

Zion's Advocate

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

Vol. 51

Independence, Missouri, August, 1974

No. 8

Heart Thoughts to God

Nellie Walberg

Away in the wilderness where God's peace resides,
Away from man's foolishness, greed, lust and pride,
Where truth sounds out clearer from the hush in the trees
And God's love whispers in each passing breeze.

The mountains show strength, God's rivers flow on,
Ceaseless, unchanging, through darkness to dawn.
The years I have wasted trusting in man,
Many dreams lie all shattered, broken where they began.

Oh, Christ, blessed Redeemer, Thou hast purchased my soul,
Shed Thy blood on Calvary my life to control.
I've come past the cross-roads pointing two ways -
One where others would lead me, the other Thy way.

The path oft is lonely with so few to share.
But thee, Blessed Savior, my friend who has cared.
The loved ones may vanish and friends untrue,
I'll keep to my mountain top of FAITH, Lord, with you.

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
How Do We Know? (Ed.)	114	A Voice From The Past	122
Temple Lot Local News	116	Peace	125
News From Collins Local	117	Sometimes We Wonder	127
It Is Written	118	Tennessee Reunion Notice	128

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EDITORIAL . . .

HOW DO WE KNOW?

With the many peculiar claims and beliefs that we of the Church of Christ have compared to other more well known churches, we are often brought to the point of asking ourselves, "How do we know that this doctrine is true?" It seems so positively true, yet with all our positions grounded upon facts obtained by scripture, we find ourselves confronted with different interpretations of the very scriptures that we claim as verification of our beliefs. Satan has done such a thorough work of confusing the people today by multiplying religions and beliefs that none dare to " . . . contend for the faith (singular) which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) except he subject himself to the accusation of being radical. Very few are really interested or even believe in a singular religion, doctrine or gospel, but the more acceptable position today is to give respect to all religions regardless of how founded or unfounded upon scripture they may be or how moral or immoral their doctrines are. It doesn't seem to matter whether a thing is true or acceptable to God, but all that is needed is a foundation of social interest to be a religion worthy of today's more popular way of life.

With this situation continually confronting us, we find that our peculiarities are not really disturbing others even when we observe the more strict teachings of Christ. There seems to be no actual evidence of this gospel being authorized of Christ to a non-believing people. This gospel isn't readily acceptable to the majority so it isn't worthy of much consideration by them. And even when a truth penetrates the conscience of an individual, there are numerous avenues of rationalizing available to escape facing it as a fact.

If this atmosphere of diversified beliefs and indifference was outside the Church of Christ only, it would be a great test to this people to meet and confront. But it appears that we have allowed the attitudes of other peoples to have their influence upon us to the point that their determining factors become our determining factors, and, therefore, we more or less blend into the world without much notice. More than this, our educated minds seek knowledgeable facts first before putting to the test the basics of the gospel to the fullest extent that God has intended for us to do.

How do we know the truth? Do we have a magic key that unlocks a door to a vast store of knowledge when our curiosity is aroused or the situation makes its demands? How is truth proved to an unbelieving people?

Perhaps if a person was granted the opportunity to live a thousand years and if he was permitted the privilege to experience repeatedly the situations of life sufficiently, the possibility is that he would learn the things that God would have him to know by selecting the better things of life. Chances are that he would have gained enough truth by trial and error

to be grounded in all truth and righteousness. However, the possibility is also true that he might become sidetracked along the way and become deceived as much or more than he would have been by living a normal life span.

So time is not the determining factor, yet it seems that time is not sufficient when days and years fly by and many of our good intentions bear no fruit. If only we had a little more time, we think. The demands and situations of life increase and a heart sick feeling seems to overcome us as we think of the work that needs to be done in God's Kingdom.

Why doesn't God unleash the power that would permit this people to be convinced and to convince the world of the truthfulness of this gospel? Do we not desire to do this work? Haven't our appetites been whetted to feed upon greater things, and haven't we desired to feed others upon greater things also?

My answers to these questions are not by judgement of my brothers and sisters in the church as much as they are in judgement of myself. By self-examination many answers to the problems of life around us can be known. This is my means of understanding the situation of the church today.

Yes, we have been primed as a people to give forth the greater truths even to the convincing of the world. But the fault does not lie so much in our desires, perfect or imperfect, but the fault stems more from the attitude that we have toward God. We need an implicit trust in Him, not in the unusualness of His works and power, but more in the full acceptance of His spiritual existence. We need an acceptance of the uniqueness of His encompassing power.

God has created all things both temporal and spiritual; this means that His creatures, including man himself, are a product of both the physical and spiritual. If we fail to accept the reality of His existence in our lives or in the lives of others, we set up a barrier that does not permit His expression in our actions or thoughts. He, indeed, speaks through the still small voice, not just occasionally but, in my opinion, continually, for our choices come moment by moment. It is not, therefore, just making a choice that determines our spiritual-mindedness, but rather a developing of an attitude toward God. Our development is to be a way of life and this usually comes by a two-fold experience: first, to learn the truth by the word through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and second, to adopt this knowledge to our lives literally.

Learning of God is not to try to explain or analyze Him or His ways but to accept Him on His own terms. His terms are given through the gospel of Christ, His commandments. They are sufficiently simple that even a child can comprehend many of the basics given therein. And, believe me, they are given to our own best good; no deception nor obstacles are intended. Our obstacles, however, are in the weaknesses of man in the flesh. When we have realized this, we can see things at a better perspective. We

know then that the mountain we seem to be climbing was not the design of God to put us at a disadvantage or to deny us a choice, but that mountain came as a consequence of a choice that was made by our first parents, Adam and Eve. Therefore, we're not fighting a battle stacked against us, but we're fighting to free ourselves of the yoke of our own misunderstandings and errors. God in His infinite wisdom has given a provision by which we can be freed from this yoke.

How important is the inspiration of hope in the waging of this war! Hope versus despair. Hope is our bulwark; despair is retreat and defeat. Our hope lies in the promises of the gospel.

Faith is also an important bulwark; it is to be exercised by placing a complete confidence in our Heavenly Father. The opposite of faith is doubt. Doubt raises an indignant attitude setting into motion the wheels of one's own reasoning power. Doubt demands the whys and the wherefores to be explained before the investment is to be made. By exercising doubt first, the greater qualities of God are denied us.

Greater than faith and hope is charity, more commonly known as love. To love God is to appreciate Him and His condescending ability which comes not upon demand but by gifts. Gifts of the Spirit, so unexplainable yet so rich in quality, are given not to the presumptuous, but to all who would readily receive and cherish them.

The full scope of our life has a divine purpose which is the fulfillment of God's will in us. Our potential, therefore, is not to be initiated by our creative imagination. The plan is simple; we are to accept or reject God completely. We are to do His will or our will; our will by nature is contrary to His will. His will is for us to comprehend and know the value of all His goodness. This brings about reconciliation between God and ourselves.

Then how do we know truth? We know truth as we comprehend God, and to comprehend God is to accept Him as He is in obedience as well as in knowledge. This is not done once or twice in a life time or periodically, but always. It is the frame of mind or the disposition of the person. It is not an accomplishment by which we can glory in ourselves, but our accomplishment is the unawareness of our own righteousness when we are lifted up in spirit as we praise God.

We should not think of God as being in some far-off realm of existence; we should think of Him as being as close as His Spirit. The touch of His Spirit is the most personal experience we can have. To the people of the church, knowing God's Spirit is imperative to their well being. It is essential to their ability in bearing the burden of this gospel work. To the peoples of the world, learning of God's Spirit is imperative to their soul's salvation. The contrasting spirits in the world are arrayed in great power - power of reason and power of unreason. The ability and

power to rebuke the deceptive spirits, however, are not in the hands of man to wield at his own discretion. Therefore, frustration often occurs as a result of not being able to adequately meet the opposing forces. A disposition to blame oneself and the brethren of the church is usually the product of such frustration.

I feel that the answer is not in abasing ourselves by criticism as we're more apt to do, but we need to realize what the requirement is. God, being consistent in all aspects of His plan, required that the quality of compassion toward one's fellow man be in the fullness of Christ's disposition. And even the expression of an unbending truth in the face of all types of opposition, is in itself an act of compassion in the attempt to correct misunderstanding. Christ's mission was personal, but he did not become offended by insult or retaliation for personal abuse. Unquestionable was Christ's attitude in His mission, yet he subjected himself to the will of man as they took His life. To give of himself in this way did not originate in his will, but it was the will of His Heavenly Father.

If Christ, being the Son of God and being perfect in example, should suffer Himself in humility and unquestionably do the Father's will, what then can we do otherwise that would put us in a similar light? Can we in the concept of our own imagination render up an act of righteousness acceptable to our God?

Our requirement, therefore, is nothing more than to submit ourselves to the will of the Father even as Christ submitted Himself. Let us remember that as a result of submitting for a time to His Father's will, Christ was able to overcome the will of the flesh, and by this act, He made it possible for us all to overcome the will of the flesh and return into the presence of God.

We find then that our love is not only an appreciation of God and the working of His Spirit, but also our appreciation should be increased as we think upon the One who was sent to redeem the world. His compassion is a quality that is to be in the disposition of us all.

The knowledge that we have of this gospel is not a thing we can outline and view to the satisfaction of our human reasoning, nor can we analyze it by our own intellect and set up a program to effectively convince the unbeliever. But the knowledge we have reaches deep within us even to the very core of our beings, our souls. If we are in tune with the Spirit, every truth rings a note that sounds within our souls. This arouses our sleeping intellect to the convincing us of a fact not attainable through any other means. This is how we know.

RLS

TEMPLE LOT NEWS

We all want to send our greetings to the entire membership of our beloved Church of Christ. We would like to tell you in person all the interesting things that have been going on here, but will have to be satisfied with this "open letter."

Apostle Clarence and Sister Angela Wheaton had a slow but steady recuperation at home after an automobile accident they had in May during a missionary trip. They drove in "Casita Angelita" (Angela's Little House, their camper with all the do-it-yourself custom touches) across Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. They visited isolated members in Texas, spending some time in Houston, where members just "happened" to need ministerial help very badly right then. From there they drove to Forth Worth where they visited and administered to another ailing member. Leaving Forth Worth and Dallas, they ran, literally, into trouble. Crossing an intersection, after carefully stopping to look, they were hit by a truck going too fast. The camper was put out of business permanently and was not covered by adequate insurance. Clarence broke a bone in his knee and Angela had some torn chest ligaments. Dick Wheaton and Kay Matthews flew to Dallas and brought them home by air, shipping their belongings. In June they were back on the road as passengers of Marlene Moser, driving to the Michigan reunion.

In April Judy Johnson was the honoree at a bridal shower at the church. The hostesses were Pam Hansen, Debbie Hedrick and Linda Case. Two weeks later

in May, Pam was the guest of honor at another bridal shower. This was at the home of Mrs. Bronson, where Pam lived for some time. Here, the other hostesses were Judy, Doris Sheldon and Debbie Hedrick.

We were delighted to hear that little Lorra Caviness is to be the United Fund poster girl this year. She's certainly pretty enough; we all know she was blessed by healing as well as the skill of the medical science furthered by United Fund Drive.

United Workers met at the home of Irene Case in April. The meeting was pleasant and rewarding as usual. There was no meeting scheduled for May as we felt that there was a busy enough calendar without our help. In June we met at Donna Moser's home in Raymore. Since it's "a far piece down the road" from there to anybody's house, lunch was served to keep the ladies going till they made it back home. The surprise of the morning was a concert of close harmony, taped in Phoenix by Gary Houseknecht, Vic and Jody (Wheaton) Houseknecht, the Christianaires.

On May the 21st our elder sister, Melvina Ritchison went quietly through a silently opening door. The peace and rest she so thoroughly earned waited for her — and more, much more. Her family feels that she has embarked on a new voyage, filled with exciting discoveries. She will be missed, but the quietness of her passing was itself a miracle for which we give thanks.

On May 25th, Judy Ann Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Johnson, was married to John L.

Palmer. The ceremony was at 2:00 p. m. and was performed by Elder Maynard Case, Judy's grandfather. It took place in the little white church on the Temple Lot. Pam Hanson was the maid of honor, Brad Vader the best man. Little Nancy Case was the flower girl; the colors were blue and yellow. The church front was decorated with lovely spring flowers and it was a beautiful wedding even though it was punctuated by the sound of rain on the windows. The young couple took a honeymoon trip to the Lake of the Ozarks and are now living in Independence. They are dear to us and we wish God's blessing on a long, useful and happy life for them.

The last week in May brought students and teachers together for our annual Bible School. The effort was pulled together this year by Irene Case. Other teachers and helpers were: Caroline Hedrick, Edith Case, Bonnie Case, Konie Caviness, Jerri Adams, Grace Rudd, Paula Case, Marie Case, Linda Case, Patricia Wheaton, Nanette Wheaton, Menda Stotis, Donna Moser, George Adams and Benny Case. These managed to keep the young ones more or less still long enough for a few lessons to be learned — especially by said teachers and helpers! On Sunday evening after the week's work was done, there was a program in which all were involved, and which all enjoyed.

There was another beautiful wedding in June, also unspoiled by the drumming of rain on the windowpanes. There was sweet music on the organ (thanks to Margaret Mann) as Pamela Hanson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Hanson, was married to Richard A.

Wheaton, Jr., son of Elder and Mrs. Richard Wheaton. John and Judy Palmer (newlyweds) gave the ceremony a sound blessing as they sang "The Lord's Prayer" and "There is Love." There was a fervent invocation by Elder Oren Caviness (the groom's grandfather), followed by a moving pre-ceremony talk and the wedding vows, administered by Elder Richard Wheaton. The bride's attendants were: Jan Hanson, Marcia Miller, Patricia Wheaton and Nanette Wheaton. Like the flowers, they were all in pink, blue, yellow and purple. The tiny flower girl and ring bearer were Johanna Hanson and Tommy Theis. The groom was attended by: Brad Wheaton, Tom Larson, Tim Larson and Gerry Case. There was a most appropriate closing prayer by Apostle Clarence Wheaton (the groom's grandfather). The new husband and wife left for a short honeymoon trip, then went on to Nebraska to attend Tom Larson's wedding. They are living in Independence. May their lives together be blessed by service and by love — of each other, of God, and of mankind. For a start they have our love and prayers.

Late in June Konie Caviness was taken ill and was in the hospital for tests and treatment. While she was there Tom was in an auto accident and was thrown out of the car. His guardian angel was there, cushioning the fall; there were no concussions or internal injuries, or even broken bones. We trust and pray that they will both be blessed and comforted.

Reporter,
Donna Moser

NEWS FROM COLLINS LOCAL

There have been two baptisms at Collins this summer. On April 28, Floyd Martin, of Collins, son of Sr. Leora Martin, was baptized by Elder Joe Yates.

On July 7, this beautiful rite was performed for Sharon Elizabeth Yates, wife of Layton Yates of Independence. Grandfather, Joe, officiated here also. These things gladden the hearts of parents, and of grandparents, and it brings joy to each of us, to know that a decision has been made for the dedication of a life.

We are delighted to welcome the Bruce and Marlene Cobb family from Tucson, Arizona, who plan to make Missouri their home. They have a son, Rodney, and three daughters, Becky, Heidi, and Jennifer. Marlene is the daughter of Leon and Francis Yates. Welcome, Cobbs!

The Larry Kellys, from Phoenix, Arizona, were here for a few weeks with her parents, Oren and Esther Caviness. Wendy Yates went home with them to visit her sister and brother-in-law Gregg and Elana Kelly.

On April 21, Brother Frank Fann, of Independence, spoke to us in the morning. After our dinner at the church, Brother C. L. Wheaton spoke in the afternoon. In May, we enjoyed a sermon by Brother Dick Wheaton.

From these and other good sermons by our local ministers, some worthwhile thoughts have been gleaned.

"As you Think — so are you."

"ALL sunshine makes a desert. We must have SOME showers."

"The offer of eternal life is a GIFT, not a SENTENCE."

"Three things we MUST have to live a successful life — FAITH — COURAGE — PRAYER."

"Any problem that is too small to take to God in prayer, is too small to worry about."

Greeting to each member of our loved church family.

Reporter,
Ruth Willard

BAPTISM

Linda Jill Gordon was baptized and received the Laying on of Hands for reception of the Holy Ghost on June 29, 1974 in Council Bluffs, Iowa, by Apostle Robert H. Jensen.

IT IS WRITTEN

Sermon by Apostle Leon Yates

How beautiful is the melody of the song which we have just heard, and which we have all participated in here. How beautiful the sweetness of the human voice in blending a petition of the Master not to depart from us until we leave this place. I am sure as I stand before you that we have been with the Almighty. What a privilege! If we can but remain in such a condition, with such warmth and zeal, with such desire, hunger and thirst as have been exhibited here for the past three days, then we can truly say, when this reunion is over, "We have walked with God." I believe this. O, how I believe it!

There are ministers throughout the world teaching in churches throughout the world. Some are highly educated men, graduates of seminaries and are preaching fine sermons, in some ways, yet are not truly feeding the sheep. I am not belittling education, not in the least. But I want to point out that when men are called according to the scriptures, as was Aaron, they are called and set apart by God Almighty for a specific purpose. And that is to demonstrate the power of God, to the dividing of the word.

I saw this difference demonstrated in Ohio, a little over a year ago. There I met a good brother who was an ex Priest of the Catholic Church. He had studied the scriptures in seminary school until he could tell you exactly where any scripture we might mention was found. But, though he had studied under educated scholars, he had not as yet studied under the holy influence of the inspiration of God Almighty.

While in Ohio I had the opportunity to visit with this good man in his home. We talked of the great things which are written in the scriptures concerning the restoration of the gospel from the dark ages 'til now. We brought in the story of Joseph Smith and the coming forth of The Book of Mormon. We used the scripture which describes the church as a woman with a crown of twelve stars on her head, clothed with the light of the sun, and the moon at her feet. We discuss how scholarly students down through the years have concluded that this was the church that fled into the wilderness, where the Lord had a place prepared for her 1260 days, or years. (Prophetic days, literal years)

Now this good man was familiar with these scriptures, but he just didn't have the understanding of what they meant. Every once in a while he would speak out and say, "Open that up! Open that up!" I asked him what he meant by, "Open that up." He answered, "Expound it to me."

As we began to open the scripture and give him the interpretation through the Holy Spirit, he began to say, "O, that's the most beautiful thing I ever heard! He then was able to cry out, "O, Master, what beauty we find in the written word!"

This man later came to our services to hear more

of the message of life and hope. In the services also, when he did not understand, he would speak out and say, "Open that up, expound it to me."

What a thrill and what ecstasy comes to any and all who when under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that which is written begins to unfold to their understanding.

The gospel of Jesus Christ as written in the scriptures is, indeed, beautiful and was given to us by our Heavenly Father, that, if we will eat of it we will live forever. I don't mean that we won't die a physical death, but that the spiritual life in us will go on into eternity and we will hear the Master say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter in, . . ."

Let me read a portion of a letter from our brother Cayetano, down in Yucatan. He wrote in his native Spanish but I have written it here in English so that I will not stumble. "Since you are in your land I asked you, when you can, to write me and help me with passages from the Bible and the sacred Book of Mormon, for I wish to acquire more knowledge of the sacred scriptures, because today I am beginning to understand the things that are happening are those things which Jesus Christ preached — wars, earthquakes and other things, yet it is not the end. For this reason, I am worried and I wish to study the scriptures and teach the people of the church so that their hearts will not be troubled when they see and hear of these things that are happening."

We see from this letter that brother Cayetano, an elder in the church, realizes the importance of sacred scripture, that which is written.

Speaking of the written word, one minister at this reunion said, "It is given us as a guide line by which to go." Another one said, "If we don't know what is in the scriptures we can be easily led astray." Another said, "Search out things that He has caused to be written, that we might be able to stand." Notice the phrase, above, "the things that **He has caused to be written.**" Brothers and Sisters, that has been the chief topic of this reunion, both in testimony and prayer, as well as in the sermons, that we might know the word of the Lord and practice it in order to stand in the days ahead in the sweeping destruction that is coming upon the earth.

A year or so ago a Brother, who was a member of another church of the restoration, began to awaken to the fact that there was something wrong with that branch of the church where he had his membership. He began to see innovations of men creep in. He began to see the precepts of men taught for the law and the commandments of God. He and his wife fasted and prayed that God would show them His truth. In a letter to us he says, "I must confess that I never really recognized the importance of searching

the scriptures until about two and a half years ago. At that time the Lord spoke to my wife in answer to our fasting and prayers, and His words were, "It is written." From that moment on he began to study. And he began to find out what the law and the testimony were — what the word of the Lord was that the scripture says would "hiss forth to the ends of the earth as a standard for my people."

He took up the question of a First Presidency and he began to find out what the law says — what was written. And he found that which had been written by holy men, through the power of the holy ghost, had been changed in order to make provision for the precepts of men. He found, as he began to lay those precepts of men along beside those inspired things which were written, that they did not agree. He began to discover his mistake and began to right the keel of his ship and now he is sailing in open water, because he is beginning to understand that all evil and all false doctrine can be confounded by the written word in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Both Brother Cayetano and this Brother had a concern for the truth, and both had the assurance that the answer could be found in the written word. One, through fasting and prayer, had a mighty demonstration of the power of God. And what a message! "It is written." The Master said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." With proper zeal and hunger and thirst, we have the promise that we will not be searching alone, but that the power and might of the holy spirit will be there with us to lead us into all truth. And that is written as well.

More and more people today, both the young and the old, are confronted with problems and a confusion. From time to time there arises a mist of darkness in the life of most every individual that almost destroys everything he or she has ever believed. Some lose faith in everything they have ever known.

While in Scotland two years ago, brother Sheldon and myself learned of a woman who had been a member of the restored gospel, but had drifted away. We thought to contact her, thinking we might be able to stimulate and revive her interest in the gospel. Our young brother there in Scotland who knew her, made the contact for us by phone. She told him that she did not want to be preached to about Jesus Christ or anything about religion. She told him she had once been acquainted with those things but now had gone back to the world and that she liked it and did not want to change.

There are two powers in the world, one good and one evil. She had been enticed by both, at different times. But finally the enticing of the evil got the upper hand. Do you know there is an awful chance that the enticing of the evil one might get the upper hand of everybody sitting in this room? No one has gained a position to where he or she can say, "O, I've got it made. I don't have to worry any more.

God's got my number, and my name is recorded and I am number one on the list for the pearly gates." Don't be fooled! You might just stub your toe, so to speak, and miss the mark of the high calling. This fact is also written.

In Romans 15:4 we read, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Yes, it was written aforetime for our benefit.

Listen to what Christ said about that which is written. "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, **It is written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Mat. 4:1-4) When Satan tempted Him again to jump from a pinnacle of the Temple to prove whether or not the angels would bear Him up and save Him from injury, "Jesus saith unto him, **It is written** again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (v. 7) The third time Satan tempted Jesus by offering Him the kingdoms of the world if He would fall down and worship him, the Devil. And the third time Jesus resisted and said, ". . . for **it is written**, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." (vs. 8-11)

You and I can do this same thing. We can say, "Get thee behind me," to all the tempting powers offering those things that look enticing, but are evil. (Underlining above, my own. L. Y.)

When Christ appeared before His astonished apostles in Jerusalem after His resurrection, He expounded to them all the scriptures from Moses down to that time. He read to them the prophecies concerning His death and resurrection — things they might have known and been watching for, if they had diligently searched them.

Many people believe the Bible is holy scripture, even if they don't read it much, if ever, but they cannot accept any other book as being inspired. We, of the restoration believe otherwise, based largely on that which is written in the Bible itself. One example of this is found in Isaiah 29:9-14, wherein it states that a sealed book shall be delivered to one that is learned, and to one that is not learned, and what each would say. The history of the restoration relates how this prophecy, given 725 years before the birth of Christ was literally fulfilled in Joseph Smith's day. Read it for yourselves.

Another striking example of a scripture referring to the Book of Mormon is found in Ezekiel 37:16-19. Here two sticks (books) are spoken of — one, the stick of Judah (the Bible) and the other, the stick of Joseph (the record of the descendants of Joseph in the

Americas). Verse 19 says that these two sticks "shall be one in mine hand." With the retranslation of the gospel in 1829 and 1830, these prophecies were fulfilled to the letter. What mortal man, within his own power, could foretell such marvelous things which were fulfilled so accurately? Only the power of God could do so. Read these scriptures for yourselves, together with the history of the restoration and see how God works in mysterious ways His wonder to perform.

In 2 Nephi 12:64-72 we read, "Wherefore, because that ye have a bible, ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written: For I command all men, both in the east, and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them: For out of the books which shall be written, I will judge the world, every man according to his works, according to **that which is written.** (Emphasis mine, L. Y.) For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews, and they shall write it; And I shall also speak unto the Nephites, and they shall write it; And I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; And I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth, and they shall write it. And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews: And the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews."

We notice in verse 66 the Lord says, "For out of the books which shall be written, I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to **that which is written.**" In the light of this one verse, how important it is that we study that which is written! Read also 2 Nephi 11:39-42 and realize God's goodness in providing these sacred words for us, and how important it is to study them for we will be judged by them.

Since the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in 1830, there have been, unfortunately, many occasions when men, possessed of another power other than God's, have changed the word of God to make it look like some of the precepts of men were really sacred things. I could name some: plural wifery for one, and a first presidency for another — a first presidency over that structure of the church that Christ set up with twelve apostles at its head, not a first presidency. This kind of doctrine cannot be sustained by the written word as originally given which squares with all other divinely written words. Because of such errors of men we need much more to study diligently and pray for divine understanding.

There is one little lonesome verse, 44, on page 156 of the Book of Mormon which says, "And my words shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel." And because the House of Israel became disobedient,

the gospel was given unto the Gentiles, and the standard spoken of in this verse applies to both Jew and Gentile. Yes, it is written, the true gospel of Christ, but it takes desire and zeal and a hungering and thirsting after righteousness for the holy spirit to lead us into all truth.

Isaiah told of our day when men would teach for doctrine the precepts of men. Joseph Smith read it and was concerned. He also read, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) The young Joseph Smith believed this, and he went unto the woods to pray. Two celestial beings appeared before him and one of them said of the other, "This is my beloved son, hear ye him." Yes, he was instructed to hear the Master of men, and the Master of men told him, among other things, that none of the churches of that day were acceptable in His sight.

The result of that marvelous visitation was the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the gospel. And when the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored, with its authorized priesthood, men had an understanding of the holy scriptures which they did not have before. And when they began to search out the scriptures they found that passages they did not formerly understand just fit together like the pieces of a puzzle, to make a perfect whole, and that they made sense. Even before the gospel was restored some of the great Bible scholars knew they were in darkness and began to see and predict that it was necessary for Christ to send prophets and apostles anew, before the gospel could be on earth again.

That the gospel was to be restored again was foretold in prophecy. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Rev. 14:6) It was also foretold in prophecy when that angel would fly, bringing back the holy priesthood and the gospel of Jesus Christ, for the salvation of our soul. But we cannot expound all that tonight, only to say that the Church of Christ organized April 6, 1830, fulfills that time, as foretold in numerous places in prophecy. It is written. Search it out.

All that we need for our soul's salvation is written in the scriptures. The structure of His Church is outlined in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Even the **name of the church** is given, and the reason for that name. "The Church of Christ." (3 Nephi 12:13, 16-20) Repentance and baptism are taught in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon and in The Book of Commandments. (This is a book of revelations of modern day, published in 1833.) Method of baptism and the exact word to be spoken when it is performed are given. The standard, the beautiful standard is there in all its simplicity, directness and purity.

In the primitive church at Jerusalem, in the church which Jesus set up on this continent shortly after His

ressurrection and in the restored church of 1830, Jesus called and set apart twelve men to whom He gave authority to minister His gospel. Does that mean twelve, or does it mean fifteen? Several factions of the restoration have fifteen apostles, including a president and two counselors. Why? Because they have changed the standard as given by Jesus. They have deleted a word here and added a word there, thus changing God's holy standard to conform to the precepts of men. Send for the little pamphlet which the Church of Christ publishes, (Changing the Revelations) and see for yourselves the weakness of men in turning from the plain and simple truth as revealed in our standard books.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells His apostles "... ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth." If those apostles back there in Jerusalem are to witnesses to us, today, it has to be through the inspired written words we find in the Bible.

In the Third Book of Nephi there is the story of Christ's visit to the people here in the Americas. Those people had the first five books of the Old Testament and they had the prophecies foretelling the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, and they were looking for the signs of their fulfillment, when Jesus suddenly appeared among them and invited them to thrust their hands into His wounded side and to feel the prints of the nails in His hands. They fell down at His feet and worshipped Him. He called twelve men to represent Him and gave them power to preach His gospel and to baptize all who came in repentance. The evil men of that day had planned to kill all the believers if the signs did not come by a certain day. But they did come true, to the everlasting shame of the wicked unbelievers. They thought all those prophecies were just some kind of hocus-pocus, just as many around us today think the prophecies of the scriptures are hocus-pocus. But the time is coming when all that has been foretold by holy men will be fulfilled, and at that day the wicked unbelievers will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them. This, too, is written.

When Jesus chose Nephi and the other eleven men and gave them power to baptize and to officiate all the ordinances of His gospel, He told them the exact method of baptism (immersion) and the exact words to say as they performed the baptism, as we pointed out earlier in this discourse. Read the entire 5th chapter of 3 Nephi and thrill to its inspiring story and be grateful for that which is written through the holy spirit of God.

There are contentions among the churches of our day concerning the manner of baptism. Some will tell you that sprinkling is good enough. Others will let you become a member of the church without any baptism at all. Upon request, they just put your name on their books. Others will preach from a big stadium and tell you, "Just give your heart to God, and accept Christ as your personal Savior, and you've

got it made." This is false; it is deception, and is not written in holy scripture. Matthew and Mark both record the baptism of Jesus, by John, and it is plain that immersion was the method used, because the baptism took place in the River Jordan and, "straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the spirit, like a dove, descending upon him." Baptism is symbolized in scripture as a "burial" and a coming forth to newness of life, which immersion only, never sprinkling, could so aptly portray.

When Jesus came to John to be baptized, John told Jesus that he, John, had need to be baptized of Him. But Jesus said to John, "... Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." If it is to fulfill all righteousness, then it must be necessary. What does righteousness do for you and me? In Zephaniah 1:8 it says that all who are clothed with strange apparel shall be punished. Anything but righteousness is strange apparel. We are told in Revelation that the robes of the saints will be righteousness. If we are dressed in anything else we will be wearing strange apparel, and we will be condemned. **It is written.**

The Book of Mormon tells us that if this nation of ours will not worship the God of this land, who is Jesus Christ, that it shall utterly be destroyed. This is written and we'd better believe it is true! If this little handful of people who know the truth, yet do not radiate the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ into the hearts of those who stand in darkness, then this nation is through. But, O, how I hope and pray that by some means we might be able to avoid this destruction!

On page 704, verses 29 through 33 in the Book of Mormon, both the Bible and "this record" (the Book of Mormon) are spoken of and it says both books or "records" are to come to the people on this continent (the descendants of Joseph) by the Gentiles, so that they would believe and know of "the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them;"

I have had the privilege, and thank God for it, with Brothers Clarence Wheaton, Don McIndoo, Wm. Sheldon, Archie Bell and Hubert Yates, Jr., at different times, to take this gospel and the Book of Mormon to a remnant of the House of Joseph in Mexico. Some of them have accepted that gospel. Some of them have been ordained to the priesthood and are diligently carrying the message to their people. This also was written and is being fulfilled by the humble converts in Yucatan.

First Peter 1:13 reads, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." And in verse 16, this: "... it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

And you young men and young women, and you old men and old women, study the written word and preach it! And under the influence of God Almighty and His Holy Spirit you can confound evil and false doctrine to the last decade of time.

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Dear Robins and Robinettes,

May I break into your circle once more, even though I am a white-crested robin, and getting a little whiter as the days come and go. But I'm not one of those "reasonable facsimilies," the Canadian Grossbeak, that so many mistake for an early robin in February.

So thought I would write once more to you all anyhow. You know that Mother and I are living on borrowed time and we don't know how soon the loan will be called. This Thanksgiving season we want to say that we are thankful for all the pleasant things that have made the evening time of life so enjoyable: the love and good will of children and grandchildren and the many friends and acquaintances, both in the Church and out. You have all contributed immeasurably to the enjoyment of our life's evening time. I haven't yet reached the height of a former ambition to get to the time where I could sit comfortably on a sunny porch and rock the summer away, but probably it was a foolish ambition. For it might tend to dissolve a person into rust. There seems to be some useful work yet in the world even for an Oldster if he doesn't get too much in the way of the youth of the age and become an unendurable trial to them.

Well, I was writing to a young brother, from whom I received a letter this week, in which he remarked, "It frightens me to think how fast time is moving." The passing of time rapidly increases in tempo after we pass the noon of life's little day. Before we know it the day is done and the opportunity to lay up treasures in heaven is at an end, so far as mortality is concerned. His expression spurred me to write him at considerable length and I thought, "It is too bad to waste so much paper on just one; I'll pass it along to others."

I told him that his expression made me think of Sister Lau's great poem and I would write it to him. It is entitled:

GOD'S RAINBOW SYMPHONY

Ah yes, a red rose on the hill
Can gain a deeper color still
When blessed with tears of heaven-dew.
(A rose has spirit-substance too)
Yet there are those who mock at love
And tears of dew from God above.

I asked Sister Lau how she knew that roses had "spirit-substance." She said, "Why, I've always known that since I got old enough to remember. All plants have spirit-substance." "Yes," I said, "I know that but few people do, even people who have belonged to the Restoration practically all their lives." All plants were created spiritually in heaven before they were created physically upon the earth. The Inspired Translation of the Bible tells us that. I knew a sister once who was so in tune with the "spirit-substance,"

that she said she had often heard flowers cry out when she cut them for a bouquet. And then the thought presented that as tears of dew bring to the rose a deeper color, so tears of life, permitted by the Love of God, bring to each of our lives a deeper, richer hue.

What good are lessons through the years
If we have never learned of tears?
For no one earns a lovely hour
Unless they plant and seed for flower.

Ofttimes the planting is in tears, but the reaping
is the joyous fruit of Life Eternal.

Dear ones, I'd like to take your hand
In mine and make you understand
That Love is like an endless sea
Forming God's rainbowed symphony.

Note of what that "symphony" consists; it's marvelous!

Each note: A flower, a tree, a bird,
A little brook's gay music heard,
The tender blue of summer sky,
A white sea gull circling high,
The song of cricket on the hearth,
A passing soul, a cry at birth,
A babe nursing at its mother's breast,
A sleepy birdling in the nest,

How wonderful! And yet the next — how sad!

The sound of Moaning from the sea
When brothers turn to treachery,

Why should not the sea moan at the treachery of man to his fellowman? Not only among the wicked the world over, but in the environs of the Church itself, when brother betrays brother. Even the earth has been heard to cry out: ". . . Enoch looked upon the earth, and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying, Woe! Woe! is me, the mother of men! I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children! When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which has gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face. And when Enoch heard the earth mourn he wept . . . and he looked, and beheld the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men. And he heard a loud voice, and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned, and the earth groaned; and the rocks rent . . ." (I. T. Gen. 7:55, 56, 62, 63)

We look upon what we call the insensate creations as inarticulate. But listen to the words of Jesus as he rode upon the colt and the people were shouting and praising God and saying, "Blessed be the King

that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." When the Pharisees remonstrated at the demonstration and said unto Him, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." Jesus said unto them: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:38-40)

But amidst it all we hear:

The wind's soft whisper to the trees,
The story of life's mysteries,
The violets waking in the spring
Their tender beauty offering,
The apple orchard's petal-boats
Where on the breeze all fragrance floats,
The star-dust in the purple night,
Two hearts who fall in love on sight,
A man and woman side by side
In gracious calm of evening-tide,
A whippoorwill whose mate is found,
A man who plows the meadow ground —
Uncounted billion voices mark
God's children calling from the dark.
Yea, all of these and countless more
Are woven in a rhythmic score
To make complete a song for God,
From heaven to the earth's brown sod.
Not even one small thread can be
Left out from His great tapestry.
If I could walk with you, my friend,
Just to help you understand
The reason why so many doubt
Their God, themselves, and those about.

Oh, if some understanding one could take us by the hand and walk with us in the early springtime of youth and be able to make us understand God's great symphony as it touches the tapestry of our lives, we would partake less of —

The restlessness in the hearts of men
Who do not know God's tender plan,
Nor do they see the afternoon
That drifts away, **but all too soon!**

Ah, how soon the afternoon drifts away. The morning of life dawns so glorious and bright; it stretches out before us as a vast eternity. There's so much to do! So much to learn! So much to acquire! We'll do all this — we'll multiply our abilities — we'll make our lot a bed of roses for ourselves and those we love — and after awhile, yes, after awhile we'll think of God. But we do not know "God's tender plan." We do not know that in His hand were silken threads to beautify the tapestry of our lives by speaking words of comfort to the sorrowing and the disconsolate and by ministering with the power of our hands to those who lie upon beds of affliction. (It may be mother or perhaps our wedded companion who is in need of that healing power. The offspring of our own flesh and blood may come under the grasp of a con-

suming fever. And there are hundreds in terrible need all about us). But we do not hear the words of the Master as they come down through the ages: "These ye ought to have done, and not have left the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). And we add to this the leading of his wandering sheep through the door into the sheepfold.

And then before we have accomplished all we set our hand to do, the MORNING of life is gone and the afternoon is upon us. How fast it "drifts away!" We become appaled at the ever increasing pace at which the years march by. Why, it's time I was "about my Father's business." We begin to change our course to make amends, to gather in the reins of our ambition. The sheep are scattered upon the mountains and hills without a shepherd; they are sick; they are starving; they faint for lack of nourishment; some have been eaten and are being eaten by the shepherds that have fattened themselves and have not fed the sheep. Why, there's so much to do! How can we get it done? The afternoon hours seem to race by with lightning speed and gather themselves into years with such undue haste. And if we continue to procrastinate the time, life's afternoon has gone "all too soon." The accomplishments of the morning, too, seems to dwindle in importance and sometimes slip from our hands; then with graying locks and faltering steps we come, saying, "Lord I give my all to thee." Merciful Father, how little that "all" seems compared to what it might have been. Yet the voice of the Loving Householder comes to us: "Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right ye shall receive . . . and . . . beginning from the last unto the first . . . they received every man a penny." (Matt. 20:7-8-9). "Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial glory, shall then receive of the same even a fullness" (D. & C. 85:6). "And thus we saw the glory of the celestial, which excels in all things; where God, even the Father reigns upon his throne for ever and ever, before whose throne all things bow in humble reverence and give him glory forever and ever. They who dwell in his presence are the church of the Firstborn; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fullness and of his grace; and he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion." (D & C. 76:7)

What about those who do not heed?

They do not see in sun set sky
A living story drifting by.
The Golden-Rose of Sharon's song
Will be remembered by the throng
Whose faith and love shall never die
(Remembering His anguished sigh).
All these, dear ones, and many more
Are written in Life's music-score.
Perhaps some ships passed in the night
And left a veil o'er inner-sight.
So one might come and take our hand
And teach us of the mystic land

Where red roses on the hill
 Hold yet a deeper meaning still;
 For they mean Love's remembered song,
 To lead us as we plod along.

by Grace Spring Lau

As we think of a sea moaning, the earth crying out in anguish, and the stones speaking in praise of the Great King, let us pursue the following which was also written by Sister Lau entitled:

EVEN THE STONES CRY OUT!

"As the full horror of this so-called 'civilization' dawns on the consciousness, and creeps across the face of Eternity, earth shudders. And as the little stones cry out at the desecration seeing and knowing that men (blessed by being made in the image and likeness of God) are turning into something less than animals — warring among themselves — killing each other — they (the little stones) turn their pale faces and hide against the protective, murmuring breast of Mother Earth, so as not to witness the degradation of man-creatures who continually crucify Christ.

"All nature knows (but man does not realize) that man must rise to the higher levels of intelligence, and thence to the pure levels where there is only the Christ Consciousness — a giving of love and beauty for the sake of giving. The wild rose knows and lives in purity, blossoming to give its essence and beauty in deep praises to the Giver of life.

"Man was born with potential spiritual light to create beauty, love and harmony and build this earth-life toward the heavenly heights; but, alas, man seems to live on low levels, wallowing in the mud and there striving to destroy all things beautiful, yea, even the earth, that was to become as it is in heaven.

"It is no wonder the little animals run and hide when they see humans in the woodland, and the birds fly away from their presence. Sly as a fox, more cruel than a wildcat, and barbarous as a human cannibal — just the opposite of that which God created and called His children!

"What will awaken humanity to its spiritual self before it destroys the earth and all its tender beauty that the Lord set before us? How much longer will the human element be allowed to go on causing nature to weep? How long will Christ allow mankind to use the radiant energies for a destructive purpose? It is no wonder the earth shudders and the little stones cry out at the horror of being forced to witness wars — killings — men turning against brother-men! How long can God endure this continued crucifying of His beloved Son? The innocent suffer! The earth suffers! Eternity veils its face in sorrow!

Oh, the river of remorse humanity must drown in before it washes away the dross, the lust for power — for lusting must be put off because it destroys not only all things before it, but finally the very one created spiritually within the lustful body.

" 'How much longer, Oh, Lord,' cry the little stones as they hide their faces against the sheltering breast of earth, 'how long before we can look out upon the earth, and see again clearly the heavens freed from this horror of war?'

"How much longer can you bear this, Oh Christ, our beloved teacher and shower of the way- How long will it be before all the little animals can turn, and in trust run joyfully to meet the humans? How long before the tender little song birds can come, and with the human family, sing all praises to the Giver of Life? How long before the Bright and Shining Morning Star can shine with joy in the new creation, freed from all shadows, beautiful again with the living pattern of harmony — all one with understanding, so that the Glory of Heaven will rest in its beauty, reflected on the earth as it is in Heaven, and the mountains will reach up to meet the Glory of God in His Kingdom, instead of shivering and moving away from the warring of peoples? Let it be soon, Oh, Lord, that Peace be established in the earth as it is in Heaven. Amen."

Written by
 Grace Spring Lau
 June 24, 1951

We re-echo the cry of the saints in all ages: How long, O Lord, how long! Enoch, as he heard the earth mourn because of the wickedness of the children of men, voiced the same cry: "O, Lord, wilt thou not have compassion upon the earth? When shall the earth rest? And the Lord said unto Enoch, As I live even so will I come again in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, . . . and the day shall come that the earth shall rest. And it came to pass, that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth, in righteousness, for the space of a thousand years." (I. T. Gen. 7:56, 65, 67, 68, 73)

The days of wickedness and vengeance are here. This is the day in which He shall come for the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. "Verily, I say unto you, this generation, the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Let my disciples therefore take heed to themselves lest at any time their hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon them unawares. For as a snare it shall come on all them who dwell on the face of the whole earth. And what I say unto one, I say unto all, Watch ye therefore, and pray always, and keep my commandments, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father." (I. T. Luke 21:32-36)

While it may be true that thousands now living shall never die, it is equally true that millions now living shall die before the coming of the Son of Man,

unprepared for that great event. But in the day when the earth shall rest and the Zion upon the earth shall put on her beautiful garments, then shall be fulfilled the scripture which saith: "Righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare; an holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion; a New Jerusalem . . . Then shalt thou and all thy people meet them there; and we will fall upon their necks and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; and there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years shall the earth rest." (I. T. Gen. 7:70-72)

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that ". . . all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voices and with the voice together sing this new song, saying:

The Lord hath brought again Zion
The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel,
According to the election of grace,
Which was brought to pass by the faith
And covenant of their Fathers

The Lord hath redeemed his people,
And Satan is bound, and time is no longer:
The Lord hath gathered all things in one;
The Lord hath brought down Zion from above:
The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath;
The earth hath travailed and brought forth her strength;

And truth is established in her bowels;
And the heavens have smiled upon her,
And she is clothed with the glory of her God:
For he stands in the midst of his people:
Glory, and honour, and power, and might,
Be ascribed to our God, for he is full of mercy,
Justice, grace and truth, and peace
For ever and ever, Amen." (D & C. 83:16-17)

"And again: I say unto you, I give unto you a commandment, that every man both elder, priest, teacher, and also member, go to with his might, with the labor of his hands, to prepare and accomplish the things which I have commanded. And let your preaching be the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness. And go ye out from among the wicked. Save yourselves. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord; even so: Amen." (B. of C. 81:4)

It is later than you think.

With love and best wishes to all,
Leon A. Gould (Written Nov. 30, 1951)

PEACE

by Elder Heman C. Smith

PEACE, complete and unalloyed Peace, who can define it? It would need an angel pen or angel tongue to so express it that man could obtain but a faint idea of the extent of its influence; and surely not until man has developed into a being grander, wiser, and purer can he fathom the depth, or soar to the height of that ocean of beatific influence proceeding from a perfect Peace.

Man from the beginning has ever sought it, and sometimes has fancied it almost within his grasp; but "'tis dashed by fate relentless down, ere once the envied sweets he sips." Sometimes through the rifts of clouds there shines for a moment its hallowed, benign and holy light; but anon the darkening cloud intervene, and the heart is with anguish wrung. It is best, while in this undeveloped condition that it should so be. There are depths in the human heart which can never be touched by peals of merry laughter, or the countenance beaming with joy; and there are latent forces in all, which can never be developed without coming in contact with that which tries men's souls. We must not only be brought into the valley of humility by things which preclude the possibility of an undisturbed Peace; but the depths of our sympathy, our love, and our tenderness must be stirred by hear-

ing the sighs, witnessing the sorrow, and hearkening to the moans of our distressed and heart broken fellow creatures, like ourselves struggling for the Peace which sometimes seems near, and again far from our anxious grasp. He who is not moved by these things can never be fully developed; nor can he find perfect or unsullied Peace; or, if finding it, can never appreciate nor understand its boundless good. Consequently, in the language of a modern revelation, "he must abide in a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory."

In this connection let me remind my readers that the agony of the cross touches a chord in the human heart which can be touched by nothing else; and he who steels his heart against the effects of that sad but softening scene, deprives himself of one of the means of perfection, and, unwittingly, takes a step fatal to the realization of his fondest hopes — Peace. Paul the apostle said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Not every thing, separately considered, but "all things" — the joy of yesterday, the sorrow of today, the anguish of the present, the peace of the future — all combined, — forming one grand whole, "work together for good to them that love God." Ah, let us not then complain if all is not

sunshine; "Twill only make the gems the brighter to shine, when we all have a crown to wear." If but faithful to the lessons provided, we shall anchor in the bright haven of Peace, though between here and there there rolls an angry sea. "The ship must be proven when tempests are howling, when mountain waves close on her press."

Jesus our Lord gives us to understand that all will not be pleasant and serene. He says, these things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.

This declaration that in Christ Peace is possible fills the trusting soul with hope, which nerves him for conflicts, and enables him to bear what otherwise would crush his soul with grief. Yet he who receives it with joy, pausing not to consider the certainty of that other saying: "In the world ye shall have tribulation," is doomed to disappointment, and loss of faith in God. He is well likened to "seed sown in stony places, for he heareth the word and anon with joy receiveth it;" "but when tribulation, or persecution, ariseth . . . he is offended." But he who has consolation in the promise of Peace, and yet is keenly sensible that he "shall have tribulation," is likely to endure, strengthened by the precious announcement: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." In this, my friends, lies the secret of success. If we can overcome the world, and though meeting the opposition of contending forces, coming in contact with these many influences, we can gain strength instead of weakness from our experiences; we shall rise high above evil and its consequences, preparing ourselves for the unsullied Peace for which we hope.

But how shall we overcome the world? This is an important question, one which has been practically incorrectly answered, and as a consequence the world has and does mourn. Men have always differed in their opinions of what constituted right, and zealous in their desire to propagate truth have often resorted to force.

From the time they began to divide upon the face of the earth, they have adopted the policy of coercion; leaders, rulers, governors have marshaled and disciplined their followers for war. Men, ambitious for place or power, thought of no other way to extend their dominions except by force of arms. To succeed in this, they must harden their hearts against the cries of the distressed — look with scorn upon widows' wails and orphans' moans.

To spread death and carnage around them, and drench our fair earth in blood, heedless of the pain, agony and suffering of their victims, was considered fair and honorable, if done to attain the end of their ambition. This aroused a feeling of antagonism and resentment on the part of those they sought to control. Men's better natures were stifled, and instead of bringing about a reign of Peace, for which they all no doubt sighed, the world was hurried on to a condition of hard heartedness, barbarism and cruelty.

The chosen people of God, in this respect, were no exception. They dreamed only of conquest by force of arms. Did they pray God for help? It was only that he would help them to wreak vengeance upon, and kill their enemies. Sometimes they had reason to believe that God overruled and fought their battles, but the general results of this war policy was unsatisfactory, and most forcibly was the principle, "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword" demonstrated in experience.

A promise was made to them that a Deliverer should come out of Zion, but so thoroughly imbued were they in the spirit of war that they expected when he did come he would come in great pomp and power — a military character, with ability to marshal and command. Under his banner they expected to enlist and go forth to conquer.

Finally, brought under tribute to Caesar, they patiently waited and prayed for the Deliverer to come and break off the Roman yoke. This was the condition of things when, as lonely shepherds watched their flocks on Bethlehem's plains by night, an heavenly messenger appeared to them: "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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord." "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."

This, coming at the time it did, was an important announcement. We can not properly appreciate it, unless we take into consideration the condition of things, and consider the circumstances of the actors.

Doubtless these angels had grieved at the tendency to evil among men, and consequently theirs was not an undisturbed Peace, hence those bursts of ecstatic joy and praise which attended their announcement of the birth of the Prince of Peace, whose policy was to inaugurate a reign of Peace on earth.

The shepherds doubtless had discussed the situation during their lonely night watches, and looked forward with anxious hope for the Deliverer, when no more their flocks and herds would be taxed to pay tribute to Caesar. How, then, must both angels and shepherds have rejoiced, one to bear, the other to hear the welcome and cheering news that the Prince was born. When, however, this same person whose appearance was heralded by angelic hosts presented himself unto his people, he was rejected with scorn. Was this rejection an honest one? Certainly so. They would not have knowingly rejected the one for whose appearance they had prayed so much.

Their rejection of the Christ was the result of a false education. Thoroughly trained in the system of war, they looked upon the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest," as the production of a diseased brain. When he added, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls," their indignation knew no bounds. "See those Roman Legions," they might have said: "Have not Israel's hosts gone out to battle against them, has not the consecrated blood of God's chosen stained an hundred battle fields, and have we not trusted our lives in the hands of mighty leaders — all in vain to lift the heavy burden of oppression off our necks? Now do you, unarmed and alone, without munitions of war, no armies at your command, unskilled in the art of war, propose to give us rest? Preposterous! Absurd! Who could entertain the thought? Away! You shall not teach in our synagogues; you only incite the Romans to take away our place and nation." This spirit of opposition continued to grow until it culminated in the vociferous cry of "Crucify him, crucify him." That many who thus reasoned and acted were sincere and devoted, we are inclined to believe; nor are we surprised at their mistake. Where, then, was the wrong? In their education. Having never learned that sublime and holy principle that evil can only be effectually overcome by good, they could not see the beauty of the pure and holy teachings of our Lord.

Strong they may have been in some respects, but unbalanced in judgment, imperfectly developed, and consequently unfit to comprehend a system at Peace with all men, and which provides that one's enemies should be loved. Well was it said of them: "Having eyes ye see not, and ears ye hear not." Kind reader, do these things seem a practicable impossibility to you? Then there liveth in you some of the old leaven which has rendered this world so sad and sorrowful. Could they have learned this lesson, that to conquer

an enemy you must make him your friend, they would have accepted the precept which provides for returning good for evil, and how beautifully would the mission of our Divine Master have unfolded to their wondering and enraptured view.

Reader, have you learned this great lesson? Is there in your heart now a feeling of hatred toward any of God's creatures? Has any one failed to do as you think they ought, and do you feel as though you would compel them if you could? Do you feel a reputation of your enemy? If so, you are in possession of the spirit of war — the spirit which crucified the Christ, and has deluged the world in blood; causing mourning, devastation and misery everywhere to abound. You may be unable to injure the object of your hate; but you are able to injure yourself; you are stilling the better feelings of your nature, refusing the means of your own development, like the Jews, placing yourself in a condition to not see when good cometh, and raising a leaven between you and the perfect Peace for which you have so earnestly longed. Oh, then, be careful to cultivate the pure, the good and true while you suppress the evil, "envy, jealousy, suspicion." Be above such groveling things. "In each others' joys delighted, all your hates by joy of war." Then when nations no more shall rush to war; when there shall be no struggling for high places, when the "knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea," then shall your victory be complete; and, elevated to the presence of Christ your elder brother, you shall feel and know the truth of the promise: "In me you shall have Peace." Then shall you join with the angelic host in the triumphant shout of "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

("Autumn Leaves" March, 1890)

SOMETIMES WE WONDER

Elder Isaac B. Brockman

Ruth and I usually go to town every Sunday morning to pick up our mail and the Sunday paper. In doing so, we drive by many churches. We find their parking lots full and cars lined up by the curbs. Yet, when it comes time for our Church of Christ services, we find that most of the time very few attend, giving all kinds of reasons for not coming. Yet my loved ones, what is so despairing is the fact that we are the most Blessed people on this whole earth. We have the only true Gospel of Jesus Christ, restored in these latter days. We sit idly by letting precious time slip away, while we run in search of the pleasures of this world, saying to ourselves, "I don't have to go to church to be a good Christian. I listen to this church service or that on the radio, and boy, this man or that really preached a good sermon Sunday morning on the radio." Yet in the process, they lend no support what so ever to those ministers of our own Faith.

My Brothers and Sisters let us stop and think, think, think!!! We are dealing with something of a very serious nature, the salvation of our own Souls. Not something that is here today and gone tomorrow but something that is everlasting. Can we not visualize the magnitude of it? Do we not understand that within arms reach we have available the source of the most powerful force there is, which is "God's Power," but we are required to reach out? To reach out and grasp God's hand and say "Father, where ever Thou leadeth I will follow. What ever is required of me, I will do without question."

When we are ready as a body of people to make the effort to take the first step, or reach out, then and only then are we going to see a real growth among us both spiritual and physical. Until then, we receive just a sample of God's goodness. If and when we as a body of people are ready to lay aside our worldly

desires and worldly ambitions and concentrate all our efforts on the furthering of God's work, we will be engulfed in the surrounding influence of God's great power and majesty. Then we as a people will experience a growth both spiritual and physical that we have never before realized.

Some of our people are sorely lacking in a true desire to worship God. As we have said before, but maybe in different words, our people can find time to do anything they desire to do, but when it comes time to go to Church, they can find every kind of excuse there is to get out of going. They just say, "Lord, I'm busy today." Some of our people will drive 400 or 500 miles on a fishing, hunting, or vacation trip, and yet they can't take the time to drive across town, or a few miles to go to church. They just say, "Lord, I'm busy today." The same holds true for our state reunions. Just think folks, two or three days out of a whole year dedicated to the purpose of reuniting our people with notice given months ahead, still some let other things interfere with their attending year after year. Brothers and Sisters, where do our senses of value lie? We should accept every opportunity to meet together with great anticipation.

If Satan realizes that we will allow any little diversion stand in our way of attending church services, you can rest assured that he will see to it that there will always be something standing in our way to deter us from going. There is no one thing that is more important than worshipping Our Lord.

There may be those who say that I'm picking on them, but that is not my intention at all. Our people must come to the realization very soon, that they must give up their worldly desires and pleasures and worship and follow Their God. Or, we are going to be very sorrowful when the times comes that we really need Him.

In the next few years we are going to live in some of the most drastic times in the history of mankind. The only thing that will sustain us is God and His Son Jesus Christ. They are our only hope in time to come.

Can we afford to take a chance and say to ourselves, "We'll wait until tomorrow to prepare to Meet our God"?

Our intention has not been to criticize. We want to mobilize our people's minds to the extent that they will sit down and seriously consider what we must do to become prepared to meet the Master of Mankind when He comes to this earth again. Or, we must prepare ourselves to meet God, if He chooses to call us away from this world arena before that time comes.

Can you see, my loved ones, why as our title says "Sometimes We Wonder"?

May we labor together to this end, and may God engulf us in the influence of His great and undying love. May we have the patience and understanding toward one another, that God has with all of us, is my prayer.

TENNESSEE REUNION

The Tennessee Reunion will be held Labor Day Weekend, August 31 and September 1, 1974, at the Puryear, Tennessee, local church.

For those interested in camping out or needing to arrange for a place to stay, or for further information contact:

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Paris, Tenn.

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NOTICE

The Audio-Visual Aid Committee wishes to announce the availability of a good selection of taped services with sermons and music on both 60 and 90 minute cassettes. These were designed to be used primarily by small groups or isolated members for services that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

A listing of these "service on tape" may be obtained by writing to the following address:

Harold Gill
1536 West 7th Place
Tempe, Arizona 85281

The only equipment required to be able to enjoy these services is a cassette player or recorder (available at most department stores from \$25.00 and up). If you wish to take advantage of this service please write to Brother Gill so we can establish a mailing list. Please indicate (1) how often you wish to receive a tape and (2) how many will be listening to the tapes. After using the tapes we urge you to promptly return them to our library. May God bless each of you.