

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."—1 Nephi 3:187.

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No. 12

The Teacher



I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And as my fingers pressed it, still
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past—
The bit of clay was hard at last;
The form I gave it still it bore,
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day,
And molded it with power and art—
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone—
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that early impress bore,
And I could change it nevermore.

—Anonymous

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ZION'S ADVOCATE

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EDITORIAL

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:6, 7.

As the Christmas season again draws near, and those who believe in, or at least acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God, turn their thoughts toward that wonderful event of nearly 2,000 years ago, we should pause to consider its magnitude.

As the prospect of war looms ominously from the four corners of the earth and presage the glorious return of the Prince of Peace, we are again faced with the seeming paradox of what is apparently an unending spiral of evil, conflict and destruction, in contrast with a promised kingdom of righteousness and eternal peace.

We may either resign ourselves to the triumph of the forces of evil, or we may staunchly believe that goodness, and peace will ultimately prevail. In a word: just who will be crowned victor at the last, Jesus Christ, or the Devil?

"Why, of course," we will say, "the Christ will destroy the Devil and all his works! He will bring in everlasting peace and righteousness."

Very good so far. But, how will it be accomplished? Through greater power? Yes, certainly, but the means is better described by the term, infinity. God is infinite: unlimited in power and love, being bound by neither time nor space nor any circumstance at all, save that which has come from His mouth.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall

accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:11.

"* * * When thou shalt make his soul (Christ, W.A.S.) an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Isa. 53:10.

The pleasure and purpose of the devil is to destroy. Is it also the pleasure and purpose of Christ? Nay! Let it be written in our hearts, and stamped indelibly upon our minds that . . .

". . . The Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Matt. 18:11.

That—

". . . Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." I Tim. 1:15.

That He—

". . . Gave himself a **ransom for all**, to be testified in due time." I Tim. 2:6.

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 2:2.

And that—

". . . For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil." I John 3:8.

Yes, Jesus Christ is a God of power, and infinite love as well. He has visited the wicked nations of ancient days with temporal destruction (and will yet, in our day) and has said that—

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Psalms 9:17.

Will he yet have compassion and love their souls, and be as "ransom" for even these? Just so have our texts informed us.

How? Only on terms of eventual faith and repentance—that much is certain. Only by bringing about their release from the arch enemy of God and mankind. Is He able? Can He indeed gain the victory?

He says of himself:

"I . . . have the keys (power, W.A.S.) of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18.

The Father says of Him:

". . . By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and **he shall divide the spoil with the strong—**" Isa. 53:11-12.

The "strong" one is the devil; Christ will overcome him and "divide", or separate, the "spoil"—those who have been taken captive by the devil.

These will be saved, all except those who have become the "sons of perdition", or the devil and his angels. Death and hell will be destroyed, but the sinners who have learned obedience through suffering will be reclaimed: will be "ransomed," and it will be "testified in due time."

Then will come the time when—

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." Psalms 21:27.

This is the real meaning of Christmas. For these reasons shall He called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace".

No wonder, then, that "there shall be no end" "of the increase of his government and peace."

"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," and Christ **will** be the victor in the fullest sense of the word.

William A. Sheldon.

LOCAL NEWS

INDEPENDENCE LOCAL NEWS

Hello everyone. We had a blessing of a little child in October. Mark Dean Maley was blessed by his father, Bro. Forest Maley, assisted by Bro. Nicholas Denham, on October 22.

Also the local church had a Halloween party on October 28, at the home of Bro. and Sr. James Hedrick. Some of the people dressed as a Bible or Book of Mormon character, but the ghosts and goblins were out in abundance too. After the unmasking everyone played charades and enjoyed refreshments of cider and doughnuts.

Bro. Vance Harris has returned home from Ames, Iowa, and he seems to be convalescing well. We are all thankful God has heard our prayers in his behalf.

Our speakers for the month of October were Bro. Marvin Case, Bro. Archie F. Bell, Bro. C. L. Wheaton, and Bro. John Sweem from Hamilton, Mo. There was much food for thought given us concerning, among other things, the plan God has provided for us to come back to him, our faith, what it is to be a peculiar people, and how we should treat our fellow man because we are a peculiar people.

This is the season for thanksgiving and a searching in our hearts and souls for the meaning of Christmas. We all have much to be thankful for and we need to stop in this busy world of ours to come to a full realization of where we are and to express our thanks to God for His many blessings. When we are all scurrying to and fro preparing for these special days, we should remember that it is Christ's birthday we are going to celebrate, which is another very wonderful reason for giving thanks—that He came into the world for our sakes. As expressed by Tiny Tim in "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, may "God Bless Us Every One."

Mary Seevers, Reporter

Y. P. C. L. NEWS

The Y. P. C. L. has had a very busy month. We've been selling Christmas cards. The team contest is over and Sr. Donna Gill's team won. On the 30th of this month is scheduled a dinner for the winning team to be given by the losing team. We've all enjoyed the competition.

The 19th of October was a study class. We are continuing our study of the question: Why is man here on earth? It is a very interesting topic and often leads to discussions on side issues.

Some of our reading has been in the first part of Genesis. We have discussed the reasons surrounding Adam's sin and the part it played in the plan of God. We hope these lessons will give us a better understanding of God and His plan for mankind.

October 26 and the 2nd and 9th of November were also study classes.

On November 16 we had an educational in which we played a spelling game. Dividing into two teams, the first person on one team spelled **railroad** and the first person of the other team spelled a word beginning with a D and so on till we were all spelled out! It was fun and a challenge because so often we couldn't think a word to spell.

November 23, we held a Thanksgiving prayer meeting. The past couple of years it has been our practice to sponsor a prayer meeting on Thanksgiving and Christmas. We had a very enjoyable evening and all profited by the spirit that was there.

Well, that's all 'till next time. See you then.

Janice Sprague, Reporter

TRY SMILING

When the weather suits you not,
Try smiling.

When your coffee isn't hot,
Try smiling.

When your neighbors don't do right,
Or your relatives all fight,
Sure 'tis hard, but then you might
Try smiling.

Doesn't change the things, of course—
Just smiling.

But it cannot make them worse—
Just smiling.

And it seems to help your case,
Brightens up a gloomy place,
Then, it sort o' rests your face—
Just smiling.

Unknown.

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.

Joseph Smith

Was He An Impostor or a Prophet?

By Apostle Wm. F. Anderson

There has been a great deal written for and against him, and to learn the true status of a person or a time, one needs to go to the friends, not the enemies of a person.

Joseph Smith was but a boy not yet fifteen years of age when he, with others of his father's family, attended revivals that were being conducted by some of the churches.

At the close of the revival, there arose a contention among the ministers as to who would have the converts, and during this contention, the boy became somewhat confused, and did not know which of these churches he should unite with. He took to reading the Bible, seeking a solution to the question, and one day while reading he came to the statement as found in James, first chapter and fifth verse where he read, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given." The lad believed what James said, and he repaired to a quiet place where he could be alone where he could ask God what he should do.

His claim was that there was a force that took possession of and tried to destroy him. He exerted himself and prayed earnestly, and that power was overcome, as he looked there came a light, and he saw just above him two personages the one said to him, "This is my beloved son, hear him"; and he was told to join none of the churches, as their teaching was wrong, and if he would be faithful, he would become an instrument that God would use to bring to light the gospel as was taught by his son while in Jerusalem. The people of that time felt they had the gospel, and this would be a great change or departure from the religious ideas of the time. It was a strange thing even to the boy, and naturally he would want to tell someone of his experience, and as he was partial to the Methodist faith he told his experience to the Methodist Minister, and was told that he had been deceived, and it was from the Devil, and from that time persecution was heaped on him, and as we peruse the history of his life, which was not extensive, we find that there was no manner or degree of persecution known that he was not subjected to. His life was constantly in danger from his enemies, and he had to oftentimes hid for safety. He was told of some plates or a book that had been deposited

by those of ancient times that he would be instrumental in bringing forth which would be a history of a people who had inhabited this continent—their national and religious history.

While the process of interpretation was going on, there were many times that Joseph had to change his place of abode so as to protect the plates from which he was translating. Many times his life was threatened, and he was persecuted on every hand. He was arrested many times, accused of crimes, but at no time was he ever found guilty, but was acquitted in every instance. He was tarred and feathered, ridden on a rail, and subjected to torturous conditions, and even those who did not accept of his claims were known to come to his defense.

"If he were an impostor, deliberately and coolly inventing, and pertinaciously propagating a falsehood, there is this much to be said, that never was an impostor more cruelly punished than he was, from the first moment of his appearance as a prophet to the last. Joseph Smith, in consequence of his pretensions to be a seer and a prophet of God, lived a life of continual misery and persecution. He endured every kind of hardship, contumely and suffering. He was derided, assaulted, and imprisoned. His life was one scene of peril and distress, scarcely brightened by the brief beam of comparative repose which he enjoyed in his own city of Nauvoo. In the contempt showered upon his head his whole family shared. Father, and mother, brothers, wife and friends, were alike involved in the ignominy of his pretensions, and his suffering that resulted. He lived for fourteen years amid vindictive enemies, who never missed an opportunity to vilify, to harass, and to destroy him; and he died at last an untimely and miserable death, involving in his fate a brother to whom he was tenderly attached. If anything can tend to encourage the supposition that Joseph Smith was a sincere enthusiast, maddened with religious frenzies, as many have been before and will be after him—and that he had strong and invincible faith in his own high pretensions and divine mission, it is the probability that unless supported by such feelings, he would have renounced the unprofitable and ungrateful task, and sought refuge from persecution and misery in private life and honorable industry. But whether knave or lunatic, whether liar or true man, it cannot be denied that he was one of the most extraordinary persons of his time, a man of rude genius, who accomplished a much greater work than he knew; and whose name, whatever he may have been while living will take its place among the nobles of the world." (S. M. Smucker, History of the Mormons, or Latter Day Saints, page 182, 183.)

The above statement comes from one who did not accept the claims of Joseph Smith; yet no better tribute could have been given had he been a believer. Mr. Smucker is not the only one who paid tribute to Joseph Smith; there are others, but space would not permit the reproduction.

We would like to say, however, that those who

have endeavored to discredit Joseph Smith have not secured their information from such men as Mr. Smucker, but rather have derived their information from those who were his enemies and who have written many books that were intended to discredit and destroy.

Several years ago a Pentecostal minister made an attack on the character of Joseph Smith, that was brought to my attention. I met and talked with that minister. I asked him what he knew about Joseph Smith, and said to him that he could not have known anything of the man, as he had been dead many years before he was born. He admitted he had read books against Joseph Smith, and had not made any effort to learn if they were true. I told him that Joseph Smith, being dead, was not able to rise in his own defense, and that he who would endeavor to discredit him or any other man who was unable to come to his own defense was a coward.

I am still of that opinion. I do think it is cowardly to make an attack on a dead person that is not able to rise in their own defense. He that would smear the name of Joseph Smith smears the restoration movement and puts it to shame, and he like all others have to go to the enemy to get their smear.

Joseph Smith is accused of many things that he did not do or teach for that matter. Yes, he like most folks was human, and as a human he no doubt made mistakes. I ask, "Is there any among us who can say they never made a mistake?" Then I ask, "Be the mistakes great or small, do you want folks to continually refer to those mistakes?" Of would it be more Christian like to refer to a few if not all of the good qualities? I am reasonably sure that none of us like to have our mistakes continually paraded to the public.

Joseph Smith is accused of being the author of polygamy, but we find evidence that shows that he was against it, and wanted it put down, and he was killed for his opposition to that doctrine, and besides the doctrine of polygamy was not introduced as a tenet or doctrine of the church until eight years after the death of Joseph Smith, in 1852. Brigham Young said he had had it under lock and key all that time, yet he attached the name of Joseph Smith as being the author and claiming it to be a revelation. Kind of cowardly was it not to do that so as to have it stick? There are so many things that are laid to the door of Joseph that cannot successfully be traced to him. Joseph was not the only man or person comprising the church, and there are instances to show that many times he had been outnumbered, and changes were made and attributed to him.

Surely there must be some good things that he did. God did use him to produce the Book of Mormon. He did give a number of prophecies, and had the instructions been followed as given during 1829 there would have been less confusion than we now have.

As Mr. Smucker said, Joseph Smith was accused of almost every crime on the calendar, and few men have

ever been persecuted as he was, lied about, tarred and feathered, imprisoned and caused to sleep on stone floors in and around these parts.

Jesus had enemies. Do you believe what his enemies said about him. The prophet Isaiah said of him, "He was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief, and we hid our faces from him." Yes, he too was killed by his enemies and there were those that sought to smear him who had professed to accept and believe him. I am caused to wonder if ever there was a prophet that the Lord sent that was free from just such persecution? Yes, I wonder?

Many of those who have professed to believe in the work brought forth through him have been the ones who have become his worst enemy, and to now attribute to him every evil that found place in the early days of the restoration is far from being fair to say the least. I think it would be best to extol the good things done rather than to be constantly endeavoring to smear and discredit. When you smear and discredit Joseph Smith, you discredit the restoration, and make it a thing of naught. Joseph Smith taught the highest of morals, and that love was the great passion. A friend displays love and good feeling.

I have in my library a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants published in Nauvoo shortly after the death of Joseph Smith, and it contains the article on marriage and denounces polygamy. The document on polygamy, marriage for Eternity, etc., was not placed in the Doctrine and Covenants till long after the tragedy at Cathage.

I heard a man of the world say on the radio not long ago, that the world needed a prophet. I am rather inclined to think the way he does. There are those who claim to be prophets, yet have brought no semblance of unity among those who claim to believe in the gospel as restored. Yet Jesus, just prior to his crucifixion, prayed to His Father that His followers might be one. The restoration is divided and still dividing. Let us pray that the Lord will cause the mists to roll away, and bring His people together.

RECLAMATION

Slow thought for thought, small prayer by prayer,
I build breakwaters in my heart
That all the tides and storms of life
Shall fail to tear apart.

Such waves have broken over me
That I had little left to stand,
Yet thought by thought back from the sea
I win my mind's lost land.

Patiently, prayer by prayer, I build
A faith I never had before,
Reclaiming for God's fertile field
What was a storm-swept shore.

—James Dillet Freeman

THE TEN VIRGINS

By Apostle Archie F. Bell

Parables: No. 1

When Jesus Christ was here on earth in His ministry among the children of men, He spoke to them in parables many times. Some of the parables pertaining to the Kingdom of God in general; others to some detail of the Kingdom. The parable of the Ten Virgins was concerning the Kingdom of God in general, and pertained to our day in particular. We want to comment on this parable and see if we can bring out some of the details that should be understood. We believe this parable to be prophetic, and if so it should be understood.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

"And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

"They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

"But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

"Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

"And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

"But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt. 25:1-13.

We will notice in the first verse that the virgins took their lamps. Every one of the children of men are placed here on this earth to do a work. This work is not only for this individual's benefit but also for the benefit of some of his fellowmen, at least. The term, virgin, would indicate purity. We knew that all mankind are subject to the temptations of satan, and through these, sin has entered the life of all. When Jeremich wrote in prophecy of the new covenant that God was going to make with the House of Israel (Jeremich 31:34), he wrote these words: "I will forgive their

iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." This shows that there would be a purification of the children of men who accepted His terms, therefore the term, Virgin, was used in this parable.

We have noticed that they took their lamps or set their hand to do the work they were placed on earth to do in the Master's Kingdom. They not only took their lamps but went forth to meet the Bridegroom (Christ). This indicates that they had a knowledge of the Second Coming of Christ and not only that but they believed that it would take place.

Five of them were wise and five were foolish. Everlasting wisdom comes from God. Those who were wise possessed that which comes from on high, which helped them to prepare for the future in the Kingdom of God. It was necessary for them to prepare for the future here on earth as well as for the future hereafter. Both are part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and man must be made aware of both if he is to hear the fullness of the Gospel.

When Christ told of the conditions and the signs of His second coming, He made this statement: "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37.

Noah was warned of the catastrophe which was coming on the earth because of the conditions of man which obtained, and the judgment of God that was going to take place. He also was told what to do to escape it. In other words, Noah was to be redeemed from this judgment.

Redemption from judgments is to come to the Lord's people in the latter day, too, for we read:

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

If God saw fit for Noah to escape the judgment of his time, because he was a righteous man, surely He would do the same in the latter day for the righteous of His children.

The oil the virgins had in their lamps was their righteousness. The wise not only had united with the Kingdom of God here on earth but they hungered and thirsted after righteousness daily. In this way they were storing up treasures in Heaven for future use. The foolish were satisfied to get by as easy as they could, satisfied to have united with the Kingdom and to have done a little work here and there but not to have let the work of the Kingdom interfere with the cares of this life, and perhaps the pleasures, too.

We want to note some scripture that would indicate that righteousness is the oil referred to in this parable.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

"And He said unto me, write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are true sayings of God." Revelation 19:7-9.

We will notice here that the Church was clothed in fine linen, which was the righteousness of the saints; it was the marriage supper of the Lamb (Christ); and these are true sayings of God.

Now let us examine Matthew 5:15-16.

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candle stick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Our first attention is called to the fact that Christ referred to our works as our light, and our righteousness is what makes that light shine. Another thing: this light must first shine to those who are in the house (in the Church). If there is no light in our works for those in the Church, there certainly will not be any light for those who are without. Our light or candle must be placed on a candle stick, which means the same as the virgins taking their lamps. We are placed in this life, if we are to be useful to God, in the place where He wants us, not necessarily where we want to be. And if we profess Christian religion, our lives cannot be hid any more than a house on a hill.

There is a special privilege given to those who become citizens of the Kingdom of God. ". . . Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven . . ." Matthew 13:11. To believe is not sufficient; we must have at least some knowledge. When the brother of Jared asked the Lord to touch the sixteen stones he held in his hand, he believed the Lord would do it but when he saw the finger of the Lord touching the stones the brother of Jared had knowledge that the Lord could do this thing. The same is meant when Christ told his disciples that they were to know the mysteries. He didn't mean believe. Noah was given knowledge of how to build the Ark. Nephi was given knowledge of how to build a ship to cross the ocean. The brother of Jared was given knowledge of how to build barges so they would not be lost from each other. This was a knowledge, in each case, of what was necessary to be known in their day. Their righteousness before God made it possible for each one of them to know these things.

We are living in one of the most important times in the history of mankind. It is just as important for the children of God to know the mysteries of the Kingdom in our day as it was for Noah, or either one of the other two mentioned, to know them in their day. They had oil in their lamps, and enough extra to keep them burning.

We may feel that these things are withheld from mankind and we will just have to wait to see what takes place. We read, Book of Mormon, page 344:18:

"And he that will not harden his heart, to him is

given a greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God, until they know them in full."

If it is through our righteousness that we are permitted to know the mysteries of God, then not only will our righteousness show to those of God's people but we will be able, as well, to assist them in learning what the Lord has in store for those who love Him.

We learn in Hebrews 11:6:

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

God is the source of all righteous wisdom. The meaning of wisdom is: Quality of being able to discern or judge soundly what is true, or false, proper or improper. If we would be wise, we must diligently seek God.

We learn in the fifth verse that the Bridegroom was to tarry. To tarry means: To rest in expectation. We are reminded of the writing of Isaiah 18:4:

"For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches."

We learn, here, the Lord is going to take His rest, but while that is going on there is to be a purification. The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins has been placed in the hands of mankind in these latter days. This is the purification. The dew in the heat of harvest refers to a time of hastening.

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Habakkuk 2:2-3.

We notice that there will be a hastening time at the time of the end; ". . . He may run that readeth it." It is to be at an appointed time; there will be a tarrying period and we are to wait for it. Isaiah said it would be . . . "Afore the harvest". And another very important condition: The bud will be perfect. The bud is the Church of Christ. The imperfections that are noticed today will be cleared away. Daniel 8:14, calls it the cleansing of the sanctuary. Matthew records it as happening this way:

"The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Matthew 13:41.

The things that offend the Lord are teachings not in harmony with His Gospel. And He says here that they will be gathered out of His Kingdom. Showing that they are there today. The bud will be perfect when these teachings are gathered out, and those that do iniquity are removed as well.

If this is to take place before the harvest then it will have to take place before the lost tribes of Israel are gathered in. The harvest is when the grain is gathered in. The threshing takes place after the grain is gathered in. Notice the wording, Book of Mormon 659:54:

"And I will gather my people together, as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor, . . ."

The floor is the threshing floor they used to have in olden times.

We read, while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. Notice it reads "all", not just five of them. To slumber means: To remain in a state of negligence, laziness or unawareness. What a state for the people of the Lord to be in: neglecting the work they should do; and being slothful or lazy about the work they are doing; or not even taking time to analyze the time and conditions in which they live to the extent that it may come upon them unaware.

To sleep means: To be in a state of inactivity. This perhaps, is just as bad as slumbering. This refers to those who have come to a knowledge of what their work is but are permitting various things in this life to cause them to become inactive. When we think of someone in this condition, we usually point the finger of accusation at some member of the ministry. But we must remember, we all are placed here for some work or purpose. Many times we use the error of another as an excuse to refrain from doing what we know to be our duty and work. This is sleeping, just as much as a member of the ministry is when he becomes inactive. To remain inactive is to go backwards. Is it any wonder that the Lord inspired Isaiah to prophesy concerning this condition and bring to the attention of the Lord's people what the result was?

"Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of a deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath He covered." Isaiah 29:9-10.

To stay is to stop going backwards; to cry is to diligently seek the Lord. Those who are drunken are the ones who say there is no God or the ones who are seeking for spiritual excitement to the extent that they are under the influence of a spirit that is not the Spirit of God. Apparently, because there has been the influence of slumbering among the Lord's people, He has poured out upon them the spirit of deep sleep, and has covered the prophets and seers. This does not say there will be no gift of prophecy, but it refers to prophets.

To follow what is meant by this statement, let us read Book of Mormon, page 344:11-12:

"And he was convinced that Alma and Amulek had a knowledge of him for he was convinced that they knew the thoughts and intents of his heart; For power was given unto them that they might know of these things, according to the spirit of prophecy".

We can see by this that there is more to being a holy prophet than to just speak under the gift of prophecy.

There is more to being a seer than just translating, for we read, Book of Mormon, page 233, "And Ammon said, that a seer is a revelator, and a prophet also; . . ."

These two great gifts are for the benefit of mankind as well as the Lord's people, but there must be a high degree of righteousness demonstrated before the Lord can use them even though they may be among the living on earth. The expression, "Hath he covered", gives us to understand that those with the qualifications necessary for the Lord to grant these two great gifts, are on earth now, but because of the condition of the Lord's people, He will not use them.

We notice that the word came to go meet the Bridegroom at midnight. Midnight is referred to so many times as the darkest hour of the day. If midnight is the darkest hour of the day, then the call will come that will cause the people of the Lord to awaken when the times on earth will be darkest for those who are trying to live better. We read about it in Ezekiel 30:3:

"The day is near, even the day of the Lord is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen."

A heathen is one who does not recognize or believe in the God of the Bible. He is the one who says there is no God, and in many instances will try to disprove any belief in a divine being. In other instances, a heathen is one who worships idols. In this reading, Ezekiel is referring to an organized heathen people who are a great world power. This world power will follow the times of the Gentiles. For over two thousand years, the Gentile nations have been competing with one another for power and authority over other Gentile nations. This was referred to in the Scriptures as the times of the Gentiles. This is no longer taking place.

When the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, then will be the day of the heathen. It will be a cloudy day; a time when few if any can see very far into the future. When the heathen comes into power, he will want to destroy freedom of all kinds. This would be a dark or cloudy day for all freedom loving people as well as nations.

How well this all fits together: Christ called it midnight; Isaiah said a spirit of deep sleep would be poured out; and Ezekiel said it would be a cloudy day. Surely a sorrowful time for both the Church and the world.

Daniel saw this condition in his day, and the question was asked for him (Daniel 8:13).

"How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot".

The Sanctuary is the Church, and the host is its membership. The time will come when the host will awake, then it and the sanctuary will no longer be trodden down; for we read that a cry was made; "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him".

When this cry goes forth, all of the Lord's people will sense their situation whether it be good or bad; whether they have the righteousness necessary for their well being or not; whether they have oil in their lamps and in their vessels or not.

We will notice that there was a separation of the Lord's people before the Bridegroom came, and it was because of their lack of oil or righteousness which caused it. Following this, the Bridegroom came.

Let us notice the statements in three different places in the Book of Mormon. Page 187:140, "... And the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them . . . ". Page 659:59, "... Yea, even I will be in the midst of you . . . ". Page 664:4, "And then shall the power of heaven come down among them, and I also will be in the midst, and then shall the work of the Father commence, . . .".

Let us not be thinking this cannot be, because it will be and we cannot prevent it, neither can any of the children of men stop it. These references pertain to the same thing; the marriage supper of the Lamb. Some will go in to it; others will be left out.

The reference from page 187 is from the prophecy of Zenos. The other two are the words of Christ that He spoke while among the Nephites. We may think that Christ is speaking of just His Spirit being among the people, but please notice He says, the power of heaven shall come down among them. Then He follows this by saying, "And I also will be in the midst". This indicates that Christ shall be among His people just as He was among the Nephites. The power of heaven is the Spirit.

Let us see what we have found in this parable:

1. The virgins are the members of the Kingdom of God on earth. They have been cleansed through the waters of baptism.
2. Their lamps are the work they are placed on the earth to do. When they took them is the time they have come to a knowledge of that work.
3. The light from the lamps indicates the works that are seen by those in the Church as well as those who are without.
4. The oil is the righteousness which makes that light.
5. The wise hungered and thirsted after righteousness and applied themselves to the work they were supposed to do.
6. The foolish were satisfied to get by as easy as possible.
7. The Bridegroom is Christ.
8. Tarried: Did not come at the beginning of the Restoration but permitted mankind to take charge of the work on earth for a season.
9. Midnight: Darkest hour of the history of the Church as well as the world.
10. Christ is to come before the Resurrection to prepare the way before Himself.

According to the Scriptures, it should only be a few years longer until the prophetic part of the parable of

the ten virgins will be fulfilled. We are reminded of the statement of Peter, found in I Peter 4:17-18:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

May we be found awake and with oil in our lamps and in our vessels when the Savior comes.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and Book of Mormon



By Elder Robert L. Maley

Part II

Book of Mormon critics to the man have used the personalities of men, principally Joseph Smith, from a turbulent Latter Day Saint history to vilify its message. Juicy morsels are exhumed to give weight to their accusations against it. Polygamy (chiefest of all), Adultery, Adam God, Blood Atonement, Purgatory (baptism and progression after death), the SDC Church-State rank high on the list of doctrines typically "Latter Day Saint." Calcified by over a century of tradition, the laity of these sects seldom question them. If it weren't a great tragedy of the ages we would have here the parts of a fantastic comedy, for there is not of these L.D.S. teachings which is forthrightly condemned by the Book of Mormon! Is this not a strange fact?

So let us seek to be wise and above all fair. Were we to judge the Bible on the deeds of its stewards for the past several centuries we would suffer a great loss. The stench of burning flesh, the screaming of the tortured, the groans of the scourged—which of these abuses has the Bible prompted? By the debauchery of which Pope, Prelate, Bishop or King, Protestant or Catholic shall we bring the Bible to trial? Again, by the deeds of which of our Bible-reading, witch-hunting Colonial forefathers shall we cast aspersion against it? These men were Bible "believers" all, and we are their heirs.

The Book of Mormon seeks only to be tried as the enduring Word of God upon the credits of the story it has to tell and the testimony of Christ which it shares with the Bible. These things they hold in common

share, and because of them, both thus far have endured, not because of but IN SPITE OF the efforts of their "benefactors."

The Book of Mormon is not God's exclusive gift to the Latter Day Saints, no more than the Bible is the exclusive property of Catholicism, et al. It is addressed to all mankind, Gentile, Jew, believer and unbeliever alike. So far none of its benefactors have been able to show mankind a Church of Christ founded upon pure Book of Mormon teachings. Shall we blush?

Few foes of the Book of Mormon challenge it doctrinally. Simple understandable truths present a mighty bulwark difficult to scale. "The Church before Christ" is one of the very few ranking even as a legitimate question. The Bible has nothing to say in this area, so the "record of the Nephite" has had to bear repeated attack upon this point for over 130 years since its debut.

The critic says, "But people could not be joined to Christ until the law was dead, and until they were dead to that law." (Bales).

A strict note of legalism is put forth in this statement not unlike those leveled at the Saviour by scribes and Pharisees when it became evident that His gospel did not conform to their "tradition." Such a crisp, all-inclusive statement as Bales makes leaves many questions unanswered, as it strikes down the gavel of finality.

(1) What of John's baptism? This was done before the death of Christ and even before the Saviour himself had been baptized.

(2) Did not the Law itself testify of Christ as did the prophets? (John 1:45.) Were they not then in essence "joined to Christ" as his witness?

(3) What gospel was declared from the beginning down until Abraham (Gal. 3:16-19; 3:8) and what gospel was declared to the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt? (Heb. 4:2.)

(4) Were all before **Moses** denied access to Christ?

(5) If the Law was an "added schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:19-24) to what had it been added?

The testimony of the prophets with the Law and its types and shadows all focus upon one central theme: Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, Son of the living God, and his mission to mankind. How, then, are we able to disannul the gospel with the Law of Moses and deny those an access to Him of whom the Law bore witness?

Notwithstanding they understood the intent to which the Law had been given, the Essene and Nephite both retained and were subject to the teachings of the Torah (Law of Moses, R.L.M.). Both were baptized. Both, through repentance and baptism became members of the "eschatological community of God." (Kingdom of God, R.L.M.) The Essene blessed bread and wine which was eaten in a solemn common meal, and the Nephite established (after Alma) the Church of Christ.

The record has revealed and history has confirmed Christian doctrines and practices existing in pre-Christian times, but in each case they were adhering to the Mosaic Code.

At the coming of Christ, of course, this unique "co-existence" came to its end. Christ used the word "fulfilled." The more righteous Nephite remnant having been baptized under the old covenant was then baptized into the new. (III Nephi 3:68-70; III Nephi 9:11-14.) Likewise the disciples baptized of John the Baptist were brought into the new covenant. (Acts 19:1-5.) The Church of Christ having been headed by a high priest under the Law, emerged anew with Christ, himself, as always, at its helm. Twelve disciples were chosen to serve in the Gospel's ministry to the Church. Priests and teachers were ordained by these disciples (called Elders) to further spread and instruct in the good news of Heaven's Kingdom. All things became anew as the old was fulfilled.

As to what might have happened to the Essene during this transition, we are left to wonder. Were they converted to Christ, or had they become too jaded by tradition (as was the Jew) too inflexible to receive Christ? We hope not. Only this is evident: a few were left to hide their records in a secret cache as the armies of Rome in 70 A.D. overran a rebellious Judea and destroyed Jerusalem. We would wish for them, as for any man, that they were able to find the Christ for whom they had looked so long.

Shall we accuse all of these "pre-Christian Christians" of "spiritual adultery"? If we do, our zeal has pressed us to hastily judge a people who were far above the moral plane of their contemporaries who granted them a certain tolerated respect because of it.

The Book of Mormon is forthright in supplying an explanation for such a condition existing. Its simplicity is beautiful.

"And notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the Law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled; for, for this end was the law given. Wherefore, the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ, because of our faith:"

"Wherefore, we speak concerning the law, that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given."

"And now behold I say unto you, that the right way is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel; wherefore ye must bow down before him and worship him with all your might, mind and strength, and your whole soul, and if ye do this, ye shall in no wise be cast out. And inasmuch as it shall be expedient, ye must keep the performances and ordinances of God, until the law shall be fulfilled which was given unto Moses. And after Christ shall have risen from the dead, he shall shew himself unto you, my children, and my beloved brethren; and the words which he shall speak unto you, shall be the law which ye shall do." (II Nephi 11:45-59, assorted texts) (See also Mosiah 7:90-124 and Mosiah 8:1-7.)

Concerning the coming of Christ:

"For behold, angels are declaring it unto many at this time in our land; and this is for the purpose of preparing the hearts of the children of men to receive his word, at the time of his coming in his glory." (Alma 10:23.)

"... for the Lord did pour out his Spirit on all the face of the land, to prepare the minds of the children of men, or to prepare their hearts to receive the word which should be taught among them at the time of his coming, that they might not be hardened against the word, that they might not be unbelieving, and go on to destruction, but that they might receive the word with joy," etc. (Alma 11:26-28.)

The mission of John the Baptist was in like manner that of preparation. It reached out throughout Judea while the Essene confined himself to the walls of his community. Nevertheless, seeds of the message of "prepare ye, prepare ye" were sown throughout the land, finding rich soil among the fishermen of Galilee.

All the preparation made in the centuries prior to the coming of Christ was insufficient for those who "would not see." Of the scribes and Pharisees who sat in Mose's seat many were unable to fathom the teachings of this Galilean miracle-worker as he spoke to them in parables. When the Savior taught them "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of his blood, ye have no life in you" they "strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (John 6:52-53.) Even His own disciples "when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying: who can hear it?" Chided for their unbelief or inability to see, "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." (John 6.)

Looking back in retrospect, having the ability to see the beginning of the story and the end, we are now able to see the sense of what was taking place. But to those who were the characters, acting the part in this great drama, the teachings of Christ were a revolutionary "new" doctrine which burst the hide-bound traditionalism which they had been accustomed to hearing since their youth. Edison, Bell, Galileo, Marconi, Wrights, Watt—all revolutionary to their time—saw many of their findings fall upon unhearing ears during their time but what school boy of today, acquainted with physics, is not able to duplicate very simply the principles these men wrestled with for years, often at the test of everything they possessed. Somehow the telescope of retrospect removes the travail of blood, sweat and tears of those men of old, but on a parallel are we of today not undergoing such a trial with the simple forthright Book of Mormon teachings—to accept or deny them?

The "more righteous" remnant of the Nephites was unable at first to grasp the words which were spoken by the Savior, "for they understood not the saying, that old things had passed away, and that all things had become new." (III Nephi 7:3.) He told them, "Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel; therefore, the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfill the law; therefore, it hath an end." (III Nephi 7:3-12.)

The events that had taken place that day among the Nephites plus the magnitude of what they had just heard taught by the Savior surely must have been quite a load to evaluate all at once, for He spoke to them again saying,

"I perceive that ye are weak, that ye can not understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time; therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand; and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again." (III Nephi 8:2-3.)

Drawing a conclusion from all that has been offered in this writing, one would merely say what has already been said. The pre-Christian teaching of definitely Christian doctrine and practices was a **preparatory Ministry** of that which was shortly to come among the children of men. To some was given more, to some less "according to the heed and diligence" they gave to the word of God. (Alma 9:16-20.) Some was given to the Essene and some to the Nephite to prepare them for that which was to come.

Sufficient is given here to provide suitable answers to the questions stated. Again, the "Record of the Nephites" is true, and if it is true we look forward with anxious hearts to that for which it came forth to prepare us. May God grant that men might give this emissary of the Gospel full sway in their hearts to prepare them for the new era that is yet before us. May we be found as wise virgins with our lamps trimmed and full of oil waiting patiently and PREPARED.

Second Death

By Glenn W. Gill

Part One

WHAT IS SECOND DEATH?

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8. See also Rev. 20:14.)

This quote from the revelation of John shows the lake of fire spoken of in scripture to be second death. It also shows us what sort of people will have their part in the second death. Now bearing these points in mind let's turn to verses 127 through 129 of the first chapter of Mosiah.

Speaking of the end result of judgment, King Benjamin said of the wicked—

"And if they be evil, they are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord, into a state of misery and endless torment, from whence they can no more return: therefore, they have DRUNK DAMNATION TO THEIR OWN SOULS. Therefore, they have drunk out of the cup of the wrath of God, which justice could no more deny unto

them than it could deny that Adam should fail, because of his partaking of the forbidding fruit; therefore, mercy could have claim on them no more for ever. And their torment is as a LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up for ever and ever."

In Mosiah 8:84 we also find words about an "endless damnation" for those who are evil.

If the plight of the evil ones spoken of above is to be "as a lake of fire and brimstone" then it is to be second death, if Rev. 21:8 is true. In other words those who have cause to "shrink from the presence of the Lord into a STATE of misery and endless torment" or drink "damnation to their own souls" are participants in second death whose "unquenchable" flames "ascendeth up for ever and ever."

"And if the Lord shall say, Because of thine iniquities, thou shalt be CUT OFF FROM MY PRESENCE, he will cause that it shall be so." (Helaman 4:68). Verse 67 calls it "accursed for ever."

Notice in Mosiah 1:127 that these evil ones are "consigned to an awful view of their own guilt and abomination." Does that give us a description of second death?

Let's now read Alma 9:28 and 29. "And now behold I say unto you, then cometh death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death; then is a time that WHOSOEVER DIETH IN HIS SINS, as a temporal death, shall also die a spiritual death: yea, he shall DIE AS TO THINGS PERTAINING UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS."

If those who go into second death are to "die as to things pertaining unto righteousness" they would then be left with "their own guilt and abominations" to "view".

Christ in explaining his parable of the sower said,

"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:40-43.)

So we see that second death is a spiritual death being a death as to things pertaining to righteousness.

This is the kind of end the devil desires for mankind—an eternal torment while separate from God and only able to view their own guilt and abominations. Continuing our reading in the ninth chapter of Alma we find that:

"Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames ascendeth up for ever and ever; and then is the time that they shall be CHAINED down to an everlasting destruction, according to the power and captivity of Satan: he having subjected them according to his will. Then I say unto you, They shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they CAN NOT BE REDEEMED according to God's justice; and they can not die, seeing there is no more corruption." (Alma 9:30-32. Also see Alma 19:60-61.)

Not even an absolute death can come upon one to save him from the everlasting destruction of that lake of fire which is second death because eternal man "cannot die". And these "can not be redeemed". They being subject to him are the "devils' angels"—

"Wherefore, they who are filthy are the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire, prepared for them; and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames ascendeth up for ever and ever; and has no end." (II Nephi 6:39-40.)

Scripture, then, in speaking of second death defines it as BEING ACCURSED FOR EVER and CUT OFF FROM THE PRESENCE OF GOD; A STATE OF MISERY AND ENDLESS TORMENT; DAMNATION; UNQUENCHABLE FLAMES—WHOSE SMOKE RISES FOREVER; SPIRITUAL DEATH; DEATH AS TO THINGS PERTAINING TO RIGHTEOUSNESS; EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION; BEING AS THOUGH NO REDEMPTION HAD BEEN MADE; and as A LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE WHOSE FLAMES ASCEND FOR EVER.

We have also seen thus far that those who would "have a part" in this second death are "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars." (Rev. 21:8.) This list is mirrored in two other Bible references we might cite. Paul states in Ephesians 5:5:

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

And in another place:

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? BE NOT DECEIVED: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (I Cor. 6:9-10.)

Also we see that those who have allowed themselves to become subjected to the devil will be "as though there had been no redemption made." (Alma 9:32). In Alma 19, verse 60, we see that all the wicked whose fruits have been evil—see Alma 3:90 and 19:61), will suffer this second death.

"But behold, an awful death cometh upon the wicked; for they die as to things pertaining to things of righteousness; for they are unclean, and no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of God."

Is there, then, no escape from second death for the idolator, the drunkard, or the murderer? Is he the same as if he had committed an unpardonable sin? Before we seek an answer to this, let's turn to Jacob 5:31-34 in the Book of Mormon. Speaking of Sherum who had preached that Christ would not come, it says:

"And he (Sherum) spake plainly unto them, that he had been deceived by the power of the devil. And he spake of hell, and of eternity, and of eternal punishment. And he said, I fear lest I have committed the unpardonable sin, for I have LIED unto God: for I denied the Christ, and said that I believed the scriptures; and they truly testify of him. And because I have thus LIED unto God, I greatly fear lest my case shall be awful; but I confess unto God."

If "all liars" (Rev. 21:8) are to "have their part" in the "lake of fire and brimstone" (second death) then surely a liar "unto God" would head the list. We can see why Sherum "spake" of "eternal punishment" in his statement.

Now to answer our previous question, let's examine some of the words of Alma to his son Corianton who had gone into adultery. (See Alma 19:5.)

"Know ye not, my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins, save it be the shedding of innocent blood, or denying the Holy Ghost? For behold, if ye deny the Holy Ghost when it once has had place in you, and ye know that ye deny it; behold, this is a sin which is unpardonable; yea, and whosoever murdereth against the light and knowledge of God, it is not easy for him to obtain forgiveness; yea, I say unto you, my son, that it is not easy for him to obtain a forgiveness. And now my son, I would to God that ye had not been guilty of so great a crime. I would not dwell upon your crimes, to harrow up your soul, if it were not for your good. But behold, ye can not hide your crimes from God; and except ye repent, they will stand as a testimony against you at the last day." (Alma 19:7-12.)

Alma has shown by his words to Corianton that there is forgiveness even for the murderer if he repents. In his proclamation to his people King Benjamin said,

"But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God; for salvation cometh to none such, EXCEPT IT BE THROUGH REPENTANCE and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ." (Mos. 1:108.)

John the Baptist said to the Pharisees and Sadducees who had come to watch his baptisms in the Jordan,

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. 3:8-10. See also Luke 3:8-9.)

Alma put it this way (verse 90 of chapter 3.)

"And again I say unto you, the Spirit saith, Behold, the ax is laid at the root of the tree; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire; yea, a fire which can not be consumed; even an unquenchable fire."

In conclusion, then, of this part of our examination of second death and its implications in the scriptures, we could say that it is the condition in which the devil and his angels, the wicked (murderers, adulterers, idolators, etc., who refuse to repent), and those who are guilty of unpardonable sin will spend eternity.

A righteous life carries much more weight than all the words of a hypocrite.

—Leslie P. Case

To know nothing of the past is to understand little of the present and to have no conception of the future.

The Inner Breakdown

By Ollie Derry DeLong

What is wrong in the church? Has an inner breakdown taken place? Is it a breakdown in the Spiritual? Something has collapsed there, and the whole of the outer attitude rests upon the inner. People cannot get along with each other because they can't get along with themselves, and therefore they don't get along with God.

Perhaps some feel that their way is correct while everyone else's way is wrong and get perturbed because others don't approve of their way. Then the battle for victory is on, and finally a sense of futility enters the minds of various ones, and that is when the inner breakdown begins.

Some don't sense what it is all about, and not knowing, the Spirit seems to shrink within, and they wander away from the church into things which are of no spiritual benefit. So in the downpour of spiritual calamity, the brightness or eagerness to be together, worship together, fades into a sickly gray, and thus the sparkle and joy of spiritual comradeship is gone, and it is hard to regain again.

Something lies songless within them, and to regain it, one must pray without ceasing, forgive as you hope to be forgiven, do good unto those who despitefully use you, pray for those who are spiritually blind.

We pray for those who are physically ill; when do we pray for those among us who are spiritually ill, a greater sickness than the physical.

To those spiritually ill we suggest a prayer, "Oh God, if thou art, then lead us and direct our minds, and we know thou art. Show us the way. My way doesn't lead me anywhere except to dead ends. I'm desiring to start the quest for the right way. Please help me to find the way. Amen."

In aviation there is a right way and a wrong way. Aviators tell us that every moment they must obey the laws upon which flying depends or else! There can be no moral holidays in the air. Neither can there be any spiritual holidays. You obey or suffer. One gains mastery only by obedience. This law holds good in every single instance.

There is a saying, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Some believe it means, be careful or your sin will be found out. It doesn't say so; rather it means it will register in you, cause deterioration, and you'll get the consequences in yourself.

We must not try to manipulate life, spiritual or otherwise, and yet how many are trying just that—trying to make things work their way. They demand and won't listen to others, and the consequence is, "If you won't be humble, you will eventually be humbled."

The first step then, is to be humble, be teachable, to cease struggling and fighting for your way when

you are wrong. Stop and listen and when you are humble you let down all your barriers of prejudice. You will then find God, and the moment you do you will say, "This is Peace," and you will find the real meaning of brotherly love. The Inner Breakdown will be no more and you will be able to say in sincerity,

"Our Father who art in Heaven,
Hallowed by thy name,
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven."

AFFLICTIONS CALL FOR REPENTANCE

By Elder Henry Van Duine

Sorrow, trouble and afflictions come because of sin. In John 5:14 we find these words:

"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

"For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?" Matt. 9:5.

In Exodus 15:26, the Lord spoke through Moses, and this is what He said:

". . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee."

"Thine own wickedness shall correct thee." Jer. 2:19.

From the Book of Mormon, Mosiah 5:41, 47, 48:

"For if this people had not fallen into transgression, the Lord would not have suffered that this great evil should come upon them. . . . Therefore, who wondereth that they are in bondage, and that they are smitten with sore afflictions? For behold, the Lord has said, I will not succor my people in the day of their transgression."

And David says in Psalm 119:67, 71:

"Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. . . . It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."

It says in Job 5:17:

"Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty."

Jer. 30:11 says, "I will correct thee in measure," Jer. 21:14: "But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings"; Hosea 5:15: "In their affliction they will seek me early."

"Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold

trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness." Jer. 14:19, 20.

Why then, do we not give ear to his commandments so that God will not put diseases upon us as He promised in Exodus 15? If we get sick or hurt, or haven't enough to eat, why will we not acknowledge our wickedness? Remember, sorrow, trouble and afflictions call for repentance.

So then, why not repent of our wrongdoing and get our healing from God; not part of our healing from God and part from man the doctor.

Rev. 3:15, 16 says:

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

God does not want a half-and-half people; put half our trust in Him and half in man; keep half of His commandments and half of His ordinances.

In II Nephi 11:108, we read:

"And except they should have charity, they were nothing; wherefore, if they should have charity, they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish."

Then the Lord says in III Nephi 11:13, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house"; then He tells them in the 10th verse: ". . . Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?" In the next verse, He has asked them this question: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me." The Lord said it was "In tithes and offerings."

"For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. . . . Wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round." I Nephi 3:27, 32.

I found out that the course of the Lord is one eternal round; that His commandments and ordinances are the same today as they were in the days of old. What does He say? "I am the Lord, I change not."

If we want to have eternal life, we will have to walk in the old path.

"Thus saith the LORD, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein." Jer. 6:16.

In the old path, they would not let the woman teach. I Tim. 12:12, and I Cor. 14, gives us a lesson that women are not to teach in the church. Paul said (I Cor. 14:37) that if any were a "prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Then the next verse tells us: "But if any man be ignorant let him be ignorant."

Paul tells us that, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:9.) If our people in the church will not accept these teachings that are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, then all I can say is, let them be ignorant.

Moroni 6:9 says:

"And their meetings were conducted by the church, after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach or exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done."

That's the old way, and if we will go back to the old way there will be food for old and young. Remember, that when we preach by the Spirit, even our little children can understand.

Mosiah 11:15 tell us:

"And also trusting no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in His ways and keeping His commandments."

"And it came to pass that none received authority to preach or to teach, except it were . . . from God." (verse 18.)

". . . And none were consecrated except they were just men." (verse 19.)

In order to preach or teach in His church, we must be called of God, or we cannot do His work.

We have become a people who say, just as it says in Jer. 6:16:

"But they said, We will not walk therein."

The Book of Mormon tells us that some of our people will do that.

"But behold, there are many that harden their hearts against the Holy Spirit, that it hath no place in them; wherefore, they cast many things away which are written, and esteem them as things of nought." II Nephi 15:2.

David asks the Lord a question:

"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1.)

Then the Lord answers:

"He that putteth not out his money to usury." (verse 5.)

So a man who puts his money out to interest cannot dwell in that holy hill, and we who are God's people know that we cannot support those who transgress these laws of the Lord.

Isaiah 24:2-3 tells us:

". . . As the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied."

It seems that most of our people don't want to understand. Usury is getting to be a sin that almost everybody is committing. When one drives down the road or street, he sees the giving and taking of usury upon the right and the left.

Verse 6 says:

"Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth."

Mormon 4:27 tells us to search these prophecies of Isaiah.

Mosiah 8:15, 16 says:

"Yea, even doth not Isaiah say, Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

If we love God and His church, we won't cast all these things away and esteem them as things of nought.

Matt. 23:23 tells us that the Scribes and Pharisees:

". . . pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

So we see that just the paying of tithes will not get us in heaven. We must have judgment, mercy, and faith, as well as to pay our tithes, in order to have eternal life.

Alma tells us that even Abraham paid tithes. If we want eternal life, we will have to stop being givers and takers of usury; we must stop robbing God in tithes and offerings.

As we go through the Word of God we find some of our people are doing just what the Lord said they would do. Because they harden their hearts, they cast many things away which are written and esteem them as things of nought. We are told in II Nephi 5 that if we follow His servants that walk in darkness, we will lie down in sorrow.

I long for the day when our people will stop casting the many things which are written, and become one. Stop and think: just as soon as we become one, we will have all things common; for the Word of God tells us they were of one heart and one mind, and they had all things common. As soon as our people stop following the "Joneses", we will have all things common; we can't have this until we become of one heart and mind.

We are going to have to do a lot of preaching to get the people to be one, and we will never be one till we stop casting many things away which are written and esteeming them as things of nought.

I spoke a word,
And no one heard;
I wrote a word,
And no one cared
Or seemed to heed;
But after half a score of years
It blossomed in a fragrant deed.
Preachers and teachers all are we,
Sowers of seed unconsciously.
Our hearers are beyond our ken,
Yet all we give may come again,
With usury of joy and pain.
We never know
To what one little word may grow.
See to it, then, that all your seeds
Be such as bring forth noble deeds.

—John Oxenham

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