

## Tommy Hicks

In 1951, Demos Shackarian, a wealthy businessman, was getting very discouraged because things just were not working out well with the Full Gospel Business Men's organization he had started. Depressed, he began to agonize in prayer. One night, God's heavenly atmosphere filled their house. Little did he know, all the things that would be taking place that night in his home. His wife began to play the piano in this Glory. Demos, in another room, had an encounter with God. He was taken in a vision by the Lord and transported over many cities in the USA and other countries. The Lord told Demos that all those cities and people would be visited and affected by his ministry, and gave him the keys and strategies that later made the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International such an effective tool in changing the lives of so many people around the world.

Mean while, Tommy Hicks, who was visiting them at that time, was in another room. He had been in prayer for quite some time and had been fasting a lot. So much so, that his friends would tell him that if he did not stop fasting, he would die.

Three times he dug an empty well. Three times he had fasted for 40 days and nights. An intense cry, placed in his heart by the Holy Spirit, led him to continue praying and agonizing for revival. After the last time, an angel appeared to him. He told him many things, and one of the things he said to him was that the Lord had a work for him to do in Argentina, and to go there. He shared this with Demos, who paid for his ticket to Argentina.

Later, as Tommy was on a flight to Argentina, he was pondering just how he would begin the process of holding the evangelistic crusades he was sent to fulfill. He actually knew almost nothing of that nation; not its culture, language or customs. He was acquainted with nearly no one there. While pondering about this, he heard the Lord tell him to go and visit Mr. Peron.

The name Peron meant nothing to him, so he called a stewardess and asked her if by any chance she had ever heard of a man in Argentina by that name. She laughed as she answered, "Of course I have; he is the President of Argentina." Now just how was an ordinary American citizen going to obtain an interview with the anti-American President of Argentina?

Obtaining the use of press and radio was ridiculous to even consider. Under the dictator's decrees, all religious activities were closely monitored and censored. All meeting schedules had to be reported to the police authorities sixty days in advance. Special permission had to be obtained for any unscheduled meetings. It was extremely difficult to obtain permission for a large gathering and careful records were kept in government files. Permissions were hardly ever granted. The head of the evangelical commission plainly told him that such a visit was an absolute impossibility. High ranking American government officials had been insulted and refused an interview with Peron.

How could an unknown, unimportant U.S. preacher ever get an audience with Mr. Peron? But Tommy Hicks believed in his God. He went to his hotel room to pray. Tommy knew that God had sent him to Argentina and to talk with Mr Peron. He knew that his God was bigger than any dictator.

The next day, Tommy, with an interpreter, walked up to the "Casa Rosada" (Pink House) where the government offices were located. As he neared the door, an armed guard, who also served as porter, stopped him with a machine gun aimed at his chest, and asked brusquely, "Who are you? What do you want?"

Tommy Hicks carefully explained to him that what he wanted was to hold a salvation-healing crusade. The more Tommy explained, the more interested the guard became. Finally the guard asked, "Do you mean to

say that God can heal?" "Yes, He can, and He will," replied Tommy.

"Well," asked the guard, "can He heal me?" Tommy answered, "Yes he can. What is your problem?" The guard complained, "I have hepatitis, and my liver is killing me with pain right now." "Give me your hand," instructed the evangelist, and right there he prayed the prayer of faith. The power of God surged into that guard's body, and in a moment his pain and sickness were gone.

Feeling the power of God, the guard was utterly astonished. He felt himself all over, then in total amazement said, "Why, it's all gone; all the pain is gone!" "Of course, it's gone," replied Tommy. "God has healed you." The guard told him, "You come back here tomorrow, and I will get you in to see the President."

The next day Tommy returned, and the same guard greeted him cordially, then escorted him to the great oak door of the private office of the President of Argentina. The President greeted Tommy and his interpreter cordially, offered them a seat, and asked their reason for coming.

Carefully, Evangelist Hicks explained in detail the desire that God had placed upon his heart -- to hold a city-wide, salvation-healing crusade in a large stadium. "Therefore, I want full press and radio coverage, and I want free rights to congregate in the stadiums and arenas of the nation." The President listened thoughtfully and was amazed as he heard for the first time of the power of God to heal and save. Tommy faithfully preached the Gospel to him that day.

At that time the President was suffering from a most persistent and disfiguring skin disease called psoriasis - a type of eczema, which up to that time, no physician had been able to cure. It had grown steadily worse, becoming so noticeable, that Peron no longer allowed photographs to be taken of himself.

Listening to the story of Jesus - the Son of God who heals through faith and prayer alone - the President asked, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ heals today the same as He did while He was here on Earth?" Pastor Hicks answered, "Of course, I do. Here, give me your hand." Right there, with hands clasped over the big desk, Rev. Hicks prayed the prayer of faith for President Peron, dictator of Argentina. As the power of God flowed into the President's body, he staggered back under the impact.

Before the eyes of all present, the skin of President Peron became as clean, as soft and as clear as a baby's. He was instantly made whole. Stepping back in utter amazement, he wiped his hand over his face and exclaimed in astonishment, "Caramba, Dios mio, estoy curado!" (Good heavens, My God, I am cured!). Indeed, he was healed; the psoriasis had all disappeared. The Name of Jesus had once more prevailed as God performed an instantaneous miracle of grace and mercy.

Opening his arms wide in a characteristic Argentine gesture, President Juan Peron gave Tommy a hug and promised him everything he desired -- freedom of press, freedom of radio and the freedom to hold a large gathering. In gratitude for his healing -- under the touch of the hand of God and with his soul awed in the presence of the power Christ -- the President made the impossible, possible. He sat right down, wrote out and signed the decree that granted religious freedom to the evangelicals -- a freedom so long denied. From that day until now, barred doors were immediately thrown open and God made a way where there was no way. In but a moment, God had done what no man could do.