

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. 57

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No. 12

Christmas Love

No birth of a child more cherished,
No death of a Son so mourned,
But God in His eternal wisdom
Made Christ the Lord our King.

We pause for a while to listen
To song and anthem sung
To His glory and almighty love
In your heart and mine to reign.

Our lives are enriched immensely
Not by worldly wealth alone,
But by treasures of friendships gathered
And nourished with thoughtful care.

The march of the endless seasons
Brings around the Christmas time
When fondly we recall each name
Our hopes with love to share.

Arthur G. Smith

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Headquarters on the Temple Lot, 200 S. River Blvd.
Independence, Missouri 64050
Phone: (816) 833-3995 - 833-3914

EDITOR

Roland Sarratt, 15910 E. 36th Terr., Independence, Missouri 64055
Phone 373-6605

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Harvey E. Seibel, 9800 E. 32nd St., Independence, Mo. 64052, 461-1762
Becky L. Fann, 4117 S. River Blvd., Independence, Mo. 64055, 373-8846

BUSINESS MANAGER OF THE ADVOCATE

C. LeRoy Wheaton, P. O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051

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Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
200 S. River Blvd.
P. O. Box 472
Independence, Missouri 64051

Att.: C. LeRoy Wheaton, Business Manager, General Church

Secretary, Council of Apostles, William A. Sheldon, 1011 S. Cottage, Independence, Missouri 64050.

Secretary, Council of Bishops, Nicholas F. Denham, 4116 South Cottage, Independence, Missouri 64055.

General Church Representative in the Office, James M. Case, 1106 E. Gudgell, Independence, Missouri 64055.

General Church Secretary, Robert W. Oldham, 13113 E. 44th, Independence, Missouri 64055.

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Editorial . . .

"AND ALL THAT HEARD IT WONDERED . . ."

The unusual circumstances under which Jesus Christ was born has always made the story of his birth special to the believer. In God's own way, He has caused the unexpected to happen to confound those who claimed authority on the interpretation of the scriptures. Only those who humbled themselves before God were in a condition whereby God could reveal His secrets. This is particularly noticeable in the accounts written by Matthew and Luke.

Those who were chosen to be a part of that great event held no position of notice among the Jews. They were not recognized by those in authority as being worthy of so great an honor placed upon them.

So it was then as it has been in times before and since — God chooses the lesser to confound the greater. He reveals His works to those of His own choosing.

The writers of the scriptures tell us very simply that Mary the mother of Jesus, was a virgin and it was revealed to Nephi in a vision that she was a virgin, "most beautiful and fair above all other virgins." Luke also tells us that Mary had revealed to her by the angel Gabriel what was to happen to her. She was to conceive and bare a son who was to be called Jesus. This was to be done not by man but by the Holy Ghost and by the power of the Highest which should overshadow her. Mary's acceptance of this unusual news was expressed thusly, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be

it unto me according to thy word."

Man in his human presumptuousness has changed things to suit his own wills; at no time did Mary refer to herself as the Mother of God, nor did any of the writers of the scriptures. No one can discredit the honorable role she played in that event, but she did not exalt herself above that which God chose for her as some have taught.

Joseph also exemplified an honorable choice of God by being obedient to God's every command. He had thought to put Mary away "privily" (annul the marriage) when he found that she was with child before they came together, but upon receiving the angel's message in a dream, he did as he was instructed. The complete acceptance of God's will by Mary and Joseph is a lesson in faith, for they were experiencing the very abnormal and it was necessary for them to have implicit trust in the messages God conveyed unto them individually.

God's foreknowledge is usually evident in all His works. It was especially true in Christ's birth. The Jews were aware of where the Messiah was to be born, but they would have never guessed the circumstances under which it would occur. Since it was prophesied that he would be born in Bethlehem, it would be very normal for someone to suppose that he would have been born of residents of that town rather than some-

one who would travel there once a year to be taxed. This, however, was the wisdom of God in frustrating the plans of Herod the king.

After hearing the news from the wise men, Herod thought to trick them into revealing where the young child was. God warned them against doing so and consequently Herod had all the children two years old and under to be slain in the town of Bethlehem.

In all the works of God He has selected witnesses to proclaim their divinity. It was true in the birth of Christ. Again, however, God did not choose prominent individuals from among the Jews to be the witnesses, but He chose lowly country folk — shepherds.

While all Jerusalem slept unaware of the holy event, those humble laborers were visited by the angels of the Lord and a multitude of the heavenly host. Being obedient to the angel's bidding, they hastened to the manger and beheld the new born babe with Mary and Joseph. As the shepherds spread this news among the people, it was unlikely that their witness was considered credible by any of the notable Jews. The miraculous birth of the Savior of all mankind was to happen only once in the history of the world, yet only a very few of God's select people were privileged to witness or be a part of the event.

This familiar and wonderful story verifies the truth that God's ways are not our ways. We should be made aware that we dare not try to tailor God's works to our expectations. If we become overconfident and set in our personal interpretations of the prophecies, we may very well miss the actual fulfillment even though it happens right before our eyes. Let us all humble ourselves and stand in awe as we behold the holy works of God.

RLS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

(Questions on the birth of Christ)

1. Did any of the Old Testament prophets indicate in which city Christ would be born?
2. Did any of the Old Testament prophets foretell that Christ would be born of a virgin?
3. What Old Testament king was promised that Christ should come through his seed? Give prophecies relating to this king.
4. Who of the prophets in the Book of Mormon foretold of Christ's birth or the coming of Christ?
5. What books in the New Testament give the account of Christ's birth?
6. What book gives the account of the birth of John the Baptist?
7. True or False. Zacharias, being a young man, readily received the angel's message that his wife Elizabeth was to bear him a son.
8. Why did the friends and relatives of Zacharias

and Elizabeth object to the name of John for their son?

9. When Zacharias prophesied, what did he say would be raised up in the house of David?

10. When Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was to miraculously conceive and bear a son, she referred to herself as ("the mother of God") ("the handmaid of the Lord") ("the mother of the Lord").

11. Where does it tell of the angel of the Lord appearing to Joseph the husband of Mary?

12. True or False. When Mary visited Elizabeth her cousin, their conversation indicated that they little understood the coming of the Lord.

13. Why did Joseph go to Bethlehem to be taxed?

14. When the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds, what did he say was born in the city of David?

15. True or False. The child was named Jesus by the angel before he was conceived in the womb?

16. When Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Jerusalem to "present him to the Lord," what sacrifice did they offer which was according to the law of Moses?

17. Who was given to know through the Holy Ghost "... that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ?"

(See answers on page 191)

"The Friends Of Jesus All Agree . . ."

During our last sacrament meeting as No. 384 (Zion's Hymnal) was called for, I had the old sick grieving feeling that I've had so many times in years passed when this song has been sung, ever since I was a girl. At times the grieving was so severe I couldn't sing the lines:

"How pleasing to behold and see
The friends of Jesus all agree"

We don't agree. We have not agreed in any local I've attended: there has not been agreement of doctrine or opinion, etc. And my grief mounted. Then a peaceful illumination came over me with the singing of the next two lines:

"To sit around His sacred board,
As members of One common Lord."

And I thought, Yes! yes! We do agree to come to His Holy Communion Table (or we wouldn't be there), knowing how broken, and how faulty we all are and how desperately we do need His cleansing, His renewing, His strengthening comfort, His grace and mercy to enable us to go on in any manner at all, striving to live His example and teachings.

Oh, how blind I have been to the full beauty of this song. My blind spots are so numerous; this is a beautiful song!

d. s.

FROM THE MISSIONARY FIELD

"Ye Are Called To The Work"

By Don McIndoo

We sat in the little church at Kopte with a small group of our Mayan brothers and sisters awaiting the beginning of the service, the second one attended since our arrival in Yucatan the evening before. Last evening the service in Yobain had commenced with a beautiful welcoming ceremony by the children of the Yobain local. Their Christian love was evident as they welcomed the two North American missionaries to their land with special songs and readings. Following this touching greeting, Elder Placido Koyoc preached the "good news" of the gospel to a people who hunger and thirst after the kingdom of God. Afterwards each member of the congregation came forward to greet us with a spiritual kiss or embrace which evidenced such love and affection that it was with difficulty that we were able to share our testimonies with our brothers and sisters. It was a rewarding experience.

Now we were to rejoice again as Elder Esteban Canul began this evening's service by leading us in song with his strong and beautiful voice. We rejoiced that the many prayers of the saints had been answered, for six months prior Brother Esteban lay in a coma in Merida hospital, the victim of critical head injuries received as he laid his motorcycle into a rock-strewn ditch to avoid hitting a bicycle rider who crossed the road in front of him.

"Forgive me," he said as he began his sermon, "for sometimes I have difficulty in speaking some words and in reading as a result of my injuries." He then spoke of the new life God had given him and related to us how even his doctor told him that it was only through God's blessing that he was able to survive the severe injuries to his head. As we listened to him preach it was readily apparent that the Lord had touched him with a renewed zeal.

Indeed, this zeal for the gospel was evident as we moved among our people. The eight elders, the priests and deacons of the Church of Christ are laboring with zeal and preaching with the power and conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their efforts have expanded until they now encompass the preaching of the gospel in eighteen cities and villages located in three states. Some of these elders are shepherding as many as three or four locals, traveling by bus or motorcycle to hold services each week in each local they serve. Such dedication might give us cause to reflect upon our own zeal to expand God's work.

In fact, the demands of travel upon some of our ministry are so great that it requires the help of dedicated lay members to maintain regular services. For example, one elder in Motul serves as the pastor over four congregations which cumulatively hold eleven services each week. In addition, he makes a monthly trip to a village 200 miles distant to carry the gospel to a

new group of interested persons. He relies upon the help of a deacon and several dedicated lay members to conduct these regular services.

We had the privilege of hearing the testimony of one of these willing workers, a brother named Carlos. We had gone to the village of Uci to worship with our brethren there. Carlos was the man in charge of the service and he asked me to preach this afternoon. After the sermon he felt moved to bear his testimony before the congregation. He told of a life of unhappiness where he expended all his earnings to lose himself in drunkenness while his wife and children went without clothing and food. His life continued in this manner until a brother of the Church of Christ invited him to a birthday celebration in his home. (Birthday celebrations are religious services among our people in Mexico.) After the service his friend gave him a Bible and invited him to bring his family and come back to worship with them. This was the beginning of a new life for Carlos and family, as he encountered the gospel, became a believing convert, and received the grace of God to change his life. Now he rides his bicycle five miles to Uci twice a week to share the saving work of God with others.

The work of the Lord in Mexico is dependent upon such dedication. The work and opportunity are great, the ministry few. Time and time again I have witnessed God's work expanded by dedicated lay members. I am often reminded of Paul's beautiful description of the saints in Corinth: "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men . . ." Such are the members of the Church of Christ in Yobain. Because of their faithfulness to the doctrine of Christ they were forced to leave their work and homes in Vayalceh and they migrated to the village of Yobain, just a handful of believers. Now from this little nucleus of the Church of Christ the gospel is carried to groups in Merida, Vayalceh, and Chompoton. Each week finds three generations of the Koyoc family conducting services in these widely scattered communities. While Elder Placido Koyoc and Priest Jeremias Koyoc conduct services in two communities, their father, Isidro, a lay member, conducts the services in Yobain, and Placido's son, a very young man of eighteen, travels by bus to Merida to assist with services there.

The dedication and commitment of our Indian ministry and membership is helping to expand the work of the gospel in Mexico. In the October issue we recounted some of the testimony we have witnessed of this dedication on the part of our brethren. Even as I praise the Lord for His blessings upon this work, the thought is borne in upon my mind that each of us, as well, has a responsibility toward the work of the gospel among this people.

The Book of Mormon clearly speaks to us of our responsibility: "For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed." (2 Nephi 12:80) "For thus it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles, that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles . . ." (3 Nephi 9:92).

The parable of the "tame olive tree" in the book of Jacob gives to the Church of Christ a revelation of God's direction concerning the emphasis of our labor: "Wherefore, let us go to, and labor with our mights, this last time; for behold the end draweth nigh; and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard. Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first . . ." (Jacob 3:126-127). A close look at this parable leads us to believe that we are to commence our work in these closing days with the last branch the Lord transplanted in His vineyard, which branch was the Nephite and Lamanite people of America.

The parable indicates the laborers will be few, but that the Lord of the vineyard shall labor beside them. You are called to assist in this work though you may never be required to leave your home. ". . . if ye have desires to serve God, ye are called to the work, for behold, the field is white already to harvest . . ." (Book of Commandments 111:1). This is the call our brethren hear and are answering. You may well ask, "How can I help?"

While in Mexico this summer, Brother Leon Yates and I were privileged to have a part in a number of spiritual cottage meetings held in the homes of persons interested in the gospel. The Spirit of the Lord was felt as we entered into these services. Its influence was evident in the faces and lives of many of the people present. As we have often seen, these cottage meetings have a way of blossoming into congregations of believers. Some of these congregations which have been meeting in homes for several years now have expanded to the point where the available space is not sufficient for services. Two of these congregations have sacrificed to the extent they have been able to purchase land for the building of a church, but the building of a church is out of the realm of possibility for these people who must spend every cent for the bare necessities of life. Here, then, is a way we can aid our brethren in their desires to worship the Lord. The Church of Christ has a special fund called Yucatan Aid and Building Fund, so when you send in your tithing accompany it with a special offering for this important service we can render our brethren in Mexico.

Each wage earner in the Church of Christ has the opportunity to assist our brethren in Mexico and the extension of the gospel among the Indian people. Our tithing is used to meet many of the needs of this work. The importance of this avenue of service cannot be overemphasized. The Lord told the early church ". . . it

is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people . . ." (Book of Com. LXV:30) Indeed, the work in Mexico could not continue to prosper without the support and dedication of our members. It pays the elder's expenses of the Mexican elders who travel from town-to-town with the good news of the gospel. It provides for some of the medical needs our people regularly encounter in a land ravaged by poverty and disease.

A few years ago members of the Phoenix local assisted a young man to go to school and study English. Today that young man desires to use his knowledge to translate needed tracts into Spanish for his people to use. I pray that the inspiration of the Lord will help him in his endeavors. But after his work is done, your tithing will be needed to publish the tracts produced.

We are faced with what might prove to be a serious problem. This summer we handed out to our people the last of the Spanish Books of Mormon we had and there were many requests for more books which we could not meet. We shall now have to purchase other editions of the Book of Mormon or perhaps find a way by which we can publish our own Authorized Version of the Book of Mormon in Spanish. In either event, it will be your tithing which must provide for the fulfillment of the prophecy we have read: ". . . there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed." (2 Nephi 12:80)

There is yet another important way you can assist in the promotion of this work. There is one limiting factor to the further expansion of the work in Mexico; the number of ministry available to reach out. Many of our elders have requests to visit new villages, but they are already extended to the limit of their ability. Let us remember Christ's injunction to His followers as He looked upon the multitudes who desired to hear the gospel. "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." (Mt. 9:37, 38) Your prayers can be much availing.

Many of our brethren in Mexico have indeed begun to labor with all their might. Is your desire to serve the Lord's purpose as strong? ". . . if ye have desires to serve God, ye are called to the work . . . and faith, hope, charity, and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualifies him for the work."

It is no good reason for a man's religion that he was born and brought up in it; for then a Turk would have as much reason to be a Turk as a Christian a Christian.

Chillingworth

If our religion is not true, we are bound to change it; if it is true, we are bound to propagate it.

Whately

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER WRITTEN TO THE PRESIDENT OF A MISSIONARY SOCIETY

By Harvey E. Seibel

I have just finished reading your recent book. Your effort to reconcile the three viewpoints (the pre, mid, and post-tribulation rapture theories) is commendable. I am glad to see that you have arrived at a correct understanding concerning the separate occurrences of the two events, the Great Tribulation and the Day of Wrath. I am also happy to see that you distinguish between the Russian Invasion and the battle of Armageddon.

There are however some points regarding these prophecies that I would like to share with you. You indicate that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem and that antichrist will set himself up in that temple showing himself that he is God. And that in the midst of the week he shall cause the restored Jewish sacrifice and oblation to cease. But let's reread the prophecy.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:24-27).

In considering this prophecy we understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah shall be 69 weeks or 483 years. And after that time shall Messiah be cut off. The command to restore and build Jerusalem went forth during the reign of the Medo-Persian Empire, the second world kingdom, in 460 B. C.

At the conclusion of this period, and at the commencement of the 70th week, Christ began His ministry. The Most Holy (Christ) was anointed with the Holy Ghost immediately following his baptism, and by His sacrifice He made reconciliation for our iniquity, etc.

After the 69 weeks shall Messiah be cut off but not for Himself. It was for us He was cut off. This was accomplished in the midst of the 70th week and through His sacrifice He fulfilled the law of Moses

causing the oblation and the sacrifice to cease. The renting of the veil of the Temple signified this fulfillment.

It becomes evident that this prophecy is surely speaking of Christ rather than the antichrist. Later, the people of the prince (the Roman army under Titus) destroyed the city and the Temple (69-70 A. D.) bringing desolation and scattering the people in fulfillment of the earlier rash statement made by the Jews who demanded that Christ be put to death saying, "the blood be upon our heads and upon our children's heads." So the Roman soldiery crucified the Jews by the thousands upon the surrounding hillsides. God is the one that brought that judgment upon Jerusalem and the Romans were his army (children) even as Gog (Russia) will soon be brought upon Israel by the Lord.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Paul speaks of a falling away or apostasy which was to occur from the true faith.

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (verses 1-3).

Simply stated, we are told that before Christ shall come the second time there shall come a falling away and the man of sin or the antichrist be revealed.

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (verse 4).

This prophetic individual will oppose God and exalt himself above all that is called God. He will be considered an object of worship above all other things that are worshipped, so much so, that he will impersonate God, sitting in the temple (the seat of religious worship) showing himself (or making claim) that he is God and equal to God.

I would like to suggest that that temple is not to be taken as a literal building constructed with human hands but rather it is the temple which God has constructed.

Consider: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an **holy temple** in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for

an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

The man of sin thus usurped the place of Christ in this holy temple, setting himself up as God in the place of God.

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time" (Verses 5-6).

Paul here is reminding them (the Thessalonian saints) of his previous conversation along this line and reiterating what they both already knew, that is, what was then preventing the manifestation of this man of sin.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (verses 7-9).

Paul recounts here what some of his former conversation to them had been. The evil processes were even then at work to bring about the manifestation of this evil character. But for the time being another power was preventing it from coming forth. Paul does not name the hindering power because they already knew what it was. For says he, "only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." THE WORDS LETTETH AND LET" in both the Greek translation and obsolete English mean "HINDER OR TO HINDER." In other words when this hindering power is finally taken out of the way (removed) then that wicked one will be revealed.

Who was the hindering power which was then, in Paul's day, preventing the rise of the man of sin? Without going into the historical account (for brevity sake) we state that it was the Imperial Roman Government. As long as the Emperor was the supreme ruler of the known world no other individual could raise up his head to oppose him. In the vision of Daniel it wasn't until after the rise of the ten horns that the little horn (the eleventh) came forth. Therefore it had to come to pass only after the fall of the Roman Empire and the subsequent division of the western empire into the ten kingdoms. The Catholic Encyclopedia also verifies this point. In the "Ante-Nicene Fathers" which are the writings of the early church fathers from 100 A. D. to 325 A. D. it is stated plainly what the hindering power was. It was then understood to be the Roman Government. And despite the periodic persecutions they had to undergo, the church prayed for the continuance of Rome so that the antichrist would not be revealed in their time.

QUESTION: Who is this man of sin? The key to his identity is found in the fourth verse of this chapter. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he

as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Was this ever fulfilled: Consider the following remarkable statements quoted below:

"All the kings of the west reverence the pope as a God on earth; said Gregory II., and he spoke truly. Sismondi describes how Pepin and the Franks received him as a divinity. His dogmas were regarded as oracles; the bulls and sentences as the voice of God. 'The people think of the pope as the one God that has power over all things in earth and in heaven.' Marcellus, addressing the pope at the Lateran Council, said, 'Thou art another God on earth;' and 'our Lord God the pope' was an oft accepted title. These are facts, substantial facts of history, which can be proved by countless documents, and which indeed no Romanist will deny. The people rendered and the pope received worship — the worship due to God alone. At the coronation of Pope Innocent X., Cardinal Colonna, in his own name and that of the clergy of St. Peter's, addressed the following words to the pope, 'kneeling on his knees:' 'Most holy and blessed father! head of the Church, ruler of the world, to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, whom the angels in heaven revere, and the gates of hell fear, and all the world adores, we specially venerate, worship, and adore thee! What blasphemous exaltation is here! Have not Paul's words been fulfilled? Has not this man of sin, sitting in the temple of God shown himself that he is God, or allowed himself to be treated as Divine, nay, even claimed to be so treated? He allowed himself to be styled 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,' because he gave and sold indulgences for sin. He was even more merciful than Christ; for He left souls in purgatory, and the pope took them out! He could command even the angels of heaven, and add saints to the celestial choir, raising dead men to form part of heaven's hierarchy as 'saints,' and causing them henceforth to be worshipped by the Church on earth!" (Romanism and the Reformation by H. Grattan Guinness, DD., F.R.A.S., page 63).

The above quotation (among many that could be cited) leave no room for doubt as to the identity of the man of sin. It is not a single individual but a ruling line or office which has continued down from its inception to the present day. The Pope is the man of sin. And though he may profess to be of Christ yet his acts betray him to be the very antichrist. Witness the millions put to death at his command during the papal reign of the dark ages.

(To be continued)

Religion is man's attempt to discover God by the unaided intellect. Christianity is God's revelation of Himself to man.

The religion of Christ reaches and changes the heart, which no other religion does.

Howells

LETTERS OF OLIVER COWDERY

No. 7

To: W. W. Phelps: Dear Brother:

Circumstances having heretofore intervened to prevent my addressing you previously upon the history of this church, you will not attribute the neglect to any want on my part, of a disposition to prosecute a subject so dear to me and so important to every Saint, living as we do in the day when the Lord has begun to fulfill his covenants to his long dispersed and afflicted people.

You have, no doubt, as well as myself, frequently heard those who do not pretend to an "experimental" belief in the Lord Jesus, say, with those who do, that (to use a familiar phrase) "any tune can be played upon the Bible." What is here meant to be conveyed, I suppose, is that proof can be adduced from that volume to support as many different systems as men please to choose: one saying that is the way, and the other, this is the way, while the third says, that it is all false, and that he can "play this tune upon it." If that is so, alas for our condition; admit this to be the case, and either wicked and designing men have taken from it those plain and easy items, or it never came from Deity, if that Being is perfect and consistent in his ways.

You will remember that in my last I brought my subject down to the evening or night of the 21st of September, 1823, and gave an outline of the conversation of the angel upon the important fact of the blessings, promises and covenants to Israel, and the great manifestations of favor to the world, in the ushering in of the fullness of the gospel, to prepare the way for the second advent of the Messiah, when he comes in the glory of the Father with the holy angels.

A remarkable fact is to be noticed with regard to this vision. In ancient time the Lord warned some of his servants in dreams; for instance, Joseph, the husband of Mary, was warned in a dream to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt; also the wise men were warned of the Lord in a dream not to return to Herod; and when "out of Egypt the Son was called," the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph again; also he was warned in a dream to turn aside into the parts of Galilee. There is no room for conjecture in this matter, and to talk of deception would be to sport with the common sense of every man who knows when he is awake, when he sees and when he does not see.

He could not have been deceived in the fact that a being of some kind appeared to him; and that it was an heavenly one, the fulfillment of his words, so minutely, up to this time, in addition to the truth and word of salvation which has been developed to this generation, in the Book of Mormon, ought to be conclusive evidence to the mind of every man who is privileged to hear of the same. He was awake, and in solemn prayer, as you will bear in mind, when the angel made his appearance; from that glory which surrounded him the room was lit up to a perfect brilliancy, so that darkness

wholly disappeared; he heard his words with his ears, and received a joy and happiness indescribable by hearing that his own sins were forgiven, and his former transgressions to be remembered against him no more, if he then continued to walk before the Lord according to his holy commandments. He also saw him depart, the light and glory withdraw, leaving a calmness and a peace of soul past the language of man to paint. Was he deceived?

Far from this; for the vision was renewed twice before morning, unfolding farther and still farther the mysteries of godliness and those things to come. In the morning he went to his labor as usual, but soon the vision of the heavenly messenger was renewed, instructing him to go immediately and view those things of which he had been informed, with a promise that he should obtain them if he followed the directions and went with an eye single to the glory of God.

It is sufficient to say that such were his reflections during his walk of from two or three miles — the distance from his father's house to the place pointed out. And to use his own words it seemed as though two invisible powers were influencing, or striving to influence his mind — one with the reflection that if he obtained the object of his pursuit, it would be through the mercy and condescension of the Lord, and that every act or performance in relation to it, must be in strict accordance with the instruction of that personage who communicated the intelligence to him first; and the other with the thoughts and reflections like those previously mentioned — contrasting his former and present circumstances in life with those to come. That precious instruction recorded on the sacred page — pray always — which was expressly impressed upon him, was at length entirely forgotten, and as I previously remarked, a fixed determination to obtain and aggrandize himself, occupied his mind when he arrived at the place where the record was found.

You are acquainted with the mail road from Palmyra, Wayne county, to Canandigua, Ontario county, New York, and also, as you pass from the former to the latter place, before arriving at the little village of Manchester, say from three to four, or about four miles from Palmyra, you pass a large hill on the east side of the road. To a person acquainted with this road, a description would be unnecessary, as it is the largest and rises the highest of any on that route. The north end rises quite sudden until it assumes a level with the more southerly extremity, and I think I may say an elevation higher than at the south a short distance, say half or three-fourths of a mile. As you pass toward Canandigua it lessens gradually until the surface assumes its common level, or is broken by other smaller hills or ridges, water courses and ravines. I think I am justified in saying that this is the highest hill for some distance round, and I am certain that its appearance, as it rises so suddenly from a plain on the north, must attract the

notice of the traveler as he passes by.

By turning to the 529th and 530th pages of the Book of Mormon (1830 and 1st edition) you will read Mormon's account of the last great struggle of his people, as they were encamped round this hill Cumorah. In this valley fell the remaining strength and pride of a once powerful people, the Nephites — once so highly favored of the Lord, but at that time in darkness, doomed to suffer extermination by the hands of their barbarous and uncivilized brethren. From the top of this hill, Mormon, with a few others, after the battle gazed with horror upon the mangled remains of those who, the day before, were filled with anxiety, hope, or doubt.

It was not the wicked who overcame the righteous; far from this: it was the wicked against the wicked, and by the wicked the wicked were punished. The Nephites who were once enlightened, had fallen from a more elevated standing as to favor and privilege before the Lord, in consequence of the righteousness of their

fathers, and now falling below, for such was actually the case, were suffered to be overcome, and the land was left to the possession of the red men who were without intelligence, only in the affairs of their wars; and having no records, only preserving their history by tradition from father to son, lost the account of their true origin, and wandered from river to river, from hill to hill, from mountain to mountain, and from sea to sea, till the land was again peopled, in a measure, by a rude, wild, revengeful, warlike and barbarous race. Such are our Indians.

In this vale lie commingled, in one mass of ruins, the ashes of thousands, and in this vale was destined to consume the fair forms and vigorous systems of tens of thousands of the human race blood mixed with blood, flesh with flesh, bones with bones, and dust with dust!

With sentiments of pure respect, I conclude by subscribing myself your brother in the gospel.

OLIVER COWDERY

TO SCATTERED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

The expression of love toward us that our Father in heaven gave through Jesus, the Son of God, is like a mighty beacon of light shining down through the ages. The prophets of old looked with faith burning in their hearts. It inspired them to write of the birth of the most wonderfully gentle Person and of His humble birth in the land of a people whose destiny and history have been wrapped up in the plan of God from the beginning of time.

"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and have not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the seashore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed by voice." (Gen. 32:15-18)

This promise to Abraham was to bless both Isaac and Jacob. Jacob was assured of the promise when in a dream of a ladder that rose into heaven, the Lord spoke to him. Later Jacob had twelve sons, known as the children of Israel; Jacob's name had been changed to Israel by an angel of the Lord. Read Gen. 32:28.

We may follow the history of the people of Israel into Egypt. The captivity there lasted four hundred years; the deliverance by God came under the leadership of Moses. Now a people of great numbers, they are led back to the land of Canaan to be established as a nation and to build the city of Jerusalem. In spite of wars and a period of captivity in Babylon, these people returned to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem before the birth of Christ. Yet, in all of these troublesome times, God never forgot His promises made to Israel.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Is. 7:14).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Is. 9:6, 7)

"But thou, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2)

Bethlehem was the city where Joseph and Mary were to travel to be taxed by Caesar Augustus. Joseph was of direct lineage of David. Christ, the son of God, was born there in a manger — a most humble place. Wondrous was the star that marked His birth, and wondrous were the angels that ministered to the humble shepherds that night.

"And the angel said unto them, fear not for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:10-14)

"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." (Matt. 2:1-2)

Thus was witnessed to the world the fulfillment of prophecy and promise of the loving kindness of our heavenly Father. He was aware of our fallen state and from the beginning, provided for our salvation. Only a true living God who loves His creation is worthy of our love in return.

The gospel of Christ is the message of the love of God for us. Love is an unselfish service for another,

expressed in thought and deed. If we give ourselves to unselfish thoughts and acts toward others, we will find the rich rewards of love. These are truly the treasures" which we can store up in heaven. These are the "works" by which we will someday be judged. We must do that which is unselfish; voluntary service to God and our fellowman to show our love and give expression of our Godliness.

May God give each of you the courage and the strength to pursue every opportunity to serve God and your fellowman in peace and love.

Your brother in Christ,
Elder Arthur G. Smith

The Unchangeable Is Always True

By Edna R. Smith

As a needle becomes stuck in a broken record causing that portion to repeat and repeat over and over again so am I about the wonderful Old Jerusalem Gospel. It must be repeated and drilled into us lest we forget especially our youth of whom I'm so very deeply concerned for they live in a very trying world.

There is a way that seemeth right unto man yet it leadeth his soul down into hell. I don't know where this statement is found but I've heard it expounded from the pulpit several times in my life by the old time ministers. I've thought about it a great deal lately in the light of what we see happening in the so-called religious world of today. Man is seeking for something lasting and true to hang on to, an anchor for his faith, in this sin sick, hectic world of ours. The Devil also is aware of this fact therefore he is blinding man with what has the appearance of right in all these so-called religions springing up. If that were not true why don't they last? The Gospel does.

I've often heard my Dad make the statement several times that the Devil is very clever and will tell you one truth so he can get you to believe a whole lot of lies. So we have to be careful of what we hear and believe.

I remember years ago when I was a teenager living in Madison, Wisconsin one so-called religion, "Four Square Gospel," came to town and held a series of revival meetings. It was one of these flash in the pan affairs out after all the money it could rake in. The leaders used to say when the collection plate was passed she only wanted the soft kind of money, not the silver for it jangled her nerves.

At this time there was a young couple living across the street from us that were pretty wild and very worldly. The man drank to excess abusing his wife and children. Many times the police was called to aid his family because of his drunkenness. Someone persuaded this couple to attend these meetings and what a change for good was wrought in this couple's home. The man quit his drinking, cleaned up his life, took

good care of his family, got a good job and settled down to raise his little boys. Well, I saw all this and being a young teenager I went to Dad about it. This about face made quite an impression on me so I thought there must be a lot of good in that Four Square Gospel church. I recall what Dad said, "Edna I'm very glad to see Ted and Daisey changing for the good and sincerely hope it will last. Remember what the Angel told Joseph Smith, with their lips do they honor me, but their hearts are far from me." I was troubled for I wanted Ted and Daisey to get on the right path not only for their own selves but for their little boys. I baby set for those children and they needed to be taught the right path to take. I also learned right then that that kind of religion threw up a wall so that the Gospel would not be listened to — it wouldn't mix any more than oil with water. This couple wouldn't listen to the Jerusalem Gospel as I was taught for the shallow gospel, the Four Square Gospel, satisfied and closed their ears to the truth. They were assured they had the truth and that was all there was to it.

Years after I was married I went home for a visit with our oldest son then a child of two years. I inquired after this couple wishing to visit them and, oh, what a shock I got when I found where they lived and how they lived. Dad's counsel of what I might find came back to me. This couple had reverted to their old ways, things were run down, not progressive and kept up. Ted had returned to drinking again although he was sober that day. I asked Ted why he and Daisey had gone back to their awful way of life after what I had seen in their lives years before. Here is what he told me; "That religion stuff is all bunk for when the going really get tough it folds up like a wet noodle. There isn't any staying power, nothing to hang onto. I lost my job and went to the heads of the church for help until I could get on my feet again. I'd heard them preach all the time about helping one another but those holier than thou Joes turned their backs on me. I wasn't asking to be kept by them, just a little help until I could get back on my feet again. When everything was going

great and I was dumping plenty of money in the old collection plate I was a great fellow, but not now. All they want is your money and when there's no more to get they kick you out. I'm through playing the fool - I've had enough of that stuff."

I began to talk to them about how the church I belonged to operated. The souls of men were what we were interested in and that we teach the plan of salvation that would bring us back into God's presence, that He Himself had restored to earth in 1830. Ours was a message about the complete redemption of man. They listened while I talked, but I could see they had become so bitter and dissoluted about anything religious it would be a long time before they could be reached. It is to such as these my heart aches, for because the so-called religion they had come in contact with had fed them nothing but husks.

That experience years ago taught me a valuable lesson, and has always been a big help to me to evaluate these so-called religions springing up today. They are mere flashes in the pan only lasting a few years then dying out - something else springs up to take their place. They too are like the Four Square Gospel group only after the money they can get. They aren't interested in the broken hearts and lives they leave behind to care for themselves. They have no lasting spiritual food that sustains life to give to the poor souls that knock upon their door.

I've heard recently from some of our own church

people, "Oh how much good they do." Do they really? I'm afraid I'm like one of our ministers who lately in a sermon branded them as spiritual cowards. I say amen.

Today they aren't quite as much in the forefront as they were. The Internal Revenue Service has begun to scan their financial records and is finding things aren't as good and on the up and up as they should be. Do you as an honest thinking person believe God would bless and give sanction to a group doing such things? I do not, but do believe their author is from an evil source. By their fruits ye shall know them.

To the law and the testimony; if they preach any other gospel than that which Christ restored through His Holy Angels, let them be accursed. They are dead and there is **no light** in them. They won't mix with the true Gospel any more than oil and water will mix.

Our time to perfect our lives grows shorter by the minute. We had better be careful that we don't follow every wind of doctrine that blows, but earnestly seek the old Jerusalem Gospel and find the old paths and walk therein. It and it alone is a lasting and a mighty anchor with power to save our souls if we remain true and faithful to the end.

Let us as a united family of God press ever forward, watching carefully for the pit falls and warning our brother when we find one to tell him don't step there. Pray for God's spirit to guide us in the way He has plotted for us.

AND THE SLOTHFUL SHALL INHERIT . . . ?

Time marches relentlessly forward and the world moves ever more rapidly toward the brink of Armageddon. One wonders how long the Lord will stay His hand from that final, awful destruction. A recent editorial in the Advocate has raised a question that must be explored and answered, and acted upon: Are we, the people of Christ's Church, guilty of sloth and in danger of God's judgment?

In the June edition of the Advocate, the editorial presented a very clear view of what the fullness of the gospel is and who has it.

Christ, in speaking to the Nephites here after his crucifixion made very plain what will happen to us if we fail to complete our mission of taking this full gospel to the remnant of Israel: "And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you, At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits and of mischiefs and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; And if they shall do all these things, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, behold, saith the

Father, I will bring the fullness of my gospel from among them; And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them;" (3 Nephi 7:34-36).

A few years ago there was a movie about a society where books were outlawed. No one was allowed to read. All information was dispersed by television using only announcers and pictures. All newspapers consisted of photos and wordless cartoons. In the society depicted the people were encouraged to turn in anyone they knew who had books hidden, a secret reader, an enemy of the state. There were small boxes like fire alarm boxes where an informer could drop a picture of the guilty person. Immediately the "Fire Department" arrived with clanging bells and men in firemen's uniforms. With long hoses pulled from their trucks, the "firemen" would proceed to throw flames on the books, totally destroying them. The name of the movie was "Fahrenheit 451", the temperature at which paper burns.

In one scene a "fireman" yields to temptation and slips one single book into his coat. Soon his picture is turned in and he knows he must choose, the book or his safety and security. He elects to leave everything behind. Taking only that one book and eluding the

pursuers, he makes an arduous journey to a remote wilderness where a small band of "book people" exist. Each person in the primitive camp is a book, having committed one book to memory, able to recite it to anyone caring to read. There the former fireman makes his home in a shaky lean-to and begins to memorize his book.

Have you ever asked yourself this "what if . . ." question? "What if my house were on fire and I only had a few seconds to save some precious piece of personal belongings," If everyone were safe, one of the first things that leaps to mind is the Bible and the Book of Mormon. What could be more precious than the written word of God?

Several recently acquired pieces of information have come together and raise the ominous foreboding evoked by the film "Fahrenheit 451": A newspaper article urging members of the Utah LDS Church to put the words of their "prophet" ahead even of the scriptures is astounding in its ramifications. The recent vote of the RLDS Church to join the World Council of Churches with its ties to Catholicism is an extremely perilous step. The rumors heard recently and with increasing frequency that the other restoration organizations may cease publishing and may even disavow the Book of Mormon is absolutely frightening.

The ever increasing strength and encroachment of the communist world where the practice of religion and study of scripture is forbidden shows how possible such a "bookless" state is.

There can be no doubt that we have the fullness of the gospel. Both the Bible and Book of Mormon clearly define the King James Version and the Book of Mormon as the two books combined to be the full gospel. There can be no doubt that we as Gentiles are charged with the task of taking this fullness of the gospel to the Lamanite remnant. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, When these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them (Gentiles) unto you (Lamanites)," are the words of Jesus Christ himself. (3 Nephi 9:89)

Very often it is heard throughout the church: "Wait, be patient. Wait for the Lord to move." "The Lord will move in His own good time." And this is the absolute truth. God will move. But if we procrastinate and wait to fulfill our task, God will move without us. We will be shut outside the work as surely as the five foolish virgins with untrimmed lamps. We must not be slothful any longer. We must not waste any more hours waiting for God to do the work for us.

Moroni's appeal to Phoran (Book of Mormon, pages 526-527) can be literally compared as an appeal from the remnant of Israel directly to us, the individuals, and the collective Church of Christ: "Yea, great has been your neglect towards us. And now behold, we desire to know the cause of this exceeding great neglect; yea, we desire to know the cause of your thoughtless state. Can you think to sit upon your thrones, in a state of thoughtless stupor, while your enemies are

spreading the work of death around you? Yea, while they are murdering thousands of your brethren; yea, even they who have looked up to you for protection, yea, have placed you in a situation that ye might have succored them . . ."

"And now, my beloved brethren; for ye ought to be beloved; yea, and ye ought to have stirred yourselves more diligently for the welfare and the freedom of this people; but behold, ye have neglected them, insomuch that the blood of thousands shall come upon your heads for vengeance; yea, for known unto God are all their cries, and all their sufferings. **Behold, could you suppose that ye could sit upon your thrones, and because of the exceeding goodness of God, ye could do nothing, and he would deliver you? Behold, if he have supposed this, ye have supposed in vain . . .**"

"And now behold, I say unto you, I fear exceedingly that the judgments of God will come upon this people, because of their exceeding slothfulness; yea, even the slothfulness of our government and their exceeding great neglect towards their brethren, yea, towards those who have been slain . . ."

"Or is it that ye have neglected us because you are in the heart of our country, and ye are surrounded by security . . ."

"Or do you suppose that the Lord will still deliver us, while we sit upon our thrones, and do not make use of the means which the Lord has provided for us?"

"Do you suppose that God will look upon you as guiltless, while ye sit still and behold these things? Behold, I say unto you, Nay." (Alma 27:19-21, 25-27, 30, 37, 40, 42)

We should be going out in passionate zeal to preach the fullness of the gospel. That is how to "make use of the means which the Lord has provided for us." Our church has young men and women who are consumed with the fire of the gospel, who desire to spread the truth. One only has to listen to them to be inspired by their dedication and eagerness to be soldiers for the Lord. The soul thrills to hear them eagerly searching the scriptures and interpreting them. The heart fills with joy at the thought of their great potential. And the heart fills with fear as their talents go to waste.

We must be using the great resources that they have: their faith, their strength, their health, their very youth and simplicity to take the fullness of the gospel to the Lamanites.

We must fulfill the task Christ charged us with. If we fail, he will surely "bring the fullness of the gospel from among us." Let us be slothful no longer, for the slothful will inherit nothing. Let us send our eager young people out, dedicated to spread the gospel, armed with the word of God, to make known to the remnant of His people who they are, what God's promise to them is, and what their task is in the Lord's great work.

Janice L. Welch

OKLAHOMA NEWS

October's bright, blue weather found the Church of Christ people traveling to M. G. and Laura Mae Elwell's home on the second Sunday. As I drove along I-40 on this beautiful sabbath morning, I was remembering the many years when the nearest Church of Christ worship service was Missouri. Then, as I looked across the countryside at the green fields with grazing cattle, the autumn colored trees, and here and there oil rigs drilling away for God's treasure beneath the soil, my heart swelled with happiness. I was happy to be ME. I was happy to be going to CHURCH. I was happy to live in AMERICA. This was the beginning of a happy day.

When I arrived at the Elwell home, Barbara and Mike Kimball and their two fine sons arrived, too. Awaiting us inside the Elwell home was the Roland Sarratt family from Independence. Also, Benny Case had driven down from Wichita. We totaled thirteen in all. It was a happy reunion for all of us. (We missed the Mike Martin family, though.)

Elder Sarratt opened the service and we sang a beautiful hymn. Having June's pretty voice, along with her sons' fine voices to help us sing, added another dimension to our service. Elder Sarratt read scriptures and expounded upon them preceding the sacrament service. He reminded us that we need the spirit of Christ with us at all times and so we come to partake of the emblems for the benefit of our spiritual lives. Next, there was a short prayer and testimony service.

Brother Roland followed this service with a fine sermon. He reminded us to be fruitful in every good work. Increase our knowledge of God. Put on the whole armor of God. He reminded us of the coming of Christ and we must watch and pray so that we may be counted worthy to escape harm and evil of that day. His sermon led into our discussion period as to what to expect at the time Christ comes to earth again. Brother Benny expressed some of his thoughts about this period of time. I was highly impressed with Benny's expressions and I can tell the young men of the church are growing spiritually and with understanding. Benny reminded us to be watching, to be aware of the happenings around us that alert us to the coming of Christ. Pray always to be spiritually attuned to God in order that we may be able to receive and understand any warning that may be given us. With Brother Roland's superior understanding of the scriptures, with the expressions of thoughts of ALL of those present, we closed this beautiful service.

Our usual pattern was followed: We enjoyed a beautiful Sunday dinner with our host and hostess. With happy hearts, we bid everyone good-bye and went to our respective homes.

In September we were honored with Elder Tony and Louise Grzincic being with us. They, too, drove that long drive from Independence. We were still having summer weather so it was a long, hot drive.

The winds sweeping over the plains help cool and clean the air and I assure you, this was a very windy Sunday.

This sabbath day was spent with Barbara and Mike Kimball near Shawnee. It was just great seeing everyone again because I had missed the last two meetings.

Brother Grzincic began the service with the usual hymn and prayer after which he gave a sermon and used the story of "The Little Red Hen" as an analogy. Some of the attributes we must strive for are patience, charity, faith, etc. We must press forward, be "doers" and not "hearers only" of the word. We must be ready to share and be able to share willingly.

The sermon was followed by a study class and we used chapter 16 in the Book of Mormon as a basis for our discussion. Brother Tony is a good teacher and we always enjoy his classes. This was followed by a sacrament and testimony service.

When it was time to return to our homes, we had been well fed by the Kimballs. We had been given spiritual food and encouragement by our brother Tony. We all had supported each other by our presence.

Our little group continues to be desirous to meet together each month. Our priesthood in Independence continue to come to us. We appreciate their diligence and steadfastness. We continue to hope that someday even more blessings may be our to receive. May God bless each of you.

Alzada Keeney Massey

HOUSTON, MO. LOCAL REPORT

Our brother, Virgil Addie, told us that it is a serious business to follow God and to do His work. Living for Christ is a serious matter. We should ask Him to share our burdens rather than attempt to carry them alone. Without God's help we are as nothing. We have free choice, to do good and follow Christ, or to go the opposite path. We must search out our soul and mind, and decide to do God's will. We need to take our gospel as a serious matter. It is our life both here and in the hereafter. He said, "I can't name one thing we have that didn't come from God, our breath, our ability to work, play, walk, talk and pray. He hears and answers our prayers."

We need to help each other find unity, live each day a little better, pray for each other, help spread His word, give a friendly smile. Do a kind deed as each will be rewarded. You will have made someone a little happier.

Brother Frank Fann reminded us that following after Christ is our duty, and as we are baptized it is our commitment to accept Him as our Lord and Savior, to love Him in all ways, to put Him FIRST in our lives and to keep His words. The devil is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may destroy, fighting to separate us from God. He has many powers and can even use scriptures to deceive us. Jesus is more powerful, he tells us to tell the devil to "get lost."

Submit yourself therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. (James 4:7, 8, 10) When we commit ourselves to Christ, we become a new man and serve sin and the devil no more.

Brother Truman Medders said one of the greatest gifts we have or possess is the power to choose. It is a tremendous power. We can and do make many choices each day. We have the power to choose to come to church, what we wear, what shoes to put on, our jobs, our mates, the groceries we buy, the car we drive, and we can choose to follow God's way, or not. It's an important power in life's little battles, and in the big ones, it is even more important. Too many times the young people let others, or the bottle and drugs, do their thinking for them. We're even free to choose our health to a degree, as a healthy mind helps us maintain a healthy body.

Alma said, 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.' (Alma 16:9) Do you find good in your choices? Do you choose wrong in spite of knowing better? Life often presents us with a choice which makes evil seem easier than good. So we need to choose the ways that seem good no matter how rough we may expect to find them. We need to take a look at our lives and make the good choices that our loving Father wants us to.

On the last Sunday of the month, many of us went to visit with the local at Ava and we had a very enjoyable day with the brothers and sisters there. A lovely dinner was served after the services and fellowship sweet was felt by all present.

Your reporter,
Mary Addie

WARRENSBURG, MO. MISSION

On the first Sunday in October, 1980 which dawned bright and beautiful, thirty-nine people met together to unite their faith and hopes for the beginning of a mission of the Church of Christ. Members came from other locals and joined the members in and near Warrensburg for a sacrament service.

Preparations have been made for Sunday School at 9:45 and church services at 11:00 each Sunday morning at the Johnson County West Side Park Community Service Center at 507 North Water St., Warrensburg, Missouri.

The prayers of many people for a number of years are being answered in the gathering of our members at this mission. Any time you find it possible, come join with us. We pray you will add this mission to your prayer list.

We can see with our eyes and feel with our hearts the hand of God working in these latter days. "God works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

Elder George Brantner

FLINT LOCAL REPORT

The Spirit of the Lord has actively moved amongst us and we are pleased to announce that the following people have been called by God and responded by being baptised: Gary Toulouse (baptized March 2, 1980), James Thompson (March 23, 1980), Todd Toulouse (March 23, 1980), Charles Pinder (April 10, 1980), Chris Toulouse (April 27, 1980), and Diane Toulouse (October 5, 1980). In addition, the following children were blessed: Thomas Elder, Jenny Toulouse, Cherie Toulouse, James Fehrman, Nicole Fehrman, and Nicole Toulouse.

The following couples were joined in marriage by our Pastor, Elder Edward Toulouse: Dawn Porter and Randall Hyde (July 27, 1980) and Adam Porter and Susan Anderson (August 23, 1980).

It is our prayer that God has also been active in your lives.

Some weeks ago we were blessed by a visit with Apostle Don Housknecht and his lovely wife, Doris. Brother Housknecht was the speaker at our Sunday worship service, and at an evening get-together, held at the Church, we were able to enjoy a meal with the Housknechts while reminiscing over the many years when they lived in the Flint area. After the meal, a question/answer meeting was held where the ministry answered questions concerning the Scriptures and current happenings within the Church. We thank the Housknechts for their visit and our prayers go with them.

What turned out to be a very successful project was jointly sponsored by the Trustees and the Young People's Fellowship. The project, which included a pot-luck meal, was the painting of the church exterior trim. Over twenty people joined in the labor and fellowship of the day. Not only was a much needed maintenance task completed, but also, we all grew closer together that day.

On the weekend of August 10th we enjoyed the company of Brother Robert Eddy and family. Seeing the Eddys again was deeply felt by all since for a number of years, Brother Eddy was our pastor and we truly love him and his family. We miss them dearly but they are never far from us in our prayers and in the Spirit.

At the suggestion of our Pastor, a recent Sacrament Service was devoted primarily to reflections on the meaning of being humble. Many testimonies were given which touched on this subject and each person left that day a little closer to God and to each other. The Spirit of God touched each of us on that day.

Recently Brother Charles Pinder became seriously ill and was placed in an intensive-care unit in a Detroit hospital. Your prayers for his recovery are requested and will be most appreciated.

May God continue to be with us and with all of you.

CANDIES AND TOYS

A True Christmas Story

'Twas just before Christmas; we knelt by our chairs
Before retiring, to say our prayers.

When all had prayed except Jennie, age two
Johnney asked, "Now how about you?"

Bowing her head, she began to pray
To our surprise, we heard her say,
Dear God, be good to us girls and boys
And give us, please, some candies and toys."

The children laughed and took her to task
Saying, "That's not what you're supposed to ask."
I explained, "These are things that Jennie needs
And I'm sure when we pray, God always heeds."

"He wants us to make our wishes known
Whenever we come before His throne
It's in His word that we are told
That 'No good gift will He withhold'."

"He is glad to give gifts that are for our good,
When we ask aright, as we should,
Though sometimes, as we older grew
We can learn it's best e'en when He says, "No"

Christmas had come and now had gone.
Again we were praying, one by one
Once more it was Jennie's turn to pray
Simply, sincerely we heard her say,

Remembering all her Christmas joys,
"Thank you, God, for my candies and toys."
No one laughed at her prayer this time
For her childish words were, somehow, sublime.

As we older grow and call on His name
Our prayers too, change; they are not the same.
Our needs may be many instead of few,
But we still need His blessings and bounties too.

When we have received what we're asking for
Liberally supplied from His great store,
Do we always remember to kneel and pray
To thank Him for all that He sends our way?

Vida Filley

Jennifer is now 16 years old.

Answers To "Search The Scriptures"

(See page 179)

1. Yes Micah 5:1-3) 2. Yes. (Isa. 7:14-16). 3. David (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 89:3, 4; Ps. 132:11; Isa. 9:7; Isa. 11:1-5) 4. Lehi. (IN 3:4-15), Nephi. (IN 3:53-62), Jacob. (2N 6:44-46), King Benjamin. (Mos. 1:97-102), Abinadi. (Mos. 8:28-32), Alma, the son of Alma. (Al 5:18, 19), Amulek. (Al 8:85, 86, 96), Samuel, the Lamanite. (Hel.

5:55-59). 5. Matthew and Luke. (Matt. 1:18-25; 2:1-23; Luke 1:26-80; 2:1-20) 6. Luke. (Luke 1:5-25, 57-80) 7. False. (Luke 1:5-25) 8. There was none of their kindred by that name. (Luke 1:59-63) 9. "An horn of salvation." (Luke 1:67-69) 10. "The handmaid of the Lord." (Luke 1:38) 11. Matthew 1:18-25. 12. False. (Luke 1:39-56). 13. He was of the lineage of David. (Luke 2:4, 5) 14. A Saviour. (Luke 2:11) 15. True. (Luke 2:21) 16. A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. (Luke 2:22-24) 17. Simeon. (Luke 2:25-35)

OBITUARIES

Crystal A. Rader

Crystal A. Rader passed from this life on September 18, 1980, after a long illness.

Born November 6, 1892, she was nearly 88 years old. A native of Wayne, Michigan, she had resided in the Toledo, Ohio area most of her life.

She had been a foster parent for twenty years and enjoyed working with children. She directed a choir for several years, and also enjoyed giving readings before church and social groups.

Sister Rader was a member of the Church of Christ for nineteen years, having transferred from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Floyd, and one son, Stanley A. Rader. Surviving are daughters Mrs. Eleanor Carter, Mrs. Dorothy Tavenier and Mrs. Helen Green; sons Ralph and Floyd Jr.; one sister Mrs. Ethel Crouch; 20 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren and 15 great-great grandchildren.

The funeral service was held at Ansberg-West Funeral Home in Toledo, Ohio, September 22, 1980. Elder Arthur G. Smith of the Church of Christ officiated assisted by Elder Donald Winqvist of the R. L. D. S. An appropriate reading as a tribute to mother was given by Laurie St. John.

Interment was in the Toledo Memorial Park, Toledo.

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Elva May Kvamme

Sister Elva May Kvamme was born September 28, 1911 to Frank and Anna May Jordan. She had been a member of the Church of Christ since 1931. She passed from this life on October 7, 1980 at Estevan, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Funeral services were on October 8, 1980 at Onsted Funeral Chapel. Interment was in Sowis Valley Memorial Gardens in Estevan, Saskatchewan. Officiating was Rev. Eric Pullum.

She is survived by her husband, Alfred, of Estevan, three sons, five daughters, twenty-five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1981 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will commence Sunday, April 5, 1981. The business sessions will start at 10:00 A. M. Monday, April 6. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, April 3 and 4, 1981.

The 1981 Minister's Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 19th, 20th and 21st at Independence, Missouri.

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