

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.

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No. 11

Thanksgiving

by

Charlotte Ella Neuls

For all the gentle ways of home
Where love is held in gracious hands,
And dreams are shared in quietness
With someone dear who understands.
For beauty of the misty dawn
When morning skies are gold;
For peace of hushed cathedrals
When bells are softly tolled.
For fragrant lilacs in the rain
That haunt the breath of spring—
Enchantment of an autumn day—
For redbirds on the wing.
For all who strive to win a goal,
For myriad deeds of kindness shown;
For cherished friendship through the years
And poignant memories all our own.
For all of this and so much more
Our grateful thanks we say,
And rest restored within our hearts
This glad Thanksgiving Day.

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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.

In compliance with the action taken at the 1960 General Sunday School Association General Assembly, all publications printed by the Association will be sent free of charge. Send ALL orders to: General Sunday School Association Treasurer, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri, 64051.

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EDITORIAL

DEFENDING OUR HERITAGE

God is not the author of confusion nor the arbitrator between the ambitions of men. Webster defines the term "heritage" as "an estate that passes from an ancestor to a descendant; a birthright or inheritance; the people of God." Under this interpretation we find ourselves in reality the "heritage" of latter day Israel. With our inheritance, we have accepted the great struggle to preserve the faith once delivered to the fathers. It is a struggle that has been fraught with men's ambitions as well as with devious methods that have been used by the adversary to destroy and bring the work of the Master to naught, that great work having been initiated in the Restoration of the Gospel in these last days. We receive our duties and responsibilities with definite knowledge that we have been warned of the conditions and signs of the times by good men of old, as recorded in the scriptures. Paul, the great Apostle, spoke plainly of some of these conditions to Timothy, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (II Timothy 3:1-5)

When we consider the conditions existing in the framework of the church, our communities, our nation, and our world of today, we are sure the time is now when we should issue the call to all believers in the great "Restoration Story" to stop and consider the conditions that exist, the great downward spiral of the basic laws of decency and morals in our civilization. This is a situation that in past history has been largely responsible for the downfall of all great civilizations of the past. The people of this land, when wickedness and abominations became so intense, black, and degrading, became divided into two camps and utterly destroyed themselves from off the face of the earth. This fulfills the warning of the Lord, "And thus the Lord did pour out his blessings upon this land, which was choice above all other lands; and he commanded that WHOSO SHOULD POSSESS THE LAND, SHOULD POSSESS IT UNTO THE LORD, OR THEY SHOULD BE DESTROYED WHEN THEY WERE RIPENED IN INIQUITY; FOR UPON SUCH, SAITH THE LORD, I WILL POUR OUT THE FULLNESS OF MY WRATH." (Ether 4:22) This is not only applied to the people at the time of the Jaredites, but it applies to all peoples who shall be permitted to occupy this land. For indeed it has been a "Choice Land" above all other lands, and is so recognized today by all the world. But sin and degradation of morals are increasing on every hand, from the common man on the street to the highest echelons within the framework of the government itself. As we study ancient secular history, we find the same was true to a large extent of the great and mighty empires of Greece and Rome. Many of the mighty nations of the world in modern history, because their peoples became weakened by the breakdown of the moral standards of life itself, have toppled and fallen to their destruction as

nations. This also is foretold beforehand by the prophets of old. A careful and minute study of the dream of the old King Nebuchadnezzar reveals the rise and fall of civilizations of the earth from his time to ours. In the consideration of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and of existing conditions of the world and communities in which we live, let us return to the old paths and let us labor together to seek to bring about the "Cause of Zion".

History often repeats itself, and the peoples of latter day Israel may find themselves in circumstances not unlike Lehi and his four sons in the Book of Mormon, when they found themselves in the firm grip of the society in which they lived. That society was given to much drunkenness and merry-making, with customs of the times moving in upon family life and demanding consideration from all, both young and old. It was a society that ran faster and faster with the sins of the people and the great downward spiral of the moral standards of the government under which they lived, until such time as weakened and staggering under the forces of the influence of the wicked, they could no longer withstand the enemies from within and without. The society crumbled under the heel of the mighty conqueror and Jerusalem was taken captive. Lehi, a righteous man, was told in a dream to flee into the wilderness for safety. This thing was inconceivable to the human, mental conceptions of some of his children, and they failed to grasp the real basic wisdom behind this extraordinary event. They rebelled and the Lord was forced to use stern measures to bring about his purposes.

Latter day Israel has sought for many years to bring about the establishment of Zion as a place of refuge from the fiery darts of the great devastation that is to come upon this land in the day of "wrath". Still, the establishment of Zion languishes because of man's lack of wisdom, and because man's human desires or ambitions have run ahead of the Lord many times and brought chastisement upon himself, when he has failed to comply with those conditions necessary to discern the will of the Master for his work in our day.

The "Time of the end" has arrived, and the words in Timothy are being fulfilled. Men have become "Lovers of their own selves." Covertousness is on every hand. Blasphemy is a common thing. The young have become unthankful for what they have, and in many cases have become unholy. The work of the adversary continues to lead away and destroy those that will heed his urging, "to deny the power of Godliness."

But the failures of the past in no way effect the final outcome of the work of the Restored Gospel of latter day. Even so, the struggle still goes on, and many times we find ourselves alone as we attempt to "Defend Our Heritage" against the ambitions of men seeking to mar and deface holy ground by disregarding their own laws because of the passing of time. Seemingly we have lost, yet we have won because of the definite promises of our Lord and Master. The work shall be done!

The Temple will be built and Zion, the great city of our God, shall be established.

In our days of peace, we have esteemed lightly his counsels; but in the days of our troubles we will feel after him. Perhaps, he may be slow to hear our pleas.

So come, one and all, with righteous desires and let us reason and pray together. Let us return to the old paths that we may be ready to meet the conditions of our times that are fastening upon us, who are clinging to the rod of iron leading to that salvation so near and dear to our hearts.

K. J. S.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

I want to share with you an experiment in Missionary effort. From this one day's effort five persons are continuing their study into this church and I pray that when our missionary comes, their homes will be opened for his ministry. After prayer I started out on this search for souls. Knocking on a door, I found I had frightened the family cat sitting on the porch. As I stooped to comfort the cat, the lady opened the door in greeting and we engaged ourselves in conversation about cats, home and flowers. As I handed her a tract and invited her to read it she expressed some remarks of her interest in religion and invited me in. There followed a good discussion together with an invitation to return and explain the beliefs of our church.

Several more homes accepted tracts and one lady, of the "Friends" church, said her whole street seemed to be "unchurched". I then expressed the thought to her that no doubt she was lonely to talk on the things of God. She said, yes, and invited me in. We studied together a chapter in John's gospel and she seemed to be lifted in spirit and I went on rejoicing in having shared the scriptures together. Later on, another in the block, a lady said, "We are all Christians on this block except the house across the street and they are Mormons!" Whereupon I crossed the street and knocked on the Mormon's door and prayed silently for wisdom. A sad-faced lady opened the door and seemed a bit reluctant to take my tract, so I said, "I am a member of this church because I believe the Scriptures show that the church that Christ established has been restored in these latter days and is different than all other churches". She immediately said, "Well, that's what we believe, we are Mormons!" Well, then I explained our church and she invited me in and introduced me to her husband. There followed a fine hour and a half discussion in which I learned the couple were long time Mormons who seldom attended church and were very discouraged and wondered what was wrong with the Restoration. She asked about the name of the church and I read from the Book of Mormon and asked for her Doctrine and Covenants praying that I could find the section without delay where the "Church of Christ" was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830. The thick

combination volume she handed me was one I had never held before. It opened to Section 22 of their Doctrine and Covenants instantly as I opened it up. I praised the Lord who help his people even in small efforts to bring the truth to others. This family had much trouble with a daughter who is paralyzed from the waist down. A home of care, believers in the restored gospel, the Book of Mormon and a hope of Zion; dwindling in faith because of false leaders and precepts of men. They cordially invited me back as they have more questions. They said, "We want to know what is wrong with the restoration." This is a big order to answer that question. It began in 1830 and takes us forward to this, our day, and we are a part of what is wrong as well as a part of what is true and good. I feel deeply for people that are searching and pray God hasten the day that others can see we are the disciples of Christ "because we love one another".

More homes were visited and tracts given out. Some remarks were as follows: "We have enough churches and they are all after money". "I'm a Methodist and my family have been Methodists for several generations back". "Of course I wouldn't be interested because I'm a Catholic". "Well, it doesn't make any difference what one believes as long as one lives a good life". Another remarked, "Well, I sure admire anyone that tries to be a Christian, we need more folks like you." I was interested in a good Seventh Day Adventist remark that "Latter Day Saints and Adventists ought to get together since they believe so much alike on prophecy". We exchanged views on the present state of the world and each agreed that we need to have the gospel that Jesus Christ taught put to work in our daily lives. We will talk again. In another home I found a young man who had entered a seminary to follow his father's footsteps as a Church of God minister. Later he was converted to the Utah Mormons and was ordained a deacon. Becoming dissatisfied he left that Church and now is searching for what he thinks is Christ's true church. He eagerly took my tracts and expressed a belief in the Book of Mormon but that he never dreamed there was another church that taught it, except the Mormons. Needless to say we had a wonderful visit and he expressed a desire to talk to our missionary. Brother Walburg and I have since returned to visit this young man and found him leaving at the moment but remarked that he was deeply interested and would get in touch. Pray for all these good people where the seed of the gospel has been sown. One Mormon lady remarked that she was a relative of Martin Harris and her husband had been a missionary but that she had been searching into church history for years and had never learned of the Church of Christ. She is studying our literature with a keen desire to learn how the church became divided in the early days. One family had never been in any church and I had an opportunity to bear witness of the saving power of Christ, that He gives a deeper meaning to life and a goal toward which to work. She said she thought her children should learn somewhere but didn't know where to send them to Sunday School.

Pray with us, brothers and sisters, for these good people, that they may continue their interest. This is an experiment with us to see if the Lord could use this type of missionary effort here. We are convinced that door to door work can be fruitful. All of us are called to bear witness to the saving power of Christ and the message of the church. How can we remain idle when all around us there are good people whose hearts are yearning for the truth? After a day such as this my heart rejoices at the assurance of my soul, that though my feet are tired, a few people tonight will have been learning of the true gospel for the first time in their lives. We hope that some day there can be the joy of knowing that, in spite of our human weakness, we have helped the Lord in the harvesting of precious souls for His Kingdom.

Sincerely,

Nellie Walberg

MY VISIT TO HILL CUMORAH

By

William Richardson

During my many years as a believer of the Angel's message as delivered to young Joseph Smith, the prophet, the early history and the historical places of significance to the latter day restoration has always been of keen interest to me. My thanks to my heavenly Father for the privilege of attending the centennial dedication of the marker stone on the Temple Lot in July followed by the Missouri Reunion, and then the solemn assembly which ended the first week in August.

Then through the kindness of Elder Brantner and family, I was permitted to proceed from Independence to Nauvoo and Carthage for a further review of vital and historical places of the early Church prior to the martyr of the prophet. Needless to say, a visit to those places leaves one with somewhat mixed feelings when we stop to ask ourselves what could have been had we remained as one church instead of all the division.

Returning to my home in Fort Wayne, Indiana, I soon began preparation for a trip to the New England States by way of the Northern route along the lakes. My first layover stop was Palmyra, New York, which is about four miles north of Hill Cumorah. I arrived in Palmyra about noon on Labor Day, September the 4th. Palmyra is a small town of about 5,000 and a rather quaint little village. It was only an hour or so until I was offered transportation to the sacred spot through the kindness of the young man assisting me, who had resided in that area all of his life. He was very nice to take me from Hill Cumorah, and to the Joseph Smith farm and home where the Smith family resided. This was about two miles from Hill Cumorah. Also the farm lay about one half mile further from the home where Joseph was working with his father when he first related to him the visit from the angel. Then about one half mile further was the sacred grove or woods where Joseph went to pray. All of this was within sight of the Hill Cumorah, which to me was a preordained matter with the Lord.

Those records had laid on that hill for several centuries, waiting for the time of their coming forth. To see Hill Cumorah one could easily understand why they were secure (the records) as the Hill is one that no one would ever be apt to disturb from its natural position. I would judge the Hill to be about two to three thousand feet elevation—a long, narrow hill about one mile wide and possibly two miles long. On top there was no level place that any construction could have been built during the centuries. A highway has been constructed by the Utah Church which leads to the top, at which point a large monument has been built with the statue of Moroni.

After reviewing all of this, the young man then drove me to the opposite side of the town, where stands a well preserved home of Martin Harris. I would judge this was some four or five miles from the Smith home.

All of this property pertaining to latter day history is owned and maintained by the Utah Church, and I for one am glad that it has been preserved and now stands as a witness to the world. It is the sacred place where the records of Mormon were deposited by Moroni for safe keeping and as a testimony of the Nephite people.

I am sure any believer of the Book of Mormon will experience the same feeling as I did while standing on Hill Cumorah. It is a sacred place where angels have stood and conversed with Joseph Smith, the prophet. I am truly thankful for this experience and I wish it were possible for every member of the Church of Christ, Temple Lot, to enjoy the same experience.

MOTHER'S CLUB REPORT

Officers for our Mother's Club this year are: Chairman, Sr. Grace Rudd; Assistant chairman, Sr. Helen Roberts; Secretary-Treasurer, Sr. Mary Johnson; Devotional Chairman, Sr. Irene Maley; and Reporter, Sr. Margaret Gill. We also elected an Assistance Committee so that in time of need, our people know who to contact for help. Sisters Velma Wheaton, Irene Case, and Gladys Nast constitute this committee.

The Mother's Club sponsors our Children's Music Club and Orchestra. We feel this gives the children an opportunity to have extra musical practice with voice and instrument for benefit of school activities, but most important teaches them to use their musical knowledge to the worship of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Sr. Manon Chapman has the beginning group, Bro. Glenn Gill the junior group, and Bro. Nicholas Denham the orchestra.

September 20 we met in the home of Sr. Grace Rudd for our meeting. I Corinthians 10:1-13 was read as our devotional. Roll call was answered with each member giving a safety tip. Roll call was a means developed for passing along helpful hints to each other. Sr. Helen Roberts gave a lesson on First Aid.

It was voted to have more of our favorite recipe booklets published. Anyone who didn't receive one that would like to, write to Sr. Mary Johnson, 5421 Hardy, Raytown, Missouri, 64133, to reserve your copy.

Sr. Margret Gill, Reporter

POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (TEMPLE LOT) RELATIVE TO MEMBERSHIP

Church actions compiled by Apostle Robert H. Jensen

The following are statements relative to the above subject contained in Church publications and conference resolutions:

An extract from a document drawn up by the Church of Christ in Illinois, under date of March 5, 1857 recorded in "An Outline History of the Church of Christ", pages 104 and 105.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, March 5, 1857

A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND SEPARATION

By the Faithful Members of the Church of Jesus Christ

Therefore for the love of God the Eternal Father, and for the love of truth, which has come through Jesus Christ, God's only beloved Son, to whom be all praise and honor:

We the Elders and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the (State of Illinois) who have often assembled in conference, for the last four years at different times and in many places, and also have declared our independence and separation from all those apostate and polluted characters who teach or practice polygamy, called the spiritual wife system or any thing like unto it—we do hereby repeat our declaration again and order the same to be printed by our agent or agents; declaring that we have no fellowship in union or association with any such person or persons who teach or practice the doctrine of polygamy under any system whatever or anything like unto it. . . .

Our foundation is upon God's holy word given by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ the beloved Son; by revelation to his holy prophets and apostles for salvation, and is contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon and first edition (of) the Book of Covenants given for a standard of faith, rule and practice to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Upon this rock and platform of Jesus Christ we stand and profess to build, by the mercy and grace of God, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is our head. (Blessed be the Lord our God.)

We also hold and maintain that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter (Day) Saints is designed to consist of all such as have been regenerated or borned again of the water and of the Holy Spirit of God through faith in Jesus Christ, (by faith in his name) according to the gospel covenant, having their minds renewed by the Holy Spirit of promise unto good works; and also seek to keep the commandments of God living and walking in obedience to his written work as is recorded in the Holy Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Covenants and all such as do according to these things are fit to be called saints and members of the church and body of Christ.

We believe that all those who transgress the laws of God and still persist in their wicked and sinful ways have only alienated themselves from the Church of Christ; and that it does not disqualify the membership of those who have kept the covenant in living and walking according to God's holy precepts; any more than treason by a part of our legislature would destroy our national government while there is a sufficient number of good and faithful citizens found in it who would discharge their duty in the execution of our wholesome laws and that the constitution and laws of our national government are not changed, nor dead because some have transgressed them; while there are others who are living and maintaining her constitutional rights.

Neither is the gospel covenant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the saints made void because some have departed from the faith.

Therefore we declare our independence upon primitive ground because our church organization is founded wholly upon first principles as given by revelation in the beginning to the church, which was organized in the year of our Lord 1830, and we the high priests, elders and members unitedly do maintain that we are founded upon the same church organization, having received the fullness of the everlasting gospel together with the all authority that is requisite to teach and practice the same, see Book of Covenants, section 12, first to last; Sec. 85 par. 2 and 3; Sec. 22 par. 1; Sec. 18 par. 9; Sec. 2 par. 8, 9 and 13 to 16. (Note: All quotations from latter-day revelation in this document, are from the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.) These references are but a small portion of what might be given, but we hope the brethren will search out those sacred pages for themselves, candidly and prayerfully that they may know assuredly by the help of God that the promises we profess to occupy are according to God's written word; we believe that God has a remnant of ordained ministers (who have not fallen with apostasy) such as high priests, elders, teachers, deacons, etc., whose right it is to unite their efforts as gospel ministers in co-operation together according to God's written word and renovate and save the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Note: The foregoing document is the position of the saints at that time (1857). They had accepted the doctrine of the First Presidency as it had been taught before the death of Joseph Smith. And at this time there was no evidence to be found by them concerning the change in revelations that provided for a First Presidency in the Church. They had accepted the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants which contained the changed revelations, and it was not until many years later that they became acquainted with these changes. They then repudiated the First Presidency, refused to accept the Doctrine and Covenants, and based their faith and belief on the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and such revelations as are in harmony with these two books. Also, it was later that they again began to use the original correct name, the Church of Christ, though it was used at least once in the referenced document above; viz, ". . . It has been before stated that the principles of the faith and doctrines which were given for the foundation of this church are recorded in the Bible, and Book of Mormon, which is the rock and pillar of the foundation of this Church of Christ, which was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830." (Truth Teller, Volume 1, No. 1, page 8, July 1864) Evidence that the Church of Christ was never a part of the "New Organization" or the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" is given in Chapter 18, page 106 of "An Outline History of the Church of Christ." Also, see R.L.D.S. Church History, volume 3, page 631.

Truth Teller, volume 1, No. 4, pages 62 and 63, October 1864.

WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

When the publication of the TRUTH TELLER was commenced, it was not, nor is now, the design of the publishers to devote its columns to the exposing of the false positions and doctrines of any particular division of the church. In the first number of the TRUTH TELLER no direct allusion was made to any particular party, believing as we then did, and now do that every person, no matter with what division they are identified, if they were a proper subject for baptism at the time they were baptized, and the ordinance of baptism was administered to them by one who had acknowledged authority from Jesus Christ to administer the law of his kingdom, all such persons thus obeying the all important commandments of Jesus Christ, enters his new and everlasting covenant, they become new creations, they are in Christ, they are born again. Having

obeyed his commandments, every such person becomes members of the new and everlasting covenant, and they remain in Christ until they alienate themselves by transgressing the laws of the Kingdom of which they are members. No person comes into Christ without consent of their will, coupled with an act of obedience to the laws of his Kingdom. No person goes out of Christ without the consent of their will. A person in the covenant may wander, their minds may become darkened, they may get out of the way not willingly but ignorantly, they "have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous".

In view of these truths, we feel it our duty to address as brethren, all who have from their hearts obeyed the commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by which they became members of His Kingdom, "for by one spirit are we all baptized into Christ." It was not required at the commencement of the rise of the Church of Christ, of those who applied for membership that they should believe any particular person should be the President of the Church, they were only required to confess Christ, obey the laws of adoption by which they migrated from the kingdom of Nature, (of which they were members) into the Spiritual Kingdom of Jesus Christ. To be more explicit with regard to the several subjects that is now agitating the minds of the readers of the HERALD (at Plano, Ill) and the TRUTH TELLER, our belief is that as many of the members of the "New Organization" as have obeyed the principles of adoption into Christ, the law of adoption having been administered to them by those who were in authority of Christ's Kingdom, are our brethren according to the new and everlasting covenant.

It is in view of these facts that we are able to know why it is that honest members of every division, that has grown up in the Church of Christ, are blessed with the gifts promised in the gospel to those who believe. Not understanding these facts have been the cause of many honest and accepted members going astray, in uniting themselves with the different divisions that now exist, they have seen in these different divisions its members enjoy many of the promised gifts, taking it for granted that they as a party were right because many of them were thus blessed when in fact it is no evidence at all in support of the claims advocated by the leaders and aspirants of the party.

If the existence and enjoyment of these spiritual gifts promised to the believer is evidence of the trust of the different organizations, whether they be "new" or old, then every organization that has come into being claiming to be the Church organized by Joseph Smith would be right, for there can be testimony in abundance adduced to prove that members of every organization that we have any knowledge of, that has been effected by members of the Church established by Joseph Smith in 1830, do enjoy the gifts of the gospel and even among the Brighamites, many of the honest, though deceived, enjoy to some extent the promised blessings. The divisions who claim that J. J. Strang, Wm. Smith, Colons Brewster, Sidney Rigdon are successors of Joseph Smith, enjoy the gifts to some extent, some more than others. Hence it will be seen that it is no evidence that any of these parties are right because its members enjoy the promised gifts, no matter when they obeyed the gospel. The existence of these very essential and promised gifts prove this and nothing more than this, that those who enjoy them are accepted believers in Jesus Christ, no matter to what division they belong. May God the eternal Father hasten the day when division and discord shall cease when the honest in heart in every land shall be united, when they all shall speak the same thing.

A vision received by Elder George D. Cole, of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), about 1870, giving evidence of divinely recognized priesthood authority in other groups of the Restoration at the time. (Evening and Morning Star, March 1916)

Not long after we retired for the night, and all was quiet I seemed to realize that I was (on) the Temple Lot high up in the air standing on a rock. It was night. I could see it plain although it was just an ordinary starlit night. And finding myself suddenly placed on that rock, for I seemed to wake up just as I was placed standing upright on it, I could not see anything supporting the rock

up there in space, neither did it seem as though it was unreasonable or strange and I had no fear of it falling. But I being so high began to totter as if I would fall without support of some kind, and without looking for other help I lifted my hands to God and appealed to him for help. And when I did I became steady, calm and without fear although I was very high up. And as I called on God for aid a voice just behind my right shoulder said to me, That is the only way you will ever be able to stand. The voice was kind, mild but impressive. It became light as if the sun was up as he was talking to me. I turned to my right, facing the northeast, for at first I was facing the west, and as I turned I seen a stump somewhere near the west end of where the building now stands on the Temple Lot (but at that time there was not anything on the lot, not even a switch nor a fence.) The stump was about three feet high and two and a half across the top. It was a beautiful stump. A small branch grew out of the stump near the top about twelve inches long, with about six or seven large healthy looking buds on it ready to put forth when the time comes; for this was impressed on me that that was the mind and purpose of the Lord. And as I looked steadfast upon it the voice said, "That is the Church of Christ that was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830."

I was impressed that the tree had become defective, for which cause the tree had been removed, a small part of the blemish or defect extended a short distance down from the top of the stump, as though in cutting of the tree a part was left in the stump on the south side about as broad as the hand. Notwithstanding it was only about or looked to be two and a half feet across the top of the stump, there was quite a number of people on top of it moving around, and I knew, or seemed to know the most of them. There was some engaged in joking, treating lightly their surroundings and as they would near that affected place in the stump they would raise an axe to strike in it in their light minded career, but just as they would start to let fall the axe something would hinder or stop them, and that voice said to me that the Lord would not let them. I was impressed again that if the Lord didn't hinder them they would destroy it, also. I said: Lord, where is the top? He said, Look! I looked just across the road running east and west, just north of the Temple Lot, and there lay the butt of the tree, and he said it was cut off as a Church, but not as individuals. I seen the scar of the axe on the butt end of the tree. The top extended miles and miles, and as it extended north from the Temple Lot the top gradually bent to the west until the extreme top was lying in a westerly direction.

I could see that the tree was dead and the leaves were wilted and turning brown. While I was still standing on that stone up in the air, He said, Look. I looked towards the dead tree. He said, Behold the elders of Israel. I looked and seen that the day will come when the messengers of the Lord will go through that dead top. It seemed to me that they were pruning the tree, but not as we prune a tree, for we would bring from it the dead branches, but they did bring out the green twigs from the dead tree . . ."

Minutes of a joint conference held in 1897 by the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. (Searchlight, February 1, 1897):

Minutes of a conference held in the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot, Independence, Mo., January 16, 18, 19 and 20, 1897, there were present of the Church of Christ, Bro. Richard Hill, J. R. Haldeman, G. P. Frisbey, G. D. Cole and J. A. Hedrick.

Of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ, Bro. Joseph Smith, Alexander Hale Smith, Rhoderic May, W. H. Garrett and Geo. E. Harrington.

The assembly was organized at 2 p. m. by the selection of President Hill to preside and W. H. Garrett, clerk.

After prayer, the object of the meeting was stated to be for the purpose of interchange of thought regarding the difference existing between the two organizations, that there might be a unity of effort in the prosecution of the work of the Lord.

It was agreed, so far as the fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ are concerned, both organizations believe the same, as per copies of epitome hereto attached.

(Also, see "An Outline History of the Church of Christ, pages 117-118)

Another joint session was held in 1900. That council reaffirmed the agreement of the former committee with slight alterations and amendments, and adopted a further series of agreements, and adjourned; no permanent mutual working basis was then established; but a much better understanding of the ground held by each organization was gained. (Evening and Morning Star, Volume 4, No. 4, pages 1-4, August 15, 1904)

Conference action taken on November 10, 1912:

The question of authority was taken up, and agreed as follows: We have no official knowledge concerning the Utah and Reorganized Church which would justify us in recognizing purported ordinations performed by them. However, should any not holding fellowship with the Church of Christ, be able to prove to the entire satisfaction of the whole Church that he received and held the priesthood through true channels, he would be given due credit by our people." (See "Old Record" of Church of Christ page 150)

Conference action taken on priesthood authority at the April 1913 conference:

Resolved, The authority question be taken up and it was agreed to stand by minutes as recorded in November 10, 1912 minutes, which was agreed upon as being the position of the Church of Christ. Carried unanimously. (See "Old Record" of the Church of Christ page 153)

Conference action on valid baptisms on March 13, 1917:

Inasmuch as the elders of the Church of Christ in joint council with the elders of the Reorganized Church (See Searchlight, page 98, January 1897) agreed that they believed that there were individuals in different factions of the Latter-day faith who held the priesthood:

Therefore be it resolved that those who are desirous of uniting with us on their original baptism, that the matter be referred to a court of Elders of the Church of Christ, and if it be proven that they were baptized by those holding the priesthood, that we extend to them the right hand of fellowship; otherwise they will have to be baptized by those of this Church of Christ who holds the priesthood authority. (See "Large Record", pages 238, 239)

During the latter part of 1917 a joint committee of members from both organizations met and adopted the former articles of agreement, with slight alterations and amendments. The committee met again in 1918 (January 27th), and formulated additional articles of agreement with a plan for submitting them for the approval of the two organizations at the April conference. (An Outline History of the Church of Christ, pages 117-119)

AGREEMENT OF WORKING HARMONY (WITH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST)

7. Agreed, that we believe that there are individuals in the different factions who hold the priesthood.

12. Agreed, that faith and righteousness and the call of God, are the chief essentials for the possession of the Melchisedec priesthood.

22. Agreed, that the branch of the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot, which was presided over by Elder Granville Hedrick and his successors, shall be continued, and that no changes be made in the custody of the Temple Lot.

24. Agreed, that whereas the Church of Christ, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints consist of members who have been baptized by men holding authority, conferred by ordination under the hands of the servants of God, called during the ministry of Joseph Smith, who have remained true to the original faith of the church, organized April 6, 1830, and, whereas, both

organizations stand for and maintain the same fundamental doctrine and practice, and have the same purpose and ideal in their church government and work; therefore, be it mutually agreed, that each recognize the standing of the other as representing Christ, the Master, and the priesthood of each as legally constituted, and the administration of each as equally binding before God, when done in accordance with the law.

Resolved, that these articles of agreement be submitted to the general conferences of both organizations, which are to be held April 6, 1918, at Independence, Missouri, for approval as a working basis of harmony between the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The above agreement was formally adopted by the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot on March 31, 1918. (See General Church Record, pages 257-266)

President E. A. Smith of the Reorganized Church made the following statement concerning the agreement of Working Harmony:

This means of course, that all vexed questions of doctrine, baptism, and priesthood, were carefully considered by the best intelligence that the church could assemble at a General Conference, both among the priesthood and the delegates.

Though arguments may be advanced upon both sides of the question, as is usually the case, this assembly conceded that our Church of Christ brethren had established their claims so far as may be involved in tracing baptisms and priesthood back to the fundamental doctrines of the church and have been guilty of no moral lapse. In fact, in the face of adroit efforts to bribe and seduce them from their trust, they have kept themselves clear of evil forces and designing men. Hence no charge of apostasy from the original faith could be supported, were there any among us inclined, at this time, to make such a charge. (From an editorial by President Elbert A. Smith, "Saints Herald", Volume 65, No. 17, April 24, 1918)

Frederick M. Smith and W. W. Smith, who were members of the Committee on Working Harmony made similar statements in the Saints Herald for April 17, 1918.

Conference action on transfers to the Church of Christ, April 7, 1926:

Moved by T. J. Sheldon that until such times as we have representatives in Europe holding the Melchisedec Priesthood, applications for membership made upon original baptism to be considered by the Elders of the Branch to which they apply, who shall act upon the best information they can obtain to make their recommendations to the respective branches. Carried.

Conference action on transfers to the Church of Christ, April 7, 1927:

It was moved that we recommend to the members and the priesthood of the local churches which compose this Church of Christ, that they take action to have the names of those affiliating with them on their original baptism from other factions of the latter-day work, removed from the records of their former association. Carried.

Conference action on transfers to the Church of Christ, April 8, 1933:

Report of the revision committee: To the General Assembly, Church of Christ: We, your committee, appointed to revise the document before the assembly on the question of receiving members from other divisions of the Restoration on their original baptisms, beg leave to report as follows: And we recommend that this report be made an addendum to Bill No. 1, as previously adopted by this Assembly;

To the members of the Church of Christ Throughout the World.
Preamble

1. The Church of Christ in all its local churches should act harmoniously in the matter of receiving members from other divi-

sions of the restoration. The Lord said, Unless you are one ye are not mine.

2. Whereas, We the Church of Christ do not approve nor endorse the various false doctrines and heresies which have caused so many sad separations among the people of the Church, yet we are constrained to recognize the measure of spiritual grace which has been preserved in the various divisions of the Church, and we concede that despite the errors of humanity and the sins of perversity, from which none may rightly be free, Christ still has a ministry, to whom he gives some recognition.

Resolution

Therefore, be it ordered and directed by vote of the membership of Christ in all the world; that the members of the various divisions of the Latter Day Restoration who turn from sin and renounce the unprofitable theories of doctrine which tend to alienate from God and disrupt true Christian fellowship, and who desire thus to place their membership with the Church of Christ and adhere to its teachings, may be received on their original baptism;

Provided: That the candidate for acceptance is certain that he, or she, has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as well as having been baptized of water, and;

Provided further, that it is made evident to the local church receiving them that this is so, as may be manifested by a penitent spirit and by a Godly walk and conversation. Otherwise, the Church will require that all be baptized who are received into membership.

Conference action on baptism and transfers in the Church of Christ, April 14, 1936:

It was moved and seconded to approve a committee report:

Committee of Baptism and Transfer reported as follows: We recommend that the action of 1917 be reaffirmed, but that the term, "Court of Elders" be changed to "two or more Elders, one of whom shall be the missionary in charge," so the resolution will read:

Therefore, be it resolved, that those who are desirous of uniting with us on their original baptism; that the matter shall be referred to two or more Elders, one of whom shall be the missionary in charge of the Church of Christ, and if it is proven that they were baptized by those holding the priesthood, that we extend to them the right hand of fellowship; otherwise they will have to be baptized by those of the Church of Christ who hold the priesthood authority. Carried.

Conference action relative to the status of the Church of Christ and priesthood authority, April 9, 1941:

Resolved that the Church of Christ, with headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Mo., is the true and lawful continuation of the Church organized by Joseph Smith, April 6, 1830, and is in harmony with said church, in origin, organization, doctrine and practice.

Conference action, April 11, 1941:

Resolved that we do not consider the foregoing resolution as abrogating former action in which we have recognized that there is valid priesthood and baptism among individuals in various divisions of the Restoration. Carried.

Conference action relative to transfers to the Church of Christ, April 16, 1947:

It was moved and seconded "That we reaffirm our former action on the matter of membership transfer requiring the signature of two elders and the missionary in charge." Carried.

Conference action on baptism and transfers in the Church of Christ, April 11, 1963:

"... resolved, that we reaffirm our former action on transfer as set forth in Referendum Bill No. 19 of the 1936 conference and that this reaffirmation be sent out to referendum." Carried.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

Original Articles are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the church or the opinions of the editorial staff. Even though some articles may in some cases be interpreted as controversial in nature, we believe that such articles if written in an affirmative manner in which a belief or an opinion is expressed, and evidences presented to support that belief, said articles should be presented to the readers.

FAITH

By

M. Harvey Seibel

Faith is of extreme importance to any child of God, and especially to the ministry, for "without faith it is impossible to please him." (Hebrew 11:6) Also let us consider the following: "Wherefore, there must be faith; and if there must be faith, there must also be hope; and if there must be hope, there must also be charity; and except we have charity, ye can in no wise be saved in the kingdom of God; NEITHER CAN YE BE SAVED IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD, IF YE HAVE NOT FAITH . . . (Mormoni 10:15, 16) Faith is a way of life, the constant companion of the righteous, their ever present guide; for it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17) While in Hebrews 11 the whole chapter is taken up in recounting the ancient servants of God whose faith in God was accounted unto them for righteousness. While Isaiah 26:3 assures us of the peace that passeth understanding, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Paul confirms the need of faith when he says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (II Corinthians 5:7) Exceeding faith coupled with good works is listed as the primary reason for God choosing a man to function in the Melchisedec priesthood. "And this is the manner after which they were ordained; being called and prepared from the foundation of the world, according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceeding great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such." (Alma 9: 65, 66) They were not called because they had a degree from some educational institution, because they had achieved success in the eyes of the world, or any other reason than that they had exceeding great faith, but coupled with good works, for, "faith without works is dead." (James 2:20)

The subject of faith is one of considerable confusion among professors of belief in the Bible, each coming from a private interpretation. One definition which is particularly troublesome because of its appeal to legitimacy, while being of a baser, more materialistic cast, is often heard among Church of Christ members. Faith, under this school of thought, is likened to a belief that a seed, when placed in the ground, will spring forth to a new life. This concept leaves God out of the picture, except remotely ascribing to Him all the forces of nature. Such a faith tells us that a stone will fall to the ground, the sun will rise tomorrow, seedtime and harvest will continue, certain medicines will heal the sick; but it does not tell us that God will intervene to heal the

sick, to cause rain in time of drouth, or protect His people in time of earthquake, flood, famine, or war. Such faith is merely the confidence any skeptic or atheist may have in the laws of nature.

Faith being of a non-material nature can hardly be defined except by coming at it from various sides: a system which God uses repeatedly in the Scriptures, often using apparently conflicting statements which, when blended together, leave a more perfect understanding of spiritual facts. A definition of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

This definition, standing alone, does little more for us than the example of the sprouting seed, for knowledge of past events as an augury of the future is also the substance and evidence of things not seen. Faith in God implies a confidence based on love and understanding of His designs toward man, based in turn on belief in His word, which traces back to the evidence of His goodness to man in times past as recorded in the Scriptures, and in personal experiences with God. But even this, by itself, is not enough to give faith to those agnostics and others who do not love God and keep His commandments. Adding a bit more to our understanding of faith, we need to add the concept of trust: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." (I John 5:14) The evidence of the unseen is shown to be the element of trust, (Note Psalms 141:8, "But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust;"), with the stipulation that we ask according to His will. This is not an unreasonable assertion if we add another element, love. If we love God completely, with all our heart, mind, and strength, we will not desire anything that would offend Him, therefore we will ask according to His will, and He will answer us according to His great love for us. There is no conflict here with the statement, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." Proverbs 28:9) For the wicked love not God, and therefore lack one element of faith, without which prayer will not be answered.

Faith is the key that unlocks the treasure house of God. It is said to move mountains, heal the sick, replenish the larder, care for our flocks and herds, ". . . All things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23) All things are possible, if according to the will of God. If this is true then faith becomes the key to eternal life. It even says this: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. . ." (Acts 16:31) Now we have added salvation, based on faith. Again this is not the whole story, though we have included love, trust, His will; it is not all. We must come to the meaning of faith from still another angle: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) How futile it is

to build doctrine on a single verse. Baptism becomes a part of the structure. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 3:28) This sounds like a proof of a common heresy, saved by grace and not by works; therefore once saved always saved. "Do we the make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." (Romans 3:31) While the following will add greater understanding: "But will thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:20, 24, 26)

All doctrines of the Scriptures cannot be fully exemplified by a single text but must be built up, line upon line, precept upon precept, coming at it from all sides until the total picture is obtained. The more subjective the presentation, the more spiritual and immaterial the concept, the more varied are the approaches which must be made to illuminate the understanding. The inaccuracies of the translation, and the bias and ignorance of the translator contribute to the need for a multiplicity of texts to set forth and expound a single doctrine. A false stroke of the brush will not obliterate the whole picture; neither an error in the work of a scribe or interpreter destroy the total concept of the doctrine when taken from numerous texts. The work of the expounder of the Scriptures must be exhaustive in magnitude, and of depth as the research leads back toward original documents, thorough and careful each step, and unbiased by preconceived concepts. That will be the human contribution; but without the guidance of the Holy Spirit based on prayer and fasting, the result will be only a scholarly presentation, lacking the spiritual truths without which there is no life, and the heart of the reader will not be touched; for "... your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (I Corinthians 2:5)

From the present composite study the meaning of faith begins to stand out. It is composed of trust in God because we know Him and love Him. It is a means of contact with God, without which no man can please Him, or come to Him. It cannot exist in the heart of the unrighteous, for it is based on the keeping of the commandments, and the desiring that which God desires.

Further, faith is not the same as believing. We believe that the seed will sprout when planted, watered, and given the elements of growth, as heat, sun, and fertilizer. This we believe. If we saw God we would believe that He exists just as we believe that mountains, plains and trees exist. Belief is not enough, for "the devils also believe and tremble." (James 2:19)

Faith is not attainable in our own strength. Scholarly proof may be irrefutable, and the evidence for the existence of God may confound the most stiffnecked so that belief is unavoidable, but a cold, calculating acceptance of God is not a living, loving faith. We can no more attain faith by our own efforts than we can proverbially lift ourselves by our boot straps. It is the gift of God.

Belief comes by degree, as shown by the example of

the grain of mustard seed, which is the smallest of seeds but grows to be a great shrub: so grows faith as it is used over and over. The father that came to Christ with tears recognized that his faith was weak and cried, "Lord I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24) Paul recognized that the gift of faith varied with the individuals, "... according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Romans 12:3)

Faith does not become inoperative because it is small. If it burns with but the light of a candle and all other conditions are right, God will be merciful and bless the person according to his degree of faith. But this thought is expressed from another angle: "if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." (Matthew 17:20) If this sounds unreasonable, that a little faith has enough power to literally move a mountain, as it says in another place, and cast it into the sea, it must be remembered there is another characteristic of faith. Faith has not power within itself, neither has the man power to wield the lever of faith and so move the mountain. Faith is not like Socrate's lever as he said, Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to stand and I can move the earth. That is not faith. Faith is the trust exhibited by the individual in God, and God will move the mountain literally, or do anything else the person desires as long as it is also the will of God to do so; and the Christian in whom the Spirit dwells will not ask for something to be done contrary to the will of God. Faith does, however, give to man contact with the infinite power of God, and nothing is impossible to him who trusts in the Lord.

There is still another characteristic of faith; it must burn with a steady flame. Doubt in the promises of God is to call God a liar. Perfect trust must be present, and perfect, unwavering faith. For, ... let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like the wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (James 1:6, 7)

Repeating, faith is a way of life, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23) Without faith we cannot please God. To be without faith for different periods of time throughout life is to have moments when we are not pleasing to God and are in sin, for to do any act, or think any thought which is without faith is sin. This is the lesson that the person holding either the Melchisedec or Aaronic priesthood must learn and practice continually. Everything that we do must be by faith, not only preaching, laying on of hands for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the other functions of the priesthood, but also our whole lives must be in tune with God through the element of faith, for faith is the living contact with God and the straight and narrow path that leads to salvation. It is the means by which we bear our cross and feel the shoulder of Christ lifting it with us. A symbolism of this walking by faith is from the story of Peter walking on the waters. Recall that Peter, in

answer to Christ bidding him, "Come", stepping forth upon the sea and did walk, and he walked until he became fearful because of the stormy waves and began to sink. Peter called to Christ in faith to save him, and Christ reached out and together they walked back to the boat. That is very typical of the lives we lead, in faith, but with Christ, for lo, He is with us always, even to the end of the world.

Consider in like manner the compass of Lehi: "I would that ye should understand that these things are not without a shadow; for as our fathers were slothful to give heed to this compass . . . they did not prosper; even so it is with things which are spiritual." (Alma 17:78) The compass worked by faith and diligence, and as long as faith burned a steady flame the compass worked, but if faith faltered the compass failed. So it is with us: if our faith burns steadily we will walk upon the waters of life, but the moment the flame of faith falters, we sink into ways of evil, into sin, for whatsoever is not faith is sin.

A word of warning: The pathway of life can be likened to the waves of the sea, never quite placid, sometimes rising and falling with the thrashing of stormy winds, but always waves. The peaks represent times of spiritual heights, and the troughs, depressions when Satan seems to tempt us greatly. As we walk in faith we ought not to expect greater blessings of healings, gifts of preaching, etc., when passing over a peak, but consider that God, who sees both the past and the future bases our spiritual gifts upon the overall view. Therefore we need not take time to put ourselves into a spiritual mood before administering the oil of healing, but must rather keep our candle of faith burning steadily with growing brightness. If we do that we can expect the signs of healing, casting out devils and others to be with us, for . . . "these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:17-18) We cannot live lax lives, and then turn to the Lord whenever anyone asks for healings, but must maintain a steady spiritual growth, for only steadfastness is pleasing to God. Spiritual wavering over the weeks is no more likely to bring answers to prayers of faith than wavering of faith during the time of petition. In neither case can we expect anything of the Lord. Inconstancy is never pleasing to God who changes not.

A second thought: what is the feeling of faith. If a single word can describe so immaterial a thing as faith it would be another immaterial word: the one chosen by the author as best exemplifying his understanding of faith is "expectancy". If you pray for the lame to walk, the feeling of expectancy must be there. You must actually expect the lame to walk, not sometime in the future as a slow blessing works, but now, at the moment of prayer. That is the common experience when the prayer of faith was offered in days of old.

Once it is recorded, a lone instance, From that very hour he began to mend. (John 4:52-53) The general way, when faith burns brightly is for the healing to occur immediately. If the mountain is to be moved it will occur suddenly, not through a slow process. So, we pray; now, it happens. Moses did not go into a long protracted period of prayer at the waters of the Red Sea: he extended his rod and the flood rolled back; Elisha on the shore of the River, extended his rod, "Where is the God of Elijah" and the waters rolled back and he crossed on dry land; the shadow of Peter, the handkerchief of Paul, and the sick and lame leaped for joy. It just happened, even as they spoke, now, in an instant! That is the way it will be with the elders of the Church of Christ. Do we measure up? Prayer need not be made all night long. We do not "pray through" to God, for the contact has already been made in a continuous, unwavering faith. Salvation is not a result of "praying through" as so many ministers are preaching in some of the churches of the world, but it is an ever present walking on the waters. This is the second lesson and warning for the priesthood: Faith is not leaping from peak to peak of spiritual experience, but a steady walking upon the waters of life, in which every moment we are born up by an unwavering faith, bearing our cross, feeling the shoulder of the Master lifting with us. Life is not a game of football where we are booted back and forth between Satan and Christ, but a walking in either one path or the other, either the strait and narrow, or the broad way.

A third warning: If an individual fails to maintain a steady flow of faith throughout his ministry, and falls by the wayside, he cannot redeem himself by great and abundant works. A bit of history is recorded for our learning that illustrates this point. The children of Israel had travelled for two years across the burning sands of the desert and had come to the promised land. When they learned that it was inhabited by giants, their hearts failed within them, and waves seemed so boisterous that they sank, and did not call for Christ to help them. "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night." (Numbers 14:1) Three million people had not the faith in God for they did not trust Him; so they all wept in their tents in great distress of spirit. The following day, Moses and Aaron fell on their faces and Joshua and Caleb pled with the people to have faith and go in for the Lord would give the land unto them. But all the congregation bade stone them. The Lord told them they would all die in the wilderness but only their children would go into the Promised Land. Then the people decided to go forward in their own strength into the country, but they were repulsed. Works without faith is not pleasing to God.

A similar history is found after the Jews rejected Christ as their Savior and crucified Him. They were dispersed into many countries, but they were full of zeal and works of the Lord. They memorized all their Laws and interpretations and carried it round in their heads.

Then the persecution prevailed among them so that "The rabbis feared that in this upheaval Jewish learning was in danger of being wiped out, for each time a Saracen or Vandal sword clove a scholastic skull, 2,500,000 words of Mishna and Gemara fell dead in the gutter. Against their better judgment the rabbis permitted the Mishna and Gemara to be written down. This compiling was entrusted to a school of scholars known as Saboraim, versed in Hebrew and Aramaic. Their combined text is the Talmud.

"The task took over two hundred years and would have taken longer but for the fact that some of the students of Oral Law had been cribbing. Many had kept written notes as aids to memory. Intertwined through its thirty-five volumes and 15,000 pages are the complicated brain twisters of jurisprudence known as Halacha, or 'law'; the philosophical dissertations on ethics, morals, conduct, and piety known as Aggada, or 'narration'; and the beautiful, tender passages on Bible stories, wise sayings, and tales known as Midrash, or 'sermons.'" (Jews, God and History by Max. I. Dimont)

Just think of the tremendous feat of keeping 35 volumes in their heads, teaching all the law from father to son by word of mouth, and such a great quantity of it. The nation had failed to accept Christ when He was on earth teaching daily among them, they rejected the words of life, and then built up a fantastic quantity of law designed, in their minds, to please God and bring salvation, working a tremendous amount of time, dedicating their lives to the work; but salvation cannot come to them by this method. For salvation is "not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:9)

Works are not a substitute for laxness in our priestly duties, nor does it compensate for pet sins of pride, lust, money. Nothing is compensated for by works, without faith. There is no other way into heaven except through Christ and keeping His commandments in the spirit of faith.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5)

A TRAIT

by

B. L. Bruce

Thanksgiving is a gracious trait
 We would do well to cultivate
 For gratitude unveils the eyes
 To the worth that 'round us lies
 The hidden good on every hand
 Awaiting hearts that understand.
 We need a thought, akin to prayer
 That we may be made more aware
 Of blessings that descend like showers
 Intended that some should be ours
 For the Father spreads His table wide
 And wills that none shall be denied.

THE QUESTION

by

Lovita G. Seibel

The question has sometimes been asked, why was it that Christ refused the wine medicated with myrrh which the soldiers offered to him just prior to the crucifixion? From Mark 15:23, "and they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not." Another record is given in Matthew 27:34, "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink." The Pulpit Commentary offers the following comment, "instead of 'vinegar' very many manuscripts (i.e. of the Scriptures. L.G.S.) . . . read here as in Mark 'Wine' . . . Doubtless the two words represent the same fluid, a wine of a sharp acid taste . . . 'Gall' here signifies some bitter ingredient (St. Mark calls it 'myrrh') which was infused in the wine to impart a narcotic quality."

The usual answer to the above question which we have repeatedly seen is this; that Christ was making the last supreme sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that it was His due (to drink the bitter dregs of the cup which the Father had given to Him), and his desire to savor all the agony and torture of the cross. While wine thus medicated would act to anesthetize His senses. Had the complete 'nth degree' of suffering have been Christ's purpose it seems that He would have, of necessity, chosen to wait out the customary slow death of the cross, which commonly required two or three days to effect.

In I Corinthians 5:6-8 Paul has some information for us as follows. "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (King James version) Paul tells here that "Christ sacrificed" on the cross is our passover. A more modern version reads as follows "Do ye not know that a little ferment ferments the whole mass? Clean out the old ferment, so that ye may be a sweet mass, and thus you will be unfermented. For Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us, so that we might keep a festival, not with an old ferment, neither in a ferment of filth and wickedness, but on the contrary, with unfermented purity and truth."

The crucifixion occurred during the Passover week, "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified . . . Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we shall prepare for thee to eat the passover?" (Matt. 26:2, 17) It was accomplished by Christ offering Himself as a sacrifice to free mankind from sin.

Those who offered the yearly passover sacrifices were high priests, having been ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices. "For every high priest taken from among

men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." (Hebrews 5:1) Christ, also, was an high priest. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee. And he said also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 5:5 and 6) And as such was prepared as His "offering gift" to offer "Himself" as the supreme sacrifice.

While it is true that Christ was nailed to the cross by the Roman soldiers, it is also true that they did not take His life. Death by crucifixion often required two or three days before it came. Jesus gave His life of His freewill and at the proper time; for He, holding the high priesthood must officiate in making this sacrifice, not the Roman soldiers.

Jesus told Pilate, ". . . Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: . . ." (John 19:11) While in John 19:28 and 30 we find, "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished . . . said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." In that manner He had completed the "offering of the sacrifice of Himself" of His own accord; choosing when to die, rather than waiting for the usual length of time for crucifixion to bring about death; nor yet waiting for the breaking of His legs which would have hastened death as it did for the two thieves. He gave His life only when all things save "His death" had been accomplished.

The Lord gave Aaron and his sons certain instructions, found in Leviticus 10:8-11: "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine or strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations: and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

These instructions, to not partake of wine or strong drink, were enjoined upon the priest lest they die; and also that they would be able to judge between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, and to thus be able to properly teach the Israelites.

So Christ as the High Priest, after the order of Melchisedec, which was His own Order, offered "Himself," a sacrifice for sins. He was "called of God, an high priest after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:10) "For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 7:17) "And I would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained priests, after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son, to teach these things unto the people." (Alma 9:63) Since Christ was the officiating priest while making His own sacrifice, He could not accept intoxicating wine and remain holy, for He too must keep the command and must abstain, thus keeping the command enjoined upon Aaron, and his sons throughout all generations.

There was further reason why Jesus must abstain from intoxicating wine, for He became "our passover" as we have already noted in I Corinthians 5:6 and 8. This reason for His abstinence is that all Israel were forbidden to eat anything "leavened" at the time of the Passover; nor were they to have any leaven whatsoever in their houses during this time. "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel; whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread." (Exodus 12:18-20)

Since an intoxicating wine would have become fermented through the working and fermentation of a leaven, Christ, as our Passover, during the 14th day of the first month (the day on which He was crucified) would have broken those explicit commands regarding the passover had He partaken of that medicated wine which was offered to him; thus cutting Himself off from the Congregation of Israel, and His sacrifice would have been made of none effect.

There is still a further reason why Christ should abstain which is found in Amos 2: 6-8. "Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; . . . and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god." Drinking such wine is the fourth transgression mentioned which God would not forgive. Spiritually "Golgotha" was that day very much the house of God. It became the Tabernacle of the Congregation for sacrifice for sin.

There is one more reason why Christ would not partake of the intoxicating wine. But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. (Isaiah 28:7) Let us be thankful to God that at this critical time that Christ did not let wine and strong drink swallow Him up, so that He would err in vision and in judgment!

This Scripture is quite an indictment by God through Isaiah of certain priests and prophets, who had allowed the use of wine and strong drink to blind them, causing them to err, to go out of the way, to lose their vision and understanding of holy things. I fear as indicated in Leviticus 10:8-11 that such ones cannot put a difference between holy and unholy, clean and unclean, and would be unable to properly teach the statutes and commandments of God.

For all these reasons Christ, our Passover, our sacrifice for sins, could not have partaken of the wine and myrrh which was offered to Him by sympathetic persons.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

BOOK OF MORMON STORIES

by
Ora Derry

5. The End of the Jardite Nation

Ether was born in the days of Coriantumr. Coriantumr was the last king of all the people. Ether was a great prophet, the last one God sent to the Jardites. He told them of all of God's dealings with the children of men from the creation down to their time. He told them that after the great flood, in the days of Noah, when the waters receded from off the face of their land, it became a very choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord. So the Lord said that the people who lived upon this land should serve Him, or when they became ripe in iniquity, they should be destroyed.

The people did not like Ether for telling them that they were a wicked people. They had secret combinations, murders, robbers, wars and contentions. They did not believe the words of the prophets. They put the prophets in pits, cast them out of the land and murdered them. For all these many things, they would be destroyed unless they repented. So they cast Ether out from among them and he lived in a cave in the rocks to only come out at night to view the destruction of the people.

There were many great men among the people who sought to overthrow Coriantumr by using the secret plans of darkness, but they did not succeed. The king had studied all the ways of war and was ready to fight anyone who came to destroy him. He knew, in his own mind, that he was a mighty man of war and he did not depend on God. So wars were fought over all the land as the people sought to gain power and authority.

In the second year Ether lived in the cave in the rocks, the Lord sent him to Coriantumr again, to ask him to repent of his sins and also all of his household. If he would, God would give him his kingdom and spare the people. If he did not repent, they would be destroyed and all his household. He only would live long enough see another people, who would be permitted to have this land of promise and they would bury him. Coriantumr did not believe the warning nor did the people and they tried to take Ether's life. Ether fled from among them and went back to his cave in the rocks.

Because of the iniquity of the people, a great curse came upon them. If they layed their tools or swords down at night in the place where they kept them, they would be gone in the morning. They had to keep them in their hands to be ready to defend themselves, their families and their homes at any time. They would neither borrow nor loan anything. They kept everything close at hand for as safekeeping as they could have during these troublesome times.

After one great battle which lasted many days, Coriantumr began to remember the words of Ether. He saw two million of his best soldiers killed besides many women and children. He knew that the words that

Ether had spoken were true and so far had been fulfilled. He wrote a letter to Shiz, the leader of the opposing army, telling him he could have the kingdom if he would spare the lives of the people. Shiz desired only to take Coriantumr's life and Coriantumr was not willing to let Shiz kill him. So the war went on. First one and then the other would win, driving and pursuing each other across the land, killing thousands and thousands of the people on the way.

At last they each took a place for a camp and for four years they gathered together all the people in the land, except Ether, to the camp of either Coriantumr or Shiz. When they were all together with whichever leader they chose, with their women and children all armed with weapons, they marched forth to battle.

They fought fiercely all that day killing many people and at night they returned to their camps and spent the night weeping and wailing for the loss of their loved ones. The next day they went again to battle and at night cried and wept over the great loss of their people. Coriantumr wrote again to Shiz to spare the people and he would give him his kingdom. Things had gone too far and there was no turning back. The Spirit of God had ceased to strive with them and no one was willing to give up. So day after day they fought on until at last there were thirty-two people on the side of Shiz and twenty-seven people on Coriantumr's side. After fighting for three hours, they had all fainted from the loss of blood. After resting for awhile, Coriantumr and his men were able to walk and they started to flee for their lives. Shiz and his men arose and started after them, overtaking them the next day. Again they fought until all were killed but Coriantumr and Shiz. Shiz fainted from the loss of blood. After resting a few minutes, Coriantumr took his sword and cut off the head of Shiz. There he stood, a victor in this terrible battle. Thousands upon thousands of dead people were all around him.

A great and mighty nation whom God had permitted to dwell upon this chosen bit of earth for about seventeen hundred years had come to an end just as the Lord had told them would happen if they did not serve Him. For the Lord said that whoever was to possess this chosen land must serve Him or when they become ripe in iniquity they will be swept off the land.

THAT SAME PROMISE IS TRUE FOR US TODAY
AS WELL AS IT WAS FOR THE JAREDITES SO MANY
HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.

CONSOLATION

by
Edna B. Simmers

We know not why there's sorrow, pain and grief.
We only know that we must have belief
That some time in a fairer, happier land
We'll meet our loved ones and will understand.
So courage, faith and hope down life's highway
Must be our guardian angels 'til that day.

WISCONSIN REUNION

The Wisconsin Reunion has again passed into history leaving pleasant memories of that season of joy and praise to our Heavenly Father, and of the association together with our dear brothers and sisters in the gospel of these latter days. The reunion dates were the 12th and 13th of August, and it was held at the little white church at Sparta.

We were happy to have with us four members of the Council of Twelve, Apostles William F. Anderson, Thomas E. Barton, William A. Sheldon and Robert H. Jensen. There were also in attendance many visitors from other places including Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, Colorado and Arizona. We very much appreciate their coming from so far to meet with us, and may the Lord bless them for their efforts in our behalf.

The first service of each day was a prayer meeting which on both occasions lasted until noon. There were many prayers and testimonies offered of a spiritual nature, and the portion of God's Spirit which was present filled our hearts with a renewed desire to press forward to that high calling. As at past reunions the emblems of the broken body and spilled blood of our Lord and Master were served Sunday morning. At this time also a number came forward for administration. What a privilege we have in approaching the throne of grace for the blessings of which we stand in need.

Our speakers on Saturday were Apostle Thomas Barton of Hayden, Colorado; and Elder Don McIndoo of Phoenix, Arizona. Brother Barton occupied the pulpit at 2:30. His scripture reading was taken from St. Matthew 23:37, 38: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." He then called our attention to some of the prophecies and commandments which have been given in our time concerning the establishment of Zion and building of the temple; and of the need to condition ourselves that we might be able to accomplish these things. We have sufficient instruction already given from the Lord if we will put it into practice. The Lord waits upon this people.

A special number, "Jesus Is Calling, Oh Hear Him Today", was offered at this service by Brethren William Sheldon, Glen Gill, Don McIndoo and Rhondal Shaw.

The evening message was brought to us by Brother Don McIndoo. At this time we were favored with the beautiful hymn "In The Hour of Trial" rendered by the same quartet as before. Brother McIndoo spoke of the conversion of Apostle Paul to the gospel of Christ, and the change that it wrought in his life. Our lives too should show a change when touched by the Spirit of God. Our main vocation should be to serve God and seek to bring about His kingdom here on earth. We can have a part in the great and marvelous work that is still to be done if we are faithful and obedient.

During the course of the sermon Brother McIndoo asked Brother and Sister Shaw to sing a certain song

which would help to portray more vividly to our minds the love of Christ, and what it should mean to us. Brother Shaw accompanied them on his guitar, and it was very nicely done, and indeed touching. Here are the inspiring words:

Last night I dreamed an angel came,
He took my hand, he spoke my name.
He bade me look the other way
And then I heard my Savior say,

Chorus

He said if I be lifted up
I'll draw all men to me,
He turned and then I saw
Those nail scarred hands that bled for me.

I touched the hem of His garment
That fell around Him there,
My life, my heart I gave,
My soul was in His care.

When I awoke, my heart beat slow
There in the dark I saw a glow,
It was no dream, He turned my way
And then I heard my Savior say,

Oh sinner hear my urgent plea
Open your heart, come unto me
I am the truth, the light, the way,
Hear my command and with me stay.

Following the noon meal on Sunday we were made very happy to witness the baptisms of two of our number. They were Brother Merlin Eddy's wife, Grace, and their son Merlin, Jr. Now the whole family is united in the gospel endeavor, and we pray the Lord's Spirit will be with them to guide and direct them in the days and years that lie ahead. Apostle William A. Sheldon officiated at this time.

Our speaker Sunday afternoon was Apostle William F. Anderson. He called our attention to the need of greater personal righteousness. The Master of men has set up a standard for us to live by. We should seek to find that way, and improve ourselves by prayer and a study of God's written word. To attain to Celestial glory, we must obey the Celestial law. "Work for the Night Is Coming" was offered as a special number at this service by the same male quartet as before.

Following the sermon, we had a short business meeting and it was decided we would have a reunion again next year. The date set is the second week end of August. Our new reunion committee is Brethren Ray Hunholz, Frank Knapp, and John Davies. Sister Sue Brickhouse was elected reporter for the coming year.

Elder Joseph Yates occupied the pulpit for the closing sermon of the reunion. His subject was the power of influence. He spoke of various ones in the church whose lives had been an influence for good on

those around them, and with whom they come in contact. Each of us influence others in our daily lives by the way we talk and act. We can be a light to others by letting the light of the gospel shine through our lives, or we can cause the light to grow dim by indifference and neglect.

Our thanks to Sister June Sarratt who led the singing, and Sister Margaret Gill for taking over at the piano. It is really nice when those so talented offer their services in this way.

May the words of council and admonition of this occasion be not soon forgotten, but rather that we treasure them up in our hearts that they may bear fruit until we meet again, is my prayer.

Helen Taubert, Reporter

BAPTISMS

Ollis Clifton Engle was baptised and received the laying on of hands by his father-in-law, Apostle Archie F. Bell, August 27, 1967 at Bucyrus, Kansas where Brother Engle and his family live. His membership was received September 3 by the Ava, Missouri Local where his wife, Sister Ella Engle, has her membership.

Donelda Adell Fields, the wife of Albert Richard Fields of Wyandotte, Michigan, was baptized September 17, 1967 by Elder Tony Grzincic at Dexter, Michigan. Sister Fields received the laying on of hands by Elders Arthur G. Smith and Tony Grzincic.

Deborah Jane Souls, the daughter of Betty Jane Trudgen of Belding, Michigan, was baptized by Elder Laverne Lussenden September 3, 1967 at Hopkins, Michigan. She received the laying on of hands by Brother Lussenden assisted by Elder George Brantner.

BLESSINGS

Suzanne Lynette Seibel, the daughter of David M. and Suzanne M. Seibel of Corona, California, was blessed under the hands of her grandfather, Elder M. Harvey Seibel, September 7, 1967.

Sarah Elizabeth Stephens, the infant daughter of Ross W. and Jeanee Elizabeth Stephens, was blessed under the hands of Elders George Brantner and Laverne Lussenden, October 1, 1967 at Cedar Springs, Michigan.

Albert Richard Fields, Jr., son of Albert Richard and Donelda Adell Fields of Wyandotte, Michigan, was blessed under the hands of Elders Arthur G. Smith and Tony Grzincic September 17, 1967.

Rebecca Jeanne Bell, the daughter of Terrence Clifford and Darla Jeanne Bell, was blessed under the hands of Apostle Archie F. Bell September 18, 1967 at Jackson, Wyoming.

Jason Lee Pinder, the infant son of Emery Jason and Mary Louise Pinder of Mt. Morris, Michigan, was blessed under the hands of Apostle Don W. Housknecht and Elder Edward J. Toulouse, October 1, 1967 at Flint, Michigan.

WEDDING

Nast - Stone

The marriage of Miss Belinda Ann Nast, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Nast, to Mr. Gary Stone, son of Mrs. LaVina Stone, was performed by Elder Nicholas Denham at the East Local Church of Christ, Independence, Missouri on September 15, 1967.

Belinda was given in marriage by her father, Mr. William Nast. The bridesmaids were Miss Dorothy Ann Denham and Miss Paula Man. Best man was Mr. Frank Fann and the groomsmen were Mr. Steven Mann. Mr. James Speer and Mr. Larry Beem served as ushers.

Music was furnished by Miss Nola Kay Matthews at the piano and Mr. James Gordon soloist.

Miss Melissa Nast, sister of the bride, was in charge of the guest book. Serving at the reception which was held in the lower auditorium, was Mrs. Carol Fann, sister of the bride, and Mrs. Dorothy Denham. Miss Michelle Nast, sister of the bride and Mrs. Margaret Wheaton were in charge of the gifts.

Belinda and Gary are making their home in Independence, Missouri.

OBITUARY

Leslie Lorraine Bowen was born January 18, 1885, in LaCrosse County, Wisconsin, and passed from this life September 17, 1967 at the age of 82 years and 8 months.

He was married to Clarissa Anne Scafe, on July 4, 1906.

To this union was born five children. One daughter, Mildred, died in infancy. Surviving are one son, Orville, of Milwaukee, and three daughters, Hazel Niedens, Wilma Youngs and Faye Christiano, all of Racine; two brothers, Raymond, of Waukesha and Tracy, of Bangor; and one sister, Lila Olson of Bangor, nine grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. His wife preceded him in death.

He farmed in the Wrightsville area for over fifty years. In later years, he specialized in the production and sale of strawberries at his roadside stand, pioneering in that field in this area.

He was baptized into Christ and united with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and later transferred his membership to the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri.

He was faithful to his covenant until the end, and was well esteemed for his high moral standard among men.

Service was conducted at Black River Falls, Wisconsin with Apostle William A. Sheldon officiating.

Interment was at the Burns Cemetery.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35:10)