

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.

Vol. 47

Independence, Missouri, April 1970

No. 4

A Poem

(Title Not Given)

Your prayers have comforted me, dear heart,
through many a day;
When strength has failed me, then I know
for me you pray.
When any hurt becomes too great
for me to bear;
I feel at ease, remembering
your power in prayer.
"I shall pray for you each day," you said,
"My voice shall lift
in your behalf . . ." Oh, heart of mine,
There is no gift
though you search the wide world through
that can compare
with the precious, shining white
of your prayer!
"Pray one for another," we are told
I, too, shall pray
for you and for each troubled heart
in need today.

Author Unknown

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Zion's Advocate

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EDITORIAL . . .

THE SPIRIT OF ECUMENISM

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the
last days scoffers, walking in their own lusts, And say-
ing, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the
fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from
the beginning of the creation. For this they willing-
ly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens
were of old, and the earth standing out of the water
and in the water: Whereby the world that then was
being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens
and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept
in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judg-
ment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:3-7).

For years we have watched the world going from sin
unto sin. We have seen within the past decade a great
change take place within our nation. Especially is this
noticeable in the moral fiber of the people. We are
seeing increasingly before us the cry of a people who
have rejected God. There is no God they say, or he is
dead. As one prominent evolutionist readily admitted, he
wanted to do away with the concept of God because he
wanted to be free to indulge in worldly pleasures with-
out suffering the pangs of a guilty conscience. This is
the underlying reason for much of the rebellion we see
about us today. This nation, due to the diligence of its
adversaries, has very nearly succeeded in destroying
the faith of its people toward God. It is no wonder
that Jesus said, "When I come again, will I find faith in
the earth?" The false scientists, eager to establish their
theory, deny the creation and the fact of the flood not-
withstanding overwhelming evidence to the contrary.
For this, they are willingly ignorant. "And even as they
did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave
them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which
are not convenient" (Romans 1:28). "And for this cause
God shall send them strong delusion, that they should be-
lieve a lie: That they all might be damned who believed
not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness"
(2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

We are not surprised at the condition the world is
now falling into for we have known since our inception
into the work that such should be the case. For did
not the Lord prophesy that it would be so when he
walked here among men so many years ago? David, the
psalmist said, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth;
for the faithful fail from among the children of men"
(Psalm 12:1).

But, perhaps many of us little expected to see this
same spirit of unbelief pervade the halls of the Restora-
tion. It is true we were aware that there would be
some sleeping virgins who would not have oil in their
lamps. But who of us would have thought to see the
work of unbelief carried to such an extreme among
those who profess to believe the Book of Mormon?

These forces of sin which have now infiltrated the
ranks of the Restoration do not accept the Book of Mor-
mon as the inspired word of God. The Bible, along with

latter day revelation, is also discounted. What is now referred to as the social gospel is to take the place of the restored gospel of latter days. Zion is a condition that can exist anywhere on the earth. "Beloved, . . . it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude vs. 3-4).

There is another scripture which can be said to have a bearing upon this present departure from truth. "But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 24:48-51).

This is another way of saying, "Well where is the promise of his coming. We have waited and expected the Lord to continue his work but all things continue as before and Zion is not redeemed." So some begin to abuse their sheep, teaching them some other gospel, denying the power of God and otherwise dealing unjustly. And so God tries the souls of those who profess to be his people. Do they truly love him and his righteousness? Or are they satisfied with the doctrines of men and devils? Yes, things continue as they are (or seem to continue) and those who profess the Lord become complacent, apathetic, lax, slothful. Oh well, the Lord delayeth his coming. Surely it won't hurt to do this or that thing. And thus Satan leads them away carefully down to hell while his servants continue the work of destruction among them. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Peter 2:1-2).

Fortunately for the little Church of Christ this spirit has not gained a foothold. It is true we have our differences but we still accept the Restored gospel, the restoration of his church and kingdom upon the earth, and his word as contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon and true latter day revelation. We look forward to the establishment of Zion and the coming of the Lord. May that we ever hold up a bright beacon light to all those who would desire to come unto Christ and to come out of that Great Babylon of the last days.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

MICHIGAN REUNION NOTICE

The Michigan Reunion of the Church of Christ, will be held in Flint, Michigan, at 1802 Utah Street, 1/2 block west of Franklin Avenue. The date is June 20th and 21st. Last year's reunion was very beneficial and enjoyed by those attending. We hope that your plans for the summer will include attending the Michigan Reunion.

Please contact Emery C. Pinder, 1102 Pinehurst, Mt. Morris, Michigan 48458, regarding the number in your party including the number of children. There is space on church property for tents and campers, with kitchen privileges at breakfast time.

Signed,

Emery C. Pinder, for the Committee

ORDINATION

Howard Albert Leighton-Floyd of Anderson, Missouri was ordained an elder March 1, 1970 by Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr. and Elder James M. Case.

BLESSING

Shawn Michael Wheaton the son of Duane Allen and Nancy Lee Wheaton was blessed by his great-grandfather, Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr. assisted by Elder C. Leroy Wheaton, Jr. February 28, 1970 at the Temple Lot Local, Independence, Missouri.

BLESSING

Ilene Elizabeth Marie Hunter, the daughter of James Gary and Mary E. Hunter of Leamington, Ontario, Canada, was blessed by Elder Edward Podhola February 3, 1970.

WAKE UP CAMP 1970

July 10, 11, 12

Come equipped with Bible and Book of Mormon, sleeping bags or tents, casual clothes, towels, any items necessary for camping (Insect Repellent!!)

Your Camp Hosts:

Lovita and George Reed
Route 1
Reed's Retreat
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13).

INDEPENDENCE LOCAL REPORT

A raw, bitter-edged wind ran its fingers through the fall-dried grass of the church lawn. Overhead the sky brooded gray, promising snow.

From the protection of the stark white church a scattering of young and old people carried hymn books toward a place back of the building where a knee height railing sprang from a patch of crushed rock. Here they huddled in an irregular line, facing the enclosure from upwind, forming a living windbreak with their coated bodies. A man in shirt sleeves stepped from the group and on through an opening in the railing. He stooped and threw back two wooden doors which lay close to the ground and thus revealed a rectangular pit nearly filled with clear water. The wind trickled through the crowd and snatched at the wisps of vapor which rose steam-like from the surface of the pool into the chilly air.

From somewhere in the crowd a man's voice called out the number of a hymn. Struggling against the wind, the words "What a friend we have in Jesus . . ." lifted thinly into the barren outdoors, having no friendly walls to reflect their power. A verse only. All heads bowed and the words of a prayer could be heard.

At the sounding of the "Amen," two men, one young and one in mid-life separated themselves from the line and moved toward to pool. Shedding their shoes at the edge, they stepped slowly down into the water until at more than waist depth they turned and together faced the direction of their entry. The older man stood to the right of the younger, who could be seen to clutch something in his hands.

Then, as if to signal, the older man reached upward with his right arm while resting his left hand on the younger man's shoulders. The watching crowd with half bowed heads listened in rapt silence, straining to catch the words the older man spoke.

"Lowell Timothy Larsen, having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Supporting the younger man at the shoulders and at where his joined hands held a folded cloth to mouth and nose the older man slowly tilted the younger man back and down into the water. For the length of two heart beats the water met over the younger man, completely concealing him.

Abruptly the waters were thrust apart as the younger man was quickly raised to stand again for a moment beside the older man. Together the two then made their way up the short stairway. A woman stepped quickly from the crowd with blankets and in a moment the two men were enveloped in the blankets' warm folds. They took their places again in the group.

A second verse of the hymn struggled to rise against the windy austere outdoors and presently ended on ". . . take it to the Lord in prayer." Heads bowed and a prayer began, accompanied by the chimes from the tower of a neighboring church.

The waters of the rectangular pool lay calm now, exposing its depth to view. The two wooden doors once more were folded closed and the crowd moved quietly back around into the shelter of the church building, grouping themselves around the two blanket-clad men. All filed inside and after the last one entered, the large door swung closed with the sound of its latch.

Once again the church yard lay empty. The raw, bitter-edged wind returned to running its fingers through the sear brown grass of the lawn. Overhead the sky still brooded gray, promising snow.

Inside the church the lights were cheerful and bright. Warmth wrapped its arms around the people. The spirit of the baptism continued to hold sway as the crowd entered the small second floor chapel almost silently and selected seats, foregoing their usual chatter while they waited. The voice of an organ moved tenderly through some well known hymns. During the playing of one number, two men in the front row were seen to confer briefly and one rose to speak the number of the hymn. The waiting congregation joined voices with the organ.

But the time the organ and people had finished the hymn, the two men seen in the water, now dried and changed, had entered and taken places in the congregation. With another hymn the regular meeting began almost as if it had continued without interruption from the water's edge.

At the end of the hymn, instead of the usual single opening prayer, the man on the platform requested a general season of prayer in view of the great importance of the event to come. A rustle of clothing, and small sounds could be heard as the people came to their knees between the rows. The man on the platform came down to kneel with the rest. His prayer was first, followed here and there about the room by several others, beseeching God's favor for the confirmation to come as well as for the the administration requested by an aging sister. Presently all was silent and then was heard the word, "Let us rise." The congregation rose from their knees and were seated once more. All was unusually quiet.

In front of the platform a chair had been placed.

From his seat with his family, the young man came forward accompanied by the older man of the front and yet another man. When he was seated, the two older men took places on opposite sides of the chair facing each other. They exchanged a look of agreement and together they placed their hands on the young man's head. The congregation bowed their heads as one of the two men spoke in prayer.

The unhurried quiet words reached to the corners of the room. The principle thing sought was the reception of the Holy Ghost for the young man to be an abiding comforter and a guide. There was also mention of preparation for future service beyond that generally expected of men. The words ceased and the two older men, lowering their hands, stepped back. The young man rose and the three stood together facing the congregation.

"Blest be the tie that binds" rolled forth from the congregation as by rows and by turns they came forward singing to grasp the right hand of the young man in this age-old gesture of good-will and fellowship. Many spoke words of blessing and congratulations. When the last had thus passed, the young man returned to sit with his his family.

Seldom has there been a more sweetly solemn happening in the life of this local church.

The elderly woman who had asked for administration now came forward with assistance and settled herself in the chair, between the two older men. Again the two men faced each other as before, but this time the man who had spoken during the confirmation now held a small bottle in which could be seen a golden colored oil. Holding it just above the head of the woman, he let a few drops fall on her bowed head. He then handed the bottle to the other man. Next he began to gently spread the oil upon the aging head while he spoke to "Our Heavenly Father." At the end of the prayer of anointing the two men joined in laying their hands on her head in the same way as with the young man. The man who had taken the bottle, then offered the prayer of confirmation, asking peace, comfort and healing. The two then lifted their hands and stood back. One returned with the woman to her seat in the congregation.

Another hymn was sung by the people and the man conducting the meeting, having returned to the platform, now introduced the speaker of the hour.

The sermon came with a sense of urgency about the path of Christianity for both those newly on it and those long upon it. The parable of the ten virgins was brought to the congregation's notice, especially the fact that all slept, but some were fully prepared before the time of need, while others were not. Application of this parable to our spiritual lives was made clear, and the need to keep spiritually alert was stressed. Attention was brought to the amounts freely spent on pleasures as compared to the amount dropped into the church collection basket.

Modern parables were drawn from signs along the highways which tell us what to expect next, but little allowances are made for the road-blocks which Satan springs on the Christian without notice. The time never comes when one can safely fall asleep spiritually, before we reach eternity. Do not be carried away by the sounds and turmoil of our present day. Use and develop the conscience to give early warning signals of possible trouble in the same manner we use the instruments in our automobiles. It is the converted Christian whom Satan particularly wants to sift as wheat. Pray. Be watchful. Hold up the light of Christ.

For the faithful the rewards are at the end of the road.

The sermon came to a close with the prayer that each of us shall gain the eternal life which God has so graciously offered to us.

Great thoughtfulness lay on the congregation like a mantle through the closing hymn and through the closing prayer. Parting salutations were brief and quiet because the morning had been so full. By two's, three's, small groups, and singly, the crowd dwindled. Finally after the last one came out the large door closed with the sound of its latch.

Soon everyone was gone. The street and the church yard lay empty now with the sear brown grass rippling in the raw bitter-edged wind. The sky brooded gray, promising snow.

Thus was the morning, December 28, 1969 at the Independence Local Church of Christ.

Forest Maley, Reporter

LETTER TO THE READERS OF THE ADVOCATE

February 5, 1970

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are all still here at the Maple City Local even though you haven't heard any news from us. We have lost one family but gained another so it didn't seem like a loss. The Max Lee family now attend the Cedar Springs Local and my brother Lowell Scott and family attend here.

Brother Ed Mallory and wife Sylvia need your prayers as they are both in ill health and Brother Ed is unable to work any longer.

All of us here at Maple City really enjoyed last year's Camp Meetings, the fellowship and meeting of so many new friends and Brothers and Sisters.

The baptisms were a very beautiful sight. They were held early in the morning and Glen Lake was at its best. It was as though Christ himself could walk into the meeting from somewhere down the shore. But his Spirit was there abundantly.

We had 7:00 A. M. young people's meetings every morning. Some of them weren't so young. These meetings were a blessing to all.

People came from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Missouri. We were very pleased to have with us Apostles Sheldon and Housknecht.

We hope to have many more in attendance this year. Everyone is welcome and there is room for all. Camping space is available at the church site. Recreation is also planned for all. The dates are the 17th, 18th, 19th of July. If you aren't set us for camping come anyway, our homes are open to all.

If you need more information write—Conley Addington, Route 2, Box 45, Maple City, Michigan 49664.

Before closing we must testify to the blessings that God has given us. He is very mindful of us here.

Love from all your Brothers and Sisters,

Sister Marian Addington

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.

EXPLANATION

By Charles E. Cottrill

Subject: Acts 2:41

I would like to call attention to the request for an explanation of Acts 2:41, Question Time, Saints Herald, February 1969 which scripture appears to say that three thousand souls were baptized and added to the church in one day. I say appears to say, because when properly interpreted it does not say so.

The author of the question is entitled to a more complete answer to the question. Incidentally this is true of many of the questions which have been asked in the past. It is not my intent to be critical, but if this is construed to be criticism, then let us hope that it will be taken as constructive criticism, rather than destructive criticism, to the end that we may strive to give people better answers to their questions. Since the River Jordan where baptizing was done is about 11 miles from Jerusalem, one has a right to question whether 3,000 thousand souls could be baptized and confirmed in one day, and before they could be added to the church this would have to be done.

I would like to answer this question more fully as follows. The Bible manuscripts were first written without regard to chapter to verse, or space between words. For several centuries copies were made in the same manner.

During the 12th century the Bible manuscripts were divided into chapters, but not into verses. In the year 1382-4 Wycliff made an attempt to divide the scripture into verses, putting his verse numbers on the margin rather than dividing the text into verses. He did indicate certain divisions in the text by underscoring them.

About the year 1411 A.D. a Frenchman made an attempt to divide the text into verses. The year and etc. are subject to verification, but nothing came of it. However another Frenchman, Robert Stephanus Estienne, about the year 1551, made a concordance of the Bible, and divided the Bible into verses for handy reference. His system of verse was adopted in the printing of the famous Geneva or Breeches Bible, printed about the year 1560. This method of division became generally accepted in all later printings and translations.

Now in this division the verses were not always divided at the right place, or ended at the right word. Adding to one verse and subtracting from another can cause confusion. It is almost impossible to properly divide all the scriptures into verse after they have been translated into another language, especially the English language, because the word order is not the same. In other words we have to have the literal word for word translation in order to make the proper division. For this reason we will go back to the literal translation

from the Greek, and hope to be led by the Holy Spirit.

The Greek Text will be from the work of Griesbach, 1775 to 1806, who is considered by some to have been the best of all critics of the various Texts. Other and earlier texts have been discovered since his work was published. As for instance The Siniatic Manuscript was found in a convent on Mount Sinai in 1859, and is now in the British museum. We must bear in mind that none of these texts are 100% perfect and that we do not have the original copies from which they were copied. We have only copies of the originals. Another thing to bear in mind is that some words not appearing are to be understood, and some meanings implied that are not expressed, that is directly. Matthew 3:1 and 2, Luke 17:20 and 21 are noteworthy examples of this.

I have found that in consulting so-called literal translations from the Greek that they are not always so literal. In other words they do not always agree with the Greek words they are supposed to represent. All this leaves us, to a great extent dependent upon the Holy Spirit, and our prayers for guidance, which is a reminder that "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." We need to use verses 40 and 42 to make the explanation clear as follows.

Acts 2:40. Other and words with many he testified and exhorted saying; be saved from the generation of the perverse **this**. (Or this perverse) end of the verse.

Acts 2:41. They indeed therefore who gladly having received the word of him were dipped and were added the day **that**. (Or that day) end of verse.

Acts 2:42. Souls about three thousand were and constantly attending to the teachings of the Apostles, and to the distribution, and to the breaking of the loaf and to **prayers**. End of verse.

Now that we have the verses properly divided, the next thing is to get them into the word order of the English language, and English equivalents, as follows.

Acts 2:40. And with many other words he (Peter) testified and exhorted **them** saying; be ye saved from this perverse generation.

Acts 2:41. They who indeed having gladly received his words, were dipped (baptized) and added (to the church) that day.

Acts 2:42. About three thousand souls were constantly attending the teachings (meetings) of the Apostles, and the breaking and distribution of bread (Eucharist) with prayer.

The words in parenthesis are not in the Greek, but they are implied, and might be needed by some for a better understanding of the text. The exception is the word dipped which implies immersion more than it does baptize, since sprinkling, pouring and washing are in-

cluded in the present meaning of the word baptism. The word of Christ to his disciples in the great commission when properly translated was to immerse people, not baptize them. This leaves no room for doubt about the method.

It will be noted that in the literal translation the 40th verse ends at the proper place with the word *this*, which I have underscored for emphasis. By the same token I have ended the 41st verse on the word *that*, also underscored. There can be no doubt as to the proper ending of the 42nd verse, since the subject changes to fear falling upon all, after the word *prayer*. Two words are supplied that are not in the Greek, nor in parenthesis. Such words would appear in italics in the King James Translation. I have underscored them. These two words are necessary to the proper understanding of the text in English. The text can be understood without the words in parenthesis, since empirical knowledge of the text and the subject matter clearly indicate who and what is being referred to.

The peculiar way of ending sentences by using the word *this* or *that* is partly responsible for this error in the King James, but more so the omission of the proper punctuation mark as can be found also in other cases. Since we do not have the original copies of the Greek, no one can say whether this is the fault of the original writers, or those who made copies later.

I would like to point out in conclusion that such errors as this, together with the arranging of verses out of sequence, and little regard to chronological order, makes many passages of scripture hard for the average person to understand.

"UPON THE HOUSETOPS"

By William E. Frishkorn

"... for verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape, and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated; and the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow, for their iniquities shall be **spoken upon the housetops**, and their secret acts shall be revealed;" (Book of Commandments 1:1).

Jesus prophesied that in the last days the same conditions would prevail as in the days of Noah. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37).

We find that in the days of Noah the earth was filled with violence. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11).

Whether we look to Africa, Asia, Europe, or right here at home, we find violence increasing at an unprecedented rate.

A study was made in 1967 of crime rates in the United States. A murder was committed every 42 minutes. Robbery, one every 2 minutes. Auto theft, one every 40 seconds. Burglary, one every 20 seconds. Considering this rate only as in the United States, a world-wide

computation would be even more fractional. Thus it's easy to deduce that the earth is becoming more and more filled with violence!

Jesus elaborated a little more on the conditions that shall parallel one another in the two dispensations. "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:38, 39).

We all know there is nothing wrong with eating, drinking or marrying. Each one is essential that life may go on. They were given to us to enjoy. However, we have spiritual obligations to our Creator also and we are not to dwell wholly on the temporal needs. "They were in these things as their element, as if they had their being for no other end than to eat and drink. They were unreasonable in it; they were entire and intent upon the world and the flesh. They were eating and drinking, when they should have been repenting and praying" (Matthew Henry's Commentary).

We find that people living in this modern day are only interested in the things surrounding them, being momentarily satisfied. We find ourselves amid a fun-loving nation that is engaged fully on the physical elements of life. Whether it be sports, education, pleasure or getting ahead in the world, the world is intent on the physical elements. People have forgotten that the spiritual is vitally as important as the physical (more so) in order to keep a nation functioning properly. Having neglected all spiritual needs our surroundings will crumble as the days go by. In contrast to drinking, we find the United States is a drunken nation. "Today there are 25 million alcoholics scattered through all nations—including over 6 million within the United States" (The Plain Truth, May 1969).

The United States has often been deemed the food glut of the world. We consume staggering amounts of food daily. I think it might be more amply be described in the following manner; "Whose end is destruction, **WHOSE GOD IS THEIR BELLY**, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Philippians 3:19).

We find also that the tower of Babel was constructed during the lifetime of Noah. The people responsible for the building of the tower had full intentions of reaching the heavens. "... Go to, let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven..." (Genesis 11:4). Today we are striving to conquer the moon. We find also that the moon was placed in the heavens. (See Time of the End, February 1962, A. F. Bell)

The scriptures tell us that Noah was a preacher in his life time, warning the people of the coming destruction to take place. "... but saved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in a flood upon the world of the ungodly;" (2 Peter 2:5).

Jesus prophesied that the gospel would be preached in all the world during the last days before His coming

in glory, that it might be a witness unto all mankind. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

Radio and television communication makes it possible for the whole world to be daily informed in news. Such was the case in the moon landings, where people in India, Korea and all over the world were shown viewing monitors. Thus we find the words of Christ to be reality! Our broadcast means may very easily be figurative for, "**spoken upon the housetops.**"

We find that in the days of Noah a place of safety was prepared. We of the Restoration believe that Zion shall be a place of safety. Although saints shall be gathered from the four quarters of the earth when Christ comes in glory, Zion shall be the only guaranteed place of safety for those who don't take arms against their neighbor. Notice that Christ mentioned that the very day they entered into the ark the flood began. Therefore we can look for a similar occurrence to transpire in the coming time. Namely, a call to go out to gather to Zion before a dark hand of destruction sweeps the nation.

In reading the Book of Mormon we see that the Brother of Jared lived also during the days of Noah, that is, in the days of the confounding and scattering of people at the tower of Babel. . We find that all things from the foundation of the world even to the end was revealed to the Brother of Jared. "And when the Lord had said these words, he shewed unto the Brother of Jared all the inhabitants of the earth which had been, and also all that would be; and the Lord withheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth; For the Lord had said unto him in times before, that if he would believe in him, that he could shew unto him all things—it should be shewn unto him; therefore the Lord could not withhold anything from him; for he knew that the Lord could **shew him all things**" (Ether 1:90, 91).

We can therefore expect to see the same things revealed to us also providing our faith is great enough. They are to be revealed in the own due time of the Lord. "And the Lord said unto him, write these things and seal them up, and **I will shew them** in mine own due time unto the children of men" (verse 92).

The question has oftentimes been asked, should we gather to Zion yet? I believe that we can be just as useful to the Lord right where we are until the sign is given that we should gather. When the sign is given, however, we are to gather immediately, not being concerned for property or personal belongings. Using the Bible and the Book of Mormon I'll attempt to verify that statement.

We find that a book was delivered to Joseph Smith. These, of course, are the plates that were shown to him by an angel. "But the book shall be delivered unto a man, and he shall deliver the words of the book, which are the words of those who have slumbered in the dust; and he shall deliver these words unto another;" (2 Nephi 11:129).

We find also that Joseph Smith wasn't allowed to translate all the contents of the book, as they were to come forth in their own due time. These words are to reveal all things, from the beginning of the earth to the ending. Such was not included in the Book of Mormon. "For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, and the revelation which was sealed, shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth: for, behold they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof" (verse 130).

We find that people are to rejoice when they receive this record to come forth. To those who gladly receive the word to come forth they will be unable to stay their tongues from proclaiming the gospel. For they shall do so with great spirit! "And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be **read upon the housetops**; and they shall be read by the power of Christ" (verse 131).

In reading the scriptures, we find the housetops to be the center of attention in many cases. For idolatry. "And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops;" (Zephaniah 1:5). For lamentation. "There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab . . ." (Jeremiah 48:38). "What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?" (Isaiah 22:1). Also for prayer. "On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour" (Acts 10:9).

Besides being used as a centerplace in the foregoing it was also used as a place for proclamation. "The cool of the evening is also passed on the roof, when proclamation is made by the public crier of any command of the ruler, or news of any public kind" (Smith's Bible Dictionary).

Thus we can see that the housetop can easily be compared to the radio and television of today.

Jesus prophesied the coming forth of the revelation which the Brother of Jared saw in this way, "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be made known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be **proclaimed upon the housetops**" (Luke 12:2, 3).

The book of Mormon verifies the same. "And all things **shall be revealed** unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be, even unto the end of the earth" (2 Nephi 11:132).

It's quite possible that the record itself will inform the saints to gather to Zion as quickly as possible, since it will reveal all things. Jesus described it in this manner. "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son man is revealed. In that day, **he which shall be upon the housetop**, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back . . . Two women shall be

grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left . . . And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together" (Luke 17:30, 31, 35, 37).

That could also be said, where Zion is there shall the saints be gathered together. Again we see a sign given directly before a gathering.

The prophet Isaiah also saw the coming forth of this record prior to the gathering of the saints. In this case he gives it as a sign. Something we shall be able to see. "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, **when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains**; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye" (Isaiah 18:3).

Here we see a sign for all the nations to see. An ensign can generally be associated with a standard. A standard is something you can see physically. It would oftentimes come in the form of an emblem affixed to a flag or at the top of a post, such was the case during ancient Biblical times. Isaiah said a standard would be shown before a trumpet is blown. These two signs represent impending disaster that's coming.

Jeremiah proclaimed the same thing prior to the invading Chaldeans. "Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land; cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities. Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction" (Jeremiah 4:5, 6).

The north country seems to unveil a destruction in many cases, such shall also be the coming of the army of Gog.

When it becomes necessary for the Lord to cleanse His land and people, it's no pleasure; it's no pleasure to hear the alarm being sounded throughout His Holy mountain. "How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people, is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jeremiah 4:21, 22).

There are perhaps many things that have been used to signify a "sign" in the scriptures. In the 11th chapter of Isaiah we find an ensign to represent Christ and the Book of Mormon also, both to be accomplished prior to the gathering of the Jews to their homeland. First we see the scripture in reference to Christ. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an **ensign** of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." (Christ appeared to Joseph Smith in 1830). And it shall come to pass in **that day**, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people . . ." (verse 10, 11). Of course the Jews were beginning to be released throughout the 1800's, especially beginning at the year 1830. Now we see the reference regarding the

Book of Mormon. "And he shall set up an **ensign** for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (verse 12).

One may wonder how one may know for sure that the ensign used in the latter case truly designates the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon speaks for itself. "And verily, I say unto you, I give unto you a **sign**, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place, that I shall gather in from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel . . . that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles, . . ." (3 Nephi 9:86, 87). This, of course, is the Book of Mormon, which was made manifest publicly in 1830.

Isaiah said that we must be watchful when an ensign is held up and that we were to be listening for a trumpet to sound. The prophet Joel warns us of the great need to gather to Zion. And tells us that the trumpet shall be sounded from Zion. Joel warns of impending danger. Already the land is made desolate from famine and pestilence and now a great army threatens destruction. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my Holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, . . . a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations" (Joel 2:1, 2).

Although there may be many records that shall come forth for a testimony, including Noah's ark, the most important will likely be the revelation which was given to the Brother of Jared. The prophet Isaiah may easily have written, "Listen all of you inhabitants of the world! All of you dwelling in homes, listen! For a great revelation shall come forth from among you, and so **great** and **marvelous** shall this revelation be that all tongues that receive it shall be loosed and it shall be proclaimed with the Holy Ghost; When this record comes forth for a witness unto ALL nations listen carefully, for the alarm shall be sounded to gather to Zion. Don't be concerned over property and personal belongings or you'll be burned with them! A great destruction is coming! Let this revelation be a **sign** unto you."

If we, as members of the Church of Christ hope to be instrumental in bringing forth this record, we'll have to be exceptional in faith, as was the Brother of Jared. "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 become 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 1:100, 101).

The apostle John was given an insight to the unfolding of all revelations in the last days. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (Revelation 10:7).

Factions outside the Restoration claim that the Bible is God's complete revelation to mankind. By reading the first three verses of the book of Revelation one may find that a revelation and prophecy are nearly synonymous. However, the book *itself* claims that two men are going to PROPHECY for 3½ years!

Some may be prone to reject the record because it won't coincide with their personal beliefs concerning hell, heaven, creation, etc. But a word of warning should be given to those who shall follow such vain pursuits. "And he that will contend against the word of the Lord, let him be accursed; . . . for unto them will I shew no greater things, saith Jesus Christ, for I am he who speaketh;" (Ether 1:102).

In the days of Noah we find that the earth was destroyed by a flood—thus we can look for a similar occurrence when Christ comes. "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:6, 7).

We are now living in the 11th hour; when the bridegroom comes at midnight it will be even darker. Let's seek to find laborers who are willing to work just one hour for the same reward. The time is growing short and the fires are burning hotter each day. "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12:49).

Let's take the advice given in the scriptures, loving God with all our hearts and our brother as ourself. "Watch ye therefore, AND PRAY ALWAYS, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

THE TWO ALMA'S

By Ora L. Derry

Alma I was the wicked priest of King Noah who believed the teachings of the prophet Abinadi. After he had repented of all his sins he went about secretly among the people and taught them; many believing, were baptized in the waters of Mormon and there they formed the first Church of Christ or God in the country.

All during the years they dwelt in the land of Helem, Alma and the priests he had consecrated, taught the people to keep the commandments of God. And they multiplied and prospered in the land. Then the Lamanites came and took over their land and placed guards

over them exacting heavy tasks upon them until at last the people cried out to the Lord for relief from their persecutions. He heard their cries and when they had all their flocks and herds and other possessions ready, he caused all the Lamanites and guards to fall into a deep sleep that lasted until the people of Alma were out of the country. After traveling for many days in the wilderness they came at last to Zarahemla.

King Mosiah called all the people together after Alma and his people came and read all the records that had been kept by the peoples of Zeniff (the man who had left Zarahemla with a group of people, many years before to go back to the land of Nephi, the homeland of his forefather's). There was the people of Limhi with their record, which was also the record of King Zeniff and King Noah. The people of Limhi also had twenty-four gold plates which they had found when they were searching for the land of Zarahemla. These plates told of another people who had lived here in this promised land for many hundreds of years, a people that God had led here from the Tower of Babel to this promised land. He told them they could possess the land if they were a righteous people, but if they forgot God and became ripe in iniquity they would be swept off and another people would be given this land. God said whoever possessed this promised land must serve the God of the land who is Jesus Christ.

Then there was the record of the people of Alma.

After reading all the records King Mosiah asked Alma to talk to the people. Going from one group to another, for there were a great number of people there, he preached repentance and faith in God, telling them that it was only through the power of God that the people of Limhi and also his people had been delivered from bondage to the Lamanites and were again a free people. What a happy and thankful people they should be.

When he finished preaching to them, King Limhi and also his people asked to be baptized and Alma baptized them as he had his people in the waters of Mormon back in the land of Nephi, and they became members of the church of God.

King Mosiah granted Alma the right to establish churches throughout all the land. Although there were many churches with teachers and priests over them, they all taught the same thing and were one church, striving to keep God's laws and commandments.

There were people in the land who did not believe in the coming of Christ or of his resurrection; their hearts were hardened and they could not understand the word of God. These people were called unbelievers and with much flattery they sought to deceive the people of the church and caused them to do many sinful things. They persecuted those who belonged to the church so much that they began to murmur to Alma and Alma went to King Mosiah about it. The king after talking with his priests sent out a proclamation to all the people that the unbelievers should not persecute the believers in the church and this was a strict command.

Among the unbelievers were the four sons of King Mosiah and a son of Alma named Alma. He, Alma was a very wicked and idolatrous man. A good talker, he flattered many of the people and led them into doing many wicked things. He became a great hindrance to the work of the church, stealing away the hearts of the people and causing dissensions among the believers.

One day as he and the sons of Mosiah were going about secretly, to destroy the church, an angel suddenly appeared unto them. He descended as in a cloud and when he spoke it was like a voice of thunder which caused the earth to shake under their feet. They were so astonished they fell to the earth and did not understand the angel, but he cried again, "Alma arise and stand forth, for why persecuteth thee the church of God? For the Lord hath said, 'This is my church and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it save it is the transgression of my people.'" The angel told him that God had heard his father's prayers concerning him, that he might be brought to the knowledge of the truth and that was the reason he was there to convince him of the power and authority of God. He told Alma, "go thy way and seek to destroy the church no more. that their prayers may be answered, and this even if thou wilt of thyself be cast off." Then the angel left them and Alma and the sons of Mosiah were so astonished that they again fell to the earth.

Alma was so amazed that he became dumb and could not speak, and so weak he could not move his hands. In this condition he was carried to his father and when they told him what had happened to his son it made his father happy for he knew it was the power of God that caused Alma to be in this condition.

He called the people together that they might see what God had done for his son. He and the priests fasted and prayed that God might restore his speech, that he might restore strength to his limbs, that he might stand again, that this great multitude of people might see the goodness and glory of God.

After two days and two nights Alma stood up and spoke to the people telling them that after going through much tribulation and repenting nigh unto death the Lord and forgiven him his sins. His soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. "I, he said, was in the darkest abyss, but now I behold the marvelous light of God."

From that time forward Alma II and the sons of King Mosiah went about throughout all this land preaching and teaching the people of the goodness of God, trying to make restitution for the wrongs they had done.

THE PEOPLE OF AMMONIAH

By Ora L. Derry

For nine years Alma was chief judge over the people of Nephi, but after the people began to prosper and become rich in worldly things they began to contend with one another. They became proud and haughty

with those that did not have as much as they did and forgetting to impart of their substance to those in need. All of these things were a great source of sorrow to Alma until at last he decided to give up the chief judgeship and devote all his time to teaching God's word throughout all the land.

He selected a wise man, who was an Elder in the church, named Nephiah to be chief judge and the people gave him authority to enact the laws for them.

Alma did not give up the office of high priest of the church, only the office of chief judge so that he might be able to spend all his time among the people, preaching the word of God.

After preaching to the people in Zarahemla he ordained priests and elders to preside and watch over the church. He departed into the land of Gideon where he taught them of the coming of Christ, of his birth and his teachings, his sufferings, his death and resurrection, telling them they must repent of their sins and follow the teachings of Christ if they were to receive eternal life. All those that repented and were baptized were received into the church. Then he established the church in Gideon as he had in Zarahemla.

Because of Alma's preaching the people of Gideon heeded the words of Alma and tried to keep the commandments of God. Alma asked God's blessings upon them and with his heart full of joy for this people he returned to his home in Zarahemla.

After resting for a short time he went to the land of Melek where he taught the people and here many people from the border land came and received the message and were baptized.

Leaving Melek he went to the city of Ammoniah where he began preaching to the people. But Satan had a great hold upon the people and they did not believe anything Alma told them. They said they knew he was high priest over the church he had established in many places throughout the land. But he did not have any control over them for they did not belong nor believe in his church and since he had given up the judgment seat to Nephiah, he could not judge them.

Though Alma went to God in mighty prayer that he might pour out his Spirit upon this people, that they might repent of their wicked ways and be baptized, they did not repent but continued to revile against him and spit upon him and at last they cast him out of the city and so he departed for the city called Aaron.

On his way to Aaron an angel appeared to him telling him to rejoice for he had been faithful in keeping all the commandments of God from the time of his conversion. Now the Lord commanded him to return to Ammoniah and preach to the people again. And to tell them that if they did not repent God would destroy them.

When Alma received this command he hurried back to Ammoniah entering the city by another way. When he entered the city he was weary and hungry. Meeting a man, he said, "would you give an humble servant of

God something to eat?" And the man replied, "I am a Nephite and I know that thou art an holy prophet of God for thou art the man whom an angel said in vision, Thou shalt receive, Therefore go with me into my home and I will impart unto thee of my food. And I know thou will be a blessing unto me and my home."

Amulek took Alma to his home, where he gave him food to eat and cared for his every need and Alma blessed Amulek and all his household. Alma stayed many days with Amulek before they (for God called Amulek to go with him), went forth to preach and prophesy to the people of the coming destruction of the people if they did not repent.

These people were Nephites and knew of all the goodness of God to them in the past, how he had led Lehi and his family to this promised land, that they were to possess if they were a righteous people. But if they forgot God they would be destroyed. Alma told them it would be better for the Lamanites than for them if they did not repent because they had known of God and his goodness and had great need to repent of their sins or they would be destroyed.

The people were very angry with Alma and sought to lay hands on him to put him in prison, but God did not suffer them to take him at that time.

Then Amulek began to talk to them. He told them he was a descendant of Aminadi, the same Aminadi who interpreted the writing that was put upon the wall of the temple by the finger of God. Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi the son of Lehi, who was a descendant of Manassah, the son of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt. And he was well known among them. He told them all the things Alma had told them were true; for an angel had told him so. Now the people had two witnesses of the destruction that was coming upon them if they did not repent. Some believed and because they believed they were cast out of the city.

One of the chief men in stirring up the people against Alma and Amulek was a lawyer named Zeezrom, who sought to destroy them by trapping them into denying the things that they had told the people, even offering them money if they would deny the existence of a supreme being. But Alma and Amulek could read their minds and know what they were trying to do. As they continued to preach to them, Zeezrom began to see that he had made a mistake and when he tried to defend Alma and Amulek and take the blame for what he had done, the people took him and cast him out from among them.

Taking Alma and Amulek and placing them in a seat where they could see all they were doing, they built a great fire and bringing all the wives and children (that believed) of the believers they had cast out of the city, they cast them into the fire with all the records that contained the scriptures and they were all destroyed by the great fire.

After the fire was over they took Alma and Amulek and bound them and cast them into prison, where they

remained for many days. Many lawyers, judges and teachers of the profession of Nehor came and questioned them; taunting them, slapping them in the face and spitting upon them, but Alma and Amulek did not answer them. They gave them no food and water and took away all their clothes. Daily they came to persecute and question them but they did not answer them. At last after many days the chief judge and many others spit upon them, slapping their faces saying to them; if you have such great power, deliver yourselves from bondage and we will believe that this great destruction you have told us will happen.

Then Alma cried out to the Lord asking how long they must suffer this persecution, and the Lord gave them strength to brake the bonds that bound them and they stood up free. Fear filled the hearts of all the people there and they started to flee from the prison but they fell and the earth shook beneath them and the walls fell and killed all who were in the prison except Alma and Amulek who went out free men.

Leaving the city of Ammonihah they joined the believers outside. Zeezrom, when he heard that they were there sent for them, for he was a very sick man with a burning fever, caused by his troubled mind because of his many sins. He thought because of his wickedness Alma and Amulek had been put to death. When they came to him he asked them to heal him for he believed all the things they had taught. Alma asked God according to his faith in Christ to heal him of his sickness and Zeezrom arose at once from his bed and walked. After Alma baptized Zeezrom he began at once to preach to the people.

Alma took Amulek whose family had turned against him (having lost all his wealth), home with him to rest from all his labors. And while they were there the cry was heard throughout the land that the Lamanite army was coming, but before the Nephites could raise an army large enough to drive them out of the land, they had destroyed the city of Ammonihah and all the people were killed and it remained a place of desolation for many years.

SOME POINTS OF INTEREST

The average age of great civilizations is 200 years. The general path which each civilization takes from its rise to its fall is as follows:

- From Bondage to Spiritual Faith
- From Spiritual Faith to Great Courage
- From Great Courage to Liberty
- From Liberty to Abundance
- From Abundance to Selfishness
- From Selfishness to Complacency
- From Complacency to Dependency
- From Dependency back again to Bondage

The five major causes of the fall of the Roman Empire is given by historians as follows:

1. The breakdown of the family and a rapidly increasing divorce rate.
2. The tremendous increase of Taxes with its attendant extravagant spending.
3. The mad craze for pleasure.
4. The rush to increase armaments to ward off ever increasing attacks.
5. The decay of religion.

It is interesting to note that all five of the above causes of the fall of the Roman Empire are now rife within our own nation.

Your Editor

CARD OF THANKS

I wish to thank all my brothers and sisters for their prayers, thoughts, and contributions during the operation and convalescence of my husband.

Goldie Hepler

COLORADO REUNION NOTICE

It will soon be reunion time again, and it would be well that we start directing our thoughts and prayers toward that end in order that we might be able to enjoy a spiritual feast together.

The Colorado Reunion will be held at Grand Junction, Colorado on the 13th, 14th and 15th of June. The church address is Route 4, 3233 B½ Road. All who plan on coming please write to one of the following members of the Reunion Committee.

Robert L. Ely
Route 4, 3201 B½ Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

T. R. Ely
Route 4, 3239 B½ Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

Marvin E. Ely
Route 4, 236-32 Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

EAST INDEPENDENCE LOCAL NEWS

Some time has passed since our last report to the Advocate. But because of the sickness in our home, we have had to put off our writing in caring for those who are ill.

We have had many good sermons and counsel from our ministry, and we hope to continue to have it. To our regret, we have missed some of the sermons.

A part of our winter is over and spring is drawing

near again, it is always refreshing to think of spring-time after the bleak, cold, wintry days. But winter has its enjoyment and purpose too.

There has been a lot of sickness these winter months; the flu has been quite prevalent as usual, which has cut our attendance down at our services.

Our Pastor, Brother John Randall has been quite ill this winter. He has had to shift his responsibility onto his Associate, Brother Roland Sarratt and others. His health is slightly improved, but he still isn't well enough to assume the responsibility as pastor at the present time. We would appreciate an interest in your prayers for him.

Jennifer Raye, four-month old baby daughter of Brother and Sister Sam Kidd was blessed Sunday, February 1st by Apostles William Sheldon and William Anderson.

Brother Gary and Sister Belinda Stone are the proud parents of a little girl named Wendy Rene. She is about three months old at this writing. Belinda is the daughter of Brother and Sister William Nast. They are making their home in Germany at the present time where he is stationed while in the Service.

Several of our East Local people attended the Phoenix Reunion in November. All reported having a good time.

General Conference time is drawing near. We hope and pray we will have God's Spirit to be with us in all our meetings, and nothing of a foreign nature will enter. We need to have unity to please God, for he said, "If ye are not one, Ye are not mine."

Your East Local Reporter,

Ruth Randall

AS A MAN THINKETH SO IS HE

By Irene Shaw

"Wherefore if these things have ceased, wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain; for no man can be saved, according to the words of Christ, save they shall have faith in his name;

Wherefore if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man: for they are as though there had been no redemption made" (Moroni 7:42, 43). Read 5 verses preceding these.

We hear it asked so many times, "Why don't we enjoy the spiritual blessings now, as the saints did in days gone by?" The Bible and Book of Mormon have the answers.

There has never been a time in the history of our nation when sports have been so important to so many people, as they are today. If it isn't fishing, it is some kind of ball, skiing, or something else. People flock to these sports on weekends instead of going to church to worship God on Sunday. We can watch sports almost every day on television, yet I can remember when they didn't play the different kinds of games

on Sunday and the networks wouldn't broadcast a ball game on Sunday. What a change we have made.

I am reminded of the first and great commandment that Christ gave to his disciples, based on complete love for God, and the second like unto it, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Should we love anyone less because we disagree with them?

One sister told me that at a conference where there was much contention, she was told that all lacked compassion. Do we lack tolerance, are we humble enough, do we offend easily? Do we give a broken heart and contrite spirit to God as a daily sacrifice?

I have heard it said that we don't need healing today like they used to, because we have such good doctors and medication. I have found doctor and hospital fees to be pretty costly, not to mention the suffering involved. Think of the money we could have to help with church work, if we didn't have so many doctor bills and have to keep our insurance paid up.

I would like to relate some testimonies told me, and some of my own. The sister who told me this testimony, said that she wondered about going to picture shows, so went to God for the answer. She was told she would not go to hell if she went to picture shows, neither would she enjoy the spiritual gifts she had enjoyed in the past.

Another sister had a dream in which she was preparing to go to Zion. She was told that she couldn't go to Zion because her skirt was too short. She didn't wear them above her knees either.

At the Solemn Assembly in 1969, I listened to a very unusual prayer. In that prayer were mentioned several things that many of us do, that are displeasing to God. Some of the things mentioned were: swimming, cards, the theater, the dance, women wearing men's clothing, and men wearing women's clothing. Later when speaking to the brother who uttered this prayer, he said in an awed tone, "I never prayed a prayer like that before in my life." When speaking to another brother about it, he said he knew every word of that prayer before it was spoken.

During the prayer, as I listened I thought, there will be some who won't like it, and this is what I saw: To my left was a table with a very white tablecloth that extended as far as I could see. On this table was the most perfect fruit I have ever seen. It was protected with something like thin plastic, and placed along each side of the table where the plates would normally be. There was no break in the line of fruit on each side however, and it was beautiful and abundant.

On my right were two tables but I paid little attention to the one farthest from me. If I remember correctly, it was bare. On the table nearest me, were crumbs scattered over the top. This table wasn't large, would perhaps seat twelve or fourteen people. Where the tablecloth hung over the side of the table, there was a green stripe about half an inch wide the full length of it.

The beautiful, perfect fruit on the first table is there

for us to use as soon as we are ready for it. Instead of partaking of the good food, we are receiving the crumbs, and the table cloth isn't all white. We just aren't in a condition to receive the full benefits of the fruits of the spirit, and until we are, we will have to get along with the crumbs.

We have been told for years that perilous times are coming upon the earth, and have been warned time and time again to prepare ourselves so that we can escape the plagues that are coming. At one reunion in Colorado we were told "to come out of Babylon, that we be not partakers of her plagues." At another reunion we were told that we lacked compassion.

It seems that the times we are deeply concerned about a loved one who is ill or in trouble, we have more compassion and are more humble, and we receive more spiritual blessings. What a shame that someone has to suffer before we will sufficiently humble ourselves before God.

We know that none of us are perfect, and we have no right to point our finger at anyone but ourselves. As one of my sons says, when we point a finger at someone else, we are pointing two fingers at ourselves.

There is much unrest in the churches of the restoration. I wonder if our light is shining bright enough for them to see and want to come to it. We do hope so.

May God bless each of us with His Spirit.

TESTIMONY COLUMN

Dear Editors:

You have asked for testimonies to be told to our people. I wish to tell of my experiences now that others may know some of the wonder and thankfulness I feel to God.

Early in December I collapsed at school where I teach. The following day my doctor told me he wished to send me to a specialist to check my heart, as he suspected trouble from the very fast and irregular beat. The evening before the appointment with the specialist I asked my father, Elder Alex Smith, to administer to me. As he spoke the words of prayer I felt a cool, calm feeling in my heart. The following day the examinations, cardiograms and X-rays, showed no heart damage or difficulty. The heart-beat has not shown any irregularity since the administration.

I returned to teaching only to collapse again at school, twice in the next week. This time I was in the hospital for three days for tests. While in the hospital, my father and Elder Harvey Seibel again administered to me. The first day I was in the hospital a blood test showed a high level of thyroid hormone. The next day, about half an hour after I was administered to, a radioisotope test revealed a very low thyroid activity. The doctors tell me that the low thyroid activity was the body's attempt to equalize or bring back to normal the amount of thyroid hormone in my body which had been too high because of a thyroid infection, but they do not give any reason

why the infection should suddenly disappear without medical treatment.

I returned home in a very weak condition and have since been improving slowly. The doctors now say that my nerves are worn out and causing my trouble. Perhaps my nerves are tired now, but I feel that I have twice this winter received a healing from God for physical ailments and I hope that I can show my thankfulness to Him some way in my life.

I have just this week returned to teaching; I find I am still weak and just able to fulfill my duties. Tonight I am going to ask my father again to administer to me, asking that my tired and battered nerves be restored to health so I can live the life of joy and abundance that He has promised us.

May you all live surrounded by God's love as I feel I have, am, and will live in all the future.

Estella Smith

GOD'S CREATION

By Margret Gill

Our Bible says, "In the beginning God . . ."
 And so by faith we believe.
 But is it really necessary to trust that by faith
 When we see creation all about?
 A blooming flower in the spring,
 New carpets of green and fields of gold,
 And trees, whose bending boughs whisper of winds,
 Or a bird whistling that tune of old;
 The cow in the meadow with her baby wee,
 The baby pigs oink for dinner,
 While Mother sow eats contentedly
 On the corn spread before her.
 And then, when you look at the best of all,
 The baby so small and innocent,
 A little soft hand and rosy cheeks,
 A smile, a whimper of need,
 Is it any wonder we believe?
 For only God, so great and loving
 Could do a thing so fine,
 As to create for all of us,
 Life, so divine.
 A life, he only asks in return,
 For us to offer him
 In that same love and servitude
 He gave to us in his creation.
 And so, by faith we do believe,
 And yet by knowledge, too,
 And try our best God's will to do
 In return for the love he gave.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Romans 8:35).

A VISION

I lay abed the other night,
 And though I cannot say
 Whether vision or fantasy or even dream,
 A visit I was paid.

I felt as though all heaven
 Had opened wide it's doors,
 For on my skin I felt so great
 A tingling in all my pores.

The excitement mounted,
 And yet there seemed to be
 A calming of the spirit,
 A feeling of calming peace.

I saw the Master before me,
 His hand spread open wide.
 I saw the nail prints and place
 Where the sword had pierced his side.

He seemed to speak, yet said nothing,
 His eyes holding me strong,
 And then I knew of all the things
 That I had done wrong.

He seemed to say, Come follow me
 And put away all sin,
 For I have come to be with you,
 My Spirit to dwell within.

And suddenly, all vision gone,
 I knew what I must do;
 And so I knelt on bended knee
 With folded hands, too.

I lifted my eyes heavenward,
 And prayed with greatest fervor,
 Asking forgiveness for all I'd done
 Against the blessed Savior.

In service, love, and humility,
 Myself I try to give;
 A credit to my Master,
 Today, I try to live.

—Anonymous

INDIANS SEEK A BETTER DEAL

By Virginia Payette

Taken from: Amarillo Daily News, December 23, 1969
 New York—Any old-time cowboy movie fan should recognize the signs. The tribes are readying up for action . . . you can hear the tom-toms . . . chiefs are holding war councils . . . and smoke signals are going up all over the place.
 The American Indians are restless. Also hungry . . . and cold . . . and frustrated.

Actually, that's nothing new. Under the clumsy guardianship of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, they've been that way for years. What IS new is all "red power" action.

The 440,000 Indians on reservations have had it up to their war paint with living in windowless log and mud huts that have no electricity, plumbing, sewage disposal or running water.

They're sick of a life expectancy of anywhere from 34 to 46 years, and of seeing their children grow up smaller than they should because they don't have enough to eat.

They want to set up job training to cut down the unemployment rate, which is nearly 10 times greater than the national average.

They're disgusted with the education their kids are getting. Half of them are high school dropouts; literacy rates are the lowest in the nation; 10 percent of those over 14 never went to school; and 60 percent never went further than the eighth grade.

If literacy rates are the lowest, poverty and sickness rates are the highest. Few Indians are trained for skilled jobs, and the land the government "gave" them (and you can pause here for an Indian horse laugh) them is likely to be grubby hard scrabble or desert, 50 million acres largely without timber, mineral or water. The average Indian income is \$1,500.00 a year.

As one disillusioned tribesman puts it: "The government has allowed our communities to disintegrate, our institutions to decay, and our children to grow up in hopelessness."

What the Indian needs, says a Blackfoot chief, is to get their pride back.

"That used to be the measure of an Indian," he explained. "But how can you have pride when you have no job, a lousy home, hungry children and no hope? When you wind up begging for your welfare check? That hurts more than anything."

And the only thing that might puzzle our Saturday matinee-er is the way they're attacking. No more Indian chiefs powwowing around a campfire. Nowadays they're calling on the Vice-President, holding strategy-planning conventions, and heading for the courts to sue for their rights.

"What are we saying," a delegate to a Denver protest meeting explained, "is that we don't want the white man telling us what we need or how to solve our problems. What we are saying is that we will decide for ourselves."

But now the younger Indians, the doctors and lawyers and professors and students, are getting together to do something about it.

Last month a task force asked Mr. Agnew to set up "red-ribbon grand juries" to consider Indian complaints, issue findings and hand out indictments for federal lawyers to act upon.

They want to know how the Indian Bureau spends that \$300 million a year to run Indian affairs, too. Mr.

Agnew listened, agreed it was high time, and promised to think about it.

Some Indian leaders are hopeful about this. But the more militant ones (who put "Custer Had It Coming" sticker on their automobiles) say they've heard that from the Great White Father before.

REMEMBER THE CROSS

By Margret Gill

Do you think of the cross
And what it meant
When God's son
From heaven was sent?

He came to this world
An infant so small,
But with God's mighty plan
To save men from the fall.

He led a life
Of miracle and good deed,
An example for man
On how to sow seed.

And commanded to us
E'en in all our strife
To give of ourselves
As he gave of his life.

So when we think of the cross
And what it meant,
Are we willing to do
As Christ, who was sent?

And if we aren't,
We'd best ourselves prepare,
That we might be ready
When judgment we stare.

But doing for him
Out of love, not fear,
That is what the Savior desires,
He, who is near.

So remember the cross
And a life of good will,
Obey the call received
Of the Savior, near, still.

Be willing to live a life
As he who was sent,
Forever remembering the cross
And what it meant.

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13).