

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."—I Nephi 3:187.

Volume 34

Independence, Missouri, January, 1957

No. 1

New Year's Riddle

The year that's here before our eyes,
What does it now betide?
Of fortune good, or fortune bad,
The soft, or harder side?

It is a book, which all uncut,
We cannot guess, or read.
The contents are a mystery great
As we are all agreed.

We cannot say what it shall bring
Of weal, or even woe;
But this we can depend upon,
That we shall onward go.

The Lord has promised He will guide
And comfort on the way.
So we will trust and praise His name,
Who planned our little day.

We'll honor Him, our Master great!
Our times are in His hand.
Let us rejoice. He has the care.
Some day we'll understand.

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ZION'S ADVOCATE

Official Publication of the Church of Christ

Headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE BOARD OF PUBLICATION, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri.

Entered as Second-Class Matter May 14, 1929, at the Post Office of Independence, Missouri, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One Year, \$1.50 In bundles of twelve or more, for missionary purposes, \$1.00. Canadian and all foreign rates, \$1.75.

Send all donations for the Temple Fund, the Storehouse, Consecrations, Tithes, Offerings, and subscriptions for the Advocate to: The Church of Christ, (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL

As believers in the restoration of the fulness of the Gospel of Christ, the people of the Church of Christ believe in present day revelation. We believe that God speaks to His people according to their faith today as He has done in ages past. There is one condition placed on the acceptance of revelations coming to the church today and that condition which we have stated as our belief is that all revelations must be in harmony with the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The question often arises as to which of the many translations of the Bible the church accepts. The answer is simple. The Church has accepted as its standard of faith the King James Version of the Bible. (See Advocate November, 1925—page 3).

In June of 1829, just before the Book of Mormon had been completed, a revelation came to Joseph Smith and two of his associates stating, "Behold I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true; wherefore you know that they are true; and if you know that they are true, behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written, concerning my church, my gospel and my rock."

Among some of the things they had written were statements of Lehi and Nephi nearly 600 years before Christ.

Nephi saw our day and the troubles that would be upon God's people. In his wonderful vision the angel said to him, "—Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church that there were many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God; and after these plain and precious things were taken away, it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles;—" Nephi further writes, "And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which proceeded forth from the

mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles, unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren; and after it had come forth unto them, I beheld other books which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles, and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true. And the angel spake unto me, saying, These last records which thou hast seen among the Gentiles shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; . . .

"And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in power, in very deed, unto the taking away of their stumbling blocks, and harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of my father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land for ever; they shall no more be brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded; and that great pit which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable church, which was founded by the devil and his children, that he might lead away the souls of men down to hell; yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men, shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God, not the destruction of the soul, save it be the casting of it into that hell which hath no end; for behold, this is according to the captivity of the devil, and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him."

We find a statement made by Lehi shortly before his death to his son, Joseph, "Wherefore the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins."

The statement given in the above quoted revelation and those quoted by Lehi and Nephi are in full harmony; therefore they should be heeded and not passed over lightly. Let us, therefore, study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

N. F. D.

A LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Independence, Missouri
December 12, 1956

To the Membership of the
Church of Christ (Temple Lot),
Scattered Abroad.

Greeting:

By this time most of you, who are readers of the Advocate, will have read and digested the "Declaration" and "General Epistle" issued by eight members of the Council of Twelve, purporting to set forth "the teachings of the Church of Christ, with reference, especially, to the final destiny of mankind, together with the means, indicated in the scriptures, as being God's plan of attaining salvation."

In connection with this Epistle, the Declaration was issued setting forth the provision, that when the quarterly, "Plain and Precious Things," is being used, that we should analyze its material in the light of what is set forth in the 'General Epistle of the Council of Twelve,' relative to points of doctrine touching upon the final state of man, between this time and the convening of the next General Conference of the Church of Christ in April, 1957."

When these documents appeared in print, and prior to the discussion of them with other persons, I obtained a copy of the Advocate for December, 1956, from Brother J. M. Case, at the beginning of the evening service, Sunday, December 2, 1956. As would be natural under the circumstances, I turned to those pages containing these documents to examine them and to see how they looked in print.

As I read these documents in their printed form the chastening influence of the Holy Spirit rested upon me in condemnation for the part I had taken in formulating and submitting these documents to the church. How these false doctrines encouched in the language of these documents escaped my notice, I do not know, except that in the haste to have them in shape for the approval of some of the brethren before they departed, I was careless. As I read them there in the meeting, I was immediately filled with a feeling of revulsion, and remorse, for it was shown to me that these documents contained the seed of innovation, and false doctrine which I have opposed all the years of my ministry in the Church of Christ; and which were opposed by the old elders of the Church before me. From that moment I deeply regretted that I had signed my name to the Epistle, that I had not done as others had done, just refused to do so. I sat through the service and pondered what I should do, and silently prayed for light and understanding.

Immediately upon my return home I made this matter a subject of prayer, and pledged the Lord, that I would do whatever was his will in the matter if he would forgive my error. And as the result I was inspired to sit down immediately that night and write a letter to the members of the Council of Twelve, calling their attention to the thing we had done, and calling upon them to "instruct the Secretary (of the Twelve) to make (necessary) corrections, and reprint it as corrected, in the January, 1957, issue of Zion's Advocate. For I (was) convinced that unless we (did), we (should) not only come under the condemnation of the church at the next conference, but also the condemnation of our heavenly Father; for if we (should) allow these things to stand as they are, we (would) be guilty of afflicting the church with evil innovations."

At the present time, with the dead line near for acceptance of articles for the Advocate at hand, I have had response from but two members of the Council of Twelve, one who had signed this document with me, and the other who had not signed it, nor approved it. Yet, I had urged that an answer by return mail would be appreciated. For I felt that time was an essence, and that these errors should be corrected at the earliest moment before they did irreparable damage and harm in the church. Consequently, feeling the need of clearing my own conscience of condemnation, and in order to make amends for my share of this erroneous procedure, I have felt the necessity of using this medium of voicing my sentiments at this time and in this manner.

As a prelude to further statements, I wish to give a brief resume of events preceding the call of the Council of Twelve together the first week of November, 1956. Sensing the under-current of feeling among certain of the members of the Council of Twelve, who had an antipathy towards the quarterly above mentioned, and being well acquainted with their views on the subject, and also feeling that other important phases of our church work should be taken care of, I joined with Apostle Thos. J. Jordan, while we were in Saskatchewan, doing missionary work together, in drafting and signing a petition to the Council of Twelve, to call a special meeting of the Council of Twelve, the General Bishopric, the Council of Seventies and others of the Eldership together, as a body of the ministry, in fasting and prayer, to consider these things, and become more united, and be better prepared to carry out our ministry in the Church of Christ. This petition was issued from Regina, on August 6, 1956, and the date we suggested was the fore part of November. This petition was rejected. A substitute, proposed by four members of the Council, making the quarterly the main subject for consideration of just the Council of Twelve, prevailed. Accordingly, we convened on November 5, 1956, at 2:30 p. m. Though no provision was made that we come together in fasting, some of us did, and as the result, it appeared that during the seven sessions in which this quarterly was reviewed and discussed, paragraph by paragraph, that a greater degree of unanimity prevailed than had been expected, which I am sorry to say was not reflected in the Epistle which was drafted.

In our review of this material, we found a number of typographical errors, especially in the scriptural references given; several places where, because of grammatical construction, the meaning was vague; and in some places, positions taken, which, not being clearly stated, would indicate on the surface erroneous doctrinal positions. These observations were taken down by the secretary in copious notes; being made a part of the minutes for each session, they were read back to us for approval, with the view, at least in the minds of several of us, that a transcript of these notes would be made and accompany the documents that were to be given to the Sunday School Quarterly Committee and the Board of Publication, for their information and use in correcting a future edition thereof. Without such notations our effort was futile, and thereby voided our action.

No such information was relayed to these respon-

sible departments of the General Church by our Secretary, neither prior to the publication of these documents nor to this date (December 12, 1956). Consequently considerable confusion and resentment has been engendered against the Council of Twelve as the result.

During these sessions, in the verbal exchange of views, certain positions were taken which led me to believe that a closer understanding could be reached. At the conclusion of our review, a number of resolutions were proposed by various members. These in turn were placed in the hands of a committee to engross them and report back a suitable resolution. The result was the Epistle and Declaration based upon it.

Prior to these documents being published, it was, as the ethical thing to do, our duty to have called both the Officers of the General Sunday School Association, and the Board of Publications, into counsel with us, and inform them of our findings and contemplated action. These documents should have been submitted to the absent member of the Council, Apostle Thos. E. Barton. They should have been submitted to the action of a General Conference of the Church and a Referendum, of which due notice should have been given prior to such conference, as this Epistle had a bearing upon the faith and belief of the church as expressed through its Articles of Faith and Practices, before being promulgated, as the "teachings of the Church of Christ" upon the subject. None of these safeguards to lawful procedure were followed. Therefore, I am compelled to confess to the whole church that the action thus taken and the procedure followed was not legal, and the publication of it was abortive, and therefore null and void.

Under these circumstances, I regret the necessity of confessing through the medium of the Advocate, the need for me to recant, and withdraw my name from the support of this document, and to declare this action out of harmony with the teachings of the Church of Christ; and to ask the forgiveness of all concerned for the part taken by me in imposing it upon the body of the church.

The chief objections to this document, called an Epistle, is to the innovation doctrines found in paragraph 5, designated as "Fourth;" paragraph 7, designated as "Sixth;" and to paragraph 11, designated as "4. The Second Death." An examination of paragraph 5 reveals, if allowed to stand, that man's probation, as to the right of choice and the use of his free-moral agency is extended beyond the grave "right down to the day of judgment." This doctrine is one which has been opposed by the Church of Christ from my earliest recollection, as false and heretic. The very references given in connection with this statement, (sustaining the position I take, and which I took in the Council sessions, i. e., Psa. 8:4-5; II Nephi 1:116-121; II Nephi 7:40; Hel. 5:85-86.) shows conclusively that man's probation, agency, or right of choice to accept good or evil, is ended at the time of death in this mortal body. I called these facts to the attention of my brethren of the Council of Twelve in my letter of December 2, 1956, and suggested, as one of the committee who had drafted it, that this statement be amended so as to read:

"Fourth: We believe that man was given his agency and the right of choice for himself; (Psa. 8:5; II Nephi 1:116-121; II Nephi 7:40; Hel. 5:85-86), and this right is never abrogated, but follows man's existence right down to the day of death in this mortal body."

Because of the language of another place, this 5th paragraph is ambiguous, wherein it states: "We further believe that all little children and those who die without the gospel having been preached to them in this life, shall come forth in the first resurrection to dwell with Christ, upon the earth for a thousand years; and that they shall hear the gospel and have an opportunity of obeying it; but the principle of baptism for the remission of sins committed in this life shall not apply to them." And with this statement references were given to the Scriptures as follows: "Moroni 8:25-28; Book of Commandments 48:48-49; Psa. 102:15." These passages teach, "it is a solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children; . . . that this thing ye shall teach, repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; . . . that little children need no repentance, neither baptism," (Moroni 8:1-11), and "that all little children are alive in Christ, and also they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all they that have on law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, can not repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing . . . for repentance is unto them that are under condemnation, and under the curse of a broken law," etc. As this stands in the Epistle, these will hear the gospel beyond the grave and be given a chance to obey or reject it, and then be baptized for a remission of sins committed in this life. This was not the intention of this statement as these scriptures show. Therefore, I have recommended to the Council in my letter of December 2, 1956, that this statement should be amended to read:

"We further believe that all little children and those who die without the gospel having been preached to them in this life, shall come forth in the first resurrection to dwell with Christ upon the earth a thousand years; that they shall hear the gospel and obey it, but the principle of baptism for the remission of sins shall not apply to them."

Relative to paragraph 7, designated as "Sixth," we find it to read:

"We believe that after the judgment, the human race shall be divided into four classes, governed by their conduct up to that time."

The quotations from Scripture, as well as from the Evening and The Morning Star, which were given in connection with this statement will not support this theory as published in the Advocate. They teach, as well as do many other Scriptures, that men will be judged according to the works performed in this mortal body. The erroneous interpretation of the Scriptures thus cited in the Epistle was called to the attention of the Council of Twelve, in my letter of December 2, 1956, also, with the recommendations that this paragraph, to conform with paragraph 5 should also be changed to read:

"We believe that after the judgment, the human

race shall be divided into four classes, governed by their conduct up to the time of death of the mortal body."

In paragraph 11, designated as "4. Second Death:" the concluding clause of that statement reads, "who are partakers of the same death." I recommended that this should have been amended to read: "who are partakers of the second death."

Perhaps others may find further amendments to offer, but so far these are the only ones I have been impressed to offer. There may be those perhaps, who feel that I should go still further and repudiate a belief in what we may term the various degrees of reward and punishment, which are set forth in this Epistle. To these I simply call attention to the fact that this belief has prevailed in the Church of Christ since February 1832; to me it seems scriptural, just, and equitable, and in accord with the justice and mercy of God. At this present time, and until such times as the Lord may give instructions to the contrary, or we shall be able to deduce from sound scriptural evidence that this principle is contrary to the just, merciful, and equitable attributes of our heavenly Father, I see no reason to abandon a belief in it.

Under the circumstances I am convinced that as a Council of the Church we made a grievous mistake in publishing this document without giving more mature thought and consideration to the consequences, and without consulting with the Departments and Boards of the Church affected, thereby making it an abortive action.

We grant to each one who had a part in formulating these documents, and publishing them, sincerity of purpose. Therefore, in conclusion, with much humiliation, chagrin, and sorrow, I find it necessary to repudiate it, on the terms set forth above. To do otherwise would lend support to false doctrines to which I have been opposed all of my ministerial life in this Church of Christ, and which at this late date in life I cannot subscribe to, nor influence others in doing.

Most sincerely your servant in Christ,

Clarence L. Wheaton

Member Council of Twelve

NEWS FROM LOCALS

Black River Falls, Wisconsin

It has been a long time since we have written to the Advocate. This has been a very busy summer for me. I have had lots of company and with other things I haven't taken time to write.

We hold our Sacrament meetings every month and our Sunday School every Sunday. Our last meeting was at my house with Brother Gill in charge. Brother and Sister Babcock have left for a vacation trip to California along with Brother and Sister Sheldon. We feel that this is a much needed trip as Sister Babcock has had so much heartache in the last month. We all mourn the passing of their son Elwood and of Brother Nelson Tucker, Sister Babcock's father.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank every-

one in behalf of Brother and Sister Isaac Brockman, for all the help they received when the household goods burned. It is truly wonderful the way their friends and relations have helped them, and they really do appreciate it. It was Sister Marquette's house and she has it rebuilt now and Brother Brockman is living in it once again.

We had a wonderful visit from Brother and Sister Flint this summer. We were so glad to see them and they both looked so well. While he was here he baptized Betty Crocker, the young sister of Sister Ruth Brockman. We want to welcome her into our Church and we feel she has done a very wise thing.

We are very well pleased to have Brother Glenn Gill with us. He is teaching school again this year in Independence, Wisconsin. He comes down almost every Sunday for our Sunday School along with Brother Babcock. We feel that our Sunday School is very important because we realize how necessary it is to start our children the right way. We have a big job ahead of us and hope we may fulfill it as best we can.

I didn't get to attend the reunion this year but they all say it was good and getting better every year. We had a good crowd from all over Wisconsin and other states. Also many of our Elders from other fields were here.

We have started another little get-together here in Sparta. Brother Gill comes down on Friday nights and we sing hymns. After a couple of hours we have lunch and enjoy a nice evening. We want to learn some new songs, and with Brother Gill's knowledge of music, my piano playing, and all of us singing, we have a nice time.

The Babcock's are going to spend Thanksgiving with the Sheldons in Independence. They will leave Thursday. We wish them a fine trip and hope they find everyone well down there.

Sunday, Brother Gill brought a tape recording of one of Brother Tom Maley's sermons. We enjoyed listening to it and I am sure we got a lot of good from it. Brother Tom Maley is the Elder in Minneapolis.

Sister Viola Petrie and family from Portage came down several times this summer to attend our meetings. She had her little girl, Christine, blessed at one of these times. Also I had my little daughter, Donna Mae, blessed by Brother Flint. He has blessed our five boys and now our little daughter. It seems we keep him busy every year doing this.

Sister Verna Jones has also been down this summer to our meetings. When last we heard, her family were all well. They visit her parents, Brother and Sister Eddy, of Black River Falls, quite often.

This is about all the news up this way. I will try to write more often but with a small group like this there isn't much news.

Sister Evangeline Clifton, Reporter

(continued on page 13)

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

NOTE: We solicit articles for this department written in an affirmative

manner. An affirmative article is one in which a belief, or an opinion, is expressed, and evidences presented to support that belief. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE THE OPINION OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH OR THE OPINIONS OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF.

ABOUT THE VISION, FEBRUARY 16, 1832

Concerning the vision had by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, and published in the old Evening and The Morning Star, for July, 1832, and used as reference in the epistle of the Council of Twelve in the December Advocate, we felt that it might be well to give our readers the full text of this vision, that was later inserted in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as Section 76. This is perhaps one of the most outstanding and profound revelations ever given by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

B. C. Flint

THE VISION

Hear, O ye Heavens, and give ear, O earth, and rejoice ye inhabitants thereof, for the Lord he is God, and beside him there is none else; and great is his wisdom; marvelous are his ways; and the extent of his doings, none can find out; his purposes fail not, neither are there any who can stay his hand: from eternity to eternity, he is the same, and his years never fail.

I the Lord am merciful and gracious unto them who fear me, and delight to honor them who serve me in righteousness, and in truth; great shall be their reward, and eternal shall be their glory; and unto them will I reveal all mysteries; yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old; and for ages to come will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things; yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations; their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to Heaven; before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to nought; for by my spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will; yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man.

We, Joseph and Sidney, being in the spirit on the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, and through the power of the Spirit, our eyes were opened, and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God, even things which were from the beginning before the world was, which was ordained of the Father, through his only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning, of whom we bear record, and the record which ye bear is the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is in the Son whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the Heavenly Vision; for as we sat doing the work of translation,

which the Lord had appointed unto us, we came to the the twenty-ninth verse of the fifth chapter of John, which was given unto us thus: speaking of the resurrection of dead who should hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they who have done good in the resurrection of the just, and they who have done evil in the resurrection of the unjust. Now this caused us to marvel, for it was given us of the spirit; and while we meditated upon these things, the Lord touched the eyes of our understandings, and they were opened, and the glory of the Lord shown round about; and we beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fulness; and saw the holy angels, and they who are sanctified before his throne, worshiping God and the Lamb forever and ever. And now after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him, that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the only begotten of the Father; that by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are made, and were created; and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God. This we saw also and bear record, that an angel of God, who was in authority in the presence of God, who rebelled against the only begotten Son, (whom the Father loved, and who was in the bosom of the Father,) and was thrust down from the presence of God and the Son, and was called Perdition; for the Heavens wept over him; for he was Lucifer, even the son of the morning; and we beheld and lo, he is fallen! is fallen! even the son of the morning. And while we were yet in the Spirit, the Lord commanded us that we should write the Vision; for behold satan, that old serpent, even the devil, who rebelled against God, and sought to take kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ; wherefore he maketh war with the saints of God, and encompasses them about: And we saw a vision of the eternal sufferings of those with whom he maketh war and overcometh, for thus came the voice of the Lord unto us.

Thus saith the Lord, concerning all those who know my power, and who have been made partakers thereof, and suffered themselves, through the power of the devil, to be overcome unto the denying of the truth, and the defying of my power: they are they who are the sons of perdition, of whom I say it had been better for them never to have been born; for they are vessels of wrath doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels, throughout eternity: concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness for them in this world nor in the world to come; having denied the Holy Ghost after having received it, and having denied the only begotten Son of the Father, crucifying him unto themselves, and putting him to an open shame: these are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels, and the only

ones on whom the second death shall have any power; yea, verily the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord, after the sufferings of his wrath, who shall be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead, through the triumph and the glory of the Lamb; who was slain, who was in the bosom of the Father before the worlds were made. And this is the Gospel, the glad tidings which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us, that he came into the world, even Jesus to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; that through him all might be saved, whom the Father had put into his power; and made by him who glorifieth the Father; and saveth all the work of his hands, except those sons of perdition, who denieth the Son after the Father hath revealed him: wherefore he saveth all save them, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, which is endless punishment, which is eternal punishment, to reign with the devil and his angels throughout eternity, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, which is their torment, but the end thereof, neither the place thereof, and their torment no man knoweth, neither was revealed, neither is, neither will be revealed unto man, save to them who are made partakers thereof: nevertheless I the Lord showeth it by vision unto many, but straightway shutteth it up again: wherefore the end, the width, the height, the depth, and the misery thereof, he understandeth not, neither any man save them who are ordained unto this condemnation. And we heard the voice saying, Write the Vision for lo, this is the end of the vision of the eternal sufferings of the ungodly!

And again, we bear record for we saw and heard, and this is the testimony of the Gospel of Christ, concerning them who come forth in the resurrection of the just: they are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name, and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he hath given, that, by keeping the commandment, they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power; and who overcome by faith, and are sealed by that Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheddeth forth upon all those who are just and true: they are they who are the church of the first-born: they are they into whose hands the Father hath given all things: they are they who are priests and kings, who having received of his fulness, and of his glory, are priests of the most High after the order of Melchisedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the only begotten Son: wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the Sons of God: wherefore all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's; and they shall overcome all things: wherefore let no man glory in man, but rather let him glory in God, who shall subdue all enemies under his feet: these shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever: these are they whom he shall bring with him, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven, to reign on the earth over his people: these are they who shall have part in the first

resurrection: these are they who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just: these are they who are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all: these are they who have come to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of Enoch, and of the first-born: these are they whose names are written in Heaven, where God and Christ is the judge of all: these are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood: these are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the Son, even of God the highest of all; which glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical.

And again, we saw the Terrestrial world, and behold and lo! these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differeth from that of the church of the first-born, who have received of the fulness of the Father, even as that of the Moon differeth from the Sun of the firmament. Behold, these are they who died without law; and also they who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited and preached the Gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it: these are they who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men: these are they who receive of his glory, but not of his fulness: these are they who receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father: wherefore they are bodies terrestrial, and not bodies celestial, and differeth in glory as the Moon differeth from the Sun: these are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus: wherefore they obtained not the crown over the kingdoms of our God. And now this is the end of the vision which we saw of the terrestrial, that the Lord commanded us to write while we were yet in the Spirit.

And again, we saw the glory of the telestial, which glory is that of the lesser, even as the glory of the stars differeth from that of the glory of the Moon in the firmament: these are they who received not the Gospel of Christ, neither the testimony of Jesus; these are they who deny not the Holy Ghost: these are they who are thrust down to hell: these are they who shall not be redeemed from the devil, until the last resurrection, until the Lord, even Christ the Lamb, shall have finished his work: these are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Ghost through the administration of the terrestrial; and the terrestrial through the administration of the celestial; and also the telestial receive it of the administering of angels, who are appointed to minister for them, or who are appointed to be ministering spirits for them, for they shall be heirs of salvation—And thus we saw in the Heavenly vision, the glory of the telestial which surpasseth all understanding; and no man knoweth it except him to whom God hath revealed it. And thus we saw the glory of the terrestrial, which excelleth in all things the glory of the telestial, even in glory, and in power, and in might, and in dominion. And thus we saw the glory of the celestial, which excelleth in all things where God, even the Father, reigneth upon his throne forever and ever; before whose throne all things

bow in humble reverence and giveth him glory forever and ever. They who dwell in his presence are the church of the first born; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace; and he maketh them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion. And the glory of the celestial is one, even as the glory of the Sun is one. And the glory of the Terrestrial is one, even as the glory of the Moon is one. And the glory of the Telesstial is one, even as the glory of the stars is one: for as one star differeth from another star in glory, even so differeth one from another in glory in the telesstial world: for these are they who are of Paul, and of Apollos, and Cephas: they are they who say, there are some of one and some of another; some of Christ; and some of John; and some of Moses; and some of Elias; and some of Esias; and some of Isaiiah; and some of Enoch, but receive not the Gospel; neither the testimony of Jesus; neither the prophets; neither the everlasting covenant; last of all; these are they who will not be gathered with the saints, to be caught up into the church of the first born, and received into the cloud: these are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie: these are they who suffer the wrath of God on the earth: these are they who suffer the vengeance of eternal fire; these are they who are cast down to hell and suffer the wrath of Almighty God until the fulness of times, when Christ shall have subdued all enemies under his feet, and shall have perfected his work, when he shall deliver up the kingdom and present it unto his Father spotless, saying: I have overcome and trodden the wine-press alone, even the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God: then shall he be crowned with the crown of his glory, to sit on the throne of his power to reign forever and ever. But behold and lo, we saw the inhabitants of the telesstial world, that they were in number as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the sea shore, and heard the voice of the Lord saying: These all shall bow the knee, and every tongue shall confess to him who sitteth upon the throne forever and ever: for they shall be judged according to their works; and every man shall receive according to his own works, and his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared; and they shall be servants of the most High, but where God and Christ dwells they cannot come, worlds without end. This is the end of the vision which we saw, which we were commanded to write while we were yet in the Spirit.

But great and marvelous are the works of the Lord and the mysteries of his kingdom which he showed unto us, which surpasseth all understanding in glory, and in might, and in dominion, which he commanded us we should not write, while we were yet in the spirit, and are not lawful for man to utter; neither is man capable to make them known, for they are only to be seen and understood by the power of the Holy Ghost; which God bestows on those who love him and purify themselves before him; to whom he grants this privilege of seeing and knowing for themselves; that through the power and manifestation of the Spirit, while in the flesh, they may be able to bear his presence in the world of glory. And to God and the Lamb be

glory, and honor, and dominion, forever and ever. Amen.

YE SHALT NOT SURELY DIE

Nehorism is a doctrine or theory which teaches the same contradiction to God's word that was instituted by the serpent in the Garden of Eden when he said to our first parents, "Ye shalt not surely die." Nehorism teaches that men shall not die, but that ". . . the Lord created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and in the end all men should have eternal life." (See Alma 1:3-18.) This was called "priestcraft" by Alma when it was first introduced among the Nephites by a man named Nehor.

Before he died, Nehor acknowledged that what he had taught was contrary to the word of God; but his confession did not stop the spread of his false teaching by his followers, for in Alma 13:9 we find them still proclaiming, "We do believe that God will save all men," and they "did not believe in the repentance of their sins." (Alma 10:106.)

Nephi, to whom God revealed so much, (for which I constantly give thanks) foretells that this same "false, and vain, and foolish doctrine" would be taught in the latter days, also. (Read II Nephi 12:3-18.) He says that the Book of Mormon will come forth in a day when many shall say ". . . Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die: and it shall be well with us. And there shall also be many which shall say, Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God, he will justify in committing a little sin: yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this. And do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God."

By a careful analysis of these words we see that, while the approach to this doctrine may vary among different teachers, yet they all arrive at the same conclusion, "Ye shalt not surely die."

Moroni, in Mormon 4, describes what he was shown concerning the latter days very similarly to the way Nephi pictures it. We invite you to study the whole chapter, but for brevity's sake, we will quote only a few verses. "And behold, their prayers were also in behalf of him that the Lord should suffer to bring these things forth. And no one need say, they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord has spoken it; for out of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it." (Verses 32-33). "Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth; There shall be murders, and robbings, and lying, and deceivings, and whoredoms, and all manner of abominations, when there shall be many who will say, do this, or do that, and it mattereth not, for the Lord will uphold such at the last day. But wo unto such, for they are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say, Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins." (Verses 38-41.)

It is my purpose to show that the prophecies of Nephi and Moroni concerning these things are, and have been, literally fulfilled. I also intend to show that it was because of the fact that many plain and precious things were taken out of the Bible that the perpetration of these false, vain, and foolish doctrines would be made possible in the latter days.

In I Nephi 3:156-187 we find that the Book of Mormon is that which is to make clear or to fill in the plain and precious things which were left out of the Bible which came across the many waters with the Gentiles, and went forth among the people. I will show some of the places where this is also fulfilled; and by accepting the Book of Mormon and allowing it to do its work, we may free ourselves from the darkness of Nehorism.

While the spirit of Nehorism consistently insists on propogating the same lie, "Ye shalt not surely die", or "All men shall be saved," yet it is not consistent in teaching all its converts the same avenue of approach. Just as Nephi indicated it would be, we find it a many-sided doctrine. With some of its converts, or victims, it is able to go much further than with others. But in all cases it is able to go far enough to accomplish its end: to persuade its victims, so cunningly, to be careless about repentance, to one degree or another. It almost always knows when to stop, which is just short of revealing itself for the lie that it is. For example, we will cite the positions taken by some of its victims:

1. There is the theory of praying sinners out of "purgatory" or hell. This concedes that there is a place of torment to the soul where he who has been wicked is confined until judgment day; but it teaches that a priest may, by prayers, intervene for that sinner, and his soul may be released from purgatory and soar into paradise, free from guilt and unthreatened by punishment or eternal death. The services of the priest, of course, must be obtained by the survivors of the departed one, and the "prayers" paid for by them, unless the deceased has had foresight enough to provide such funds in his will. I have, upon occasion, been asked to contribute to funds to pay for such prayers as much as a year after the departure of the "sinner" from this mortal life. This theory, or doctrine, fulfills the reference quoted above in Moroni 4:41. The sinner is told, "Ye shalt not surely die," even though he has passed from this life without having repented of his sins. That is, if he has enough financing.

2. Then there is the theory of "baptism for the dead" by proxy. It is hardly different from the one mentioned above except in method. The ultimate end and intention is the same. The converts to this doctrine concede that all men must be baptized or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God, (II Nephi 6:48) but ignore the scripture that says that those that do not have the law are not accountable to the law, and are therefore under no condemnation for not being baptized. (Moroni 8:25-29, Mosiah 1:107, Romans 3:19-31.) They themselves are baptized for these uncondemned departed souls, and suppose that they have, by that act, freed them from hell or purgatory; and they exult in the thought, as they visualize the released soul soaring into paradise, that they have performed "work for the dead," as they shout, in effect, "Ye shalt not surely die." The

early history of the restoration indicates that this particular brand of Nehorism took some 10,000 or more souls at one swoop when nine members of the Quorum of Twelve were united in its erroneous (false, vain, and foolish) doctrine, and were able to persuade that many to follow them into that, and other, error.

3. There is the theory that to be saved in the kingdom of God one need only to lift up his hand and say, "I believe on Jesus Christ," and he has nothing more to do. Once saved, always saved. Once in grace, always in grace. Without doing any more at all "Ye shalt not surely die."

4. There is the theory that anyone who has not heard or understood the gospel, as well as those who have heard and rejected it, will be given a chance, or a second chance as the case might be, for probation after death in the spirit world. It is claimed that, "God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live," and they theorize that, "God's pleasure must always be done; therefore all men will be saved." By this concept, God's love and mercy completely overthrows His justice; He goes beyond the grave, contradicts His own edicts, and brings the wicked spirits back to Himself, regardless, so that His "pleasure" may be complete.

5. Some teach that there will be no "second" chance for those who have once accepted the gospel and then gone back to sin, but do teach that those who have not heard the gospel in this life must hear it in the "hereafter" so that they may be given a choice, or "chance", of accepting or rejecting it. This theory includes all the little children who die before the age of accountability, and all they who have no law. This is the reverse aspect of Nehorism. It snatches the innocent (those who are not under condemnation, because they have no law to condemn them, and little children, who are incapable of committing sin) who are alive in Christ, and are already assured of eternal life (for the second death shall have no power over them—see Revelation 20:4-6 and Mosiah 8:56-60) right out of the arms of the Savior, denies them their inheritance of salvation, and threatens them with eternal death, after having already been safe in the arms of Jesus.

This doctrine also contends that the spirits consigned to hell or the prison-house are undergoing "correction" or punishment, and that when they have been punished there sufficiently, or "corrected", they may then either (a.) go to paradise, or (b.) be resurrected during the millenium and join the happy throng there, or (c.) be rewarded with some "glory" or reward just short of eternal life; but still, "Ye shalt not surely die."

6. And finally there is the theory that there is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that the only just thing for God to do is reward us for our good and ignore our bad. According to this doctrine, there is no such thing as perfect righteousness. So God is going to deal out to humanity a certain amount of eternal life, or "glory", divided into portions called "celestial", "terrestrial", and "testial". The "celestial" group consists of those who heard and obeyed the gospel, and endured it to the end. They have been abiding in paradise. Some say this "glory" may be reached by hearing and obeying

the gospel while in the prison-house, others say not. The "terrestrial" group are those who never heard the gospel, but lived a good life according to their conscience—honorable men, but not quite fit for "celestial" glory. Some place them in hell, some in paradise, between their death and resurrection. The third group are those who have supposedly done some good, but mostly bad, and have a little reward coming; just a little glimmer of glory. These definitely have been in hell, "paying" for their "bad" before their resurrection. Or they may have resisted the preaching of the gospel, even in the prison-house, but have done some little kind act sometime in their lives, and are therefore entitled to some little glory. But now, having "paid" for their wickedness to the uttermost farthing, they have just a little slice of eternal life coming, which is compared to the various candle-power of the starbeams. So they progress from hell to a certain amount of eternal life. Yes, they too, "shalt not surely die."

These "false, and vain, and foolish doctrines" do exist today. They existed to a greater or lesser degree in 1830 when the Book of Mormon came forth, just as Nephi and Moroni prophesied. Why do they still exist and thrive today, when we have, for over 120 years, had access to the plain and precious things which would be of much worth to those who seek truth? Is it not because we have not searched them out and believed them?

It is true that Ezekiel states that ". . . As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live . . ." (Ezek. 33:11). However, if we read from verse 7 right on through verse 20, we should take special note of verse 13, and consider it carefully, and our conclusion might be very different. "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." This is the same word that God delivered to Adam and Eve. Verses 14, 15 and 16, on the other hand describes what repentance will accomplish. Wickedness cannot be "paid for" by any human being, either in this life or lives to come. It can only be erased by repentance through faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, and His atonement. He, and He alone can "pay for" our wickedness, by His blood; and that only on condition of our repentance. Yet, men in Ezekiel's day, and men in our day say, "The way of the Lord is not equal;" and in Alma's day they said, "it is injustice that the sinner should be consigned to a state of misery." Let us see what plain and precious things may be found in the Book of Mormon on this point:

". . . According to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only, on conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state; yea, this preparatory state; for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice." (Alma 19:94.) Please read the entire chapter, but especially verses 81 to 107. I will quote verse 104: "But there is a law given and a punishment affixed, and repentance granted; which repentance, mercy claimeth; otherwise, justice claimeth the creature, and executeth the law, and the law in-

flicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God." This is exactly what Ezekiel proclaimed.

Jesus is quoted in John 12:32 as saying: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." But in III Nephi 12:26-28 we find Him saying this: "And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, I might draw all men unto me: That as I have been lifted up by men, even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil; And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father, I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works." I do not for one moment believe that Jesus preached one doctrine to the Jews and a different one to the Nephites. I believe He said the same thing to both of them. I believe that some of His words (plain and precious words) were left out of the Bible, just as Nephi says he was told by the angel; and this illustrates how the Book of Mormon supplies the plain and precious things that were left out. And by supplying them it sets at naught the doctrine of Nehorism that has been based on that verse in John; that is, that all men will be saved because all men have been redeemed.

Here is another example: In Matthew 5:26 we find a statement that "Verily, verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence" (from prison) "till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Let us see how different it sounds when the Book of Mormon supplies the plain and precious part. "Verily, verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence until thou hast paid the uttermost senine. And while ye are in prison, can ye pay even one senine? Verily, verily I say unto you, nay." (III Nephi 5:74-75.)

This gives an entirely different meaning to the idea; as different as "Thou shalt surely die" is to "Ye shalt not surely die." It sets at naught the theory of Nehorism that penance can be paid by the sinner either in this life or in the life hereafter. It does, instead, clearly show that nothing can be paid by the sinner while he is in prison, and neither can he come out unless every senine is paid. This puts man in a very hopeless situation, if he has committed any sin at all; and surely I believe that very few have passed through this life without committing some sin. But there is a solution, and the plain and precious Book of Mormon again supplies the answer.

Mankind came into the captivity of Satan when our first parents sinned. "For he shewed unto all men that they were lost, because of the transgression of their parents." (II Nephi 1:110.) "And the Messiah cometh in the fullness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall." (Verse 116.) "And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil: For he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself." (Verses 120-121.) "For it behooveth the great Creator that he suffereth himself to become subject unto men in the flesh, and die for all men, that all men

might become subject unto him. For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfill the merciful plan of the great Creator, there must needs be a power of resurrection, And the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and the fall came by reason of transgression; And because man became fallen, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord; Wherefore, it must needs be an infinite atonement; Save it should be an infinite atonement, this corruption could not put on incorruption. Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man, must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have lain down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more. O the wisdom of God! his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more . . . O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; Yea, that monster, death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit." (II Nephi 6:10-25.)

Thus we see that man cannot redeem himself, but his redemption can only be brought about by the atonement of Christ, the Son of God. He, and He alone, can release mankind from the captivity of Satan.

We find in the following scriptures that He paid for the sin of Adam, thus bringing all mankind out of the first death, which is temporal; and also the spiritual death upon certain conditions: "Yea, it behooveth him, and becometh expedient that he dieth, to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, that thereby men may be brought back into the presence of the Lord; Yea, behold this death" (Christ's) "bringeth to pass the resurrection, and redeemeth all mankind from the first death; that spiritual death for all mankind, by the fall of Adam, being cut off from the presence of the Lord, or considered dead, both as to things temporal and to things spiritual. But behold, the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord; Yea, and it bringeth to pass the conditions of repentance, that whosoever repenteth, the same is not hewn down and cast into the fire; But whosoever repenteth not, is hewn down and cast into the fire, and there cometh upon them again a spiritual death, yea, a second death, for they are cut off again as to things pertaining to righteousness." (Helaman 5:69-73.) "Therefore, as the soul could never die, and the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal; that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord; therefore it was expedient that mankind should be reclaimed from this spiritual death; Therefore as they had been carnal, sensual and devilish, by nature, this probationary state became a state for them to prepare; it became a preparatory state. And now remember, my son, if it were not for the plan of redemption, (laying it aside,) as soon as they were dead, their souls were miserable, being cut off from the presence of the Lord. And now there was no means to reclaim men from this fallen state which man had brought upon himself, because of his own disobedience; Therefore, according to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only, on conditions of repentance of

men in this probationary state; yea, this preparatory state; for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy justice. Now the work of justice could not be destroyed: if so God would cease to be God." (Alma 19:90-95.) Please read on in this chapter, but take special notice of verses 105-106. "But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead: and the resurrection of the dead bringeth back men into the presence of God; And thus they are restored into his presence; to be judged according to their works; according to the law and justice; for behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved."

Now it becomes very plain that while all mankind is redeemed from the temporal death by the atonement made by Christ, a man may only be redeemed from the spiritual captivity of Satan by repentance for sin, all of it. And such repentance must be made in this probationary state, mortality. Therefore, the spirit cannot "come out thence until thou hast paid the uttermost senine. And while ye are in prison, can ye pay even one senine? Verily, verily I say unto you, nay." The only hope we have is upon the conditions of repentance as outlined by Alma, and Samuel in the book of Helaman. And it is only because of the mercy of God, not justice, that we may have this hope of being released from Satan's captivity.

Zechariah says, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee." (Zech. 9:11-12).

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive" (they became subject unto him—Christ—instead of unto Satan. See II Nephi 6:10.) "and gave gifts unto men, Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth." (Eph. 4:8-9) "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Is. 42:6-7.) "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;" (61:1-2.)

These all agree with the points brought out by Alma and Samuel that Christ arranged a plan whereby hopeless man might have hope of coming out of the captivity of Satan, of having his blind eyes opened, and his darkness lifted, on conditions of repentance for all his sins before he leaves this life. Also Luke 4:18 and Isaiah 49:8-9 convey the same thoughts. In John 5:25 we find the promise "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that

hear shall live." Yes, Samuel and Nephi have just explained to us how all mankind were considered as dead, (though they were alive upon the earth) except it were for the atonement of Christ. The atonement was about to be made which would make it possible, by true penitence, for spiritually dead mankind to live again, or be restored "into the presence of God" instead of existing forever in that hopeless condition which would have prevailed forever if there had been no atonement or payment of "the uttermost senine" by Christ.

We cannot atone for our sins by enduring punishment. We, ourselves, cannot "pay for" our sins in any way; for we are in the captivity of Satan as soon as we have sinned, and are imprisoned by him. We cannot pay even one senine. Sin can only be wiped out by repentance—"truly penitent" repentance. The only benefit that punishment can be to mankind, by way of correction, is that punishment or chastisement that comes upon us before we depart from this life, which brings remorse of conscience, and meekness, and a broken-heart, which contriteness is truly penitent.

We find that Nehorism, in one of its many aspects, has chosen to interpret the foregoing scriptures relative to the word "dead" to mean those whose earth-life had ended. Such a wresting of the Scriptures would make it possible to teach that man could atone for his sins by being punished in the prison house while he is awaiting his resurrection. "And if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God." This sets at naught the atonement of Christ. He did not atone for men's sins except on condition of repentance, and that in this life.

The same wresting of the Scriptures is attempted by quoting I Peter 3:18-19. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Here this deceiving spirit stops, because to read the next verse would confound the theory it tries to promote: "Ye shall not surely die." Let us include verse 20. "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." Peter was not teaching Nehorism. These spirits were disobedient. What he taught was that the same spirit that was in the mortal body of Christ was also in the immortal body of the resurrected Christ, and also was pre-existent before the mortal body. Christ did not put some other spirit into the immortal body of the resurrected Christ. It was this same spirit (Christ) that preached unto the mortals in the days of Noah. Alma explains this, (16:232) "... That same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world."

There are many references to show that the gospel was preached to those mortals who lived before Christ came in the flesh. Because it was preached to them, the resurrection of Christ broke the bonds that bound

them, also, and they were judged according to men in the flesh, but lived according to God in the spirit, or as God had decreed. See I Peter 4:6. Mosiah 1:109 gives us an example of this. "And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them." Alma 2:20-22 brings us more evidence of the works of Christ in the spirit before he took on mortality. "... looking forward to that day, thus retaining a remission of their sins; being filled with great joy, because of the resurrection of the dead, according to the will, and power, and deliverance of Jesus Christ from the bands of death."

No, Peter did not teach Nehorism; that is, that disobedient spirits would be preached to in hell or the prison-house or purgatory, and then after they were punished for awhile, ("beaten with a few stripes") they would repent, having paid the uttermost farthing, or senine, and then "Ye shall not surely die." Peter was a preacher of the gospel. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; . . . The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (II Peter 2:4-9.) By this we know that Peter understood and taught that the unjust, the disobedient, the ungodly, who had passed from this life unrepentant, were reserved in that condition, awaiting judgment day to be given their punishment, after their resurrection. He was not picturing them as being "corrected" or being taught, or otherwise going through a second probation, as Nehorism attempts to make it appear that he taught, so that in the end "Ye shall not surely die."

Now we come to the thought that Eternal Life may be apportioned out like pieces of pie, called "degrees of glory" or reward. Paul is quoted in I Corinthians 15:40-42 as teaching this aspect of Nehorism, that men will be saved in their sins provided they have done a little good sometime in their life, and have not denied the Holy Ghost. This is an error that most of us have accepted for fact; perhaps because it was introduced into the church so soon after its organization in 1830. But, by a prayerful, serious and studious approach to this scripture, it will be found that things have been read into Paul's letter which are not there. He is not discussing rewards (or degrees of reward) anywhere in the chapter. He is simply answering the question, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (Verse 35.) In the verses prior to 35 he has been proclaiming the fact of resurrection. From verses 36 to 50 he is explaining the mystery of resurrection, and answering the question, "with what body do they come?" He explains that there are earthly bodies, and that there are heavenly bodies—which is apparent even to the unbeliever. He points out that, in appearance, earthly bodies and heavenly bodies differ;

that earthly bodies differ from each other, as do also the heavenly bodies—the sun, moon and stars. It is by their differences that we can identify them; and so shall it be in the resurrection. Our bodies will differ from each other, just as they do now or in this life, and will thus be identifiable. But 'Now this I say, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption . . . but we shall all be changed, . . . and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed.'" (Verses 50-52.) In verse 44 he has explained "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." "For this corruptible must be on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (Verses 53-54.)

Amulek is discussing the same subject in Alma 8:99-107. There is perfect accord here between Paul and Amulek; and while they agree, Amulek's words are more plain, and therefore more precious. Neither are teaching Nehorism, or that God will save men in spite of their sinful condition, but both are preachers of truth, that only the penitent will be saved. The Book of Mormon again supplies that which is plain and precious, and is therefore of great worth to both the Gentile and the House of Israel.

The reward for righteousness is life—Eternal Life. If I am alive, and you are alive, which of us is the most alive? To be alive in eternity is to be in the presence of God. To be dead in eternity is to be shut out from the presence of God. Is there any half-way place between death and life described in the Scriptures that is promised to the half-way righteous? If there is I have not found it. I have found references to "heaven and heaven of heavens" (I Kings 8:27, II Chronicles 2:6 and 6:18.) I have read Paul's reference to the "third heaven" in II Corinthians 12:2, and I notice in the fourth verse he calls it paradise. Smith's Bible Dictionary (Revised Edition) on page 125, defines heaven as being always plural in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. "The 'third heaven' of Paul, in II Corinthians 12:2, is explained from the Jewish way of naming three parts in heaven, as: 1. The place of the clouds in the air; 2. The place of the sun, moon and stars; 3. The place of God and his angels." In other words, as Paul says in verse 4, he was caught up into paradise, or the place of God and his angels, the heaven of heavens. Any place else except the place of God and his angels is away from God and out of his presence, and therefore eternal death.

The "half-way righteous" are not righteous. Can a man be called "honest" if he is just a little bit dishonest? To be truly honest, a man must be completely and always honest. To be truly righteous, a man must be completely and always righteous. If he is completely righteous he will also be truly penitent; never deliberately sinful, and always quick to repent when he finds he has erred in the least degree. Because he is truly penitent he will repent of all his sins, and be therefore spotless and blameless, and "mercy claimeth him". Mercy also atones for any sin that he is truly

unaware of, for there is no condemnation upon those who have not the law, or are unaware that they have broken a law. But to those who have the law and the doctrine of Christ, there is no hope except to obey it in every detail. If our thoughts in the least condemn us we are guilty. "And again I say unto you, Ye must repent, and be baptized in my name, and become as a little child, or ye can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God. Verily, verily I say unto you, that this is my doctrine; and whoso buildeth upon this, buildeth upon my rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock, but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell standeth open to receive such, when the floods come, and the winds beat upon them." (III Nephi 5:40-42).

Let this be our warning. Let us take heed what doctrine we are building upon. Is it Nehorism in any of its many aspects, or is it the rock of Christ's gospel? Is it "In the day thou partakest thereof, thou shalt surely die," or is it "Ye shall not surely die"? Let us make careful examination of the doctrines we are teaching or are being taught, comparing them scrupulously with the plain and precious things found in the Book of Mormon to see which side of the truth they fall on. Let us be careful lest we inadvertently accept or establish doctrine which is more, or less, than the doctrine of Christ, and we be swept away because of it, into the open gates of hell.

Rolland D. Sprague

NEWS FROM LOCALS

(continued from page 5)

Phoenix, Arizona

The following items were taken from the October, November and December bulletins of the Phoenix Branch.

Recent speakers and thoughts from their sermons were: Larry Shaw—In this day of labor and time saving devices, we seem to have less time than ever to improve ourselves for the betterment of Christ. People take the goodness of God for granted more often than in gratitude. Ed McIndoo—Remember the story of "Lewis the Strong"? We too could be forging chains that will later bind us. Oren Caviness—"This is your life—live it up!" A T-V and radio expression that would have us throw off restraint and live an abandoned life rather than an abundant life. Man should live life to its fullest. "This is your life—live it up!" but live it in abundant living, not abandoned living. Don McIndoo—Everyone needs a balance, a way of measuring our lives. Remember King Belshazzar. Christ's teachings are our measure or balance. Oren Caviness—The thought is that all this life is a preparation for life to come. It is futile to think we can do anything behind God's back. No day, no hour is too late or short to be unimportant to our lives. E. L. Yates—Our life is as a wisp of smoke. Now is the time for unfeigned love. Christ is bound when we do as He says, but if not there is no promise. October 21 in the morning C. L. Wheaton spoke. Jer. 31:21—"Set thee up

Waymarks". Waymarks are necessary to direct us on modern highways—even more important are they on the highway of life. There were many more just as interesting and vital to everyone.

One evening in the church annex we enjoyed an hour of beautiful colored slides of Arizona plants and birds with an informative talk by Louise McIndoo. The pictures were furnished by Ed McIndoo. Another evening the "Story of Rocks" was presented by Oren Caviness. Rocks are often ignored beauties of nature that God has created for our pleasure and use. Colored slides and a display of rock specimens, fluorescent and phosphorescent, were used. On another evening a treat of an interesting report or story of "The Dead Sea Scrolls" was given by Alice Darby. It left everyone with an urge to know more of these old Bible manuscripts.

There were social get-togethers in October for the Junior class at Patty Shaw's and for the Beginner's class in the church annex. October 30, Hallowe'en, "Spooks and Hobgoblins" gathered at the home of E. L. Yates for an evening of mystery and excitement. On October 7 a dinner in the annex was given in honor of Hester Reed. October 21 another dinner was given in honor of Clarence and Angela Wheaton. It is a practice to have a dinner once a month regardless, but when there are visitors it gives everyone a chance to enjoy them. On November 25 a Thanksgiving dinner was held in the annex. On Sunday night December 23, will be the annual Christmas program.

Visitors of late have been Ruby and Elmer Frishkorn and son Billy from Jamul, California, Judy and Larry George and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Floto of National City (Mrs. Floto is a sister of the late Irene F. Yates), Jim and Viva Shaw and family from Colorado, Ruth and Don Willard of Sedona, Arizona, Hester Reed from Independence, Mo., Clarence and Angela Wheaton of Independence, Mo., Andy Yates of Lancaster, California, Bruce and Marlene Cobb of Tucson, Sister R. E. Maloney of Oklahoma City and her daughter and son-in-law, Edda and Gene Thatch, of San Bernardino, California.

Hubert Yates of Phoenix is back from the Coast Guards permanently.

The storehouse stock is growing which pleases everyone very much. From a tiny acorn the giant oak tree grew.

"There was a time when we thought we were able to be of some help to the saints of Yucatan, but the tables are turning; now they are helping us. Proof: the letters appearing in the Advocate from Yucatan saints, about their dreams, healings, manifestations, faith and cheerfulness. What a lift they give us all!"

Independence Diary

The month of November was a happy and busy one for the folks here in Independence. We enjoyed several visitors, among them Brother and Sister Robertson. Those of us who had not known the former Sister Myrtle Hart were happy to meet her and to

know her as Brother Robertson's lovely and helpful companion. We wish them much happiness and hope they will be able to continue together in God's work for many years to come. Brother and Sister Frank Elliott and their three boys were here on Sunday, November 4, at the evening preaching service. They had some car trouble on their way here and so were not privileged to attend the morning Sacrament service, at which time Brother and Sister Robert Maley's baby son, Steven Richard, was blessed. Brother Maynard Case, assisted by Brother Forest Maley, officiated in this beautiful ordinance. The Frank Elliott and Robert Maley families live in Valley Center, Kansas. Brother and Sister Archie Bell were visitors during the month, but we think of them as "home folks" and are happy when they are at home with us. Perhaps Brother Leon Yates will forgive us if we say he was "half" here—we missed his dear Frances very much.

Have you heard about our Children's Music Club and Mother's Club combination? It was organized in February of this year by Sister Katherine Matthews, our Sunday School chorister, and a group of enterprising mothers. The children, ranging in age from 4 to 12 years, meet for singing at the home of Brother and Sister Nolan Matthews twice each month. The mothers meet once a month at different homes by invitation, to plan activities for the children.

Brother and Sister Kenneth Smith opened their home to the Mother's Club the evening of November 30. Mothers and Daddies left their little ones in capable hands at home and enjoyed a turkey dinner together, prepared and served by the mothers. After dinner Brother Forest Maley set up screen and projector and showed us pictures that young Brother Joe Smith had taken in Germany and Wales. Brother Joe and Brother Arthur Smith explained each picture. Some of the pictures taken near Brother George Allen's home in Wales were especially beautiful.

Among the pictures was a handsome young fellow with a background of a circular bed of prize winning tulips. The bulbs had been imported from our own dear country. This picture was taken in Holland. We parents enjoy such occasions; but greater than this is our appreciation of the time and effort Sister Matthews and Sister Margaret Mann, who is our pianist, give to the children. We are all grateful for this opportunity for our children to develop and use their God-given talent, and at the same time have a closer association together than our regular Sunday School and church activities permit. Each Sunday following class study, the children assemble in the middle section of the upper auditorium and have a short song service. To most of us who are parents or grandparents to these young singers, their sweet voices are a warm and beautiful part of our morning services. We can almost feel God's smile and hear Him say, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me."

However, all has not been joy. We are saddened by our Sister Arthur Smith's suffering. She underwent an operation on December 1 to remove splintered bone in her shoulder and other repair of the broken arm. She is again at home with Brother and Sister Kenneth Smith. Brother Smith suffers from injuries he received, although they were not considered severe. Sister

Maude Wagaman has been ill this past week. Sister Mary Lois Bryant is at her parent's (Brother and Sister Vance Harris) home to be near the hospital where her husband, Loren, has been a very ill patient. The doctors have been unable to know the cause of his illness. We have news that he is improving. We thank our Heavenly Father that He hears our prayers for these brothers and sisters and ask that you join us.

"Far better than claiming God on our side is being sure we are on His side."—B. C. Flint.

"The final test of a great sermon is not its beauty, eloquence or its popularity; but its power to change the lives of people."—Selected.

"PLAIN AND PRECIOUS THINGS"

Open Letter from the Sundry School Association.

Since it has been brought to our attention that the study guide, "Plain and Precious Things", contains errors and misquotations, we feel it is our duty and privilege to ask forgiveness of all those concerned. The only mistakes we know of are those we have been able to locate ourselves. We wish to make these right.

The Council of Twelve Apostles has asked you to study and analyze this study guide, and we heartily agree with this request. The corrections listed below may prove helpful. We are sure they will not change the thought since these errors are typographical errors which were made in the first stages of typing and printing. This is found in nearly all first editions of any printed matter. If you should find any further errors, or places where lines have been omitted from the Scripture quotations, please let us know so that we can pass them on to the whole Church.

The following corrections are to be made in the lessons on the Principles of the Gospel:

Page 12, Par. 4, line 5, "173" should be "172". In line 7, omit one "n" from the first "and".

Page 13, Par. 1, line 2, change "are" to "is". Par. 3, line 2, "show" should be "shew".

Page 14, Par. 1, line 5, omit "the" before "power". Par. 2, line 10, after "that ye may" and before "see him", insert the following: "become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall". Par. 3, line 4, "show" should be "shew".

Page 15, Par. 1, line 6, "God" should be "heaven".

Page 16, Par. 2, line 8, "he confesses his sin" should be "he confess his sins"; line 11, "tresspasses" should be "trespasses". Par. 3, line 7, "know that you deny it" should be "know that ye deny it"; line 12, "whoso" should be "whosoever"; line 14, insert "a" between "obtain" and "forgiveness".

Page 18, Par. 4, line 6, "Nepri" should be "Nephi". Par. 5, lines 8 and 9, after "before the Father" and before "that he would" insert a comma and "and witnesseth unto the Father"; in line 9, "by" should be "in".

Page 19, Par. 3, line 9, omit the "and" before "hell" and insert "an" after the next "and" before "endless" on the next line.

Page 22, Par. 3, line 5, insert "to" between "he" and "whomsoever"; line 8, omit "the".

Page 23, Par. 1, line 11, "show" should be "shew". Par. 2, line 8, "on" should be "upon"; line 14, insert "them" between "ordained" and "by".

Page 24, Par. 1, last line "11" in the reference should be "10". Par. 5, line 4, omit "death" after "temporal"; line 6, "the" should be "this".

Page 25, Par. 3, line 10-12, omit "and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night" and insert "wherefore I shew unto you the way to judge: for everything which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ"; line 16, "neither" should be "either".

Page 26, Par. 3, line 6, "are those who have" should be "is he that hath".

Page 29, Par. 2, line 11, insert "even" between "knowing" and "as we". Line 17, insert "be" between "brought and" and "arraigned before".

We have noted several mistakes in punctuation and will give them to you as space will permit.

This study guide is not a quarterly with lessons set up to be studied at any certain period of time, but is written with numerous references under headings. (See entire "Foreword"). This may have caused some misunderstanding because thoughts one might think to find under one heading are often found under a different heading. Example: The unpardonable sin is not mentioned under "Repentance, What Is It and Why Is It Necessary?", but under "Result of True Repentance—Forgiveness"; also, under "Eternal Judgment, Between Death and Judgment", where we are asked to read the entire chapter 19 of Alma.

As for misapplications, we believe that the Scripture is of no private interpretation and feel that the study guide is so written. Since it is written using references and quotations from only the King James Bible and the Book of Mormon (which is the standard by which all Church matter must be proved, even the Book of Commandments; also, the Inspired Version of the Bible, the Doctrine and Covenants, and all other latter day revelation), we believe it will stand on its own merits.

We are looking forward to bringing you more study helps in the coming issues of the Zion's Advocate.

The General Sundry School Association,
P. O. Box 472,

Independence, Missouri

Lois Harris, Secretary

NOTICE

To the Readers of the Zion's Advocate;
and
To All Who May be Concerned;
Greeting;

There has recently come to my attention from a number of different persons, the report that I have changed my belief as pertaining to the question of the God-Head, and that I now believe and teach what is commonly called The One Person in the God-head doctrine; or, to make it more plain, that God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Son, are one and the same person or Deity.

This report is not true, and is false in all its parts. I do not believe or teach any such doctrine, neither have I ever believed or taught anything at any time like unto such a doctrine. My belief and my teaching concerning this question are the same today as it has always been throughout all my life, and is well stated in the Articles of Faith as follows:

1. We believe in God the Eternal Father, who only is Supreme; Creator of the universe, Ruler and Judge of all; unchangeable and without respect of persons.
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, the manifestation of God in flesh, who lived, suffered, and died for all mankind; whom we own as our only Leader, Witness, and Commander.
3. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, which searcheth the deep things of God brings to our minds things which are past, reveals things to come, and is the medium by which we receive the revelation of Jesus Christ.

My address at the present time is 209 South Crysler, Independence, Missouri.

Apostle Arthur M. Smith

BIRTH NOTICE

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hose of Baltimore, Maryland, are the proud parents of a fine baby boy. The grandparents of the little boy are Brother and Sister Myrle Hose of Morgantown, West Virginia.

OBITUARIES

Johannes Jacobus Graven

Brother Graven passed from this life on October 14, 1956, at the age of 83 years, at the County Hospital at Schiedam, The Netherlands.

Brother Graven held the office of elder in the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), and was a faithful member.

He died in the true faith of Jesus and was beloved of many who really knew him. The funeral service was held at the County Hospital at Schiedam, Holland, with interment in the General Cemetery.

Bernice Leona Mason

Sister Mason was born at Columbus, Nebraska, February 6, 1892, and passed from this life October 11, 1956, in the Douglas Hospital, Douglas, Arizona. She was baptized June 25, 1916, and transferred to the Church of Christ September 23, 1927.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder Ray Ratterree, pastor of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, October 13, from the Brown-Page Chapel in Douglas. Interment was in Calvary Cemetery.

Sister Mason is survived by one sister, Mrs. Stella Brown of Douglas, Arizona; one daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Gibbons of Mammoth, Arizona; four nephews; Leonard Spooner of Prescott, Arizona, Robert Spooner of Coolidge, Arizona, George Ash of Whittier, California, Robert Ash of Burbank, California and one niece, Sue Kapp of Prescott, Arizona.

May we urge all who have material to be published in the Advocate to be sure to have it in the hands of the Editors by the 13th of the month previous to its mailing. Example: Material for the August issue should be in the hands of the Editors by July 13. This will help us to get the paper out on time.

Material should be typewritten when possible. Please submit all typewritten material double spaced.
The Editors.

INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDERING

Our quarterlies are not dated, but numbered, because they contain a regular course of study, and if the schools desire to make this study, they should order the quarterlies according to number so as to avail themselves of the entire course, so far as the study has been extended up to the present time. None of the courses are, as yet, complete.

Send ALL remittances for the Sunday School Association to: General Sunday School Association Treasurer, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES

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