

Zion's Advocate

"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost."—1 Nephi 3:187.

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No. 12

In The Stillness of The Night

Kenneth J. Smith



The stars shone bright and clear that night,
The wind brought fragrance sweet and light
The sheep grazed lazily neath the herders sight,
Close knit the circle bedded for the night.

A star rose in yonder sky brightness seen by naked eye,
Small and bright piercing with its might;
Seen afar by all both great and small, a boon for right.
Gave elegance to the scene that night.

The lowly shepherds ear was sharp to catch the sound,
Intruders stealthy step his sheep to harm,
Amazed to hear, instead of stealthy footstep, music
Bursting forth across the hills, ringing rock and rill.

With clear sweet tones the Angels sang, an anthem
To the new-born King, "Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men."
"Fear not: . . . I bring you good tidings of great joy."

Let us then with angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild;
God and sinners reconciled."

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EDITORIAL

HARK THE HERALD ANGEL'S

"And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN." (St. Luke 2:9-14)

Ah yes, perhaps it is one of the simplest yet most fabulous events in the history of all mankind. It's an event that is celebrated by both the simplest unknown and the greatest celebrity among the thousands of devoted Christians. It's an event scoffed at in private by the orthodox blood descendant of Judah, who does not know Jesus as the Saviour. And perhaps, he looks on with glistening eyes of satisfaction at the possible profit caused by the glamour and glitter of the decorative expressions of the Christian. There's still another class that is blatantly oblivious to the salvation of all mankind, that is uninterested in the story of our Lord Jesus, who are steeped in the sins of ungodliness, and are aiding and abetting the activities of the great Anti-Christ movement. Last, there's the heathen as he brings his sights to bear upon the defense of the defenseless, and schemes dark and monstrous schemes of conquest and bloodshed.

Ah yes, this is the strong picture of the strange happenings in this great season of the year, when so many turn their eyes towards the altar of worship. It's a season that is fraught with both love and devotion to ideals, and death and destruction of war, which brings misery and commotion endangering the safety of all mankind. The Apostle Paul speaks clearly of the time in which we live: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: . . ." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) He continues further with his warning: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. BUT EVIL MEN AND SEDUCERS SHALL WAX WORSE AND WORSE, DECEIVING, AND BEING DECEIVED. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" (2 Timothy 3:12) "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And their shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4:2-4)

Ah yes, the message of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" comes down to us with greater import and sweeter significance as the years go by, especially this year of 1968. Our message is not intended to be one of complacency to soothe the ears and eyes of mankind concerning the conditions of our times. Nor is it to add to the alarm that is often sounded by him who brings about division and distrust. Our message is to bring about individual evaluation that will allow those who are looking for stability and understanding to see; and, in seeing, to understand the true values contained in the story our our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

The peoples of another civilization of bygone years on this land also lived and suffered because of their beliefs in the prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus. They had been taught and preached to for many years concerning the great event that was to take place. They were taught that it was to have great influence upon their lives, and the lives of their children, and upon all the creation of God. But alas, there were those in that day, just as there are those in our day, that began to teach against the prophecies concerning his birth, even as they are now teaching contrary to his literal second coming to the earth in this day. They said, ". . . the time was past for the words to be fulfilled, which were spoken by Samuel, the Lamanite. And they began to rejoice over their brethren, saying, Behold, the time is past, and the words of Samuel are not fulfilled; therefore, your joy and your faith concerning this thing hath, been vain." (3 Nephi 1:5-6). And the commotion began to increase and the believers began to waiver just a little, ". . . and the people who believed, began to be very sorrowful, less by any means those things which had been spoken, might not come to pass. But behold, they did watch steadfastly for that day, and that night, and that day, which should be as one day, as if there were no night, that they might know that their faith had not been in vain." (3 Nephi 1:7-8) Commotion continued to increase and persecution with it, until they were threatened with death because of their belief unless the sign should come about. "Now it came to pass that there was a day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to death, except the sign should come to pass which had been given by Samuel the prophet." (3 Nephi 1:9) Then we find the good man, Nephi, fearful for those of his people who believed, went out and offered up mighty prayer and supplication to the Lord in their behalf. The Lord heard and the sign was given. And great and marvelous was the fulfillment of this prophecy. For, ". . . at the going down of the sun, there was no darkness; and the people began to be astonished: because there was no darkness when the night came. And there were many who had not believed the words of the prophets, fell to earth, and became as if they dead . . ."

What of these last days? Will the shock and the turmoil of his second coming have its effect upon the believer and the unbeliever alike? We are told, ". . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven,

shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11) Unusual shall be the event of his second coming in these last days: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thessalonians 4:16-17) And great shall be the consternation of the unbeliever: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks; Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (Revelations 6:15-17)

So we say to all men, repent and come in unto the covenant, that in the final culmination you may be accounted worthy to partake of that better way of life which leads to the salvation, and the true individual evaluation of the fullness of the story of our Lord Jesus. To the peoples of the restoration, we would continue to plead, arise, shake off the coals from our garments. Come up to that standard that is made possible by that covenant we have partaken of, that we may be able to teach loud and clear the message of the heavenly host, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN." (Luke 2:14) Come, that together we may be ready when the bridegroom comes, and that we may enter into that rest. (All emph. mine KJS) HARK THE HERALD ANGEL'S SING.

K.J.S.

FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF

The editorial staff of Zion's Advocate solicits original articles suitable for missionary activity. All material must meet the requirements listed under the "Original Articles" Department. All material submitted should be typewritten (the original copy) and double spaced. This is required by the printer and your cooperation will expedite our work. Any material received that needs retyping is subject to be delayed in printing.

Send articles, copies of taped sermons, missionary reports, General Church notices, General Church reports and miscellaneous items to Kenneth J. Smith, Editor, 209 South Chrysler, Independence, Missouri 64050.

Send all letters, Local Church Reports, special reports, committee reports, Sunday School reports and United Workers reports to Harvey E. Seibel, 1502 South Logan, Independence, Missouri 64055.

Send Young People Christian League reports and notices, poetry, and notices of baptisms, births, blessings, marriages, and obituaries to Lovita Seibel, 1101 West Orchard Street, Independence, Missouri 64050.

(Editor's Note: We welcome letters of encouragement and missionary success as well as those of our isolated members everywhere).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

142 Pioneer Village
Regina, Sask., Canada

Dear Brother Kenneth
Editor of Zion's Advocate

Owing to my increasing handicap and the increasing handicap upon Mary, it seems wise not to attempt to send our church membership our usual Christmas Cards.

So by this means we say to one and all: A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Brother and Sister T. J. Jordan

(Editor's Note: Although my aging brother and his good companion may not be able to answer all I know he would really appreciate hearing from every member of the church that is able to write.)

(He will soon approach his 93rd year).

4809 Stephanie Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76117

To the People of the Church of Christ, Greetings:

Thank you for sending the missionary Yates to us, it was a voice in the wilderness and the fellowship of Brother and Sister Yates was surely welcome. I had to catch the flu and miss Sundays meeting with them at my friend's home where they stayed. My wife's and my friends Robert and Lorraine Holbert were thrilled at the idea of having them staying at their home. The Book of Mormon was new to them as they had never read it and only talked about it the last few months. We here in this part of Texas look forward to their return. We hope to have more families interested in listening to the Good News when the Yates return. My wife and I have a kinship with the Yates in Christ as well as we learned they were friends of a departed cousin of mine, and live close to my aunt and uncles and a cousin in Macks Creek, Missouri. Our friends Holberts see the meaning, meeting in the name of Christ.

Welcome Saints of the most high God. Thank you again for the fellowship and friendship of your church through Brother and Sister Yates. May God see fit for them to pass this way again. So until we meet here or at Jesus' feet God be with yours and mine until the end of time.

George and Ruth Hale

COLLINS, MISSOURI REPORT

It has been a long time since you have heard from the Collins Local, so I will try to bring you up to date.

Among those who have visited with us the past several months are: The Archie Bells, Clarence Wheatons, William Sheldon family, Daryl and Ron Temple, Maynard Cases, Rex Weavers, Glen Gill family, Bob McCubbin family, Warren Sarratt family, Albert Rudds, Brother and Sister Sweem, Lester Burgen family, Sam Kidd family, Sister Minnie Smith, all from Missouri,

the Robert Jensen family from Omaha, Nebraska, Andy Martin and wife from Oklahoma, the Don McIndoo family from Phoenix, Arizona, Rita, Randy and Kenneth Shaw from Colorado, and I am sure there were others. We appreciate it very much when our brothers and sisters come from other places to worship with us. Do come again and bring someone with you.

Brother Don McIndoo showed slides depicting the life of Christ, accompanied by beautiful music and narrated in a way that made it very effective. Brother Don and other members of the Church of Christ at Phoenix worked long and hard to compile it and they were well rewarded for their efforts. It is something one could see over and over again and still enjoy it. I wish each of you could see and hear it too.

The last Sunday of each month we have dinner at the church and visit and just enjoy being together.

The second Sunday of each month Brother and Sister Oren Caviness go to Houston, Missouri for services with the Keeneys and other Church of Christ members over that way. The last time the E. L. Yates went with them.

Brother and Sister E. Leon Yates are in Texas on a missionary trip and hope to be at the Phoenix reunion. We sure do miss them when they leave, but our loss is gain for those whom they visit.

Brother Joe Yates, who was joined in Independence by Brother William Sheldon, went on a missionary trip to Minnesota and other north central states and perhaps to Canada.

Every Thanksgiving the Baptist Church at Collins, invites the Christian Church and The Church of Christ to join them for a Thanksgiving program. We are asked to bring a musical number and part of the time one of our ministers is asked to speak. Brother Joe Yates has been the speaker on two occasions. We enjoy being with our neighbors and singing praises to our God and enjoying fellowship afterwards, as we enjoy refreshments together.

In the sermons we have heard, we are constantly reminded to live by God's laws and we hear a lot about prophecy concerning the time in which we live, and what to expect in the future. If we will but listen and heed the admonition and instruction given us we will be prepared for what is yet to come.

If all goes well, Brother and Sister Joe Yates and this reporter and her husband (Irene and Rhondal Shaw) will attend the Phoenix reunion. We look forward to it with anticipation and I'm sure we won't be disappointed.

Our prayers are with all of you good people in the family of Christ, and we here need your prayers.

May God bless each of you this Thanksgiving season, is our prayer. We all have so much to be thankful for.

Sister Irene Shaw, Reporter

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:8).

BAPTISMS

Richard Dale Camp, son of Alma and Jean Camp of Godfrey, Illinois, was baptized and received the laying on of hands by Elder James M. Case assisted by Elder August Schwegler at St. Louis, Missouri, August 4, 1968.

Gary Tod Gage, son of Meredith and Gretchen Gage of Racine, Wisconsin, was baptized and received the laying on of hands by Elder Ray W. Hunholz assisted by Elder Joseph Yates September 8, 1968. He was received as a member by the Milwaukee-Racine, Wisconsin Local.

Michael Winston Fields and Ann Marie Fields, son and daughter of Albert Richard and Donelda Adell Fields, Robert Mitchell Long, son of Ernest Otto Long and Opal (Long) Carroll, and Trudy Louise Grzincic, daughter of Tony and Louise Grzincic were baptized by Elder Tony Grzincic at Dexter, Michigan September 29, 1968. They received the laying on of hands at Trenton, Michigan October 6, 1968 with Elder Tony Grzincic and Arthur G. Smith officiating. The new members were received by the Downriver Branch, Trenton, Michigan.

Mrs. Rowena Mary Sloan of Phoenix, Arizona was baptized and received the laying on of hands by Elder Donald E. McIndoo assisted by Elder Al Voorhies at Phoenix on October 20, 1968.

Clemena Jane Sills also of Phoenix, Arizona was baptized by Elder Donald E. McIndoo and received the laying on of hands by Elder Hubert E. Yates assisted by Elder Donald McIndoo at Phoenix October 27, 1968.

Howard Albert Leighton-Floyd, Anderson, Missouri. Baptized September 15, 1968 at Noel, Missouri by Apostle C. L. Wheaton. Confirmation under the hands of Apostle C. L. Wheaton assisted by Elder J. M. Case.

THE SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

It is now four months until we shall meet in Solemn Assembly. Though the time may seem afar off yet it will pass quickly. Let us, therefore, be putting some thought on this important gathering and not take lightly the purpose for which it was called—that is, to seek to know the will of the Lord. And is not this a worthy enterprise especially in this day of trouble and turmoil? Come, let us not be unfaithful or of little faith, but let us be strong for we know not when our Lord shall appear only that His coming is near. Let us therefore come together with full purpose of heart and in faith believing.

Harvey E. Seibel
Associated Editor

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Hebrews 9:28).

BLESSINGS

Daniel Edward and Jeffrey Lynn Camp, the sons of Daniel and Anita Camp, and Angela Lee Kirk, daughter of Donald and Sandra Kirk all of Godfrey, Illinois, received blessings under the hands of Elders James M. Case and August Schwegler in St. Louis, Missouri September 8, 1968.

Sabrina Ann Knight, daughter of Phillip and Jeanne Knight of Madison, Wisconsin, received a blessing under the hands of Elders Ray W. Hunholz and Rollo O. Addie in Lima Center, Wisconsin October 6, 1968.

Jeffery Michael Kimball, son of Michael Louis and Barbara Carole Kimball, received a blessing under the hands of his grandfather Apostle Don W. Housknecht assisted by Elder Harold H. Polack at Flint, Michigan October 6, 1968.

Terrence Clifford Bell, Jr., son of Terrence Clifford Bell, Sr. and Darla Jeanne Bell, received a blessing under the hands of Apostle Archie F. Bell at Moose, Wyoming October 6, 1968.

Tresia Gale Vaughn and Robin Ann Cox of Paris, Tennessee were blessed under the hands of Elder M. Harvey Seibel at Puryear, Tennessee, October 27, 1968.

NONE OF SELF AND ALL OF THEE

Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow
That a time could ever be
When I let the Saviour's pity
Plead in vain, and proudly answered,
“All of self and none of Thee.”

Yet He found me; I beheld Him
Bleeding on the accursed tree;
Heard Him pray, “Forgive them, Father;”
And my wistful heart said faintly,
“Some of self and some of Thee.”

Day by day, His tender mercy,
Healing, helping, full and free,
Sweet and strong, and, oh, so patient,
Brought me lower, while I whispered,
“Less of self and more of Thee.”

Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered;
“None of self and all of Thee.”

“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” (James 3:3).

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

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.

"WALKING IN THE LIGHT"

By

Nellie Walberg

The Bible tells us to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints (Jude 3). Could it be that the truths of the gospel which Christ came to proclaim would be attacked, corrupted and changed? Satan has always attempted to undo everything which the Lord has built up for our good. For every genuine article of God's creation there is a counterfeit of the Devil's devising. We hear Christians say, "I don't think it was ever intended that we should all believe alike"; but Jesus prayed "that they all may be one . . ." (John 17:21) and Apostle Paul counselled to "speak the same thing"; God placed ministers and gifts in the Church for the very purpose of bringing us into the unity of the faith (Ephesians 4:13). Paul affirmed "there is one body . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4-5). Jesus said, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

Many Christians will remark "Doctrine doesn't matter. It doesn't make any difference what I believe, as long as I accept Christ". This is exactly contrary to what Jesus said in Matthew 15:9, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men".

The Bible foretold a departure from the faith "once delivered unto the saints". Paul recognized it had begun in his day. He wrote: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (II Thessalonians 2:7). Notice further warning from apostle Paul in Acts 20:29, 30: "For I know that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them".

In the previous article on "How to find the true Church", we briefly touched upon some of the false teachings that are accepted by many as truth. We found that the largest Christian denomination bases its claims upon succession of authority back to the time of the Apostles; there is no allowance for any break in that authority, they claim, yet we listed a number of its teachings that are contrary to the original gospel which Christ proclaimed in His Church. If the true church is on earth today, then there should be found within it, the gospel which Jesus taught when He was on earth and which was later taught by His chosen Apostles.

We reviewed briefly, the condition of modern Christianity that has arisen out of that great Apostate Church which had its beginning after the first Apostles had died. We can read in today's news media and learn of the foment and unrest of our modern churches. We see

their long held creeds are crumbling. Their authority is being questioned by sincere searchers within their ranks. At the same time, there is widespread effort to unite, the ecumenical movement is growing, in hopes that combined efforts will be fruitful in stemming the tide of evil that is threatening to engulf the world.

May we illustrate: Just before the autumn killing frost comes to one's flower garden, there can be observed an unusual, last blooming effort among the season's flowers. Time is short, and forces within the plants somehow seem to signal a death bloom. The last roses of summer, the last remaining Nasturtiums, summon up their withering strength for a final display; yet just ahead is certain death. In human life, this principle is observed as loved ones stand by, and watch the ebbing strength of one who lay dying. There seems to come a momentary rallying of strength just before the last fleeting breath is drawn. So it is in the rise and fall of Christianity. The world and its religious forces are ripening in iniquity and have come to the time of the harvest. There is a momentary last effort of revival arising out of the death throes, as mankind desperately seeks to stem the tide of his own disobedience. But the end of false creeds and worldly greed and power is near at hand. God is at work and time is running out for all that will not hear His voice.

The Bible tells us that before the second coming of Christ there will be an Angel's Message announcing that the "hour of God's judgment is come" (Revelation 14:6). As the prophetic time approached for the true gospel to emerge from the wilderness (darkness), the spirit of God began to awaken honest-hearted persons to proclaim various truths they were led to perceive. The apostasy from truth had been gradual and God saw fit that the complete restoration of truth should also be a gradual process as man should prepare to receive it. First began the reformation period of Wycliff, Huss and Martin Luther, of Charles and John Wesley and Roger Williams, preparing the Way for still greater light which God would initiate among men, known as the "Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ". Have you ever come out of a dark place into the dazzling brightness of the sun? One is momentarily blinded. God allow the light of truth to shine gradually increasing the integrity so that mankind could adjust to the truth by taking one step at a time. This is even yet His way. Consider "If ye believe these things, then shall greater things be made known unto you . . ." (III Nephi 12:3-4).

With careful preparation ahead of time, God then moved to bring about a literal restoration of the true gospel of Christ again to earth. Whenever there has been a great divine work, God has always used angels,

and thus it was that He sent an angel to a young man destined to do a very important work for the Lord. The Prophetic year for the event had come for God to set His hand to bring order out of Chaos—truth to spring forth and the light to shine on darkened humanity.

Let us read the actual testimony of this young man as it transpired on September 21, 1823. "While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noon-day, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside . . . not only was his robe exceeding white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. When I first looked upon him I was afraid; but the fear soon left me; he called me by name and said that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me . . . that God had a work for me to do; and that my name would be had for both good and evil among all nations, kindreds and tongues . . ."

The young man's name was Joseph Smith. Truly his name has been for both good and evil. The message which he gave in truth was later corrupted and changed and few people, the world over, really know what the original teachings of Joseph Smith were. But God is not to be mocked, and truth will triumph. God has always worked through prophets and by angels, and there have always been those who accept or reject.

Let us keep the foregoing testimony in mind, as we proceed in this article. This was the beginning of the fulfillment of Revelations 14:6, 7 and one of the highlights of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the earth. "Truth though crushed to earth shall rise again" is a divine principle to be reckoned with when men try to thwart God's plans.

The Lord has sincere people in many different churches, but the Bible makes it very clear, and divine revelation tells us in these last days, that He is calling His people to "come out of Babylon (confusion) and live the truths of the gospel as Christ first proclaimed it when He said "I am the way, the truth, and the Life". We have the assurance that God will be successful in finding men and women in this generation before Jesus comes to whom He can point and say "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

Secretly, some may be thinking: "But my parents were such devoted Christians, yet they believed differently than the angel message of the restored gospel. Will they be lost?" Surely not! If they lived up to all the light they had, God would accept them. Please understand this. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Likewise, the generations which are past will be judged on the basis of the light and opportunity which they had. But as the reformation brought some degree of light and as the Restoration of latter day truth brings us closer and closer to the higher truth, God has a right to expect more of us. No sincere Christian is going to evade the

light in an attempt to escape responsibility. It is not God's will that His Church be divided. This is the work of the enemy. "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10:16). Christ's prayer should cause us to reconsider our love for Him, if we let blind sentiment keep us from following Him all the way.

If we come face to face with truths in the Scriptures which we refuse to accept we begin to sever our relationship with the Lord. Slowly, but surely our spiritual light recedes and we will be ultimately left without the light of Christ to guide. And oh, how black the darkness to those who have once known light and truth, and the Holy Spirit had whispered to their souls "this is the way, walk ye in it", and they quench that Holy Spirit.

We need to catch the spirit of John Robinson, the Puritan pastor when he gave admonition to his people as they were about to embark for America in search of religious liberty: "I charge you therefore, before God and His blessed angels, to follow me no further than I have followed Christ. If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive truth from my ministry; for I am very confident that the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word" . . . He said further, "the Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw . . . the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God; but would they be living now would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received." . . . (History of the Puritans by Neal, Vol. 1, p. 269). This could be good to reflect upon, even in the restoration Church. Are we willing to be called to higher ground than that which our predecessors stood upon? If not, we are not in accord with the admonition in Isaiah. "Line upon line, precept upon precept". We are told the light shall grow brighter and brighter until the perfect day. We are called to "go on unto perfection".

The human heart is stubborn and reluctant to change even when change is for the best. This comprises the group of Christians who are set in their own religious convictions, regardless of whether those convictions are in agreement with Christ's teachings. They resist change in the direction of truth, or in the direction of better methods of promoting truths.

There is a second class of people who are always willing to embrace change just for the sake of change, thinking that old ways are always irrelevant to the modern age. They so often go ahead of the Lord into paths of their own choosing. Paul warns of this in (Acts 2:30-31). Both of these extreme attitudes have resulted in the formation of new denominations, but without the sanction or authority of God. This condition would be found in the latter days among the Gentiles, according to the Book of Mormon. Light and truth would break forth at God's command but it would come when conditions were as follows:

"Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and Churches become defiled, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; Yea even in a day when leaders of Churches and teachers, in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their Churches . . . oh ye wicked and perverse, and stiff-necked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get gain?" (Book of Mormon P. 708)

There is a third class of people between these two extremes of thinking. History reveals this group to be made up of those who were willing to make full surrender to the will of God. To move forward in faith in all the light they know. Of such persons were composed the true followers of Christ—the Martyrs, the prophets, the humble ones who spearheaded the gospel of the Kingdom in their day. They are to be found in this day and will be yet in the future. "Here are those who came up out of great tribulation and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:13-14). Again in I John 1:7 we read ". . . the blood of Jesus Christ, his son cleanseth us from all sin . . . if we walk in the light . . ." Note the little word "if". Furthermore, the Scripture in John 3:19 makes it plain that there is condemnation upon those who reject light and prefer darkness, and gives the reason why they so choose; let us consider:

". . . and this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds be reprov'd; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God. Jesus said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33).

We are now ready to list the guideposts that will help lead the searcher to the true Church of Christ that is on earth today, and will be on earth when Christ comes to claim His own. The Church will:

1. Arise in fulfillment of Bible prophecy in 1830. Study Daniel 2:44. There are other scriptures relating to this, but this can be a beginning.

2. Proclaim that an angel has brought the "everlasting gospel", and that the hour of God's judgment demands that we worship the creator. Revelation 14:6-7.

3. Have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17); and the "spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10 and Amos 3:7). The testimony of Jesus affirms the diety, life, death, resurrection and supreme power of the Lord, leaving no room for liberalist thinking on these points.

4. Have the same organization that "God set in the Church". Study carefully I Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11, Acts 21:8-10, Ephesians 2:19.

5. Courage to preach and teach the truth of the gospel unmixed with the traditions of men which are contrary to the scriptures (Matthew 15:9; Acts 20:19-27).

6. Proclaim high standards of personal righteousness (Romans 12:2, John 15:16-19).

7. Be the recipient of latter day revelation whether experienced, spoken or written and will be eagerly anticipating further light and knowledge for the future (John 13:19, II Peter 1:19-21, John 16:12).

8. Small in the Numerical Numbers as compared with other religious bodies that proclaim to be the true Church (Luke 12:32, Isaiah 1:8-9 and I Nephi 3:226-230). God's people are many times spoken of as being a "remnant". With dress designers, for example, a remnant is a small portion of the original cloth, matching exactly in pattern, color and strength of fiber.

9. Apt to be subject to persecution (I John 3:13).

10. Will proclaim the "gospel of the Kingdom"—a righteous government in accord with Christ's prayer "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it heaven" (Matthew 6:9). However the Kingdom will not come by man's doing but it "cometh not with observation". In the hearts of the people the Kingdom laws will be written, resulting in social justice and judgment of their own free will. They will "think of their brethren like unto themselves".

By carefully studying these points, and developing further scripture related to those listed, we may by process of analytical thinking, and by the process of elimination, be led to the true remnant church—this of course requires that we seek for the Holy Spirit to guide and be willing to walk in the light that is revealed.

We are responsible for our example. When we believe in Christ and profess to follow Him, yet remain in allegiance to the world and its standards; when we remain a member of a church which we know in our heart does not measure up to all the scriptures, we are confusing others, by our example and we become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Our example contradicts our profession. For this reason Jesus calls us to "come out of Babylon" (confusion) into His truth. He says if we are lukewarm, He will "spew us out of His mouth." (Revelation 3:16).

Jesus says in His word, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27).

God has ministered to this generation, particularly to America, by angels. He has and is speaking His commandments. His true gospel has been restored. Have we heard His voice calling us to "come out of Babylon" into the ark of safety which He is preparing for the days of wickedness and destruction that lie ahead? Are we willing to "walk in the light" until it becomes brighter and brighter unto the perfect day?

This is the crucial test. This is the only way we can find, and ever remain in the true Church of Christ.

"Oh, my people, saith the Spirit,
Hear the word of God today;
Be not slothful, but obedient;

'Tis the world's momentous day!
 Unto honor I have called you—
 Honor great as angels know;
 Heed ye, then, a Father's counsel
 And by deeds from purpose show.

from song "Admonition".

THE CHOICE SEER

A Consideration of the Prophecy Given Through Joseph in Egypt

By Lovita G. Seibel

We shall quote from 2 Nephi second chapter the verses which apply to the choice seer, then follow each with a statement concerning its fulfillment in the life of Joseph Smith, the latter day prophet and seer. The first one is:

1. "For Joseph truly testified, saying, A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins" (2 Nephi 2:10).

The fruit of Joseph's loins are signified by the following, "And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim . . . And one told Jacob, and said Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee . . . and Jacob said unto Joseph . . . and now two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance" (Genesis 48:1, 2, 3, 5, and 63). So Joseph's descendants were to be called in the names of Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob then places a blessing on the two lads, with his right hand upon the younger one's head, and his left hand on the older one, who was Manasseh, and so doing he gave the greater blessings to Ephraim. Speaking of Manasseh Jacob said, ". . . he also shall become a people, and he shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations" (Genesis 28:19). The Book of Mormon tells us that the Nephites were descended from Joseph through Manasseh. They truly become a great people, as their history shows.

In order to develop our understanding of what occurred through the years we turn to I Chronicles 5:1 in which we are told, ". . . his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel . . ." Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, sinned so that God removed the birthright from his line to that of Joseph's sons. Then in Jeremiah's time we read this, God speaking says, ". . . For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn" (Jeremiah 31:9). Thus we learn how important became Ephraim's standing with God. Again in speaking of Ephraim, God says, "I have written to him

the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing" (Hosea 8:11-12). Here then is a prediction that God will write the great things in His law for those who are the fruit of the loins of Joseph. This is confirmed and more fully explained by a prophecy in Ezekiel which says, "Say, unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, WHICH IS IN THE HAND EPHRAIM, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick in my hand" (Ezekiel 37:19). These sticks were to have writing upon them, and as such we understand that they were scrolls, the form in which records or books were then written. Thus the work of the choice seer is indicated. The great things of God's law, written for Ephraim were to be in the stick of Joseph, and was to appear in the hand of Ephraim. The Book of Mormon qualifies to be this stick of Joseph, having been written by those who were of the fruit of Joseph's loins, for the Nephites were the descendants of his son Manasseh. But at the time that these two sticks or writings were to become one in God's hands, the stick of Joseph was to be in the hands of Ephraim and not of Manasseh. Joseph Smith, then, was of the fruit of Joseph's (of Egypt) loins through the line of Ephraim, which is logical since Ephraim's descendants were destined to become a multitude of nations in the earth. This supposition is confirmed by a statement in the Book of Commandments, "Verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim" (Book of Commandments 65:47).

Point Number 2. "Yea, Joseph truly said, Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins" (2 Nephi 2:11).

To discover that Joseph Smith was highly esteemed and greatly beloved by his brethren we shall quote from the following. "About 8 a. m. Dr. Richards started for Nauvoo with the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum on two wagons . . . They were met by a great assemblage of citizens of Nauvoo . . . several thousands of the citizens were there amid the most solemn lamentations and wailings that ever ascended into the ears of the Lord of Hosts to be avenged of their enemies . . . the room was thrown open for the Saints to view the bodies of their martyred Prophet and Patriarch, and it is estimated that over ten thousand persons visited the remains that day . . ." (History of the Church, vol. VI, pp. 626 and 627; Joseph Smith's Journal History). Another indication of the esteem in which his brethren of the Church held Joseph Smith is taken from David Whitmer's "An Address to All Believers in Christ, p. 45", "We had all confidence in Brother Joseph, thinking that as God had given him so great a gift as to translate the Book of Mormon, that everything he would do must be right." David Whitmer reiterates his love for Joseph in several places in his book. Joseph Smith is still esteemed very highly, and greatly loved by

people who belong to the Restoration. Though there have been some who regard him as a fallen prophet, and they would prefer to drag his errors out for scrutiny rather than the things which he did that were right. This is done in spite of the fact that in his first visitation the angel Moroni told Joseph that his name would be had for both good and evil in all the world. Though his name was to be had for evil, we must not overlook the fact, which is more important, that his name was to be had for good also.

Point Number 3. "And unto him will I give commandment, that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth to them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with their fathers" (2 Nephi 2:12).

The choice seer is to do a work which will be of great worth to the descendants of Joseph in Egypt, even a work which should serve to bring them to a knowledge of God's covenants with their fathers. The translation of the Book of Mormon is indeed such a work. It brings to our knowledge the history of the ancient peoples of the Americas, and is an account of God's dealings with them and the covenants which He made with them, and from it we gain also a knowledge of this covenant which God made with Joseph in Egypt. But it does even more than that, for it also brings to our knowledge many plain and precious things, things which which were removed from the record of Judah (the Bible) by evil men. See Book of Mormon I Nephi 3:165-171. Verses 168 and 169 specifically state, "... they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many COVENANTS of the Lord have they taken away". Then in verse 179 we are told, "Neither will the Lord suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in because the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen . . . I will be merciful to the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb; for behold, saith the Lamb, I will manifest myself unto thy seed, and they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious . . . behold these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles by the gift and power of the Lamb; and in them shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation; . . . and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (I Nephi 3:179, 183, 184, 185, 186, 195).

It might be asked, in what way does showing that God is going to bring forth the plainness of His word to the Gentiles have to do with Ephraim, and the great things of God's law which are to be written for him, since the stick of Joseph was to be in Ephraim's hand? We

will let the Bible answer. "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people . . ." (Hosea 7:8). From the days of king Jeroboam, Ephraimites ruled over the ten tribes of the House of Israel until they were carried away by Assyria about 721 B.C. So where Israel is, there we will find Ephraim, and God says, "Israel is swallowed up: now, shall they be among the Gentiles . . ." (Hosea 8:8). This then explains why God's word written by descendants of Joseph in Egypt was to be for the Gentiles, for by this means God could place the stick of Joseph in, "... the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows . . ." (Ezekiel 37:19).

Point Number 4. "And I will give unto him a commandment, that he shall do none other work save the work that I shall command him" (2 Nephi 2:13).

This seems to have been fulfilled unto Joseph Smith in the words given in March 1829, "... and he has a gift to translate the book, and I have commanded him that he shall pretend to no other gift, for I will grant him no other gift" (Book of Commandments 4:2).

Point No. 5. "And he shall be great in my eyes: for he shall do my work" (2 Nephi 2:14).

Joseph Smith is speaking of the strict charge which he had received from the angel about the safe keeping of the plates says the following, "For no sooner was it known that I had them, than the most strenuous exertions were used to get them from me. Every stratagem that could be invented was resorted to for that purpose. The persecution became more bitter and severe than before, and multitudes were on the alert continually to get them from me if possible. But by the wisdom of God, they remained safe in my hands, until I had accomplished by them what was required at my hand. When, according to arrangements, the messenger called for them, I delivered them up to him; and he has them in his charge unto this day" (History of the Church, vol. I, p. 18 published by Deseret Book Co.). Since we have the Book of Mormon, we all are witnesses to the fact that Joseph Smith did do the work which the Lord commanded him to do. While even more important, the Lord says that he did, "Wherefore he had fulfilled the thing which I commanded him. Marvel not that I have called him to mine own purpose, which purpose is known to me: wherefore if he shall be diligent in keeping my commandments, he shall be blessed unto eternal life, and his name is Joseph" (Book of Commandments 15:7-9).

Point Number 6. "But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins" (2 Nephi 2:17).

The explanations under points 3 and 5 have already explained point 6. They do show that Joseph Smith was given the power by God to bring forth the word of God to his brethren, of the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt. The Book of Mormon contains this word of God, and is one of the books which was to "come . . . from the Gentiles . . . unto the convincing of the Gen-

tiles, and the remnant of the seed of my brethren (Nephi's brethren), and also the Jews . . . that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true" (I Nephi 3:191). So the Book of Mormon is to aid in reaching and convincing them of the truth contained in the Bible and Book of Mormon, not only those among the descendants of the Nephites and Lamanites, but also the Jews, and those of the seed of Ephraim, and those of his brethren of the tribes of Israel for they are mixed among the Gentiles. The Gentiles and the Indians must be reached by this book. They have been already to some extent, but must be reached to a greater extent in the future, for only in this manner can the seed of the loins of Joseph in Egypt be reached, and this prophecy fulfilled.

Point No. 7. "And not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them." (2 Nephi 2:18).

An objection has been raised against the belief that Joseph Smith was the choice seer spoken of in this verse, because it is said that he never went and preached to the Indians, nor converted any of them to Christ. This verse does not require that he will have done so. The fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt are the thousands of Manasseh, and the tens of thousands of Ephraim, so Joseph had many brethren of the loins of Joseph of Egypt to work among in order to fulfill this prophecy. That many were reached in his life is a well known fact, "Perhaps no religious denomination grew with greater rapidity than did the church of the Restoration. From the date of its organization, April 6th, 1830, to the death of Joseph Smith in 1844, only 14 years, the estimate given by the prophet himself was approximately 180,000 to 200,000. These figures are furnished by the late historian of the Reorganized Church, Elder Heman C. Smith, and taken from the "History of Religious Denominations, page 409, and the Times and Seasons, vol. 6, p. 547, and published in the work, "True Succession in Church Presidency" (An Outline History of the Church of Christ, by Apostle B. C. Flint, p. 68).

Quoting again from the writings of Nephi we note that in Nephi 3:191, which was quoted extensively under point 6, that these books (there must be at least two, LGS) which were to come forth by the power of the Lamb "FROM THE GENTILES" were to be for the convincing of Gentile, Jew, and the seed of Nephi's brethren of the truth of the records of the prophets and the twelve apostles of the Lamb, or in other words of the truth of the Bible. Nephi goes on to say that these books, ". . . shall make known to all KINDREDS, TONGUES AND PEOPLE, that the Lamb of God is the son of the Eternal Father, and the savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him to be saved" (I Nephi 3:191). It seems very evident that the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt are very widely spread indeed, even as the Bible says "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people". We have learned that the

Book of Mormon is one of these books spoken of by Nephi, for it contains the words of the Lamb of God. For this particular truth see the book of 3rd Nephi. At present the Book of Mormon, even though it is much maligned and evil spoken of, is the most powerful tool that we of the Church of Christ have for the convincing, and converting of people of the truth of the Bible. Many give lip service to the Bible but they do not really believe it.

Point Number 8. "Wherefore the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins (2 Nephi 2:19-21).

These verses are a second witness to the prophecy given in Ezekiel 37:19 which we have already referenced under point 1, wherein Ezekiel predicts the sticks, or writings, of both Judah and Joseph which are to be one in God's hands. It is objected that the Book of Mormon has not confounded false doctrines, laid down contentions, nor established peace. It seems to be true that in the hands of some the Bible is used to belabor the Book of Mormon, and in the hands of others the Book of Mormon is used to try to destroy portions of the Bible. It is to be noted in these verses from 2 Nephi and 2nd chapter that these two writings are TO GROW TOGETHER UNTIL THEY DO CONFOUND FALSE DOCTRINES, LAY DOWN CONTENTIONS, AND ESTABLISH PEACE. A period of growth is indicated which requires a period of time. It also requires a willingness of the people to use both books as a unit, not against each other.

Point Number 9. "And bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days; and the bringing them to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord" (2 Nephi 2:22-23).

The period of growth just spoken of applies here also, and requires a willingness on the part of Church of Christ ministers to promote the Book of Mormon in their missionary endeavors on an equal basis with their promotion of the Bible.

The Indians can, of course, obtain a knowledge of forefathers through the pages of the Book of Mormon since it is their history. It is to be noted that with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon that the line of Ephraim also began to learn of their forefathers; in that they began to learn who they themselves were descended from. This information was first opened up by the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy in that the stick of Joseph would be in the hands of Ephraim, of which tribe was Joseph Smith. We should take special notice that in the verse under point 9, that this knowledge of their forefathers was to come to the fruit of the loins of Joseph in Egypt "in the latter days". This understanding began with the fact that the book had come through, and was in the hands of an Ephraimite,

and the patriarchal blessings which have been received by members of the Restoration have pointed out that the recipients are of all the various tribes of Israel, whom Ezekiel says were also to have the stick or book of Joseph. So within the Restoration God has given knowledge of their forefathers. While outside of the Restoration much research has been done in the history and traditions of the ancient peoples, and the travels and the whereabouts of the ten lost tribes, which included Ephraim, have been largely learned and documented, so that we now know that the North European, and the Anglo Saxon peoples are descendants of the ten lost tribes. As predicted many of them have come to a knowledge of their forefathers. A knowledge of the Book of Mormon and the Bible will bring them to a knowledge of the covenants of God.

Point Number 10. "And out of weakness he shall be made strong, in that day when my work shall commence among all my people, unto the restoring thee, O house of Israel, saith the Lord" (2 Nephi 2:24).

Two things are said here, 1. The choice seer shall be weak but in the power of God will become strong; 2; that this shall happen at a time when God begins or commences his work among all this people to the restoration of the house of Israel. First they must learn who they are, no longer being lost to the knowledge of themselves, or to the knowledge of people in general. Israel must be found! This we have learned has been done. This finding began at the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Having been found they are in a position to be restored to their homelands, and to the knowledge of God's covenants on their behalf. God's work was to commence among ALL people at the time the choice seer brought forth the book written by the seed of Joseph of Egypt. Certainly the setting up of the Church of Christ at that time is a major portion of the work. Joseph Smith were not the choice seer then the choice seer is 168 years too late, for God began His work among all the people that long ago. The stick of Joseph, prophecied by Ezekiel has appeared; the words of those ancient writers have spoken and cried from the dust as foretold by Isaiah; and the work of the Father has commenced to the fulfilling of the covenants to the fathers, that they, the fathers, should be made known to the fruit of their loins, and the work of the gathering has been going on. The end of the subjugation of Jerusalem by Gentiles has arrived. If we do not recognize Joseph Smith as the choice seer then we are very like the Jews who did not recognize the Christ as their Messiah, and who still blindly look for him to come.

Joseph Smith was but a boy, a stripling of a lad when first visited by the Lord, and first instructed by the angel Moroni. Of himself he says, ". . . and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world . . ." (taken from Joseph Smith's own account as printed in

the Times and Seasons, March and April 1842, vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 726, 727; and vol. 3, no. 11 pp. 748, 749, as printed in the Outline History of the Church of Christ). Joseph Smith was only 24 at the time that the Book of Mormon was printed, which through the power of God, he had translated. These circumstances were long before predicted in Isaiah 29:11, "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned". Truly Joseph Smith was not learned, but the Lord did the work through his instrumentality making the weak strong. The obscure boy became the greatest religious leader of his time, for God uses the weak things of the world, and making them strong through His power, confounds the strong things of the world. That this was so in the case of Joseph Smith is substantiated by the writings of one man who had denounced him in as strong terms as have any of his enemies. In speaking of Joseph Smith, S. M. Smucker says, "But, whether a knave or a lunatic, whether a liar or a true man, it cannot be denied that he was one of the most extraordinary persons of his time, a man of rude genius, who accomplished a MUCH GREATER WORK than he knew; and whose name, whatever he may have been while living, will take his place among the notable of the world" (History of the Mormons, or Latter Day Saints, p. 183). With the above quotation consider the following, "It is by no means improbable that some future text book, for the use of generations unborn, will contain a question something like this: "What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen?" And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogation may be written: Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet. And this reply as absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants" (Figures of the Past, by Josiah Quincy, written in 1885). It seems clear that Joseph Smith moved from weakness as an obscure uneducated lad to a place and position of strength, not only among his own people of the Restoration, but among world figures in a short span of less than 25 years, which covered the time from his first vision at 14 until his assassination at 38 years of age.

Point Number 11. "And thus prophecied Joseph, saying, Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; and they that seek to destroy him, shall be confounded: for this promise, of which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled" (2 Nephi 2:25-27).

This promise was that the choice seer of the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt would bring forth the words that had been written by the fruit of his loins, to others of the fruit of his loins in the last days. This Joseph Smith did in the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon. His enemies were confounded, for every device

which they used to stop the work was unsuccessful. A perusal of the various Church Histories put out by the Restoration show some of the attempts to try to stop this translating and publication. The enemies, numerous times, sought to find and steal the plates after it was known that Joseph had them. They put him in jail on various pretexts (up to 38 times in a span of 14 years, in which he was acquitted, and the last time he was slain without benefit of trial). They also threw his father into jail, leaving his wife and small daughter unprotected, and to the mercy of the mobs who sought to obtain the manuscript from her. His enemies lied in every conceivable manner, stole their home, also stole 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript thinking to make changes and prove that Joseph Smith could not translate twice in the same manner. Then as the book was being published his enemies coveted to not purchase the book, but to destroy all they could lay their hands on. One of the enemies even began to print a paper in the same print shop on Sundays, and stole from the writings of the Book of Mormon manuscript to put into his paper, until he was stopped by Joseph Smith. But all these attempts failed and the Book was published. See *The History of Joseph Smith* by his mother Lucy Mack Smith, for an account of these occurrences and persecutions. Also in her book she says the following on viewing the bodies of her murdered sons, "I sank back, crying to the Lord in the agony of my soul, 'MY God, my God, why hast thou forsaken this family!' A voice replied, 'I have taken them to myself, that they might have rest' . . . I was swallowed up in the depths of my afflictions, yet I was dumb until I rose again to contemplate the spectacle before me . . . as I looked upon their peaceful, smiling countenances, I seemed almost to hear them say, 'Weep not for us, we have overcome the world by love; we carried to them the gospel, that their souls might be saved; they slew us for our testimony, and thus placed us beyond their power; their ascendancy is for a moment, ours is an eternal triumph.' Then I thought upon the promise which I had received in Missouri, that in five years Joseph should have power over all this enemies. The time had elapsed and the promise was fulfilled" (*History of Joseph Smith*, by Lucy Mack Smith, pp. 324, 325).

Point Number 12. "And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father" (2 Nephi 2:29).

"In the meantime we had a son whom we called Joseph after the name of his father;" (*History of Joseph Smith*, by Lucy Mack Smith, p. 46).

Point Number 13. "And he shall be like unto me; for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation" (2 Nephi 2:30).

Joseph of Egypt had brought a temporal salvation during the seven years of famine by supplying the food for the needs of his fathers family, and then by having them move to Egypt where he could better care for

them. By storing up food during the 7 years of plenty he was an instrument in succoring his own people, also the native Egyptians, and doubtless people from other countries, who like Jacob had learned that there was a goodly supply of food down in Egypt.

The work of the choice seer, while likened to the assistance Joseph had rendered in Egypt to these various peoples, was to have a greater significance, and be far more reaching, for it was to apply to spiritual succor sufficient to bring about spiritual salvation. They were to learn the words of the Lamb of God, and of His covenants with their fathers, the most important being the everlasting covenant brought by Christ who is the author of the salvation which was promised to Joseph's seed in the prophecy given to him. For, He Christ, ". . . became the author of salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). Again, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . ." (Hebrews 12:2). We refer the reader again to I Nephi 3:191 which tells us that these books, one of which is clearly the Book of Mormon, will be to the convincing of Gentile, Jews and Indian of the truth of the prophets and of the record of Jesus' Apostles as found in the Bible. So the thing (the Book of Mormon) brought forth by the hand of the choice seer does have the power to bring people to salvation, and it has been doing so for 139 years.

Point Number 14, "And the Lord said unto me also, I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him, that he shall write the writings of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it" (2 Nephi 2:36-37).

This spokesman of the choice seer is to first, write the writings of the choice seer, and secondly he is to declare the things written. We quote the following, ". . . and did commence to write for my servant Joseph even so I would that you should continue until you have finished this record, which I have intrusted unto you . . . Behold the work which you are called to do, is to write for my servant Joseph" (Book of Commandments 9:1-2). This is from a revelation given to Oliver Cowdery.

After the experience of the stolen 116 pages of Book of Mormon manuscript, the plates and the Urim and Thummim were taken from Joseph Smith as a punishment until he should humble himself enough to be allowed to continue the translation. After their return to Joseph, Emma began to write for him but of this he says, ". . . the angel said that the Lord would send me a scribe, and I trust his promise will be verified . . ." (*History of Joseph Smith*, by Lucy Mack Smith, p. 135). In April 1829 Oliver Cowdery with Joseph Smith's brother Samuel set out for Pennsylvania to join Joseph. Oliver Cowdery's intent was to be of help to Joseph in the work of the Lord. ". . . Joseph called upon the Lord, three days prior to the arrival of Samuel and Oliver, to send him a scribe, according to the promise of the angel; and he was informed that the same would soon

be forthcoming in a few days. Accordingly, when Mr. Cowdery told him the business that he had come upon, Joseph was not at all surprised" (History of Joseph Smith, by Lucy Mack Smith, p. 141). The spokesman for the choice seer was also to declare the words which he had written. In the revelations printed in the Book of Commandments Oliver Cowdery is instructed that he is to go to the world and preach these things. See Chapters 15:42-45; 17:4; 25:17; and he was also one of the first to be sent to the Lamanites, see Chapter 30:7. Oliver Cowdery amply fulfills the requirements which the Lord laid down for the spokesman of the choice seer.

Point Number 15. "And the words which he shall write, shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy loins. And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had cried unto them from the dust; yea, even repentance unto their brethren, even after many generations have gone by. And it shall come to pass that their cry shall go, even to the simpleness of their words. Because of their faith, their words shall proceed forth out of my mouth unto their brethren, who are the fruit of thy loins; and the weakness of their words, will I make strong in their faith; unto the remembrance of my covenant which I made unto their fathers" (2 Nephi 2:38-43).

To corroborate this statement and to offer further witness to the purpose of the Book of Mormon we quote, "And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust . . . and the vision of all is to become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith I am not learned . . . and in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel . . . therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine" (Isaiah 29: 4, 11, 12, 18, 19, 22-24). We have here the promise of a book, and also a promise of its blessings to the house of Jacob, or the Israelites, for it was wisdom in God that the things written by the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt should go forth to their brethren, of the house of Israel. The Book of Mormon has its own proof that it contains the words which in God's wisdom were expedient to go forth to the House of

Israel. We find this proof in 3 Nephi 12:1-5. We will quote from the third verse, "And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things, then shall the greater things be manifest unto them."

In this writing all the points of 2 Nephi which pertain to the choice seer have been considered. It is doubtless that there is much more that could be brought forth from the Scriptures and from the Church History that would confirm the truth that Joseph Smith is the choice seer spoken of in the prophecy, but what I have given should suffice.

The thought has been expressed that Lehi, in speaking to his son Joseph, and in giving him his blessing, meant to convey the thought that the choice seer must be one of the descendants of Lehi's son Joseph. Or as David Whitmer expressed the idea, the choice seer was to arise from among the Lamanites or Indians. So a little consideration of this viewpoint may well be worthwhile. Referring again to 2 Nephi, 2nd chapter, the promise to little Joseph, as he is called, are as follows, v. 3. This land was to be the inheritance of his seed with those of the seed of his brethren. v. 4. His seed was not to be utterly destroyed. v. 5. He is told that because he is a descendant through Lehi of that Joseph who was carried into Egypt, that his seed would share in the great blessing to be brought through the choice seer to those who are of the fruit of Joseph's (of Egypt) loins, or those who were his descendants.

Then follows the dissertation on, or a repetition of, the prophecy and of the promises which Joseph of Egypt had received from the Lord concerning these things, and the choice seer.

Finally, after thus rehearsing the whole matter, Lehi again speaks directly to his own son Joseph in v. 44 and in v. 45. He says this, "Wherefore because of this covenant thou art blessed: for thy seed shall not be destroyed, FOR THEY SHALL HEARKEN TO THE WORDS OF THE BOOK". The blessing on Lehi's son Joseph was that they would hearken to the book which would be brought forth by the choice seer; not that the choice seer was to come from his descendants. vv. 46 and 47 show that after they had hearkened to the word of the book that one among little Joseph's seed will rise up to do a great work for the seed of his brethren. But this again is not the choice seer.

The book or books which are to contain the words or writings of the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt were not to come forth through the agency of any of the Lamanites. This is proved by 1 Nephi 3:191-192, "And after it had come forth unto them (the Bible, L.G.S.), I beheld other books which came forth by the power of the Lamb, FROM THE GENTILES UNTO THEM, unto the convincing of the Gentiles, and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true. And the angel spake unto me,

saying, These last records which THOU HAST SEEN AMONG THE GENTILES SHALL ESTABLISH THE TRUTH OF THE FIRST (the Bible L.G.S.) which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them." According to this the choice seer must be one among the Gentiles, as well the one or ones who will be used by God to bring forth the other book or books spoken of in this passage.

Moroni, speaking concerning one of these records, makes this statement, "Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the Brother of Jared saw; and there never was greater things made manifest, than that which was made manifest unto the Brother of Jared; wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to write them, and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he hath also commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of God. For the Lord said unto me, They shall not go forth UNTO THE GENTILES UNTIL THE DAY THAT THEY SHALL REPENT OF THEIR INIQUITY, AND COME CLEAN BEFORE THE LORD; and in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the Brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the Brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are." (Ether 1:98-101). Thus we see that God has made wonderful promises concerning the things that are to come forth to the Gentiles, and through them to all the fruit of the loins of Joseph of Egypt, and also to the house of Jacob, and to Ephraim and his brethren, the house of Israel.

Instead of still looking for the choice seer, we should be busily preparing for the day of righteousness, of faith, and the sanctification of the Gentiles, so that more of God's word shall come forth to them.

A MANIFESTATION

Given by Elder John Carver at a Sacrament Service, Brick Church, Lamoni, Iowa, December 2, 1917.

(Ed. Note: The following printed by request has neither endorsement or rejection of the Editorial Staff.)

I arose from a sleepless couch this morning facing a responsibility to which I have always responded unwillingly so far as my part is concerned; and especially from the message I feel constrained to bear to you today I would withdraw, because I am conscious that some of the things I am about to say will not be believed by some of the people present. I want those people to know that so far as my part in this expression is concerned, it is entered upon with deliberation, not on the spur of the moment, but at a time when I feel constrained to say the things which I understand the Spirit of God has been pressing upon me for many months. And

shall I divest myself of my responsibility, as I regard it, I shall be free. Let God then judge between me and that man who in his own heart finds it to say that I speak from my own desire to have my own way, or out of undue zeal.

The Spirit of God cometh in the midst of my people today to bear counsel. Many times have my servants stood before you, under the power of their calling, declaring unto you what they have understood to be the counsel of God. Time after time my Spirit has been expressed in your midst, declaring unto you the counsel of God. Many among my children have raised the question: What meaneth these men? And what meaneth God in these things that are declared to be the things of the world? Think ye that in this manner you have escaped, when you have known the things which my servants have condemned? And when in your hearts you have felt that the ministrations of my Spirit in regard to the things of the world have included the things which my servants have condemned?

I come to you by the gracious ministration of my Spirit when you were assembled in that sacred place known to thee as thy reunion, and I said unto thee; Must it be necessary for me to speak and to name these things? Yet there are those among you who make it necessary this morning. The counsel of my Spirit then is this:

He who finds contentment and pleasure, and from time to time waits upon the theatre; he who takes himself to the dance; he who engages himself at the card table; he who consumes his goods, to draw pleasure therefrom, in the maintenance of an automobile; he who spends his energy upon the things of the world and the goods thereof, to the end that he may satisfy his own pleasure and heap upon his family; he who engages in these things, or any of them, or in anything like unto them, let him know that to this extent he is in the world, he is of the world, and the world has claimed him. And let him know, furthermore, that from this hour, as never before, he stands in a place of dangers; engaging himself in these things, or any of them, he places himself in an atmosphere where, unless he shall have extreme care, he shall move more fully into the world.

Let my saints be counseled, therefore, as has been suggested from time to time, that the hour has come when he who would enter in Zion, and into that immediate preparation necessary to be made on the part of the faithful, must of necessity withdraw himself from these things.

And if there be among you who are found in folly, whose families go unrestrained, whose children are outside the counsel of God, and which children will not hear my voice nor yield to my persuasions, let such families know that their own folly is what set their children outside my way.

Hear me, therefore, saith the Spirit: Be thou charged that is shall require the utmost effort of every man

if he would overcome, that he may enter in with his goods, and with his family, unto the building up of my Zion; and if he be hampered by these things which my Spirit declareth today can have no part in Zion, he shall not escape, but he shall become so entangled that eventually he shall pass out and find his place elsewhere.

I turn, saith the Spirit, to these men upon whom sacred responsibility hath been placed, and I say that among them have been those who have led my children to the theatre. They have thought this thing to be innocent; but this encouragement there are those who would go elsewhere. And even these men who ought to be an example in all things, they have wasted their means and their substance upon the theatre, and such like, and have thought themselves justified in exercising thus their own free agency. They have their agency, but let them know I shall require of them in the day of final reckoning how they shall engage themselves therein.

My Spirit saith further to those who are willing to yield: O, my beloved children, come thou now unto me! The promise of my Spirit is that this opportunity is set before thee. Let not your hearts be troubled. It is God who hath said that Zion shall be redeemed; and those among your number who are willing to come unto me, these will I receive. I receive them today; and out of this number, and the countless number who shall be gathered with these will I build up Zion. I accept those whose spirits are contrite, whose devotion is sincere. I rebuke those who are unworthy; and yet I do it that they might have light, that they might have joy, and have their reward in my kingdom here, and eternal life in the world to come. Thus saith the Spirit.

PETITION

Author Unknown

I do not ask for care-free days,
For fame nor golden gain;
Nor hope amid this sweeping maze

I do not ask for cloudless skies
Nor perfect days nor hours,
I know that shadows must rise
Dark clouds dispel the showers

But, Lord amid the storm and stress
I pray for this release;
O keep my heart from bitterness
Unto my soul give peace.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

THE REFINER'S FIRE

He sat by a fire of seven-fold heat,
As He watched by the precious ore,
And closer He bent with a searching gaze
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that could stand the test,
And He wanted the finest gold
To mold as a crown for the King to wear,
Set with gems with a price untold.

So He laid our gold in the burning fire,
Though we fain would have said Him "Nay",
And He watched the dross that we had not seen,
And it melted and passed away.

And the gold grew brighter and yet more bright;
But our eyes were so dim with tears,
We saw the fire—not the Master's hand—
And questioned with anxious fears.

Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow,
As it mirrored a Form above
That bent e'er the fire, though unseen by us,
With a look of ineffable love.

Can we think that it pleased His loving heart
To cause us a moment's pain?
Ah, no! but He saw through the present cross
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited there with a watchful eye,
With a love that is strong and sure,
And His gold did not suffer a bit more heat
Than was needed to make it pure.

—Anonymous

PSALM 15

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
He that walketh uprightly, and worketh
righteousness, and speaketh the truth
in his heart.
He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor
doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up
a reproach against his neighbor.
In whose eyes a vile person is condemned;
But he that honoureth them that fear the Lord.
He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not,
He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor
taketh reward against the innocent.
He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).