit—I told him to keep the deposit, which would probably pay for a good many of the lights. What made it kind of difficult was he spoke in very broken English. You could just barely make him out. But at any rate, we communicated enough and he said, "Okay, we will just call it even."

So, now we were committed. Well, they showed up on Tuesday morning, and it was dark in here at 10:15. About five minutes later, somewhere very close to 10:20, the lights went on and everybody

gave a little bit of a cheer. It took our fellas 10 or 12 minutes to get geared up on the computers and ready to go. They started and they found out that the stream was not getting out of the building except on the telephone. They felt that if they would just reboot, they could get it up, and we would be able to hear it on both the phone and also the computer. But Richard, I guess, made the decision that, no, we will just let it go out on the phone rather than take an extra 5 or 10 minutes to reboot everything. So at least it got out on the phones.

That was Tuesday. We held both services here and everything went reasonably well. Then the next day, Wednesday, there was a pretty good sized storm heading for Charlotte. This thing already blew off several tornadoes, and it was headed right toward us. I was here at work, and about every two hours or so, I would tune in to the Weather Channel to see where the storm had advanced to. It was really interesting to watch, because of that storm came near here, believe it or not, it split in two, went right around Charlotte, and then continued on out toward Albemarle and Greensboro. And then right around there, it started to regroup again. That thing spun off 25 tornadoes and killed, I believe, 9 or 10 people in central and eastern North Carolina. But the way I look at it, just as God made it possible for us to have services here on Tuesday, He spared Charlotte and the Living Church of God and the Church of the Great God, both of whom have their headquarters here. And so there was no problem from that.

I'm not sure exactly what happened on Saturday—was that the day that we had the storm here and the hail and everything? I'm not real sure. It might have been the week before. At any rate, we are getting a lot of storms.

At the same time that the storm ended, Amazon had the Amazon storm. I believe this was potentially, for us, the worst of all, because we got an update from Amazon and they described in very technical terms what happened. But basically what happened was this: The whole thing began with human error—an operator of some kind. He might have clicked on the wrong thing. Anyway, what happened is a whole rush of electronic data went rushing from one place to another, and the other place could not take care of it. That huge electronic cloud began to—I would call it—disperse. It contained what must have been millions and millions and millions of bits of electronic data that belonged to very, very many large corporations. And here was the little Church of the Great God.

Believe it or not, the way it worked out, they broke the thing down, sort of section by section, and restored order to the system. Guess where we were? We were right in the heart of the worst part. You would think, then, we were in a position where we had virtually everything to lose that we had, because you would think right in the crux of that little tornado that was going on there, was all of our data—not all of it, but a good chunk of our data. After about 60-65 hours, they restored that portion that contained our data. As we have found, then, over the weekend, as far as we know, not a bit was lost. It was still there. All of the stuff that we have on the on the website. It's been restored, as far as I'm concerned. Why, God intervened, but other companies lost their data. We did not lose anything, even though we were right in the center of the funnel cloud, I guess you might say.

God intervened there, as well, so that then on Monday, the holy day came up, and we had passed through the Red Sea and we came out the other side, dry and fully clothed, and everything was there. So that was, to me, very exciting to look back over that and see how in each case, God came to our rescue, so that really, essentially, everything worked.

It cost us about \$190 in deposit; that was about it. I told those people to keep it so that they could replace those lights. And to me, that was a good deal. And so they even profited out of that a little bit.

Now they can display that auditorium: "Look how bright it is. The Church of the Great God paid for this." So anyway, that was kind of exciting. We had a nice, peaceful Monday. Well, I do not know whether I have covered everything there, but I gave you pretty good summary. And that's my commentary for today.