

# ZION'S ADVOCATE

"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost." 1st Nephi 3:124

Volume One

November, 1922

Number Seven

## LINEAL PRIESTHOOD

The question has been asked different of the elders of the church of late, what the position of the Church of Christ is on the subject of Lineal Priesthood. Therefore feeling that it is an opportune time, and that it is one of the questions that relate to Zion and her welfare, we will seek to place before the public, our belief upon the subject.

We do not enter into the discussion of this question through our columns for the purpose of controversy, or criticism of any one who believes in the doctrine, but as stated in the first issue of the Advocate. It is not our purpose to enter into controversy with other divisions of the Latter Day work, but will state our position without reflection upon any others, for we feel that as the representatives of God in this part of his vineyard, that it should be our policy to put forth our efforts in work that will be conducive to the final unity of all Latter Day Saints, instead of a further division," also "that our policy shall be to publish and advocate the cause of Zion, without courting favor nor fearing condemnation, for the Lord has said "that he that puts his trusts in the arm of flesh, shall perish." Therefore, we hope that our decision to answer the question raised will not be misconstrued, for it is for the purpose of setting forth our belief upon the matter that prompts us to undertake the task. Further, in as much as it is a question that has to do with the establishment of the Church of Christ in an organized condition we believe that the subject should be considered very seriously from every angle, for to our belief, it shows the strength or weakness of the position of those who accept or reject it. First, because if it is true that the priesthood in certain offices should be handed down from father to son as a birthright, then those who do not fall in line with its teaching and practice, are not in harmony with the plan of God, and will come to naught, while on the other hand if it is not taught, and to be in harmony with the scriptures, it will always be a source of contention that will tend to keep up a division among Latter Day Saints.

With these and other equally important ideas in mind, we now think it is pertinent that we state our position upon the matter, which is; that we believe that Lineal priesthood by blood descent is unscriptural, and cannot be sustained by any book of the church, viz: The Bible (King James or Inspired) the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants or Book of Commandments. That its practice destroys the democratic spirit in the church, wherein that God provided that any man who has the necessary qualification of faith and righteousness, and the call of God, is eligible to any office in the priesthood, and institutes a monarchical form of government in the church, that makes slaves and subjects of the people. Thus doing away with that principle of equality instituted of God among the children of men, and substitute in its place, a plan by which some; because of their position of birth, have the ascendancy over their brethren.

It may be well at this point in our discussion, that we take time to set forth a definition of terms that will be used in the considering of this question. First, we are given to understand that Lineage means, "Race; progeny; descendants in a direct line from a common progenitor." Second, Lineal; "Composed of lines, descending in direct line, hereditary."

Democracy, "Government by the people, or representatives chosen by the people, a republic."

Monarchical Government, "A monarchical government is one in which the supreme power is exercised by a single individual; if the sovereign succeeds his predecessor by right of inheritance it is a hereditary monarchy. \* \* \* England, Spain, etc., are hereditary Monarchies" Parley's Cabinet Library, Vol. 20. Thus we have defined after the manner of our own language, the terms that are often used in connection with this subject, and they will be used more explicitly later on.

Now to the examination of the evidence offered to support this doctrine. First, it is urged that it was taught by Joseph Smith, the prophet by command of God, as found in Sec. 84:34, "Therefore, thus sayeth the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers, for ye are lawful heirs ac-

ording to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God; therefore your life and the priesthood hath remained, and must needs remain, through you and your lineage, until the restoration of all things spoken of by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

"Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a saviour unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it, Amen."

Upon examination of this quotation, we find that the Lord is not speaking to one individual, but to several persons, for the language is not expressed in singular form, but in the plural, viz., Ye, "plural of Thou, You; heirs" plural of the word heir, one who inherits property from another." fathers:--"Servants"--(par. 1) all plural terms used only in places where more than one individual is spoken to. It is often urged the Old Testament sustains the position of those who believe in Lineal Priesthood, yet we find that succession by blood descent is broken in the case of Moses, for he received his priesthood through Jethro, his father-in-law, who was a priest of Midian (D and Cor. 83:2, Exodus 3:1) who by no means could be considered as a literal parent according to the flesh, so we can not regard this point as a possible proof of the doctrine. Again, it has been urged that the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was written was handed down from father to son, but upon examination of the evidence, we find that they were often handed down from brother to brother, in one case from uncle to nephew, and at other times through those who were in no ways related. As proof of this we will examine the following outline which shows that there were two sets of plates, the historical, and the ministerial.

#### Historical Plates

Nephi, son of Lehi, made the plates and was the first historian. He also made the smaller set of plates for the ministerial record and wrote the first part of that record. See 1 Nephi 2: 92-101; 5: 218-225; 2 Nephi 4: 45-50.

After Nephi, the historical record was kept by the kings (See Jarom 1:31), whose names are not given until Mosiah I. After Mosiah I the historians were as follows:

Benjamin, son of Mosiah I. (Words of Mormon, verse 14.)

Mosiah II, son of Benjamin. (Mosiah 1:15, 22-24.)

Alma, first chief judge. (Mosiah 13:1) No relationship to his predecessor, Mosiah, is mentioned.

Helaman I, son of Alma. (Alma 17:31, 52-53, 71.)

Shiblon, brother of Helaman, second son of Alma. (Alma 30:1, 2.)

Helaman II, nephew of Shiblon and son of Helaman I. (Alma 30:15)

Nephi and Lehi, sons of Helaman II. (Hel. 2:33; 5:140. Also see heading of the Book of Helaman.)

Nephi, son of Nephi. (3 Nephi 1:3.)

Amos, son of Nephi, (4 Nephi 1:22.)

Amos, son of Amos. (4 Nephi 1:24.)

Ammoron, brother of Amos. (4 Nephi 1:56.)

Mormon. (Book of Mormon 1: 2-6) No mention is made of any relationship to his predecessors.

Moroni, son of Mormon and last writer of Nephite history. (Book of Mormon 3:8.)

#### Ministerial Plates

The custodians and writers of the ministerial record were as follows:

Nephi. (See comments under 'History Plates')

Jacob, brother of Nephi. (Jacob 1:1-4.)

Enos, son of Jacob. (Jacob 5:45.)

Jarom, son of Enos. (Jarom 1:1.)

Omni, son of Jarom. (Omni 1:1.)

Amaron, son of Omni. (Omni 1:5.)

Chemish brother of Amaron. (Omni 1:10)

Abinadom, son of Chemish. (Omni 1:13)

Amaleki, son of Abinadom. (Omni 1:18)

Amaleki finished the ministerial record and turned it over to King Benjamin's care, and it was thereafter handed down from one generation to another with the other sacred records and sacred treasure. It will be observed in the foregoing outlines that the plates did not always go from father to son. Four times the plates went to a brother; once to a nephew. Twice, in the case of Alma and of Mormon, the plates passed into the keeping of a new family.

NOTE--In the above outlines, where a son succeeds his father the names appear in line. When the plates go to some other relation, the line is moved over. When the plates pass into a new family, a new line is made by bringing the name forward.

It will be observed from the above that there were frequently breaks in this line of descent and not once in a period of about a thousand years is the question of priesthood raised, nor the question of hereditary right, or the "lawful heir" etc. So it is for this and other reasons that we shall hereafter present, we feel justified in taking the position we do; which is, that lineal priesthood

is not sustained by scriptural evidence, for the church is to be governed by the law as revealed in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, as well as the covenants and church articles. (B. of Com. Chap. 44:13, also verses 45, 51, Chap. 59:27) to the law and the testimony has always been the standard that we have raised to the world, so we feel that we should be governed by the same rule now.

In harmony with this position we now present our proof of the inconsistency of this doctrine with other principles of the gospel. As to there being such a doctrine as lineage that is sustained by scriptures we do not deny, but that the wrong application in this case is made of it we affirm to be true.

(To be continued)

**"COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOR  
AND ARE HEAVY LADEN AND I WILL  
GIVE YOU REST TO YOUR SOUL!"**

(Continued from last issue)

Some men may say where will we be able to learn of him. He hath said, Search the Scriptures for they are they that testify of me. Therefore, let us reason together upon this matter. Are you willing to accept this invitation? Do you want rest to your souls? Are your burdens too heavy to bear alone? If so, let us draw near and see what Jesus would have us do.

It is said that he that would come unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6.) Thus it is necessary for us to do something to prove that we are in earnest. We must believe in God. Do you believe that before the world was that God existed? Do you believe that he is the beginning of all things, the great first cause, by which all things have their being, and by whom all things were created? Do you believe that he stretched out the heavens, and placed the sun, stars and moon therein to lighten the great space of the universe, and that by his power the earth was formed and all things therein were made? Do you believe that in the creating of the great expanses of the universe that all things move and have their place because of the laws that he gave to control and influence them? If so, then have you faith that the small needs and wants that we are confronted with will be assured us if we but ask him for them? If you have, then let us draw nigh and learn of him that our burdens may be made easy to bear.

### His Government

When we consider this great message that Christ has extended to all of those that are willing to listen to it, and seek to enjoy the blessings promised therein, it brings to our minds the

thought that one who has promised so much and whose invitation to come and obtain rest from the burdens and trials that beset them; would of necessity have a plan or program through which the said blessings could be equitably distributed.

In order that each person who should desire to accept the invitation that has been extended to them may be assured of obtaining the promised blessing, we must come to the conclusion that there must be some rule or form of administration provided by the Saviour to assure the same. This brings us to the point where we should consider the form of government he has in force by which we can enter as a qualified recipient of his blessings.

Now I take it for granted that the promised blessings that Christ offers us is not temporary, but on the other hand is permanent, for one of his ambassadors seemingly authorized by him made this statement on the day of Pentecost, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39. Thus if the promises of Christ as made in the gospel that he taught us are to as many as the Lord our God should call, then there is no limit to the time, or scope of these blessings, which would give us to understand that the Saviour's message was to all nations in all ages, to come into his kingdom and subscribe to his rules and form of government, and he would give rest from their labours and burdens.

It is with the form of government that he governs his kingdom with, that now concerns us. Looking at the question from this broader standpoint, we at once must come to the conclusion that there must be some kind of law made to which all who would enjoy the promised blessings must subscribe to. There must be provisions made by which they would be accepted into the kingdom. Again there must be rules of conduct, manner of administering the various affairs that pertain to the minute details of the kingdom. Thus we see that there arises before our minds a vast amount of matter that at first glance was not apparent. Christ realizing the extent of how this promise would affect others, wisely saw to it that provision should be made that would be perpetual in their character. For the object He had in mind when he set up his kingdom on earth, and sent out this message to all that would receive it, was for the purpose of giving aid to those who had been placed in bondage by the enemy of all men, even Satan. It was from the labours and burden that this wicked one had caused to be placed upon

**ZION'S ADVOCATE**  
ISSUED IN THE INTEREST OF  
**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

(Organized April 6, 1830, by Jos. Smith)

Published under direction of the General Church Authorities at Independence, Mo.

**BOARD OF PUBLICATION**

C. L. Wheaton, Andrew Himes, A. O. Frisbey

Address all communications to

C. L. WHEATON, Editor

P. O. Box 22      Englewood, Mo.

A. O. FRISBEY, Business Manager

Subscription is 50c per year in advance. Foreign countries 75c.

**NOTICE**

Zion's Advocate will go to press each issue in time to be put in the mail by the 15th of the month. All letters and articles for publication must be in the hands of the editor not later than the 1st of month preceding the above date, or they will not be printed, if accepted, until following issue. This is necessary that the Board of Publication may have time to pass upon and prepare the copy for the printers.

the children of men that Christ came into this world from the presence of His Father in Heaven, and endured the pangs of sorrow and persecution from the evil one, in order to establish his Kingdom be for the over-throw of the devil. So he himself being in the form of man, subject to the same environments, circumstances and conditions found that in order that he might be qualified to rule over such a kingdom that he too must submit himself to the same laws as he asked others to do. As proof of this let us recall to mind what he said to John when he was baptized in Jordan. Didn't he say concerning his baptism, "Suffer it to be so now for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," Math. 3:15.

Thus we see that Christ who was the symbol of perfection, who had broken no law realized that it was necessary for him to keep the laws that were given, to sustain him through obedience to the same. So we see that if it was necessary for him, we can justly reason that it is all necessary for us to do the same. So let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

**The Form of Government**

It is said in the scriptures that "the invisible things of him (God) from the foundation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Romans 1:20. If this is true then we should be able to draw an analogy between the way Christ's Kingdom shall be governed and the governments of the earth, which I believe is possible.

In the first place we must take into consideration that to have a kingdom, there must be officers, subjects and territory. If any of these are

lacking, then there is no kingdom. This is necessary in order to establish a temporal kingdom, it is also necessary in order to establish a spiritual kingdom. So when we think of an earthly kingdom, we think of conditions where there is a king or ruler, who has control of certain territory and inhabited by his subjects. We also conclude that in order to perpetuate his kingdom and to assure its well being, that he would prescribe a code of laws by which his subjects would be governed. This would necessitate the providing of officers qualified to go forth and administer the laws and represent him throughout his kingdom. He would also provide ways by which people would become citizens of his kingdom, also how that they should be punished or rewarded for their conduct.

(To be continued)

**INDEPENDENCE ITEMS**

The General Conference of Oct. 6th, met with a spirit of unity and peace that was good to behold. The matters of most importance considered was, that of continuation of the Advocate and the working out of a Missionary, pastoral, and financial program for the church. It was decided that the Advocate would be continued, and the members rallied to its support in a way that was good to behold. The working out of the Missionary, pastoral, and financial program of the church was referred to the elders to be worked out, and reported backed to conference before adjournment.

Elder Clarence L. Wheaton is holding a series of Gospel meetings at Fairmount Highlands, that are attended with interest, the prospects are good for building up the work in that locality. The Choral Society is rendering good service in these meetings, and their work is highly appreciated.

We are pleased to announce the marriage of Bro. L. G. Cogan to Miss Irene Rice, both of Independence, Mo. The wedding took place at the bride's home on Lexington road. We wish them a long and happy married life.

Brothers Floyd and Chas. Denham arrived in Zion safe and tired last Friday evening. Bro. Floyd will settle down here and bring his family.

Bro. Charles Denham, who holds the office of Deacon, gave us a short talk, in which he urged the church to do more missionary work, as he thought the field was white for harvest, and the laborers few.