

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 the power of the Holy Ghost:" 1 Nephi 3:187

Vol. 54

Independence, Missouri, September, 1977

No. 9

The Little Church on the Temple Lot

Press onward my brethren
And do not despair,
Let truth be your motto,
God heareth your prayer;
Come out from the world,
Was the Saviour's command,
My church is not popular,
Wealthy, nor grand;
'Tis not with great numbers,
Great learning and pride,
Nor the fashions of this world
That I will abide;

My church must be humble,
United and just,
No self aggrandizement,
I ever will trust;
The time of my coming
Is closely at hand,
The warning is given
All over the land;
Give heed to my word
For I am the head;
And I will be with you,
The Saviour hath said.

I was thinking of the little church on the Temple Lot when the following lines came to my mind.

A friend

(Taken from the Evening and Morning Star, July, 1902)

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Zion's Advocate

Official Publication of the Church of Christ
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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Temple Lot), P. O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051
 Second class postage paid at Independence, Missouri

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Subscription rates to members paid from general funds. In bundles of twelve or more for missionary purposes, \$1.00 Non-member rates one year \$1.50. Canadian and all foreign rates, \$1.75.

Send all donations for the Temple Fund, the Storehouse, Consecrations, Tithes, Offerings, and Subscriptions for The Advocate to: Church of Christ (Temple Lot) P. O. Box 472, Independence, Mo. 64051
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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

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Editorial . . .

THE ATTITUDE OF WORSHIP

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

" . . . the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls: and they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus; . . . and their meetings were conducted by the church, after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach or exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done."

"Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy." (Ps. 122:1; Moroni 6:6, 9; Ps. 99:5)

How great is the invitation to come to the house of the Lord to worship Him by exalting His name! This privilege is a blessing unmeasurable by our finite minds. Even the more full appreciation of worshipping God as we choose may not be known to us unless we are deprived of the opportunity. We can gain a greater enjoyment in worshipping God, however, by examining the rights and the wrongs that are evidenced in our endeavors and by correcting ourselves accordingly.

Only a humble and a thankful people can gain the full benefits that God has generously provided. Regretfully, it seems necessary to bring to our attention the need of showing greater reverence to God when we gather to worship Him.

Some emphases have been made recently concerning the lack of respect that the people of the church show toward their places of worship. Especially this is noticed before, after and between services when the people stand in the aisles visiting about everything but the purpose for which they gathered. Loud talking and laughing show a total lack of consideration for the place and the occasion.

An added evidence of disrespect is often shown when people go in and out during a worship service. At times children are given too much liberty; most necessities can be taken care of before or between services eliminating much of the confusion. Also small children are sometimes permitted to run in the aisles and to play on the rostrum of the church after services.

Another evidence of disrespect for the house of worship is shown in the way people litter the floor with paper, food, clothing, etc. and the way they mistreat their hymnals, Bibles, pews, etc. The church building is often treated as any other public building. If it has been dedicated to the Lord, it is His house and it should be treated as such.

Complaints are sometimes made about the kind of clothing worn to church. A person's appearance, as to whether or not he or she is clean and properly dressed,

can show how much respect they have toward the Lord. If they have clean and decent clothing to wear but are too lazy, indifferent or busy to ready themselves for the service, they show that they are not careful about their preparation to meet the Lord.

Complaints have also been made about women wearing slacks and pant-suits to church. Until recent years this was not an acceptable practice in the church and to some it is still not acceptable. It should also be recognized that due to the styles that have been popular over the last few decades that some dresses are too immodestly designed to wear to church.

The guideline should be thus: clothing made and styled for men that is normally worn by men should not be worn by women, and clothing made and styled for women that is normally worn by women should not be worn by men. This may not be considered much of a guideline with the modern styles as they are, but an added thought would be that we should dress as modestly as we can to not draw attention to ourselves or our bodies.

It has been customary and proper that priesthood members wear dress clothes (suits, sport's coats and slacks, ties, etc.) when occupying in the stand or officiating in the services. In circumstances where such dress is prohibitive, such as extremely hot weather or other physical or financial conditions, the type of clothing should not be considered a requirement in the performing of a service. Wherein it is reasonably possible, we should keep our physical appearances in accord with the occasion showing proper reverence to God in worship of Him.

All this may be judged as nitpicking since our outward actions and appearances do not always reveal the inward feelings. The things thus far mentioned are secondary to the true attitude of worship; what is in our hearts when we come to a service is really what counts.

The requisite is a true reverence given to the time and place of a predetermined worship service. No experimentation should be made by trying new things; our instructions that are scripturally given are simple. To branch off into new ideas may be disastrous.

The place of worship does not determine the spirit of the occasion. Where two or three are met in Christ's name, they have His promise that He will meet with them. Many spiritual services have been held in lowly abodes.

A worship service should be predominantly a prayer service. The attitude of prayer should continue throughout the service whether or not audible prayer is being offered.

Although the testimony part of our services usually merits much good, its authorization as properly being a part of a worship service is questionable. At least deep humility should be retained in our testimonies.

Giving testimonies in the worship service has been greatly stressed reaching almost to the point of becoming a test of fellowship at times. A true testimony is a witness and it can be given in any circumstance depending upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is not always given in word only, but it can also be an expression of actions that declare one's personal convictions.

Unfortunately testimonies in a worship service can become merely a show of words usurping time that could be occupied in more spiritual ways. Sermon length talks during worship services have often robbed and disappointed many faithful members who came to the service with hopes of worshipping God with their brothers and sisters.

Too often a casual and relaxed mood prevails over a worship service. Rather than making a full concentration of worshipping God, the people drift into an exchange of ordinary thoughts with the testimonies becoming an avenue of expressing personal feelings that degenerate to a social level. Mundane happenings are sometimes related in such detail that they become boresome.

Also airing disagreeable feelings will touch off a discontent within the congregation which in turn offends the good spirit. Consequently the gifts of the spirit are crowded out defeating the hopes of those who hunger and thirst for spiritual nourishment. Under such a condition an evil spirit can enter and bear its fruit of confusion, deception, contention, etc.

One of the more noticeable errors that have been made during a worship service is when an individual compliments himself or someone else. Supposedly we are gathered together to worship God and when man steals the scene he offends the Spirit of God. God is no respecter of persons; He will not give regard to one person over another that they might indulge their human ego.

Liberty must be retained in our worship services, however. Too many restrictions or regimentations can be offensive to the Holy Spirit. Freedom must be given to allow the various gifts to be demonstrated according to the guidance of the Spirit. Revelments of God's will are of great value to His people and they cannot be sacrificed for lesser things except the people suffer loss.

Our greatest endeavor should be to embrace the Spirit of God in our worship services. When we are touched by His Spirit, we receive peace to our souls and our spiritual senses are awakened to a keep perception of His presence. We are aroused from our normal human feelings to a total respect and reverence to God. In communing with Him in spirit, we give our complete attention to Him and we set aside our natural human concerns. In such an experience, we are refreshed and our souls are filled with their spiritual needs.

RLS

SERMON

TEMPLE LOT, MARCH 13, 1977

BILL MORRIS

(Condensed for Publication)

In the spirit of prayer is the universal language of humility. Will you bow your heads with me for a short prayer?

Oh, mighty God, as I, imperfect man, stand before Thee trying to help in thy perfect work, wilt Thou bring Thy mercy upon me? Give me that strength which I lack and speak through me, Lord, if it be Thy will. In Jesus name, Amen.

A long time ago in the days before time as we reckon it, there was a man called Moses who led his people out of bondage. He suffered with them; he became angered with them — he died with ambition unfulfilled — to enter the promised land. But in so doing he left us a legacy. He dug the footing and laid the cornerstone for what we know as the Christian religion.

Then came Amos. A good man, he built stone upon stone of this legacy and taught us that God is a just God. And there were others who brought us the message through time for all mankind, that God is a good God.

Time passed. In the town of Bethlehem came the birth of a baby who was to be called Jesus. Thus occurred one of the most misunderstood events in the history of mankind, the first coming of Christ.

Now, why Bethlehem? Why the town of Bethlehem? Why poverty? Why humility? It was in a stable. I don't know what its condition of cleanliness was. But why that setting? Could it be that from the time God ordained that Christ should come into this world to be its King and Saviour of mankind, every moment of every hour, everything He did or by which His life was affected was to be an example to us in some way? Do you suppose this is why like, our faith, He came in humility, as a thief in the night? We have wondered what made this Jesus the Christ and what He means in our lives. Or does He mean anything?

The scriptures do not tell us when Christs became aware that He was to be about His Father's business, or what were the circumstances of the early days of His life. These are left out; we don't know. But we do know that this series of events set the stage for what was to be the greatest life ever lived, and for the principles of the Gospel, and for the message of this hour — that Christ works for us, in your life and mine if we let Him.

Let's go back to this birth and read.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these

things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also" (Matt. 2:1-8).

Oh, this crafty, vicious dictator! Oh, this wicked man! All his craft and diplomacy were used to discover where this Jesus lay, so as to kill Him if possible. Curious how the fiction differs from the reality. We have all seen portrayals of Christ's birth, angels and songs and bright lights, glossing over this violence. When Herod found out, you know what he did! He caused to be killed all the boy babies in and about the city. That was the first great paradox of Christ's life, that the Prince of Peace, the King of the Jews, the Saviour of the world, should come into the world in such scenes of violence. But the lesson therein is for us to hear and know. Perhaps it is that even at such times as the birth of Christ, man is still imperfect. It can be no other way until man is perfect. And when will that be?

We know that at one time when He was a youth Christ was gone; His parents searched for Him and found Him in the Synagogue, teaching the teachers! His mother said, as any mother would, "Well, where have you been?" He answered in this wise, "Don't you know that I have to be about My Father's business?" So we know that at some time He became aware of this and began; the stage was set. There is a wondrous order in these things. In Matthew we find this.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized

of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3: 1-6).

We have thus far examples of faith, repentance and baptism. Then a wonderful thing happened.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3: 13-15).

You and I understand that this is the Son of God. He has no need of baptism. But He comes to be baptized. For what purpose? John just couldn't believe it! He was baptized, and thus laid the foundation for those important principles of the gospel. Of this there can be no dispute.

Then a curious thing happened. You will find if you study the three gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, that often they do not agree precisely on what happened; they use slightly different words, telling the events differently. But in this event they all agreed.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Ibid 16).

You cannot come "straightway out of the water" unless you have been in the water.

Then Jesus began His short ministry. He did many things. He opened a way of life for us, for every one who wishes to take advantage of it. He divided the world; He said He would. He made it possible for us to overcome death, not of the physical but of the spiritual body, that death in which most of the world exists today. He made it possible for us to overcome this. In so doing He left us an image, a picture. I wonder what your image, your picture of Christ is. Don't tell me. That image has been distorted dramatically by those who have something to gain. You see, the world found that crucifying Him wasn't enough. They killed Him but they couldn't stop Him. So they found other ways to do it. The way they have done it is to distort what He really was, to build churches and say, "Here we are!", when He is not there at all. I know, because I have been in some of them. They build organizations and say, "Here He is!", but He is not with them either. And they make pictures, distorted pictures, of what Christ is like.

Now, we all have an image of Christ; it is important because that image helps us define our relationship to God. What was He? Was He weak? I don't think so. Was He a teacher? Just a teacher? There are many people in the world who revere Christ as a teacher. Mahatma Ghandi, a great Hindu leader, recognized Him as a teacher, not as the Son of God. My image is

an image of Christ in strength. I like Christ as He went to the temple that day. In anger He turned the plates of the money changers over, loosed the doves, and told the people they had made His Father's house a den of robbers! Matthew tells us about this.

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (21:12, 13).

That's the Christ I hold up to you!

And my Christ is a gentle Christ. He gathered the children and said "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." That's the Son of God I know.

Christ is a friend. You know, a friend is somebody that we get to know. It is hard to know a stranger. We get to know what a friend is like., what he will do, what he will say. Christ is my friend and He is your friend, whoever you are. Through that friendship we can have peace, great strength, and a quiet certainty in our lives. If you do not experinece it, I would that you did! I have experienced it and I know what it means.

I like the Christ of compassion.

"And, behold two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him" (Matt. 20: 30-34).

"And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus moved with compassion put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean" (Mark 1:40-41).

"And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, in-somuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they came unto him, bringing one sick of palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark 2:1-5). "And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him

on the sabbath day, that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath day, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand, And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mark 3:15).

You see, this is the Christ of compassion! But this is also the Christ of courage! He stood in the midst of His enemies and did that which He knew they would call evil, so that they might rid themselves of this man. You see, they didn't like Christ. They didn't like Him because He brought the revolutionary idea that you and I and the people of His time might deal with God through Him on a personal basis. Having done this, He would undermine their power. This was the source of their evil.

Now, this is the Christ I know, the Christ of courage and compassion. Knowing this Christ, I know God. And knowing God, as I do through Christ, I share the reward that He has promised. And so do you.

When I heard that I was to speak I was greatly concerned about what to say, because I know there is a need. I asked that that need be fulfilled, prayerfully and at length, and the answer came to me.

The Christ that I have learned to know (and it has taken time for me to mature in this spiritual wisdom) has led me to know God and this has led me to understand that I might share in some small way in what God has to offer.

I turn to Paul's writings.

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth

the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2).

Paul is telling us that we share in the wisdom of God through the Spirit of God. This is what belief in Christ, belief in God, can lead us to. Not only does God share this wisdom with us, but He makes us a dwelling place of His Spirit.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:9-11).

Paul says that he is the masterbuilder, the one that began with the people of Corinth; he laid the foundation of Jesus Christ. He said that others would take up the task and teach them, but must be careful what they say, because it will come to light.

"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (Ibid 12-17).

I am impressed with the power and majesty of those words. You see what our relationship, our image of Christ, leads us to, what we can experience with our acceptance of Him through repentance, baptism and the other principles of the gospel? It will lead us to share with God His wisdom and to be His temples!

When people spitefully use us, when they would make us the objects of their scorn or foolish in the

ways of people, we have God's wisdom and promise that we are His temples, under His protection. He has guaranteed it.

Now, the heart that is troubled this day, the soul that cries out in agony and sorrow for peace, can find it — Jesus, that Jesus born in a stable, rejected by His own, who wanted to kill him! He was rejected by His own, convicted when He was innocent, nailed to a wooden

cross between two thieves. He speaks to you and to me and to all mankind. (Matthew 11:25-30) records this great promise.

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest in your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

LET THEM GO

When we are baptized, we make a commitment to the Lord. A better word would be covenant. The covenant is that we agree to keep the commandments of God. (BM 161:15-18)

There are many commandments and all are important, however, in this article we will concentrate on those that apply to our duty toward our fellow human beings in the spreading of the Fullness of the Everlasting Gospel. (BM 44:16 and Rev. 14:6) First, let us establish what the gospel is: "Now this is the commandment, Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day. Verily, verily I say unto you, This is my GOSPEL; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do, that shall ye also do" (BM 674:33-34). Jesus Christ spoke these familiar words: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16; BM 712:86-87).

The question is, are we supposed to preach this gospel? Were the instructions meant only to the Apostles of old? "He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world; for he loveth the world, even that he layeth down his own life, that he may draw all men unto him. Wherefore, he commandeth none that they shall not partake of his salvation. Behold, doth he cry unto any, saying, Depart from me? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; but he saith, Come unto me all ye ends of the earth, buy milk and honey, without money and without price. Behold hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; but he hath given it free for all men; and HE HATH COMMANDED HIS PEOPLE THAT THEY SHOULD PERSUADE ALL MEN TO REPENTANCE" (BM 147:96-103).

Let us reverently consider these verses. We have read that by being baptized, we agree or covenant with

the Lord to keep His commandments. Then we found that Jesus Christ told His Apostles to go into all the world with His Gospel. Finally we narrowed the Lord's word down to the plain and simple statement: "HE HATH COMMANDED HIS PEOPLE THAT THEY SHOULD PERSUADE ALL MEN TO REPENTANCE." We can not escape that commandment if we are His people.

Someone may say, "Yes but there are more important things to do." Again let us look in the written word for an answer. "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the holy Messiah: for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. Wherefore, HOW GREAT THE IMPORTANCE TO MAKE THESE THINGS KNOWN UNTO THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the holy Messiah" BM 83:71-73).

Dear Ones, again the words are plain and easy to understand. We are told, "HOW GREAT THE IMPORTANCE TO MAKE THESE THINGS KNOWN UNTO THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH".

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). We see that to really love God requires obedience to His teachings; therefore, we accept a great deal of responsibility when we say, "I love God".

"Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head" (Ezek. 33:4). If we teach the Fullness of the Gospel, our responsibility for the blood of our fellowmen will not be upon us; however, if we don't obey the commandment of the Lord, how terrible it will be to stand before the judgement bar of the Living God having a perfect knowledge of our guilt.

Without quoting many scriptures, which could be mentioned let it be said that both the Bible and the Book of Mormon contain many scriptures concerning

the teaching of repentance. My point is this. We, the Church of Christ, must begin to reach this nation and the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ours is a great responsibility which should not be taken lightly. The call goes out; the harvest is white; send forth reapers. The question is asked in the Bible, "how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14). That is a fair question. We echo that to the church today. How shall this nation and the world hear the Fullness of the Gospel without preachers? Next question, "And how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:15)

The burden must rest upon us all, the burden of sending forth the reapers into the harvest field, as well as the burden of responsibility that we have as caretakers of this beautiful Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The word says, "Yea, thus saith the Spirit, Repent all ye ends of the earth, for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand; yea, the Son of God cometh in his glory, in his might, majesty, power and dominion" (BM 319:87). Eighty three years before the first coming of Christ, the Spirit was pleading repentance and thus that Unchangeable God stil pleads to His people.

We have agreed to keep God's commandments; we say we love Him. He has plainly told us to persuade all men to repentance. He has told us how important it is. He has asked us, how shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they preach except they be sent? The Spirit pleads, **let them go**. "And I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (BM 695:89).

Al Leighton-Floyd

HOUSTON NEWS

The fifteenth of May was the date of the Ava rally. The large hall that was rented for this occasion was filled to overflowing. Coffee and doughnuts were served for those who came early, and many did.

The sermons and singing were especially good and the meals that these few women had prepared were something to brag about. At the close of the day one could sing, "What a fellowship, what a joy divine"; and how good it was to have been there.

The Houston rally was the last week-end of May, the 28th and 29th. Breakfast was served at the church. Services began at nine. The little church was filled and such a wonderful spirit as does attend these rallies and reunions! They seem to be getting better as time goes on. Let us pray that this might continue. They come from far and near and how good it is to see those sweet faces each and every time.

The sermons were all very good as well as the prayers and testimonies, at the close of the rally one could truly say, "There was a sweet, sweet, spirit in this place."

Our sister Anna Keeney has been doing at bit of traveling. Her first trip was to St. Louis to see her nephew and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Jess Fisher. Jess had a very bad heart attack, but is feeling much better at this time. While there Anna also visited her nieces, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Stigall and Mr. and Mrs. Tahlen and family. She was home just a few days and then left for Tennessee to attend the wedding of her granddaughter, Joan Marie Kommer, to Steve Hawkins. Those attending the wedding from the Houston local were: Ernest and Anna Keeney, Truman, Mary Jane, DeeAnna, Tommy, Theresa, and Jennifer Medders. Bro. Archie Bell performed the beautiful wedding ceremony; DeeAnna sang, "Sunrise, Sunset", also "The

Lords Prayer. DeeAnna was one of the bridesmaids; our little Jennifer Medders was the flower girl.

Arden, Johna, Tamma, and Christopher Ely are going to make their home somewhere in this beautiful state of Missouri. Johna and children came ahead. The reason? So Johna could take care of their bees. They were losing so many bees by swarming. After putting the extra boxes on the top of each hive, twenty hives in all, no small job! This seemed to have taken care of the situation. Johna says she believes Arden makes a braver bee keeper than she does. Arden will be joining his family real soon.

The eleventh of June, David, Cathy, and Jeremy Jones, Dorothy Wilson and Verna Jones attended the wedding of their nephew and cousin, Merlin Lyle Eddy, to Eva Len Gould. David was best man. The men looked so nice in their blue and white suits and the bride's attendants were especially pretty in gowns of different colors. Merlin and Eva Len were dressed in pure white. How beautiful and handsome they looked. John Gould sang two or three songs. John, you have a voice that is most pleasant to listen to. John Gill performed the ceremony. The reception was held at the trailer court's recreation room. The beautiful tiered cake and candy bells were made by Sr. Bonnie Case. Merlin and Eva said their goodbyes and drove away in Merlin's 1934 Chevrolet (real cute).

Rashelle Woiak is spending her vacation with her Aunt, Dorothy Wilson. Rashelle is the daughter of Maybelle and granddaughter of John and Verna Jones. Mae Walker, a sister-in-law of Dorothy's spent the second and third week of July with Dorothy. We are always pleased to have her meet with us here in Houston.

Those attending the Missouri reunion at the Inde-

pendence East Local from Houston were: Dr. and Mrs. I. C. Keeney and children, David, Douglas, and Diann; Mr. and Mrs. Truman Medders and children, DeeAnn and Tommy; Mrs. John Medders and daughter, Jennifer; Lois Helsath; Dorothy Wilson; Anna Keeney; and Elder and Mrs. John Jones and granddaughter, Rashelle.

Anna Keeney returned home with her daughter Alzada and grandson, Bill Massey, to spend a few weeks with Alzada and her family. On her way home she stopped over to visit her son-in-law's mother, Lois Medders.

We were pleased to have Don and Ruth Willard over the weekend of July 10th. Sunday evening we all enjoyed the beautiful slides they had taken while vacationing in Europe. Thank you, Don and Ruth, for such an enjoyable Sunday evening.

Those youth attending the Y. P. C. L. outing at Lake Pomme De Terre last weekend were: David and Douglas Keeney, DeeAnna and Tommy Medders. They re-

ported a wonderful time and the greatest joy of it all was the baptism of their cousin, Kim Stancil. They are looking forward to the State Youth outing the first of August. The Houston local women's club met at Mary Jane Medders' on July 21. We are all making different items to be sold. The money is to be put in our local fund. I'm closing the Houston news with a piece Mary Jane read at the meeting, entitled "Where Dandelions Are Roses".

"Just for you", he or she said, as was given me a handful of dandelions. I took them from the smudgy little hands, reached for my prettiest vase and set them in a special place where I could watch them wilt and fade. Remembering what had been said, "I picked them just for you.", the dandelions suddenly changed to roses.

How true it is: it's not the gift, whether great or small, but the love that goes with it that changes all. May God bless each and every one of you.

Your Houston Reporter

MICHIGAN REUNION

MAPLE CITY, JUNE 18, 19

Saturday morning: preaching service under the direction of Elder Conley Addington; opening song No. 133, Send Me Forth; song No. 134, Am I A Soldier of the Cross?; Sermon by Elder Harold Polack; closing song, No. 144, Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus.

Afternoon: Business meeting was chaired by Elder Conley Addington. June Haines was appointed to record minutes. Conley Addington was re-elected to the Reunion Committee for a 3-year period. June Haines was elected as Secretary-Reporter. No site was decided upon for the 1978 reunion. The committee will discuss that and a decision should be forthcoming by September 10. The referendum was discussed; it was agreed that it reaffirms what was agreed upon years ago as far as acceptance of the King James Bible and the Book of Mormon is concerned.

Also during the afternoon the young folks, under the watchful eyes of Ken Hoare and Mark Addington, climbed the Sleeping Bear sand dunes.

Evening: A well attended, highly inspirational song service, under the direction of Brother Lavern Lussenden, was held. In addition to singing of old and new favorites by the entire congregation, there was considerable participation by the young people by the way of specials.

Sunday morning: Beautiful Glen Lake was the scene of an equally beautiful ceremony in which Randy Ritsema, son of Bernie and Laura Ritsema, entered into

the waters of baptism. The baptism was performed by Elder Lavern Lussenden, after which those who had gathered at the lake to witness the baptism returned to the church for the confirmation by Elders Lavern Lussenden and Conley Addington. Randy will be returning to Germany to complete his assignment there. We in Michigan ask for your prayers in his behalf, as we know he will be subjected to many temptations and that his row will not be an easy one. He is a fine young man.

Communion was then served, followed by a season of prayer and testimony under the direction of Bro. Lussenden; everyone agreed it was one of the most spiritually uplifting experiences they had enjoyed for quite some time. One of the most gratifying things about the service was the inspirational participation by our young people.

Afternoon: Some of the saints who had travelled long distances to attend the reunion had to leave after lunch. Those of us who remained were privileged to hear Bro. Ken Hoare deliver the sermon. Opening song was No. 296, The Old, Old Path; closing song was No. 20, Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing.

This was truly an outstanding reunion, one that will be long remembered by all those (estimated to be about 90) who attended. Our sincere appreciation to the Maple City Local, who did a tremendous job hosting the reunion.

Reported by June Haines

FROM COLUMBIA FALLS, MONT.

Where two or three in sweet accord,
Obedient to their sovereign Lord,
Meet to recount his acts of grace,
And offer solemn prayer and praise,

There will the gracious Savior be,
To bless the little company;
There to unveil his smiling face,
And bid his glories fill the place.

We meet at thy command, oh Lord,
Relying on thy faithful word!
Now send the Spirit from above,
And fill our hearts with heavenly love.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

We do have this wonderful promise Jesus made, that He will meet with us even though we are few in number when we meet in His name. Yet I feel alarmed when I see interest waning because there are so few of us.

We who have no ministry sometimes find it a struggle to keep meeting, but we must not let ourselves become discouraged for this is just what the evil one wants us to do. Then he can convince us that it just isn't worth while and there are always many other things at which to spend our time. Oh yes, he can persuade us to give up. We have so much work to do, or it is such a nice day to go picnicking, or it would be nice to just stay at home and rest. And of course, we are continually bombarded with many things to think about and fill our time with; they shout at us from every side. So if we do not set aside time to seek the Lord, and to study His word, to meet in prayer and worship before Him, the cares of this life and the things of the world will gradually fill all of our time and thought until the Lord can find no place in us.

Let us pray for one another, and let us together, praise His Holy Name!

We have so many blessings each day and our very lives are being spared upon the highways. In the past year our grandson, Marshall York, was hit by a pickup, which he didn't see, as he was crossing the highway.

The pickup he was driving was demolished and he was knocked unconscious, but he had only a few bruises and scratches on him. The other driver was not hurt.

Then just a few weeks ago, our nephew, Bruce Riley, was in a motorcycle accident injuring one leg, but not breaking it. Otherwise he was unharmed. We know he could have been hurt much more severely, as the two motorcycles collided.

Also our precious daughter, Margaret Smith, escaped a three car accident Friday morning, July 8th, as she was on her way to work. A car came up behind her going so fast and passed her as she was meeting an oncoming car. She said that they were so close there just wasn't anyway humanly possible for him to get around her and she cried out, "Oh no, no," as she saw him come around her. She knew there was no way that he could get past without a headon which would have caused a three car smashup, but he made it around and between them without even a bump.

Margaret said she wept all the way to work, in thanksgiving, knowing that it was only by God's intervening hand that this car got around her without the three cars being wrecked, for there was no human way it could have been done. All the day long she wept whenever she thought about this, and she wept again that evening when telling me of what had happened. She knew that the Lord was right there at that very moment and saved at least three people from very possible death. Praise God!

We know that in each of these instances our dear ones were spared by His intervening hand from death, or from being maimed for life.

Praise God! Praise God!

Yes, Lord! We need Thee every hour, most Holy One!

The Lord is very close to us and we can walk daily by His side if we will.

We are living in the very last hour just prior to His coming when every eye shall see **Him**, and shall **know just who He is**.

Let us pray for one another that we will not forget.

Your sister in Christ,
Stella Winegar

COURAGE

Courage can be silent as the sunlight
Invisible as air
Soundless as the oak tree in the forest
Quiet as a prayer

Courage has no army and no banners
Courage has no drums

But softly, when the heart asks God for help
Courage always comes.

Author Unknown

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord"
(Psalm 27:14)

TEMPLE LOT LOCAL NEWS

Greetings to all the brothers and sisters in our Church family! The month of July was a big and busy one. We started out on the very first evening. Doris Ratterree opened her home for a stork shower; her daughter, Gerry Adams, was hostess. The honoree was Carol Adams; the high point of the evening was that Carol drove herself to the party, though she was expecting on the fourth, three days later. She didn't quite make it. Matter of fact, the event occurred just over three weeks later; on July 27th she presented her husband Ray with a seven pound, fifteen ounce boy, named Casey Ryan.

Then, on Tuesday the fifth there was another such shower, this time at the home of Edith Case. She was ably assisted by her daughters, Marie and Barbara (Mrs. John!) Case. The guest of honor was Bonnie (Mrs. Don) Case. Bonnie didn't drive herself there. As a matter of fact, she had a bit of trouble arriving at all. Her veterinarian husband was called at the last minute on an emergency case — a horse. She did get there after all fortunately. Her little production came on the twenty fifth; Nathaniel Daniel weighed in at nine nine pounds, three ounces and was twenty two and a half inches long.

Each of our mothers to be received a goodly stack of goodies. We pray God's rich blessings on them (and their new sons); may each sister accept the responsibility and the rewards with joy. May each never forget that she has at the tips of her praying fingers all the help that Heaven affords, which is immeasurable.

The next occasion to draw our attention was Vacation Church School, held July 11-15. From the habit of years we keep calling it "Bible School", yet we turn to the Book of Mormon for just as much of our reference and inspiration. We had an enjoyable and profitable week, the teachers as usual (your reporter, at least!) learning more than the students. There were thirty six enrolled from both Independence Locals, and a few visitors who were welcome indeed. Grace Rudd, Irene Case and Bonnie (Jim) Case were co-chairmen. Marie Case led the singing, assisted by Paula Case. There was a daily story from the scriptures, brought to delightful life by Katie Moyer in her own enthusiastic fashion. The Cradle Roll was taught "Obedience" by former students, Becky Fann and Steve Sarratt. Edith Case and Barbara Case taught the Primary class about "The Creation". The Intermediates studied "Principles of the Gospel", under Caroline Hedrick and Konie

Caviness. The Juniors learned something about the "Church History" from Donna Moser and Bonnie (Jim) Case. All classes spent some time each day on various interesting bits of handcraft, which were proudly displayed on Sunday evening at the "graduation" program. Menda Stotis ministered to the vigorous young appetites with cookies and punch each day and helped with the cake and punch served Sunday evening. Patricia Bruner, Robert Bruner and David Rudd came to the rescue of the teachers by supervising the daily recesses. In the program each class displayed or recited something from the daily lessons and, as usual, charmed the audience. I think everyone felt as I did when the week was over. We were tired but happy. Working with our dear young ones, large and small, and with our much-loved sisters in an effort to add just a little to God's glory here, this blesses more than it wearies.

The month's parties were finished off on Tuesday, the twenty sixth. This time it was a wedding shower. Linda Case was the honored guest; Jean Chapman and her daughter, Manon Lawrence, were joined by Judy Palmer and provided a pleasant evening, downstairs in our little white church. A highlight here was a series of household hints, interspersed with funny memories of the weddings of other brides, recent and not-so-recent. The hints were practical, but some of the mishaps related might have caused Linda to consider postponement, especially those of Bonnie (Jim) Case and Barbara Case. The gifts were varied, many, and appealing, Linda kept them, so evidently she decided not to cancel out! Her wedding to Terry Affholder will be an important event in August; I'm sure she knows how much we wish for her a life of blessing and being blessed.

The last event recounted took place before the above, but seems to be a perfect finale. On Sunday afternoon, the twenty fourth, the baptismal font behind the church was surrounded by members of both Independence locals. Young Jon Geier, son of Sharon and Paul Leikness of the East Local, entered the water with Elder Frank Fann. Assistance was given by Elder Larry Beem. There was dual symbolism to this event. Besides the new birth in Christ, there was a joining of two congregations in love: for each other, for the new member, for the Temple Lot, and for God. May this love grow till it mingles with that of all the saints — and fills the earth!

A firm faith is the best divinity; a good life is the best philosophy; a clear conscience is the best law; honesty is the best policy; and temperance is the best physic.

He drew a circle that left me out,
A fool, a rebel, a thing to flout;
But love and I had the will to win,
We drew a circle that took him in.

AVA REPORT

Wednesday June 22 at 2:00 P. M. we had the privilege of attending the marriage of Miss Janette Ludwig to Bro. Steven Burgin (Steven is the son of Bro. and Sis. Lester Burgin). The wedding service was performed by Bro. Archie Bell. The young couple are now making their home in Millington, Tenn. where Steven is stationed in the Marine Corp. We wish all God's blessing to attend these two in their new life together.

Visitors at services recently have been Bro. Arthur Smith and wife Ruth and two children, Bro. and Sis. Archie Bell, Bro. and Sis. Gary Housknecht, and Bro. and Sis. Eugene Gould.

Several of our group were able to attend the Missouri Reunion from which we received great encouragement. I especially felt well fed by the three sermons I was able to attend; I was fed richly by The Spirit. O! as a group to grow so deeply into the fullness of Christ's love indwelling, by the Holy Ghost that always we may be fed, and enabled to "feed my lambs" as Peter was told (John 21:15).

Further small gleanings from sermons, testimonies, study classes.

One stumbling block to convincing others of the truth of God's Gospel is, we do not **act** like people of God, for our righteousness does not exceed the "righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," etc. (Matt. 5:20 & Ro. 10:3). We do not exceed in this way any more than sectarians churches even though we have a true commission given from God; we yet lack personal dedication; our lives fall far short of the standard set by Christ (Ro. 10:3 & 4).

Small gleanings -

Our only light is Jesus Christ, (Eph. 5:14 & 1 John 1:5). Inasmuch as individuals reflect Christ in their lives that they are in touch with Christ and wherein we fail to reflect this Christly mind, light, truth, life, we are not filled with His fullness. The Church has the "Fullness" restored. O! that we all could live to this "fullness" of the "light" given. O! that we can awaken to this and make full repentance in deep remorse of our failure of making inward spiritual growth; for He can reveal His precise "will" to each individual.

Small gleanings -

Justice **acted** in Eden in the expulsion of Adam and Eve after their disobedience, their choosing to give "flesh", i. e. self, the honoured position instead of total yieldedness unto God, thus find their "joy" (1 John 1:4) in His precious "will" in which we are blessed beyond understanding.

Mercy **acted** in the fullness of the plan of redemption, there uniting of humanity unto God, the restoring us to the right relations with God whereby we may grow to the full measure of the stature of Christ.

Small gleanings -

Satan has robbed us of many blessings by entering unlawfully and interfering through the channels of the "flesh" i. e. self. He has set up patterns (habits in us) by which we yet stumble! he instigated fault-finding (which if carried to excess can fault us right out of the church, out of God's Kingdom), yes, right out of the Spirit's abiding within the citadel of our hearts.

Small gleanings -

Do we put more **stress** on the material or temporal side of serving God, rather than the Spiritual, inward growth? Having entered the "door" by repentance, faith and baptism, do we linger by the "door" not yet convinced that we cannot serve God by fleshly methods, and that by serving in the "flesh", are we not "carnal"? (1 Cor. 3:3) "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" Walking after the "flesh" (self-importance, self-pride, self-adulations, self-magnifying, self-excusing) are some of the things which cause strife, envy, divisions, etc.

The "fullness" of the Gospel is Christ, all that He typifies, to "abide" in Him, to be wholly grafted in unto the "true vine", Christ! He, the "living water", He, the "life", the "light, He in us and we in Him by power of the Holy Ghost, herein is "fullness". O! to be of this "fullness"! (John 15:4 & 5; Rev. 22:17; John 4:13 & 14 and John 1:4)

Small gleanings -

"Nevertheless, Jacob, my first born in the wilderness, thou knowest the greatness of God; and he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain" (2 Nephi 1:61). To our "gain"? Surely if we know "the greatness of God" and follow Him, our most desired gain is spiritual growth unto the "fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ". Is this what it means? He came that we might have life abundantly (John 10:10). That His "mind" and words be "written on the fleshly tablets of the heart" (Phil. 2:5 and 2 Cor. 3:3), changing it, our hearts, spirits and souls into the fullness of the living Gospel, no longer "carnal" Christians wrapped up in self. When affliction leads us to the "word" it becomes a blessing to us. The "word" is sharper than a "two edged sword" (Heb. 4:12), which cleanses our souls, hearts and spirits and life, worthy to become the "abode" of God's indwelling Love, through Christ by power of the Holy Ghost.

Have you, when going through a grievous trial, experienced the feeling of being more in Him than in the trial, though you are in the midst of the trial? How blest is the work of His through the Comforter's presence. Come, let us know that he is more **near**, closer than any trial or trouble. Let us, thus strengthened, bear another's burden, bear with each other, and re-

member we are **more** in Christ, abiding in the "vine", than in a brother's burden.

Small gleanings -

Could it be that God has used other peoples to do work for Him inasmuch as they are deeply humble before Him and true-hearted?

Awe it is to realize, Thy Spirit,
O! God, touches where it "listeth".
What bondage it is to think

It dwelt in a few.

Where'er hearts are turned in
earnestness to Thee,
there will Thy Spirit
in response be.

Man may give up on himself
and on others in
despair and grief;

But Thou canst not, -

Creator, -

brother, -

Father.

Are we not humbled by this; oughtn't we to be humbled unto the dust by this, that we claiming to have more "light" yet fail to live up to it in "fullness"?

Our promise, our hope of Salvation is in fulfillment of doing God's will, not in just being a church member.

Small gleanings -

"Love", Godly love is the motivating power unto righteousness in our lives, this beautiful quality can be utterly destroyed by indifference, hard-heartedness, excessive fault-finding and tale-bearing. The biggest responsibility upon the face of the earth is to bring mankind to the personal knowledge of God and Godly-Love. Often we strive to do His work while we lack much of this quality of Godly-Love.

Two great powers are at work in this world, the Spirit of God and the evil spirit. One is "light" the other "darkness" (Eph. 5:14 and 1 John 1:5 and Col. 1:13 & Eph 6:12).

The cry in the night, -

The night of life's darkness,
out of this arose the cry.

How to answer this pleading cry,
a soul an hungered,
a soul a-thirst?

In oneself there is no surcease,
no help;

Only by being a channel through which
God may bring relief, - helps, -
food of His feeding.

The channel aching in sympathy
with another

May be fed too by the overflow of
Blessing brought to this other
By God's answering the
cry in the night.

May He strengthen us to be
this open channel of
intercession!

When we do evil, or when we live as a carnal christian, (Ro. 8:7 & 1 Cor. 3:3), are we not partaking of the folly of darkness? The "night has a 1000 eyes, the day has but one". The sun of our day is Jesus Christ our risen Lord. The deepest darkness cannot hide us from God's Holy eye. Each of us must determine to walk in the "light", in righteousness, (Ro. 8:1 & 2). By failing in being truly, deeply dedicated we then may be a stumbling-block to other searching ones; let us beware that we do not hinder God's work by laxness.

We sing the beautiful song, "Make Me A Blessing"; we cannot be this beautiful blessing by only living as a "carnal" christian.

Small gleanings -

God has commanded His people (this means you and me) that they should bind up the broken-hearted, comfort all who mourn, etc. (Mosiah 9:39 & 40). Christ was sent by the Father to deliver the captives; even so He sends His disciples into all the world with like commission, (John 17:18 & 21 and Luke 4:18), to those who are captive unto the evils of this world, snared, bound in darkness, scarce knowing where to turn in their trouble, bound by Satan.

None are forbidden or barred from coming unto Him (2 Nephi 11:98 through 105) We are living in a time of great darkness and great upheavals in nations. Are we preparing ourselves, yielding ourselves unto God, so He can purify the sanctuary of our hearts until He rules and abides there?

O! that we may be filled with this Godly-Love.

Small gleanings -

And a great gulf separates the righteous from they that deliberately chose to serve Satan knowingly (Luke 16:26 and 1 Nephi 4:46. 1 Nephi 3:127 tells us what this gulf is: "And a great and terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the justice of the eternal God, . . ."

Hast thou seen the black roiling, -
moiling

Of an evil gulf opened at thy feet?
Has it filled thee with horror
and fear?

A terror that grips thy very soul
And sends thee fleeing to thy Savior,
Crying out in panic, "Save me,
Save me"

A sigh so indelibly pressed upon
thy soul

That ever after just the remembrance
Of it thou dost tremble and cringe?
And seek thy Heavenly Father
In re-assurance, finding in His embrace
Mercy, Comfort, Love and strength.

"I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid" (Ps. 86:12, 13, 15, 16).

Small gleanings -

1 Nephi 7:60: "And because of the righteousness of his people Satan has no "power" over them. The Bible says in Rev. 20:2: "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."

The Book of Mormon explains what it is that is the binding cords that binds Satan, the righteousness of His people, Christ's righteousness and His people's righteousness.

Small gleanings -

As we face the great responsibility before us and consult with others, which helps so greatly, yet we are to take warning; there is danger of putting our trust in the "arm of flesh", (Jer. 17:5), rather than in God. "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). While we feel great weakness in bringing truth to others, we are companioned even by Paul, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much

trembling. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:1, 3, 5). "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause. Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will He teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies" (Ps. 25:3 through 10).

Out of the terrible darkness came the tender voice of the Shepherd, our Savior, calling them unto Him, out of their darkness, out of their fear, telling them to become as little children with faith deep in His Truth, believing on Him unto Eternal Life. (3 Nephi 4:41 through 65). We yet hear Him calling in this day of darkness, in all loving kindness to come unto Him.

O! to realize that to **give** all, to forego all unto Christ, means to receive back from Him all, doubly our own being from Him and His blessing in addition. The sins we yield to him, He helps us overcome by His forgiveness; the afflictions and trials, He helps us and strengthens us to bear, and blesses them to our gain; the good in our lives, children, parents, friends, etc. by Him doubly blest.

Ava reporter

A PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts. Thou which hast kept with thy servant . . . that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant . . . that which thou hast promised him . . . yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in thy law, as thou hast walked before me. Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant . . . But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which (we) have built! Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee; that thine eyes may be open upon

this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there: to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place.

Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive. If a man sin against his neighbor . . . then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, giving him according to his righteousness.

And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house; then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou

gavest them and to their fathers.

When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; then hear thou them from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be: then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when everyone shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house: then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men) that they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways, so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

Moreover concerning the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched out arm; if they come and pray in this house; then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and may know that this house which (we) have built is called by thy name.

If thy people go out to war against their enemies by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which (we) have built for thy name; then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their sup-

plication, and maintain their cause.

If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; if they return to thee with all their heart and all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which (we) have built for thy name: then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent(ive) unto the prayer that is made in this place. Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength; let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember . . . thy servant(s)".

This prayer was offered at a prayer meeting in the Temple Lot Local one evening recently. It could have come from the heart of almost any one of our ministry. The man through whom the utterance came, however, was King Solomon, as he stood with the congregation of Israel in the temple which had just been completed . . . and "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices: and the glory of the Lord filled the house" (II Chron. 7:1) (The prayer, with only minute changes, is found in II Chron. 6:14-42.)

THOMAS

I almost feel I know the man,
Yes, know and love and understand.
He walked toward death with his dear friend.
Before he really knew the Plan
He walked toward death with his dear friend.
It's sadly true — he'd not believe
Unless he'd see, unless he'd touch.
Then he saw! He ceased to grieve.
That blessing might not be as much
As if his faith had let him know.
But this the Master won't forget:

When to Judea He would go
For Lazarus' sake, to danger yet,
This Thomas was the one who cried,
"Let us go too, that He not die
Alone, that we die by His side!"
The Master must have loved that cry!
So, I rejoice for Thomas' sake
And weep, as though with him I'd trod,
As though I'd shared that joyous shock
And whispered too, "My Lord, my God!"

Donna Moser

BAPTISMS IN COLLINS

At the Collins church on Sunday morning, June 12, Shelly Spear, little daughter of Jerry Hays, was baptized by Elder Ed McIndoo. Elder Oren Caviness was spokesman at her confirmation. Shelly is the granddaughter of Sister Loraine Welton and a great granddaughter of Sister Minnie Smith, both of Ava.

July 17, Jennifer Cobb, daughter of Bruce and Marlene Cobb of Louisburg, was led into the waters of baptism by her grandfather, Apostle Leon Yates, who also confirmed her, assisted by Elder Oren Caviness.

It is good to see how the gospel of Christ blesses one generation after another down through the years.

BAPTISM, TEMPLE LOT, JULY 31

On this sunny Sunday morning, between Sunday School and preaching service, an exultant grandfather led his little granddaughter into the baptismal waters here. Elder George Brantner performed the rite for Heather Stephens, daughter of Ross and Jeanece Stephens. Our pastor, Elder Richard Wheaton, conducted the service; the opening and closing prayers were offered by Elder Leslie Case. Elder Nicholas Denham read the instructions given by Christ to the people of this land, concerning the authority and method for baptism and ending with "And there shall be no disputations among you." We sang "Jesus, Mighty King"; as we sang the words, "Fearless of the world's despising we the ancient path pursue, buried with our Lord and rising to a life divinely new" and then "Ye Must Be Born Again" our hearts were touched. Upstairs again, Elder Brantner said a few helpful words to his dear granddaughter, then Elder Wheaton confirmed her by the laying on of hands. As we welcomed her with the hand of fellowship, more than a few loving arms went around our new little sister.

Whence came man? Wherefore? What his goal?

What his true part on life's brief stage?

Where speeds that unknown thing, the soul,

When ends its earthly pilgrimage?

Where dwelt that soul, before it hied

To vivify its clod of clay?

Where will its subtile essence bide

Till summoned at the Judgment Day?

. . . Whether religion's flickering flame

Won o'er his savage heart its sway;

Whether some holy prophet came

To point him to a better way.

. . . We can but know that God is wise,

That faith, not knowledge, serves us best,

That duty in the present lies,

And to his wisdom leave the rest.

J. W. Temple,
in his Sheaf of Grain

THE JOY OF RETURNING

What a joy there is in returning! None have explained the fact — but the seeing over again, the finding again, the recollecting, is the secret of nearly all our profoundest pleasures. What we see, or hear, or touch, for the first time, may be beautiful, or grand, or sweet, but it is then too new. It takes us by surprise.

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