

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

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Unity

Be of one mind and purpose, the Good Lord does advise
A person who goes his separate way will cause his own demise
Have you talked of your religion with your neighbor or your foe?
Have you offered the hand of fellowship to those who do not know —
Of the blessings that are given to those who do believe
And miracles often wrought that man cannot perceive?
There is a sense of unity in the offering of a prayer
You pray to a God you cannot see and yet you know He's there,
In the first act of uniting, you take on His Holy Name
Through the waters of baptism and your life is not the same.
Partaking of Communion brings you closer to your Lord
And each one feels His Spirit if all are in accord.
For once the Holy Spirit has descended from above
We feel a holy union through the fellowship of love.
Why not carry this love forward to everyone you know
So every person in the world will have his life aglow
With the spirit of the Master as known in olden days
And what He'll do to change their lives if but Him, they'll praise.
This act of being united is not as easy as can be
It calls for help from everyone — like you and you and me.
And when it is accomplished and we all become as one
We surely will be ready for a visit from God's Son.

Sam Kidd

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Editorial . . .

MERCY OVERPOWERETH JUSTICE

One of the greater faults of man is his trying to take into his own hands the divine justice of God by reasoning against the limitations that have been set. It is made plain in the scriptures that mercy cannot rob justice (Alma 19:107). The mercy of God is His own and it is not in the hands of man to determine; it is only in the hands of man whereby he is able for himself to make choice whether he will come under the plan of mercy or whether he will allow the justice of God to determine his final destiny. We are given the word of God in the scriptures that we might understand the plan that God has made.

It is far beyond a person's ability to put into a few words this great plan, but light comes to us by various degrees as we seek the Lord to understand His will. Wherein we take it upon ourselves to understand without obedience to His will and look at things in an objective way as if we are in some kind of position to judge the world, we do fail and consequently we bring ourselves into a state of darkness.

It is not given into our hands to condone man in his sins nor to condemn man in his sins. We are given the ability, if we truly obey the will of God, to place a judgment upon man by our own obedience, that is by the light of truth that we understand. By this we become a witness just as Jesus Christ was a witness to the world that man may know the truth. But if we fail to give this light through obedience of the will of God, we are as a "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal"

giving no light and causing greater confusion to our fellow man. It is imperative that we learn the principle of obedience along with the understanding of the plan of redemption.

The justice of God would forever bring mankind under condemnation through the sin of Adam. We are told that all the family of Adam, or all mankind, would have been under a condemnation, forever lost from God and banished from His presence, were it not for the atonement of Christ (Mosiah 8:76). Christ gave his life, spilling his blood, that God the Father would be appeased. Mercy is in the person of Jesus Christ, not that he instituted of his own will this atonement, but through the will of his Father, he came and in perfect obedience brought about the plan of redemption. This was an act of mercy on the part of God the Father by giving to the world His only begotten Son.

Now this gives us to understand that there is first a justice and second a mercy all in the character of our Heavenly Father. His justice will always be the same. Also His mercy will always be the same. Inasmuch as we are told that mercy cannot rob justice we must realize that God's mercy is effective only by the favorable reaction of man individually. The exception to this is little children. They escape the fall of Adam through the blood of Christ. He himself has given us this knowledge (Moroni 8:8, 9). We are also told that those who are without the law, or those who

have not known the law of God, come under the power of redemption through Christ (Moroni 8:25, 26; Mosiah 1:107).

We should not speculate to any great length to try to determine just who all these are, but should trust in our Heavenly Father that since He has exercised Himself in instituting this plan of mercy, that truly He would have made provision which is appropriate and right. So we must trust in this plan of mercy for our own salvation for we have no other recourse. We cannot justify ourselves outside of Jesus Christ.

We find that mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, or it also states that mercy overpowereth justice (Alma 16:216, 217). In this we realize that God expresses His love toward mankind and He desires to reclaim man from his fallen state. We grasp through the greater knowledge given in the Book of Mormon that this desire was all in a plan set forth through the preknowledge of God. This in no way denies man the opportunity to make his choice between good and evil, or between accepting and rejecting the plan of redemption.

If man is rebellious against this plan, he falls under the justice of God. He must make his choice between accepting the mercy of God through the plan of salvation or rejecting his mercy and coming under the power of justice.

A vital part of the justice of God is in His law. Without the law justice could not be in effect. With the law man comes to the understanding of what the Lord's will is and from that point he either complies with the law through obedience to the will of God or disobeys the law. If he disobeys the law, he comes under the original condemnation which was through the fall of Adam.

Adam and Eve sinned by heeding Satan's words rather than the counsel of God. Satan is the father of lies and he has been deceiving man from that time forth. Here again is another vital part of the justice of God. Satan and his angels must have had a choice between good and evil and chose evil. They are under the justice of God, having no means by which they can be reclaimed for there is no indication that the blood of Christ atones for their sins. They therefore are the means by which evil is exposed unto man even as it was in the garden of Eden.

We are made subject to the persuasion of the devil. If we comply to his guidance and remain in a state of rebellion against God to the end of our days or to the end of our time of probation, we also are in an unreclaimable state.

Our day of probation may not seem all that we think it should be for we might want all to have a very distinct understanding of good and evil. We would want all mankind to know the conditions of this probationary state. This, of course, is the mission of the Church of Christ to declare the limitations of our existence and the purpose for which we live.

At the same time we know that Satan has his power and his purposes. He is working to deceive man. Regardless of the fact that he will inevitably be lost and that he has nothing to gain as a result of his efforts except for the company of those that he has deceived, his purpose and his aim depicts the nature of the being. We cannot at any time be sympathetic with the power of Satan. The justice of God for ever condemns him and in that state of torment he rages in a power undecipherable. Only through the great misery that we see in the world can we comprehend the state of his misery.

Therefore we should be fearful that we be lost in this state of misery. We should seek diligently to come under the great plan of redemption and to remain faithful until the end that we may have that sure reward of eternal life and partake of God's joy.

So we conclude that the opposite between justice and mercy is vitally important — it is vitally important that we seek the plan of mercy and that we are not lost in a dilatory and complacent attitude that would allow the justice of God to determine our final end.

RLS

PRAYERS

Oh Lord, reform Thy world - beginning with me.
A Chinese Christian's Prayer

Let us have faith that right makes might.
Abraham Lincoln

O God, Thou hast given so much to us - give us one thing more - a grateful heart.
George Herbert

O God. Help us not to despise or oppose what we do not understand.
William Penn

Lord, we pray not for tranquility; but we pray that Thou grant us strength and grace to overcome adversity.
Savonarola

O God, help us to be masters of ourselves that we may be servants of others.
Alec Paterson

O Lord, never suffer us to think we can stand by ourselves, and not need Thee.
John Donne

O Lord, let us not live to be useless.
John Wesley

Let not that happen which I wish, but that which is right.
Menander

WHICH CHURCH? IT REALLY MATTERS!

By William A. Sheldon

Part One

This Church of Christ is of the latter day saint faith, commonly called Mormonism, yet distinct and in many ways opposed to the so-called Mormon Church of Salt Lake City, Utah, and other divisions from the Church established by Joseph Smith.

A common belief of all these churches is the acceptance of the Book of Mormon as holy scripture and a companion to the Bible, both bearing witness to the divinity of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and of the gospel truths He established. Because of human prejudice, the masses of professed believers in Christ will reject the Book of Mormon without examination. For such we feel sorry, for they thus deprive themselves of untold spiritual blessings. We hope such prejudice will not interfere with the reader's objective consideration of the following, taken largely from the Bible.

It will be my purpose to show the doctrine of Christ upon which salvation depends; not extensively, but to reveal a marked departure in some instances by the churches of men. I speak of the churches of men as being distinct from Christ's Church, and in this respect, refer to churches which declare faith in Christ, but are not built upon His gospel, but rather, are built upon the doctrines of men. The great variety of such churches is mute testimony that most, and probably all, of these churches do not represent the Kingdom of God upon the earth, neither has their membership been brought into the Kingdom of God.

This sounds presumptuous, but I expect to show from the Bible that such is the case; that this condition was predicted by divine prophecy; but also that God, in infinite mercy, love and judgement has revealed again the ancient order of His Kingdom, and again has sent men with divine authority to build it up just prior to the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, that a people may be prepared for His coming and to enter into the great wedding feast of the Lamb of God.

Because of the great confusion in the minds of many as to the various doctrines propounded by the churches of men, some declaring one way, and others another way, and because of the multitude of scientific theories, some of which cunningly teach contrary to a belief in God, many have turned away from God and His Son. The learning of man has in many instances caused disdain of spiritual values; they say there is no God and no devil, and man is left to gain, as he may, his needs and desires during life, after which he dies with no hope of consciousness, of reward or otherwise beyond the grave. As for the churches: many people fervently declare faith in Christ, but because of the

"lo here" or "lo there", they have lost faith in any formal body of believers, and understandably so. They say: the Church is among you, but that there is no Church organization which may truly lay claim as being Christ's Church; it is an undefinable body of believers.

I expect to show that this is not so; that there will be a body of people to whom Christ will appear as the Bride-groom, they being the Bride, His Church, adorned in wedding garments of His choosing. Perhaps it is best to begin here, with the Church to show it as a real entity, or body, not as imagined by many, as only a spiritual essence, an unorganized body of believers. How there may be a body with no organization of definable parts will be left to others to attempt explanation. It is unreasonable to imagine a building without a planned and executed structure.

Paul depicted the Church as being one body, with many members. He said: "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?" So also did he speak of the eye and the ear, and of the smelling. Refer to 1 Cor. 12:12-31. Since Christ said: "I will build my Church" (see Matt. 16:18), we know He was speaking of a spiritual structure, not of man's contrivance or assumption that it must be thus and so, but of a divine character to implement a divine plan. Nevertheless, it would be fashioned with human elements (it concerns mankind), wrought upon by the Holy Ghost to assist in the implementation of that plan.

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom. 10:14, 15.

Again, Paul said of the saints, that they are 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." See Eph. 2:19-22.

This informs us that the very foundation of the Church is of apostles and prophets, together with Christ as the cornerstone. Can there be a valid claim for any body as the body of Christ without such a foundation. I speak of such in the present tone, not only as something had in ancient times. The body of Christ (His Church) will not only profess the name of Christ as

the chief corner stone of its building, but will have present functioning apostles and prophets. From 1 Cor. 12:27 and 28 we read: "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

It should be noted that God set these offices and gifts in the Church. If they are lacking, we may be sure that is not His Church. Some will say they have these things in the Church, but as for apostles and prophets (for instance), they are not called by such a name. A sober reflection will reveal how lame this reasoning is. Others will say, Apostles and prophets were had in the ancient Church, but are not for our time. Would this not make God a changeable being, if true? Yet we read in Mal. 3:6: "For I am the Lord, I change not."

As evidence that apostles and prophets are placed by God in His Church in the last days as in times of old, we read in Eph. 4:11-16 where Paul again refers to Christ's Church as a body with necessary functions in every part; a complete unit. It surely could not be an arm in one church body, a leg in another, etc. I quote: "And He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Surely, the absence of these gifts and divine provisions of God in the churches of men, as also their discreditation in the minds of others, is reason enough for the division in Christian philosophy, and of their devotees being as children, tossed to and fro. A thoughtful consideration of the foregoing will reveal that apostles and prophets, with all others of the Ministry, are essential elements of the body in order that proper health and growth is had; and these were to be in the Church of Christ until all should come to a perfect unity of the faith, etc. It goes without saying that such a blessed state has not yet been attained, and therefore the need for each and every one of the elements God has provided.

It is argued, as Christ said, that "the law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Just so; but if it is argued that this means there would be no more prophets after John, such an

one thus goes too far, for this would mean that Christ was no prophet, nor Paul, nor Peter, nor John, nor Agabus, etc. These all accurately predicted events in the future, and thus were prophets. It is well to observe here, that a prophet is not an ordained office in the Church, but is a necessary function; thus, an apostle, which is an ordained office, may also be a prophet; as also may any other whom the Lord should see fit to use. What Christ said was that the Mosaic law, and also prophets as head of the Church, was until John. After that, a different order was instituted by God. The Mosaic institution was, as Paul said, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ; it was harsh and exacting in temporal ordinances, sacrifices, etc. The fulness of the Kingdom was then brought in by Christ and His Apostles, and the law was changed to a more benign order; not that it was less exacting, but founded on faith; yet a faith that required obedience to God. I will discuss the principle of obedience later.

Let us consider the name of the Church. Some will say: What's in a name? It is true that the Bible offers no specific discussion of this. Apostle Paul often refers to the church of God or the churches of God, but it is evident he thus speaks in a broad sense. The term, God, is really a general term with reference to deity, a supreme being. There are many nations which acknowledge and pray to one or more beings they consider as greater than man, but of course, the Jewish and Christian concept is of one God over all. In the Christian faith, we revere Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the only name given under heaven whereby mankind may be saved. We approach God through Christ, and are commanded to pray in His name. Since the Church is referred to as the body of Christ, as shown in 1 Cor. 12:27, and moreover as His Bride (see Rev. 21:2 & 22:17), it follows then, that the Church shall be called by His name, that is, Christ. Paul also referred to the churches of Christ.

While the reader may not be convinced of the Book of Mormon, as being the word of God, perhaps some reasoning as found therein will be acceptable or worthy of consideration. The following is given as the words of Christ to His disciples:

"Have they not read the scriptures which say, Ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? for by this name shall ye be called at the last day . . . therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore, ye shall call the Church in my name . . . for if a church be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man, but if it be called in my name, then it is my Church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. And if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel, then will the Father shew forth His own works in it. But if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you, They have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return."

Here we have the words of Christ that the Church shall be called in His name, or, it shall be called the Church of Christ. If so, it is His Church if it is built on His gospel; and this is very important. He refers to others being built up, but not on His gospel. They have joy in their works for a time; they are popular with men, but are not of His fold. These will be brought down.

Now, let us consider the doctrine of Christ - His gospel. For my purpose in giving a general concept of the position of this Church of Christ, I will not attempt an exhaustive analysis, but as before stated, to show some primary differences with other churches. To do this, I will use the Bible as the arbiter of the faith of Christ, and thus show that many have departed from that faith.

Faith in Christ is an acknowledged principle by all churches who profess to be His followers; but this very principle is scarcely comprehended by many. The main element is considered to be a confession of Him as a personal Savior. This is very well and true, but the doctrines of men - of the churches - have so misconstrued the teachings of the Apostles (notably of Paul as to require no more than such a confession or belief in Jesus Christ. These say that we cannot earn salvation; that our works are nothing but an outward sign of an inward grace. Admittedly, we cannot earn salvation; but to say that works of righteousness will have no bearing on our standing with God in the end is a lie fostered by the devil at the most, and trumpeted by deluded souls at the least. What about works of wickedness? Will these have a bearing on salvation? A loud clamor goes up: Of course! Sin will drag one into hell from which there is no return (they say) unless he has accepted Christ! What about one who has ignorantly sinned, who has never heard of Christ? Is he to be cast off forever? Yea, verily, says the churches of men! Not so, says the doctrine of Christ. The urge to refute such fallacy is great, but I must desist lest I go beyond my intended summary of basic concepts, and this presentation be prolonged.

Isn't it strange that works of wickedness will have a great effect upon a person's standing at the final Judgement of God, and yet, not so with one's works of righteousness? O consistency, thou art a jewel, says the philosopher; and I agree. So what says the scripture (Rev. 20:12, 13): "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS . . . and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

How plain this is, and yet men will wrest the scriptures unto their own destruction, and lead others there, also. Paul speaks of such ministers as "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan him-

self is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to THEIR works." See 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

This should clear the air, but even more important are the words of Christ, concerning faith in Him:

"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from me ye that work iniquity."

Luke 6:46 gives it thus: "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say." He then goes on to speak of those who hear His sayings and DO them, as likened to a man who builds his house on a rock. When the wind, rain and floods descend, that house shall stand; while he who hears and does not obey is as a man building his house upon sand, which house shall fall when the elements come upon it.

The commandment of God through Jesus Christ, is just as binding today, and essential for salvation as were His commandments given in the Old Testament. We MUST OBEY GOD, doing the works He has commanded in the doctrine of Christ, or suffer the consequences of disobedience. When Paul spoke of the righteousness of faith in Christ as opposed to the works of the law, he was speaking of those who were, or had been, under the Mosaic law. He said, those works, or THAT law, was ineffectual. They could not ultimately be saved by such works, a law of carnal ordinances, but must come to Christ by faith; a faith which nevertheless required obedience to God, no less than the faith of Abraham which required his willingness to offer up his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice. This, of course, was a type of the offering of Christ as the only begotten Son of God: but this sacrifice by Abraham was not finally given; the Lord tested him to see if he was willing.

I will not speak of repentance, except to define it as the scriptures do, as a godly sorrow for sin. One must turn away from sin, seeking to overcome by the grace of God, and help of His Spirit. Repentance is a vital step toward salvation. Without it, baptism means nothing.

But what about baptism? Is it necessary for salvation? Contrary to the doctrines of churches of men, it IS essential. As a follower of Jesus Christ, we must PUT ON Christ, and to do this, we must be willing to follow Him through the waters of baptism; we must be buried with Him by baptism into death (that is, the death of sin) "that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall

be also in the likeness of His resurrection." I have quoted here from Rom. 6:4, 5. That Paul referred to baptism of water is shown in Col. 3:12: "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God . . ." Of course, we know that Jesus was baptized by John, and this by immersion, as found in Matt. 3:13-16. Christ is an example in all things, and would do or teach nothing except it had a bearing upon salvation, that we might eventually stand in the Kingdom of God at His right hand. He said to John: "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Just so with us, and more, for as pertaining to us who are sinners, our obedience in this thing will cleanse us, or bring a remission of sins. Peter said: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." See Acts 2:38. Much more could be said.

How do we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? Peter has given us one clue: we must be baptized. The Holy Ghost is another term for the Holy Spirit; it is the same. Its operation or function in the performance of God's will cannot be measured by the mind of man. We have clues as to His operation, but at best we are limited by our finite understanding. The finite is as far below the infinity of God as the earth is beneath the heavens. By His Spirit, an infinite power, God has created all things, and has animated the living. It is the function of the Holy Ghost to lead men to God; and therefore whatever is good, or noble, or pure, or light and truth, comes from this Spirit of God. Darkness and evil is the absence of this Spirit, which the devil uses to draw men away from God. There are two forces at work for the souls of men: the Holy Ghost leading to good, and the Prince of darkness, satan, or the devil, who with his kindred spirits or fallen angels, seeks the destruction of mankind. To accomplish his purpose, the devil may even use a little light, a little truth, or may use those who have a little light, and because they love darkness rather than light, they will give heed to, and proclaim error. They will put light for darkness, and darkness for light, and thus the devil gains his end (see Isa. 5:21, 22). Strange as it may seem, even God will bring strong delusions upon those who have not the love of the truth, because of their pleasure in unrighteousness. See II Thess. 2:10-12.

I have spoken in this vein in order to show that some may believe they have received the Holy Ghost, and yet may not have. Again: it is His function to lead men toward God, but if they will not come according to the Spirit of truth, if they have received into their hearts the doctrines of men, they will be deceived, still thinking they are doing God's service. Nevertheless, through faith in Christ, or by His name, many marvelous things are done. Prayers for sickness or affliction are answered as desired, through faith, and miracles are performed. Yet with some, Christ will say, I never knew you. Only He can judge the heart by the Holy Ghost. There may be those who speak

in tongues, or prophecy, or heal the sick. It is not necessarily by the Holy Ghost, for even as the devil can appear as an angel of light, he can also perform marvelous works through men who have not the love of the truth, as previously quoted from the Bible.

How then may we know if we are led by God or Satan? The Holy Spirit will bear record unto one who is truly searching for truth that the burden of the scriptures is true; He will bring reconciliation to scriptures which may appear to be at variance, and reveal that which has been twisted by the precepts of men. He will lead us into all truth, enabling us to discern error. He will teach us the need of keeping the commandments of God, and when we do so, we will obey the gospel of Christ. Thus, through the laying on of hands of the apostles and elders of Christ and His Church, we will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost as an Abiding Comforter, according to the promise of Christ (see John 14:15-26). You may read of the laying on of hands in Acts 8:14-18 and 19:1-6.

This brings up another important consideration not previously mentioned: divine priesthood authority. It goes without question that Christ was called and sent by God, the Father. So also was John the Baptist, who baptized Christ; and just as surely did the apostles of Christ have the authority of God. In His last mission to the Twelve, He sent them to teach all nations, to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things He had commanded them (see Matt. 28:19, 20). It is obvious this was not a general commission to all believers, but to the twelve Apostles in this instance. Of course, we knew that He also called and sent forth seventy others. Our point is that the calling of God is not a matter of human aspiration or assumption.

How are the servants of God called? Heb. 5:4 says concerning the priesthood of God: "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron was the brother of Moses, to whom God spoke; He revealed to Moses that Aaron should minister unto the children of Israel, as well as Aaron's sons (see Ex. 28:1 and 4:13-16). Aaron did not take upon himself the priesthood, but was called by revelation through Moses. We find that Paul and Barnabas were called to the apostleship by revelation of God: ". . . the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for the work whereunto I have called them." (Acts 13:2). Even so, one may not assume to minister in the ordinances of the gospel of Christ, nor be authorized to preach His word, unless he is called by revelation to another whom God has recognized, and through whom He chooses to speak.

If we were to migrate to another country, desiring citizenship it would be foolish to make application to anyone but a properly authorized official of that country; just so with the kingdom of God. Apostle Paul, speaking to Timothy of their mutual calling from God (2 Tim. 1:9), had previously warned him to "neglect not the gifts that is in thee, which was given thee

by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (or others of the Ministry, the holy Priesthood / W. A. S.)". See 1 Tim. 4:14.

Without mature thought, or scriptural basis, many have thought there were only twelve apostles in the ancient Church, and when these died, there were none others. Admittedly, the record is not as clear as we would like it, but there is sufficient for us to know there were more than twelve. At the death of Judas, Matthias was chosen and numbered with the eleven (see Acts 1:22-26). We have additionally, Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14) and James the Lord's brother (Gal. 1:19), among others. Some have argued that these were not apostles as the first Twelve, but this argument is without good reasoning. We know the apostles were special witnesses for Christ, and as such, we could possibly think to include the seventy other disciples whom Christ sent. But He did not call these seventy, apostles; actually, they were other evangelists, to the number of seventy. The reason there were twelve Apostles was because of the twelve tribes of Israel. Christ told them they would come with Him to judge the 12 tribes, and would sit upon 12 thrones (see Matt. 19:28). Obviously, this would not include Judas who fell, but rather, Matthias, who took his place.

It was the intent of Christ that whenever His Church was on earth it should have 12 Apostles, as well as prophets, etc. The fact that within a few years after He left, that body of men ceased, does not invalidate the divine intent. As a matter of fact, it demonstrates that the pure Church of Christ ceased to exist on earth. This was predicted by Old Testament prophets, by Christ and by His Apostles. Rather than attempting to quote all available, I will give references such as: Isa. 24:5; 60:1, 2; Amos 8:11,12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3.

Christ alluded to it, thus: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Matt. 11:12). The "violent" would be any who would violate the divine doctrine and order of the kingdom or destroy the peace and lives of the saints. The "violent" would come and take it by force, the force of evil and falsehood; they would destroy the truth.

Paul said that grievous wolves would enter the flock, and not spare them; and others draw away disciples. (Acts 20:29, 30).

Peter said there would be false prophets and teachers among them, bringing in damnable heresies. (2 Pet. 2:1-3).

Finally, Paul spoke of the second coming of Christ, and said: "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, 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 showing him-

self that he is God." See 2 Thess. 2:1-4. Many in our time have supposed this to refer to a man of sin who is yet to be revealed. It appears true that some things will yet be revealed through a "man of sin" which will bring much spiritual desolation, but in fact, that man of sin was revealed centuries ago. It is not a single person, but rather, an ecclesiastical system, a spiritual despotism, which has continued to the present and will continue until Christ shall come in power and glory. Paul speaks concerning that "wicked" one: "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (Ibid. 8).

It is not my purpose to go further into this subject of a universal apostasy, except to declare it as a present fact and force, with its deadly influence undergirding the churches of men and the ecumenical superstructure of the modern Christian community. This whole spiritual system is equated in the Book of Mormon as the "church of the devil," in contra-distinction to the "church of the Lamb" (see 3 Ne. 3:220-231), and, tied as it is to a world-wide economic system, is referred to as "Babylon", which shall fall; and great shall be the fall of it. An elaboration of this composite system is given in Revelation, chapters 17 and 18, and detailing the magnitude of its demise. The Lord also alluded to this through Daniel's prophecy (2:28-45), of a stone, representing the kingdom of God (His Church), which should fall upon the nations of the latter days to break in pieces and consume them; and that the Kingdom shall "stand forever" (v. 44). The power of the Kingdom shall be exerted through the pure word of God, and by the Holy Ghost, as delivered through a divinely called Ministry.

Much more could be said regarding the apostasy of the ancient Church of Christ, but this presentation is overlong. For any who would seek further, we offer a book entitled, "A Marvellous Work And A Wonder" (see the literature listed in this publication).

It is intended to present (in Part Two) evidence of a restoration of the ancient order of the Kingdom, and of its scope in the latter days. There is a Church of Christ, today, however weak and imperfect; a tangible structure of divine appointment, which shall act as a nucleus for the gathering of His saints, to whom He shall come; which shall be arrayed in garments of righteousness, adorned as His Bride.

God draws a cloud over each gleaming morn.
 Would you ask why?
 It is because all noblest things are born
 In agony.
 Only upon some cross of pain and woe
 God's Son may lie;
 Each soul redeemed from self and sin must know
 Its Calvary.

Frances Cobbe

SYNOPSIS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

by Virginia Kidd Phillips

The Book of Mormon tells of three groups that migrated to the West from Bible lands:

The Nephites - left Jerusalem about 600 B. C. Destroyed about A. D. 400. Had a history of about 1,000 years.

The Mulekites - left Jerusalem about the same time as the Nephites - became a part of the Nephite nation.

The Jaredites - left from Tower of Babel about 2200 B. C. Destroyed shortly before 600 B.

C. Had a history of about 1500 years.

The main part of the Book of Mormon is about the Nephites who came out of Jerusalem about 600 B. C.

The Mulekites came from the same place about eleven years later. They merged with the Nephites and lost their own identity. They had kept no records.

The Nephite colony split before they came upon the Mulekites. Some Nephites had dissented and had joined the Lamanites. The barbarian segment, the Lamanites, annihilated the Nephite group about A. D. 400. This gave them about a thousand years of history. Moroni was the last Nephite left alive.

The third, the earlier colony's time of migration, is placed at the time of the Genesis tower of Babel. This was about 2200 B. C. This colony was destroyed through civil strife just before the Nephites came from Jerusalem.

Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in July, 587 B. C. and was destroyed. Zedekiah was king of Jerusalem and he was carried away captive into Babylon.

The Book of Mormon begins with the story of Lehi and his family. Prior to the fall of Jerusalem, Lehi was aware of what was taking place and he believed the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah who told of the destruction of Jerusalem. Lehi was a Jew. He had lived in Jerusalem all his life. He had a wonderful vision in which he saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God. And it came to pass that he saw one descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noon-day; and he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament; and they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth; and the first came and stood before Lehi and gave unto him a book, and bade him that he should read. And it came to pass that as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and he read, saying, Wo, wo unto Jerusalem! for I have seen thine abominations; Yea, and many things Lehi

read concerning Jerusalem — that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof, many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon. After the Lord had shewn so many marvelous things unto Lehi concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, he went forth among the people, and began to prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard. And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations; and he testified that the things which he saw and heard, and also the things which he read in the book, manifested plainly of the coming of a Messiah, and also the redemption of the world. (See II Chron. 36:15, 16). And when the Jews heard these things, they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also sought his life, that they might take it away. And it came to pass that the Lord commanded Lehi in a dream that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness. He left Jerusalem with his wife, Sariah and their four sons; Laman, Lemuel, Nephi and Sam, and went into the wilderness as God had commanded him to do.

Lehi had a dream in which the Lord told him to return to Jerusalem to obtain from Laban the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of his forefathers, and that they were engraved upon plates of brass. Lehi sent his sons back to obtain the records which resulted in Nephi taking the life of Laban by command of the Lord. Zoram was the servant of Laban and carried the plates. They returned the second time to Jerusalem and persuaded Ishmael and his family to go into the wilderness with them. Each of Lehi's four sons and Zoram took a daughter of Ishmael for a wife.

Jacob and Joseph were born to Lehi and Sariah in the wilderness. Ishmael died in the wilderness.

By direction of the Lord they built a ship and upon finding a curious compass they crossed the waters to the promised land (the Americas). There was strife between Nephi and his elder brothers. After Lehi's death, the elder brothers, Laman and Lemuel, and their people rebelled against God, and God caused their skins to become dark. Nephi took his people and fled into the wilderness to escape the Lamanites. They were commanded of God not to mingle or intermarry with the Lamanites. They settled in the land of Lehi-Nephi, built a temple and ordained ministry.

About 200 B. C., Mosiah, King of the Nephites was warned by God to flee out of the land of Lehi-Nephi into the wilderness. The wilderness was to become a barrier between them and the Lamanites. This they did. To the Nephites' surprise they came upon a people whom they called "the people of Zarahemla." They came to learn that they had left Jerusalem about the same time as Lehi - just before the city was expected to be captured by the Babylonians. Their leader was Mulek who was the son of Zedekiah, the king of Judah. This

made Mulek a Prince. When they left Jerusalem they brought no records with them. They became a part of the Nephite people. They had kept in their possession a large stone. From this stone, interpreted by King Mosiah and from the traditions of the Mulekites, an unusual story was put together. The stone and their traditions told of a lone man whom the Mulekites had found when they came to their country. His name was Coriantumr. The civil war had destroyed the rest of his people; only he had survived (Omni 1:37-39). "And Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla; and he dwelt with them for the space of nine moons . . . and his first parents came out from the tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people."

The Book of Mormon tells about groups of people that went out from Zarahemla and then found their way back again. The story began with part of the Nephites who had migrated northward about 200 B. C. to get away from the Lamanites and who then wanted to return to their former home (the land of Nephi). This group went up into the wilderness to return to the land of Nephi but the project ended in confusion, with only fifty managing to get back to Zarahemla. These fifty started out again with new recruits. Amaleki said simply this, "I have not since known concerning them."

Later, another group of Nephites of Zarahemla set out to return to the land of Nephi. The people of Zarahemla began to wonder what had happened to these people who had left Zarahemla and they pressured their king, King Mosiah II, to try to find them. The king sent out a company of sixteen strong men. After forty days of wandering, the expedition set up camp in an area near "the land of Lehi-Nephi," their former homeland. Ammon, leader of the scouting party went ahead with three other men into the land of Nephi. The king of the land of Nephi was Limhi. He told the four men that he had left Zarahemla and had returned to the land of his fathers. He questioned the four about their identity and said if they were spies they would be put to death. Ammon and his co-scouts had found the people for whom they were searching. He told King Limhi that he had come from Zarahemla to inquire concerning his brethren who had gone up out of that land. There was surprise, gratitude and curiosity on both sides. Limhi told Ammon that his people were in bondage to the Lamanites and that they longed to be released. The people of Limhi had been wanting to get back to Zarahemla. The Nephites gave wine to the Lamanites who became drunk and the Nephites escaped and returned to Zarahemla. King Limhi said that he had even sent out a searching party to try to find their way back to Zarahemla and that they became lost and this searching party had come upon a place where some former civilization had flourished. Ruins and artifacts had left evidence. Their chief discovery was "twenty-four plates which were filled with engravings; . . . of pure gold."

These golden plates were carried to Mosiah, the

Nephite King of Zarahemla. In time the translation was effected. The abridged story of this earlier people is placed toward the close of the Book of Mormon in the Book of Ether. They are referred to as the JAREDITES, after the name of their leader in their first migration. The book takes its name from Ether, the prophet toward the close of the Jaredite history who compiled their history and buried the plates. Jared, Jared's brother and their people crossed the ocean in eight boats about 2200 B. C. The Jaredite story tells of the closing combat between two opposing factions, the final struggle between the two leaders Shiz and Coriantumr, the survival of the latter. The final struggle would have taken place a short while before the Mulekites (the people of Zarahemla) came to the land, the land the Jaredites had once occupied. Here, for a moment, the three colonies are brought together in the story. The Nephites came upon the Mulekites, who as inhabitants of Zarahemla brought their story of their encounter with the lone Jaredite (Coriantumr) some four centuries earlier.

Christ was born exactly 600 years from the time that Lehi and his family left Jerusalem. Soon after Christ's crucifixion and ascension into Heaven, in the 34th year after His birth, Christ came to this Western land and appeared unto the people of Nephi as they were gathered together in the land Bountiful, and did minister unto the people. This same Christ that had established His Church in the land of Jerusalem proceeded to establish His Church on this continent in exactly the same manner as He had established it in the land of Jerusalem.

At the close of the Book of Mormon, Moroni is the only Nephite alive. The Lamanites were the only people left.

The Book of Mormon testifies five sets of original plates of historical record:

1. **The brass plates**, brought from Jerusalem by the Nephites just before 586 B. C. They contained the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world; And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah. These are often called **the plates of Laban**.

2. **The larger plates of Nephi**, began about 590 B. C., soon after the Nephites arrived in the Western land. These contained **the civil history of the people**.

3. **The smaller plates of Nephi**, began a few years after the larger plates had been started. These contained **the religious history of the Nephite people** for about four and a half centuries. They are described as ending with Amaleki who said, "These plates are full" (Omni 1:53). Chroniclers place this about 160 B. C. Thereafter the religious history was included with the civil history on the larger plates.

4. **The plates of Zeniff** is a short record of a group of Nephites who left their Nephite land of Zarahemla to return to their former homeland. These give ac-

count of their bondage to the Lamanites, their conversion, and their eventual escape and return to Zarahemla. This story was incorporated into the Nephite history (Mosiah 5:57).

5. **The twenty-four gold plates of Ether, giving the story of the Jaredites.** About 600 B. C., when the Jaredites were approaching the battle in their civil war which led to their extermination, Ether prepared this record and buried it for future discovery. The original plates had been discovered by the Nephites about 121 B. C. These plates were used by Moroni for the abridged story.

When Columbus discovered America, he thought he had landed in India and he called the people he found there Indians. The name was never changed; so the Indians of today are a remnant of the Lamanite colony, a division of the Nephite migration.

UNDERSTANDING WITH THE HEART

In my prayer before retiring, the night of December 18, '80, I was moved to ask God to give me more of the kind of love that Jesus had for others. Little did I realize just what I had asked for!

Later in the night, wakened from a sound sleep, I lay thinking of different individuals, not only members of my family, and friends, but some I'd met only briefly. As each one came to mind I was prompted to pray for them.

Then such a deep concern for people in general came over me that I began to weep as I'd never wept before. Words fail me in describing it. I can only say that love and the most intense grief one can imagine, over the lost condition of everyone apart from Christ overwhelmed my whole being. A question, "Is this what it means to 'Weep between the porch and the altar?'" came to my mind. I thought "If so, we have little comprehension of what this will involve; at least I did not." (Joel 2:17)

The 6th verse of "Admonition", written by inspiration by Joseph Luff, came so vividly and with such meaning to my mind, that words are inadequate to describe it. The words are enough, they are:

Love ye me and love all people -
Love as I have loved you:
This your calling - this My purpose -
Thus be My disciples true.
Then in this exalted station
Your companion I will be:
Every promise of My Scriptures
Will be verified in thee.

I thought, The Apostle Paul understood this, well; that is what gave him strength to suffer and endure all of his trials. That is why he knew that "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to

separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38, 39)

I thought of how Jesus wept over Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." (Matthew 23:37)

As each thought came to me the feelings of love, and especially the grief, intensified and I continued weeping. I realized that though I'd supposed that I appreciated the great love, the suffering and the sacrifice Jesus gave for us, it was more of the head than of the heart. With the head we have knowledge which gives some understanding, but it can't be compared with understanding with the heart.

As this power continued, I came to the point that I had to cry out to God, "Help me, I cannot endure any more." I reminded Him "I am only clay, I can't contain all this." I thought my heart would literally break, then the thought, "I already have a heart problem, I know I can't stand this much longer, I will die." No sooner the thought, than these words came emphatically to my mind, almost as though spoken, "How insignificant is a physically broken heart in comparison to a spiritually broken heart."

Gradually the intensity of this power diminished. I got up and wrote down the sequence of the experience. It took me some time as it was still difficult to see through my tears.

About a week ago, I listened to a radio minister, speaking of the time when Jesus wept over Jerusalem. He said that Jesus wept from frustration over His rejection by His people. I am convinced that the cause for weeping far transcended mere frustration, if indeed, that even so much as had any part in it. I believe Jesus wept because of His incomparable love for His creation, together with a depth of grief and sorrow beyond our ability to comprehend for those who reject Him.

I am sure that He can and will give deeper understanding for both our minds and hearts to all those who accept Him. It is through Him alone that we can accomplish that which He requires of each one. It is through Him we can receive the strength to endure that which would otherwise be unendurable.

Paul said it all in Ephesians 3:14 through 21: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fullness of God. Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the

power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Vida Filley

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

By Harvey E. Seibel

Part 6

Having discussed the above major prophetic subjects of God's word there yet remains a point which we will now answer. This concerns the tribulation and the rapture which I will only briefly discuss.

You affirm that the Russian invasion will occur before the Tribulation and the appearance of the antichrist. The vision which John saw was the history of the world from his day unto the end covering a period of 2000 years. Without going into the historical proof of these I will simply state that the first four seals have already been fulfilled, the first beginning in John's day and shortly thereafter, followed by the second and third and then the fourth. The fourth was the papal rule and persecution during the dark ages in which millions of Christians perished. We are today in the 5th seal.

If you recall, the 5th seal portrayed the souls under the altar who had been killed for testimony which they held. These were killed during the Pagan and Papal persecutions during the time of the earlier seals. They ask how long will it be before God avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth. They are told to wait a little season until their fellow servants and brethren also should be killed. These will include all those killed during the great tribulation.

Now I would like to suggest that the Great Tribulation began to be fulfilled in 1917 when the communist took over Russia and from thence has spread from country to country. The resultant persecution of the christians has even exceeded that of the dark ages in intensity and in numbers. However it soon will also reach our own land but fortunately in comparison to the iron curtain countries I believe it will be relatively short lived.

There is really no definite statement that the great tribulation will last 3½ years. True, the antichrist will rule for 42 months which as we have shown was for an earlier period of much longer time measured in prophetic years. Immediately following this period of tribulation shall the sun be darkened, etc., and Christ be revealed in the clouds of heaven. This of course occurs with the opening of the sixth seal. The seventh seal is the wrath of God upon the wicked.

Now it is evident from reading all the scriptures pertaining to the heavenly signs in both Testaments that the Russian invasion occurs at the latter end of the tribulation and really climaxes that evil period.

QUESTION: How about the two in the field, one of which is taken, etc? Is this truly the rapture as is now commonly accepted? Consider:

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Luke 17:34-36).

The disciples upon hearing this of Christ asked a very logical question. "And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord?" (Luke 17:37). And the Lord answered them saying, "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together" (Luke 17:37).

This is a strange answer if indeed those who are being raptured end up as dead bodies for the birds of carion to feast upon. However I checked this scripture in Thayer's Greek Lexicon. There it plainly states that those who are taken are the wicked and that they are taken to be burned thus leaving the righteous behind.

This truth is confirmed in Matthew 13. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the household came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, GATHER YE TOGETHER FIRST THE TARES, AND BIND THEM IN BUNDLES TO BURN THEM: BUT GATHER THE WHEAT INTO MY BARN" (Matthew 13:24-30).

And again, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. **The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;** And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:37-43).

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: **THE ANGELS SHALL COME FORTH, AND SEVER**

THE WICKED FROM AMONG THE JUST, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:47-50).

"And it shall come to pass, THAT HE THAT IS LEFT IN ZION, AND HE THAT REMAINETH IN JERUSALEM, SHALL BE CALLED HOLY, even every one that is writtn among the living in Jerusalem; When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning" (Isaiah 4:3-4).

From these scriptures we can see that the wicked are removed from among the righteous instead of the reverse.

With these few thoughts I wish to conclude by quoting the following scripture.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

TO SCATTERED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Many years ago I was introduced to the teachings of the gospel. It was presented as a ladder that reached upward to heaven, called "stepping stones." How appropriate it is even today as we contemplate the need to take a step at a time as we press on toward the ultimate goal. The word "stone" gives one the sense of solidarity and permanence - of a good foundation to build upon. This is what has been expressed so many times in the scriptures.

This brings us to the lesson of the month, with the urgent message to build our house upon a rock. This rock is found by obedience to the will of God. We need a careful study of the plans as we build to be sure that it is correctly placed. We need to dig deep to find the rock for our foundation. Read Matt. 7:21-29.

One of the steps in the gospel of Jesus is baptism and our study will continue this month. I will try to be plain and direct in my presentation, for while it has had wide and generally favorable acceptance, it has suffered the most from changes and has been perverted from its original meaning more than any other major Christian doctrine. Isaiah wrote of this as he portrayed the scene of God's judgment upon the earth in the last days. What reason is given? "The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." (Isaiah 24:5)

This scripture evokes sober reflection on our attitudes toward the teaching of Jesus Christ. It isn't just

common litter, over population, and exploitation of our natural resources that is to be the downfall of our earth. It is the spiritual perversion and human propensity to ignore the laws of God and to change them to serve our own wills that will be subject to the wrath of God. The one ordinance that has been changed more than any other is baptism.

Some say that it is not needed. Others say that it is only an "outward sign of an inward grace," or that it is up to the believer to submit or not. There are those who believe that babies should be baptized soon after birth lest they die and go to purgatory; that a sprinkling of a bit of water upon the candidate is sufficient. A few teach that immersion of the person is necessary. There may be other variations that are not as common, but it comes down to the fact that a change has been instituted in the use and teaching of baptism, an ordinance that Jesus commissioned his disciples to administer to every believer without exception to the saving of the soul. You may want to review the lessons in the April issue.

I submit that baptism of water must follow the scriptural precedents as taught by Jesus and the Apostles which was by immersion and administered to all who were capable of understanding what it was for and who expressed a desire to submit themselves as repentant of sins and had faith in God. This eliminates some of the perverted practices such as sprinkling, baby baptism, free will observance, and the casual neglect that some practice to avoid argument. I believe that it is better to avoid the wrath of God by keeping His Word as our foundation for our faith.

To fortify my position that remission (forgiveness) of sins is the reason for baptism, I offer the following scriptures to establish the proper understanding.

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach baptism for the remission of sins." (Mark 1:4)

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38)

"And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. 3:5, 6)

" . . . that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins . . . Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?" (Acts 10:43, 47)

" . . . but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus 3:5)

" . . . that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:26)

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there, and they came,

and were baptized." (John 3:23)

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in the newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans 6:4)

This last is a great promise and deserves our careful consideration. Oh! That all who believe and have faith in God should see the beauty and blessing that comes from hearing His Word and doing it, that we might build upon the rock that is Jesus Christ.

Your brother in Christ,
Elder Arthur G. Smith

THE DEDICATION OF THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE

Part 2

Following the hymn "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning" President Joseph Smith then asked the several suorums separately, and then the congregation, if they accepted the dedicatory prayer. The vote was in every instance unanimous in the affirmative.

The eucharist was administered. Don Carlos Smith blessed the bread and wine and they were distributed by several elders present, to the church. Then followed various remarks by President Joseph Smith, Don Carlos Smith, Oliver Cowdery and others.

On Tuesday, March 31, 1836 the dedication services of the previous Sunday was repeated for the benefit of those who could not be admitted for want of room on Sunday.

On Sunday, April 3rd Joseph Smith writes: "Attended a meeting in the Lord's house, and assisted the other presidents of the church in seating the congregation, and then became an attentive listener to the preaching from the stand. In the afternoon, I assisted the other presidents in distributing the elements of the Lord's supper to the church. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the vails being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us. We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit before us, and under his feet was a paved walk of pure gold in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah."

"After the vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. Also Elias and Elijah also appeared."

Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by and invisible power, many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple).

F. G. Williams bore record that a holy angel of God came and sat between him and Joseph Smith, Sr., while the house was being dedicated. Numerous other manifestations of the Holy Spirit were also reported. NEXT: General Thomas Kane's "The Expulsion of the Mormons From Nauvoo."

MORE GOSPEL MUSIC

Many have requested another tape of some favorite musical selections we have lifted up to our most living Saviour. In order to meet those requests we have recorded nineteen songs which are now available on good quality 60 minute cassette tapes. We do not intend to make a profit, but in order for us to offer our praises to the Lord in this manner we must ask for a \$4.00 donation. Please keep the following list of songs for reference since we will not include a listing of the contents with each tape.

All praise and glory to God,
Gary and Neva

Mail all requests to:

Mr. and Mrs. Gary A. Housknecht
2411 E. Nisbet, Apt. #2
Phoenix, Arizona 85032

Gospel Music #2 Contents:

Side One:

1. If it Keeps Getting' Better N' Better / A Capella (55)
2. The Family of God / Guitar (2:53)
3. A Hill Called Mt. Calvary / Guitar (3:50)
4. I Believe in Miracles / A Capella (2:07)
5. Abide With Me / Billy Leibert Orchestra (3:00)
6. Like a River Glorious / Supreme Strings (3:40)
7. Fill My Cup, Lord / A Capella (2:25)
8. He Touched Me / Supreme Strings (3:18)
9. Seek Ye First - Praise Medley / Guitar (2:55)
10. Redemption Draweth Nigh / Guitar (2:37)

Side Two:

1. Come Holy Spirit / Guitar (3:44)
2. I Want To Be Like Jesus / Guitar (2:06)
3. To Help Zion on Its Way / Guitar (2:02)
4. Zion Will Be Beautiful / Guitar (3:00)
5. How Long Has it Been? / Guitar (2:22)

6. You Needed Me / Guitar (4:28)
7. Who at My Door is Standing? / Guitar (2:20)
8. Worthy is the Lamb / Supreme Strings (3:30)
9. Sweet, Sweet Spirit / Supreme Strings (3:53)

HOUSTON, MO. LOCAL REPORT

We have had so many good sermons in the last two months that it makes it hard to get all of the essence captured in just a few words. So I will try to put down a few of the things that impressed me hoping you will bear with me.

We must believe with our whole heart in the miracles of Jesus and that they are available today. Our faith is to be tried but the Lord will reach out to us if we BELIEVE AND OBEY. We've fallen short, bound ourselves down with our shortcomings and doubt. Pray that the Lord will prepare our hearts to understand his words more fully, giving us the strength and power to accomplish that which He has told us to do. Harken to God's counsel, which is a strength to you and those around you.

Don't procrastinate the day of your salvation. Be prepared. Never mind that last little fling in the world you plan. We don't know how long we will live. Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today. Do it now.

Though not popularly accepted by the worldly thinkers, scripture states that the primary responsibility for the provision of authority in the home has been assigned to men. (Not stated in exactly these words, of course.) Children look to their father for authority; how often does television depict father as a bumbling oaf. Much too often, I'm afraid. Mothers and fathers need to be in agreement on the basics of child rearing and not let the children play one parent against the other. Both need to spend more time with their children in life's simple pleasures and duties, not in over commitment to outside activities and individual pursuits. Many marital problems stem from a lack of communication. Husbands and fathers need to again place their families at the highest priority level, reserving a goodly portion of their time and energy for leadership in their homes. The future of our families and our country can be secured only by dedication and commitment and prayers for divine guidance in this area.

We are an important people to God for He has entrusted His Gospel to us. It is a great responsibility. We need to be ready to do His will always. When Christ enters our life He brings fulfillment and that special peace not found of the world. He said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." He can cure all ills, can give you a new heart and mind. Lay your guilt, fears and selfishness at Jesus' feet and find rest. Find strength and satisfaction through Christ. Obey His words. Paul said to set your ideals on things above, not on the things of the earth.

You can sit at Jesus feet,
You can sit at angel's feet,
IF YOU WILL.

Our business meetings were held this month for Church and Sunday School sections. Most everyone retained the office or job they held this past year. Assistant chorister, Janeen Barke, was the only new one coming to mind at the moment.

Love and best wishes to all from the Houston Local.
Mary Addie

COLORADO REUNION NOTICE

On June 12, 13 and 14, 1981, we will once again gather at the Orchard Mesa Local Church, 3233 B½ Road, Grand Junction, Colorado, for reunion services.

We are very happy to provide sleeping quarters for all that we can accommodate. Last year, however, we found ourselves "bursting at the seams," so we are requesting those who can to bring campers or camping gear so that we can provide for all who care to come.

We are eager to hear from you so we can arrange to provide for your meals, also, so please phone or drop a card to our committee.

John E. Bell, Pastor
572 - 34 Road
Clifton, CO 81520 303-434-7100

Marvin E. Ely
236 - 32 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-434-8149

Ron W. Church
497 - 30 ¾ Road
Grand Junction, CO 81501 303-434-5846

If you cannot attend this reunion or others that are planned, be sure to petition God on behalf of those meetings that His Spirit will be there in abundance.

Enid E. Bell, Secretary

MICHIGAN REUNION NOTICE

The Michigan Reunion will be held the week end of June 20-21, 1981, at Maple City.

Camping facilities are available at the Lime Lake Campground. If housing is needed, please contact:

Conley Addington
Rt. #2, Box 45
Maple City, MI 49664
Phone: 616/334-4922

Come and worship with us.

Reunion Committee:
Norman Trudgen
Jeff Butts
Jay Lee

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.

WRITTEN MATERIAL FOR "ZION'S ADVOCATE"

Articles, sermons, poems, news items, letters, notices, etc. which are appropriate to be printed in this paper are requested by the editorial staff. If possible they should be typewritten on one side of sheet only, double spaced and grammatically corrected. If this is not possible, please send your material anyway. Send all material to one of the members of the editorial staff or to the general church (see title page). The deadline for each month is the 7th of the previous month.

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P. O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051

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Comprehensive Comparison of Changes to the Revelations	\$1.30
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The Principles of the Gospel, Faith and Repentance	N/C
The Principles of the Gospel, The Laying on of Hands	N/C
The Principles of the Gospel, Baptism	N/C
The Latter Day Restoration	N/C
Apostasy or Succession, Which?	N/C
The Book of Mormon (Tract)	N/C
Articles of Faith and Practice of the Church of Christ	N/C
Articles of Faith and Practice (Spanish)	N/C
Articles of Faith and Practice, No. 9, 20	N/C
Sermonettes on the Teachings of Jesus	N/C
What the Church Teaches in Respect to Matrimony (Spanish)	N/C
Does It Make A Difference?	N/C
Mighty Acts of the Ages (Spanish)	N/C
Priesthood, Divine Authority	N/C
"Is Any Sick Among You?"	N/C
"Why"	N/C
A Synopsis of the Church of Christ's Beliefs and Practices	N/C
The Sealed Book of Isaiah 29	N/C
Are You Satisfied?	N/C
Gentiles - Weighed and Wanting	N/C
First Presidency or First Apostles	N/C
Marriage For Time and Eternity?	N/C
Baptism For The Dead?	N/C
Zion and the Temple of the Lord	N/C

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AUDIO VISUAL MATERIALS

The following materials are available on loan from the Audio, Video, Visual-Aids and Archeological Committee:

"Mexico, Land of Contrast" — A 50 minute slide program with taped narration about how archeology supports the Book of Mormon.

"Out of the Dust" — A 55 minute slide program with taped narration about the story told within the Book of Mormon.

"A Lamp Unto My Feet" — A 35 minute slide program with taped narration about the story within the Book of Mormon (directed toward Indian viewers).

"Light at Evening" — A 35 minute slide program with taped narration about the bringing forth of Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the Church of Christ.

"We Sing and We Talk About Jesus" — A series of Sunday School lessons, each with a teaching outline, and illustration and a taped song to be learned by primary or intermediate age children.

Send all orders to the Office Secretary, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), P. O. Box 472, Independence, Mo. 64051. Specify cassette tape or reel-to-reel ("We Sing and We Talk . . ." is available only on cassette). Slide projectors and tape players are not provided.

We also provide a Sermon-by-Tape service. There is no charge for the issuing of a cassette tape on a loan basis. Please refer to the January 1981 issue of the Zion's Advocate for a complete listing, or write to Harold Gill, 18848 N. 30th Street, Phoenix, Az. 85024.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Send all orders to: General Sunday School Association Treasurer, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), P. O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051.

	Price Each
Primary, Volume 1, No. 1, Childhood of Jesus (Out or Print)	N/C
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Primary, Volume 1, No. 4, Life of Jesus	N/C
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The Bible Game, "Who Am I?" by Doris Housknecht	\$1.50

(No charge for single box to a Local Sunday School)