

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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Evolution Versus Christianity

I know that I am thus I know that God is
For how else could we be as we are?
'tis easier to believe that we're made on a plan
Than to grow with no purpose, by far.
Think you through the past distant eons of time
Through space rolled an atom alone,
And grew upon nothing, with nothing plus
nothing,
Until the poor thing was a stone?
A stone we had then, with nothing to add,
Time worketh wonders you know,
A stone and it's nothing, innumerable nothing
To stars and great planets did grow.
But alas for such wonders they stagger my soul
Such faith I must have to believe
But why trouble myself with things so absurd
Or why should I over them grieve.
For how simple it is to believe that God is
When I see that I am and you are;
So I turn and rejoice in the faith of my Fathers
And breath my thanksgiving in prayer.

M. Harvey Seibel

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Editorial . . .

"YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH . . ."

Man's inability to accept God for what He is usually lies within the fact that man is unable to accept truth. Truth is a characteristic of God the same as love is a characteristic of God. The origin of truth as well as love, is in God.

It is necessary for us to understand truth as being something more than a provable fact; it is the infallible intellect of an infinite Being. Just as God is unchangeable, so also is truth unchangeable. Just as God is infinite, i. e. immeasurable and unlimited, so also is His truth, His intellect.

One of the greatest faults of man is to try to humanize God. Many people have difficulty in accepting His greatness; their minds will not open to the ultimate superiority that His word reveals. The carnal mind rejects what is not readily seen or that which cannot be proven tangibly.

This does not change the reality of God, however. His unproveableness is one of His most distinct characteristics, for it is His will that mankind learn of Him through faith rather than through a more natural means. He would have man to overcome his fallen condition by reaching above his natural senses to experience the higher level of existence, the spiritual level.

It was necessary, therefore, for God to condescend to man, who had fallen, that he might be reclaimed and return into the presence of God. This was done by sending His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who became a sacrifice to atone for the sins of man. Through Christ came the truth that God desired to be revealed unto man, that which would acquaint man with God.

Our personal acceptance of the word of God - God's truth - determines our relationship with Him. We individually come closer to God as we gain understanding of His word, we gain the greater understanding of His word by responding to it in obedience.

The modern world has increased in such a vast expanse of knowledge that we find ourselves flooded with volumes of information all claiming to be the truth. From this standpoint, we find that words are cheap, but truth - God's truth - is precious.

The word of God, as compared with the writings of man, has great depth. God is a Master of language and can convey the thoughts of His mind unto man in ways that can confound the wisest of men. Embodied within His word, especially in the prophecies, are phases and unique expressions that reveal excellence in the ability to hide the truth from the carnal-

minded. Only the humble and spiritual-minded are able to discern God's written mysteries.

We are told that God's ways are not man's ways; this is especially obvious in His dealings with man. When we try to outmaneuver the Lord, we show just how foolish we are. His works are not predictable except where He has revealed them through His prophets. And even then, they are not easily understood except through the Holy Spirit.

The important thing, then, is for us to endeavor to obtain truth - not just a scholar's knowledge of truth, but an understanding and fruit-bearing knowledge of truth. We are usually given to think that to obtain truth is to recognize that which is false. We are told that there is an opposition in all things, so it seems reasonable that when we see a thing or hear a precept that we consider false, that the opposite would have to be true. But how do we know a thing to be false, unless we can compare it to the truth? We have to know truth first before we have a sure knowledge of that which is false.

So, how do we know truth? We are told to pray to the Father in the name of Christ and He will reveal the truth of all things. (See Moroni 10:5, James 1:5, Matt. 16:17) This is given to us through His Holy Spirit.

We usually have an initial experience that conveys to us a knowledge that a certain thing, such as the Book of Mormon, is true. This, however, is merely the

beginning of our learning process. We know that His word is true, but we still need a working knowledge and understanding of the word. The word must be proven in us - in our very lives.

This process of learning is expressed thus: "For behold, thus saith the Lord God: 'I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.'" (2 Nephi 12:36) As we experience this learning process the greater revelation of the divine truth is confirmed in us wherein we find that all truths are compatible one with another. It is as if we are building one truth upon another. If we try to incorporate a falsehood into our building process the structure takes on a peculiar shape, for truth will not fit with that which is false.

We must have confidence in the Lord for He is most skillful in teaching us. He doesn't need a classroom, but he needs our willingness to study to show ourselves approved unto Him. Our daily lives are the classrooms, the scriptures are our textbooks. And each experience in life is a test proving to Him and to ourselves whether or not we have learned the lesson.

The important thing is for us to realize that the Lord is diligent in His teachings and will strive with us to the end if we don't become a "drop out." His truth - the divine intellect of God - is our course of study; we are His privileged students.

RLS

SERMON BY ALBERT LEIGHTON-FLOYD

1-31-1982

(condensed)

I'm just glad to be here; and just praising the Lord for all his goodness to myself and my family. I just want to tell you that this life is great when you've got Jesus Christ with you. I really believe that. And I really believe that as long as we feel that way we have something to offer to other people; and so I think it's important that we feel like this life is all right. It isn't that we want to stay here, we want to be pilgrims passing through; we don't want to become a part of everything that's wrong with this world, but at the same time while we are here there's many things in store for us and that's what we're going to talk about this evening.

Have you ever seen the TV commercial where they are advertising, I think it's a stockbroker, and it's a classroom situation and there's quite a bit of com-

motion going on. They have several different commercials and there's always a lot of commotion. Well in this case it's a small girl; I think she's standing at the chalkboard and she's writing the a b c's; A B C D E F . . . E. F. Hutton, and everybody stops, and it says, "When E. F. Hutton speaks everybody listens." Wouldn't it be wonderful if when God spoke everybody listened? Think about that. I think about that when I think of that commercial, I suppose that stock brokerage is very creditable, I know nothing about it, but just think how creditable God is. And God has spoken. He's spoken to us in his word; and just think how exciting it would be if you were walking along with one of your friends in the gospel, and you were talking and you walked by a crowd of people, and you said, "You know what Jesus said?" and everybody stopped and said, "what? what did he say?" If they were just that in-

terested, but they're not. A lot of people aren't and that's where we come in. That's right, we've got a job to do. And our job is to revive the interest in what God has to say.

God is looking for something, and this is what we are going to talk about. In the 4th chapter of John, in the 23rd. verse it says, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; . . ." everything in the word of God is important, but this is what we really want to center in on. The Father is seeking for something. Now isn't that important? If you were listening like we were portraying and you heard, "There's something that's important to the Father," wouldn't you ask, "well what is it?" Well right here it is, ". . . For the Father seeketh such to worship him." Who? The Father seeketh those who will worship him in spirit and in truth.

The next verse, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Two tremendous dimensions that we could spend all our life working at and probably never achieve all the knowledge and capabilities that could come from either one of these two things, truth and spirit. Many times instead of binding people together and giving them great strength there comes a wall of separation because of disagreement on what is truth. Still God is seeking people to worship him in spirit and in truth.

Now God speaks to you, you know that? So when I say that God said something to me don't think that I'm crazy, because several years ago when I was living in the Ozarks God spoke to me, and he was dealing with me about what I should do for Him. And you know as a human being we have a natural tendency to want to say and do things that will make us look a little bit better in the eyes of people; it's a human weakness that is not just common to me or you but almost every human being battles this. Why are you doing certain things? Is it for God or isn't it? And I was struggling over these things and I was thinking about this truth, not so much the spirit but the truth part of it, and I was struggling with the question, am I really preaching the truth the way I see it or am I holding back some of the things that I feel are the truths that God has shown me through his word? And as I meditated over these things the Spirit said to me, "If I be lifted up," I being Jesus Christ, "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto myself." And immediately I understood I'm not all that important in this whole thing of the world; the important thing is Jesus Christ. The gospel of Jesus Christ, the life that you live for Jesus Christ, everything that you are built around in your life centered in Jesus Christ; and so he said, "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me." And at that moment in time I had to reevaluate many things in my life and I had to say, "the only important thing is Jesus."

And I began to search the word of God, and I'm not going to stand here tonight and tell you the church isn't important and the organization isn't important and the officers in the church aren't important, and that Zion is not important; you each have your own ideas of their importance, but I want to tell you that there is nothing more important, you can have church organization, you can have apostles and bishops, you can have libraries and fine buildings and if you don't have Jesus Christ, you are just wasting your time, so you just as well start out with him right from the very beginning; and the people that come, come to Jesus. And if they come to him and they're fully converted there'll be a church and the truth will be there, and the Spirit will be there and it will be the Bride; and God will be there, but the foundation has to be Jesus Christ. It has to start with him and go up to these other things; and the thing that is the binding thing and that amalgamates and fits things together and makes it work is Jesus.

And so we have this voice that has spoken and it said, "I am seeking those who will worship me in Spirit and in truth." We find over in the Book of Mormon, on page 452 an account of what happened in the garden of Eden, and it tells how they were tempted and partook of the fruit and it finally says, (I'll read verse 84), "And thus we see, that there was a time granted unto man, to repent, yea a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God." This was the result of what happened, that a time was given which was called a probationary time, wherein man would have time to make a decision to repent and serve God. Not just to repent but to repent and serve. Serve means you do something. God is looking for those who will worship Him in spirit and truth. I will read verse 88 on page 453, because I think this helps to link this together, "And now we see by this, that our first parents were cut off, both temporally and spiritually." So at that point in time, they weren't who God was looking for if He was looking for somebody to worship Him in the Spirit, because they were cut off, "both temporally and spiritually from the presence of the Lord; and thus we see they became subject to follow after their own will."

Back to TV again. An old comedian you don't see much of anymore is Flip Wilson, and he did skits that I didn't appreciate all that much, and it was always the devil that made him do it. Now friend that's not true. This says they became subject to follow their own will. You are not going to get off on the judgment day when the finger is pointed at you and you are asked if you did so and so and you answer, "well, yes, but the devil made me do it." It won't work. From that point in time we became subject to follow after our own will. We may be tempted on one side to do that which is wrong, and on the other side we may be enticed to do that which is right by the Spirit of God,

but the final decision, my friends, is yours! and mine! We make that decision. God gave that to us, and there's no one to blame but ourselves.

How important is that? It's very, very important. They were going to suffer both a temporal and spiritual death; verse 90 says it better, "Therefore, as the soul could never die, and the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal; that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord; therefore, it was expedient that mankind should be reclaimed from this spiritual death." It sure is, because that is what God is looking for, people who can worship Him in spirit and in truth and those which have been cut off spiritually will in no way be able to do that. So how can they get into a position where they can do that? This is where the gospel of Christ comes in. I don't mean to tell you that if you embrace the gospel of Christ all your troubles will be over. Everything is not going to be smooth sailing but you've got a Helper, somebody's there that wants to help us, and that makes so much difference, and how we use that assistance from Him is so important: and the only way that you know how to use it is to look into the word. You find that, "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" and when you meet these difficulties, these challenges in life, if you've got Jesus with you, you have a source of strength that is greater that is **greater**, that is **GREATER**, than all the powers that hell can muster up against you; God is Greater!

On page 161 of the Book of Mormon, verse 14, "And the Father said; Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son." Now what are we talking about? We're to the point of finding out how people can get back into the situation to be those people God is looking for. Continuing, "And also the voice of the Son came unto me, saying, He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism; yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; Yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then ye can speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel. But behold, my beloved brethren, thus came the voice of the Son unto me, saying, After ye have repented of your sins, and witnessed unto the Father that ye are willing to keep my commandments, by the baptism of water, and have received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and can speak with a new tongue, yea, even with the tongue of angels, and after this, should deny me, it

would have been better for you, that ye had not known me."

It is just as well that we read that right in with the rest of it because there's no use in getting all excited about wanting to serve Jesus, and wanting to make this commitment to Jesus Christ and not really being committed to it. Make that commitment and make it solid. Don't play church! Get down to business; this is really IT. When you talk to God you are talking to GOD! We're not gathered here in front of some idol. It's not just so much lip service. He's real; He heals and delivers, and He has benefits and attributes and helps, and He's mighty and powerful, and He's tired of being played with.

You know, I'm very serious about this; but I'm just as serious about having a good time. I want to smile and laugh and have a good time, and I don't want to do it and be disgusting to God. But I'm not scared that He doesn't want me to be happy and enjoy myself in this life as long as I walk in that pathway and example that He set for me. And I love it, but I love it because as much as I know that God is a God of truth and He's got these principles and He doesn't want me to play with them, He wants me to realize that He is true, and at the same time with all those things He wants me to be happy because I'm his child. And you know the best way that I came to realize that was when I had children of my own. I found that I didn't want them to be miserable; of course, you can't allow anybody to just do everything; there has to be discipline. The great thing about parenthood is that you begin to understand a little bit more about God. I understand, because of this parent-child relationship that you feel all that love for your child and you have a great desire for them to have the best of everything. And God said, if you, being human know how to give good gifts to your children, think how much more I know how to. And God wants us to have the best of everything.

Now, we've gotten this person into the church, let's say. No, let's not say that. That's what we usually say, but what have we done? We've gotten him to make a commitment to Jesus Christ. He has solidly decided that, "I want to serve Jesus, he died for me on the cross of Calvary, and paid for my sins and I want to accept him as my Savior and serve him, not for just a little while but all the days that I walk upon this earth. This person has repented and they've sealed it through the waters of baptism and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, where as the word of God has said, and they spoke with a new tongue and shouted praises unto God. And that's all right too. We don't hear too much of that, but it's all right, it's in the word, if you feel like shouting it's all right with me. Praise God, he's all right.

And now we're getting down to us, because I don't

suppose there's anyone in here that hasn't acknowledged Jesus Christ and made this commitment and even been baptized, so we're going to deal with us.

Over on page 315, verse 27, of the Book of Mormon, I know that you're familiar with these things but we're going to go over them another time. "And now behold, I ask of you my brethren of the church," it's us isn't it? "Have ye spiritually been born of God?" Question mark. What is God looking for? Over in John He said He was looking for people who would worship Him in spirit and in truth. Big question mark. So it's not necessarily a true assumption to say that everybody in the church has spiritually been born of God, or else this question would have been a waste of energy and written word, and God doesn't waste time. Verse 28: "Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts? Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye full of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God, to be judged according to the deeds that have been done in the mortal body? I say unto you, can ye imagine to yourselves that ye hear the voice of the Lord, saying unto you in that day, Come unto me ye blessed, for behold, your works have been the works of righteousness upon the face of the earth?" That's what we want to hear, but can we say that? These are hard questions, but it's a self-examination.

Verse 34: "Or otherwise, can ye imagine yourselves brought before the tribunal of God, with your souls filled with guilt and remorse; having a remembrance of all your guilt? Yea, a perfect remembrance of all your wickedness; yea, a remembrance that ye have set at defiance the commandments of God? I say unto you, Can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands?" This is to people in the church, this isn't somebody standing on a street-corner somewhere preaching to people passing by; this is why it's so important to us. "I say unto you, can ye look up having the image of God graven on your countenances: I say unto you, can ye think of being saved when you have yielded yourselves to become subjects to the devil? I say unto you, Ye will know at that day that ye cannot be saved; for there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white." Skipping over to verse 46 page 316: "And now behold, I say unto you my brethren, If you have experienced a change of heart, and if you have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?" Can you feel it now? We've got to have this now!

We read that it's a probationary time we're in, a time to make a decision; and the decision that we're making is so terribly important because it effects not just now but our eternal salvation. Psalms 103 says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me,

bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:" These are some of the benefits in serving the Lord, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" How important that is. You have to realize that you're not perfect, but God has prepared a way to forgive you of your iniquities. That doesn't mean that this is a cop-out, that you just go out and sin and run back and ask God to forgive you. But He has prepared a way to give you forgiveness of your iniquities; that's one of His benefits, and it's a great one.

When the question was asked, what is the greatest commandment? It was, to love the Lord thy God with all your mind, might and soul; and to love thy neighbor as thyself. And that's our problem. Too many of us do love our neighbor as ourself and we don't love ourselves either. We're down on us. We feel like we've been a failure, we can't do anything right. If we try to do anything at church we mess it up, and nobody likes what we try to do at home, and nobody appreciates us even in our work. If we're feeling that way, we love our neighbor the same way neither one is getting much love. So this is why it's so important that there is a way and it's one of the benefits of God, that He forgiveth iniquities, and makes it so that you can feel good about yourself and when you can feel good about yourself you can start feeling good about other people and loving them.

"Who healeth all thy diseases;" No, there are no exceptions, that's one of His benefits, to "healeth all thy diseases."

"Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Those are some of the benefits of God. The question was asked, if you have experienced that change of heart, do you feel so now? Well, if you don't, think of some of the good things that God has in mind for you.

We have made a commitment with God through the waters of baptism, and that's so important, and now we have been spiritually born of God, but we realize from these questions asked in the Book of Mormon that some can be in the situation of having made a commitment, have come into the church and still not be walking right with God. And we see that God has benefits; he cares about every detail of your life. And over on page 233 of the Book of Mormon we find something else about those who are committed to God. Verse 81: "Thus God provided a means that man, through faith, might work mighty miracles; therefore, he becometh a great benefit to -- himself." No it doesn't say that. What the word of God says here is that "... he becometh a great benefit to his fellow beings!" Now we might think that we'd just be of great benefit to God, but just think if you had faith to do mighty miracles how much you could bless your fellow human

beings; people that are on the sick beds, people that are blind, and that are afflicted. These things God has promised and put within our grasp, and we're an organization that claims to believe in them; and we have the potential of being a great benefit to our fellow human beings, not for our glory but for the glory of God and for the service to those who need it.

On page 212 verse 49, "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God." That's true, it doesn't have to be a big thing, you can do it this evening, tomorrow, you can be kind to people. If you see people who are in distress and downhearted, if you're understanding to people. It doesn't have to be people in the church or it doesn't have to be people you're trying to get into the church; just care about people. Love them, reach out to them, really be concerned, be a good listener when somebody's got a problem. One of the greatest ways to get people interested in the Lord is to show them you love them. You don't have to say the first thing, "you ought to come with me to the meeting over at the church." Just care about that individual, care if they are miserable right then; and if you care about them pretty soon they'll start getting interested in why you care about them, and then you can tell them about these things and then they'll have some reason to come, and they'll have some reason to expect something when they come.

I want to talk briefly about love. What the Book of Mormon says about charity is beautiful. If you want to read it, it's on page 768. Charity is the bottom line of what we're talking about. And I want to say this, we're too judgmental. Before you make conclusions about the black man, or the Indian, or the crippled man, or the deformed one, or the person that doesn't have normal intelligence; before you decide that you can't associate with them, that you're too good to be around them, try to do the old Indian saying and walk a mile in his moccasins. How much did you have to say about the fact that you were born to be a white American? Did God, before He sent you here, bring you up and ask you, "would you rather come here as a black man, an Indian or a white person?" and you said, "Oh, I'd like to come as a white person, man preferably." No, you know He didn't bother to do that. You didn't have anything to do with it, so why look down on anybody. They didn't have anything to do with it either. What they've done with their life after they came here, whatever color, gender or whatever else they are, they have to answer for that.

Situations are the same way. We see situations crop up, we don't know the details about it, but we're ready to judge them. We say, "They shouldn't have done that." It might be a brother or sister in the church, but try just loving them. It's hard sometimes,

but the word says, even the publicans love those who do good to them, and a lot of times we feel real good if we just love our relatives. Really, we feel like we've done a big thing if we just love people who are doing good to us, and here we are associated with people who have made their decision to serve Jesus and they are in the church and they've got the same problems and troubles that we do. But if they blow it or something we're ready to jump on them.

Jesus said to love and pray for your enemies, and those that spitefully use you. It says, your enemies, and I've said, "I wish we would not give another dollar to foreign aid, to our enemies; but that's not what Jesus said, that's what I said. Jesus said, pray for them, love them, turn the other cheek. The reason we can't quite do those things is because we haven't quite received enough of the Spirit of God in us to understand that if you do all of those things, Jesus Christ is big enough to handle the problems. Give it to him, love; love when it hurts, don't put people down, put them up, lift them up.

If you'll do those things it will help solve the problems of the denomination. Is that what it is? I think Brother Marvin, this morning said the church, and I want it to be the Church of Christ. But me wanting it to be doesn't make it that way, and you saying it is doesn't make it that way. Us obeying the word and developing ourselves to where we are those people that God is seeking, "to worship him in spirit and truth" makes it that way. The truth is in the word of God, and it needs to be looked for, it needs to be dealt with and it needs to be talked about. It needs to be that I can love somebody whether they believe in one God or two, or probation after death or not. I stand here and say these things because I don't care anymore; I care about this group of people somehow getting above those things, and saying we can rise above it. There's greater things to do, there's service to our fellowmen, there's a reason for us being here. If we are born of the spirit and filled with the spirit and have love within us that it's going to conquer the problems, it's going to take us above them and we're going to be serving man instead of worrying about our petty problems with no programs or no outreaches to anybody that's lost.

Quit playing church. Are we just here on a family get together or what? It can't be that way. There's people out there that's lost, there's people out there that's looking for the right way to go, there's people out there that don't know the first thing about the fullness of the gospel of Christ and they probably never will unless we do something about it.

I'm getting mean now. I'm sorry but that's the truth. It gets down to the point, you know, of year after year of conference after conference after conference, after committee after committee after committee and what's the result? We need a little bit of

commitment in this organization. Do something for God. Tell somebody you are going to do it so they'll know about it and see if you follow through.

I heard a preacher say, "make a list of more things than you can do today, and then do it." We're lazy, we're indifferent, we're playing this game too much. Now I know that there are some of you that's working hard, that's dedicated and putting a lot into this, and you are putting a lot more into it than I am. But there's also a lot of us that need to be getting down to business, and realizing that the books say that someday we're going to stand before the tribunal of God, and some of the people of the church are going to have to say, "I served the wrong one all those days."

In spite of the fact that I might appear to be a little bit angry and a little bit disgusted, I love you all, and really you must love me a lot to put up with me. Really and truly, I do love you and I love God; I love preaching, I love preaching repentance more than anything else, but there's times when other things have to be said. And I say, with all the sincerity of my heart, Let's get down to business about this, let's really pray about it, not just casually but let's really talk to God about getting things moving realizing that God has some answers. God is pouring out His spirit on many people and you may not believe that. I'm not privileged to be where there's a Church of Christ to meet with other people and I see what I consider some very exciting and good things happening. I praise God for them, and I wish that I was seeing them here. I wish

that I was seeing happiness and excitement about the movement of the Spirit of God, the healing of people. Some people would say that those things are all of the devil, and everybody has the right to their own judgment. But I want to tell you it is true that the word says that there would be those that would come before him and they would say, "Lord, in thy name didn't we cast out devils and we healed the sick, and did all these things," and he will say, "depart from me ye workers of iniquity." But you know what he did say (too)? He said, "By their fruits you'll know them." And you know what fruits he was talking about; what I've talked to you about this evening, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, kindness are the fruits of the Spirit. If you walk by a tree and there's no fruit on it it doesn't take long to determine that. The fruit has got to be there. The love has got to be there. The gentleness, the kindness, the goodness, not how many members you have, not how many big programs you have. You've got to have that fruit. The fruit God's looking for is this fruit of the Spirit, and if you're filled with the Spirit the fruit is there. You just think about that. You don't need to go out and develop love and kindness and longsuffering and patience and goodness and gentleness, and meekness and kindness, you get filled with the Spirit and you've got them. Think of the last time you felt a big fill of the Spirit of God on you and did you have any impatience, unkindness or anything like that? No; all you felt was love. So get filled with the Spirit and you'll have the fruits. It's a natural result.

MEN AND BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

(Acts 2:37)

By William A. Sheldon

A Brief Preface

The question asked by Jews (as posed in the title of this treatise) as they listened to the inspired teaching of Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, was answered succinctly, so far as the scriptural account is concerned:

"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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Acts 2:38-40 (All emphasis throughout is mine, W. A. S.)

How timeless is this exhortation, The promise is

even to us in these last days, but it is predicated upon the same terms enunciated by our Master, of which the apostles bore witness. Perhaps in even greater measure today, we need to be saved "from this untoward generation."

Peter had appealed to those things written in the scriptures, of that which had been spoken by the prophets, whom the Jews honored (being now dead), but whose teachings concerning that Just One who was to come, they rejected. Likewise, today, lip-service and honor is rendered to Christ, and a measure of concession to His teachings and that of the apostles, but many hearts are far removed.

Therefore, it seems necessary to rehearse the provisions God has made to recover his ancient covenant people of Israel, as well as, in mercy, to call the Gentiles into the same covenant of grace. One can only

marvel at the condescension and long-suffering of our Heavenly Father. Though the task of portraying the divine proviso is great, this present "mite" is contributed with the intent to magnify the "King of Glory," our Lord Jesus Christ, which, if successful will also exalt the great God and Father of all.

The Abrahamic Covenant

As the Lord led the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage by the hand of his servant Moses, he gave them commandments and ordinances to observe throughout their generation, which served to remind them of Him; of the high hand by which they had been delivered. At Mount Sinai, He delivered the Ten Commandments through Moses, and many other charges did He give which specified their manner of worship and of their relationships to each other, and with those of other nations. With great detail and severity, He imposed upon the Israelites the Law of which Apostle Paul spoke in contra-distinction to the covenant made with Abraham.

"Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his descendants as a covenant. He did not say, To your descendants, as of many, but, To your descendants, as one, that is Christ. For if the inheritance is by the law, then it would not be as the fulfillment of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Then what is the use of the law? It was added because of transgression, till the coming of the heir to whom the promise was made . . . Is the law then against the promises of God? Far be it; for if a law had been given which could have wrought salvation, righteousness would truly have come as a result of the law. But the scripture has included everything under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were guided by the law, while we were waiting for the faith which was to be revealed. The law then was our pathfinder (schoolmaster/KJT) to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But since faith has come, we no longer are in need of the pathfinder . . . So if you belong to Christ, then you are descendants of Abraham, and his heirs according to the promise." Gal, 16:25, 29 (Lamsa)

The Lamsa translation, taken from original Aramaic texts (which was the language of Christ and the apostles) is used in the above, as the sense is a little clearer than that of the King James translation. However, the term, "pathfinder" appears to be less appropriate than "schoolmaster." It is our purpose throughout to use the scriptural quotations from whichever book (s) shed the greatest light, to determine as nearly as possible the speaker's intent, realizing, as we should, that translations which are not given by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, may serve as only a dim reflection of the original.

Now, what is it that Paul is saying? God made a covenant with Abraham in that because he believed God (Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:6), it was accounted (imputed) to him for righteousness. The covenant made declared that of his seed should be raised many nations, and that they would be as numberless as the stars in the heavens, or as the sand upon the seashore. This has been literally fulfilled in the multiplied millions descending from both Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac, who was the covenant son of Abraham in his old age. Jacob's (or Israel's) descendants are multiplied through Ephraim (the son of Joseph) among the European Gentile nations (with others of their Israelite brethren whose identities are presently lost for the most part), and upon the isles of the seas. Some of Manasseh (the other son of Joseph) are known as the American Indians. Those of Judah, who was another son of Jacob, are scattered among the nations, but are increasingly gathering to their homeland in Palestine. These are commonly called Jews. An even greater multitude are the descendants of Ishmael and Esau, the present Arabian nations, who are of Abraham, but are not of the covenant lineage. Much could be said of value concerning the covenant through Isaac ("in Isaac shall thy seed be called" - Gen. 21:12), and thence through Jacob, or Israel (meaning, a prince of God), but will not be done here. Suffice it to say that jealousy and hatred has marked the attitude of the Arabic nations through the centuries because of this covenant of divine favor through the line chosen of God. With God, it is never a matter of favoritism toward any man or nation, except upon the condition of faith, righteousness and humility; and this is true regarding Abraham and his seed. The matter is explained by Apostle Paul, thus:

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." Rom. 8:29.

God foreknew the faithfulness of Abraham:

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." Gen. 18:19.

This God knew; but He also knew that many of His children would be stiffnecked, hardened in their hearts against their Redeemer. As a result, He repeatedly cast them off and brought their enemies upon them to destroy and to carry into captivity. He humbled them also by famine and pestilence. Again and again He entreated them by the voice of their prophets, but they killed them, and would not that He should rule over them. Notwithstanding, God sent his Son, descended from Abraham and David through the lineage of Judah; and they slew Him, too. For this crowning act

of their rebellion, He slew many with the Roman swords, who destroyed their beautiful city of Jerusalem, leaving their temple with no stone upon another, and they carried captive only a remnant.

For nearly 2,000 years the most visible vestige of Israel (the Jew) has been scattered among the nations, a hiss and a byword until the Lord has softened the hearts of the Gentiles within the last 150 years and more. We may, if we will, see and marvel at the mysterious movement of Divine Providence in the restoration of the house of Israel to the lands of their inheritance. Even yet they must suffer until they learn obedience; but gather they shall, and will yet call upon the Lord with one consent. Then shall the Lord have mercy upon them, when He shall descend upon the mount of Olives (Zech. 14:v, 4); when He will "seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem," and

"Will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced . . . Zech. 12:10.

Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am He that doth speak: **behold it is I.**" Isa. 52:6.

Then shall the promise of God to Abraham be verified in the fullest sense, saying:

"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed . . ." Gen. 23:18.

How are they blessed? Because the Son of God came in the meridian of time, born of a virgin, and in manhood declaring the gospel of the Kingdom; He being the Light of the world, giving his life to seal the verity of his message; arising from the grave as the first-fruit of the resurrection, hence to dwell at the right hand of his Father in heaven until He should be revealed in the last days; and lo! the vision of scarred hands and feet! the sound of his voice comforting his people, and declaring forgiveness of sins and cessation of tribulation and wars! (see Isa. 40:1, 2).

"And He shall set up an ensign (in the form of his people declaring the fulness of the gospel of Christ; see Zech, 9:16) for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. Isa. 11:12. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles . . . He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law." Isa. 42:1, 4.

(To be continued)

UNITED STATES/ISRAEL COOPERATION TREATY

The action of the U. N. Security Council declaring the annexation of the Golan "null and void" and the United States' support of that resolution is tantamount to a denial of the Word of God.

Every Bible believer knows that God gave certain land to Abraham and his descendants by a covenant. (Gen. 15:18; Deut. 32:8-9). Bible-believing Americans can not acquiesce to this turn against Israel, threatening sanctions, and suspending the U. S./Israel cooperation agreement.

America needs the blessings of Almighty God right now, perhaps more than ever before in our history. It is recorded in the Bible in reference to Israel, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, . . ." Gen. 12:3. The Bible also quotes God as saying, speaking of the Jewish people, ". . . and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginning; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ezekiel 36:11.

Can America afford to risk offending God by ignoring His word?

It is true that the United States has ignored the prophetic word of Jesus in reference to Jerusalem. In the 1967-73 wars when the Golan, West Bank and old city of Jerusalem were all liberated from Syria and Jordan, the United States should have recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Jesus said, speaking of the Jewish people and Jerusalem, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21:24. Jerusalem is no longer under the Gentiles; it is the capital of Israel. Why does the American government continue to reject these words if America really believes them? Our Embassy continues to be in Tel Aviv.

We call upon the President and Congress to move our Embassy back to Jerusalem. The American consulate from the days of Turkey was in Jerusalem. My uncle was vice-council for years.

Israel sincerely desires that America and the free world come to realize that they are surrounded by hostile Arab nations, with the exception of Egypt, plotting and craving Israel's total defeat. And mark this: Those Arab nations will spend their last petro dollar in that mad cause. The Arabs can't defeat Israel so they are trying desperately by oil blackmail and their millions from oil, one cause of world inflation and depression, to get America to put pressure on Israel to relinquish all so-called Arab lands. God has raised up leaders in Israel and they will never do this even if they stand isolated. Let the world come to understand - one with God is a majority.

The fervent prayer of faith seeks to know God's will; the fervent prayer of self seeks to change it.

America should remember that the Jewish people waited and prayed nearly 2,000 years for the day when they could return to Jerusalem. During the British mandate of Palestine the policy of the Zionist movement was to purchase the land. When the British pulled their armed forces out and the Arab nations attacked in 1947-48, that policy ended and it became necessary to liberate the land by war. America should, of all nations, understand because America did much worse against the American Indians from sea to shining sea.

The Arabs were the occupiers of Palestine because God never gave them the title, but He has given it to Israel and Judah. We should stop calling Judea and Samaria occupied territory. The Jews are not the occupiers of Arab land; they are the liberators. But that is not the bottom line. That bottom line belongs to God. And this is the word of the Lord, "The combined forces of the Soviet Union and her surrogates, including the Arab nations, will not be able to defeat Israel, neither will they be able to reach Jerusalem, because the battle is the Lord's." Bless the name of the Lord. The coming war in the Middle East is not Armageddon. But it will be the end of Russian Communism and Arab threats.

After over 2,500 years we are now going to experience the fulfilling of the prophetic words of the Prophet Ezekiel (chapters 38 and 39). It is near at hand.

Briefly: Russia is moving to take over the Middle East. To do that the Soviet Union and her surrogate nations, including the Arab nations, are going to try to liquidate Israel. Plain but not so simple because, you see, God is involved. The nations involved in this pending invasion are enumerated in the Bible. Egypt is not among them. Just a few years ago Russia was in Egypt. The prophetic words says, "I will turn thee back, and put hooks in thy jaws, . . ." Ezekiel 38:4.

God turned Russia back! That portion of God's word has been fulfilled. The Lord God used Anwar Sadat to kick the Russians out, bag and baggage.

This coming invasion will precipitate the use of nuclear weapons, make no mistake about this - it is God's word. America can't prevent this coming war but we can develop "a formal cooperative treaty with Israel." We can help ready bases in Israel and the Sinai near Sharmel Sheikh, in some of the territory we are forcing Israel to relinquish.

We need to stop all effort to try to pressure Israel into giving up any part of Israel for an independent Arab state. The Word is clear: This will never be! Israel is all liberated land. The Arabs occupied the land for centuries, that day has passed.

We call upon the Administration and Congress to stop, by veto if necessary, all efforts of the U. N. to enforce sanctions against Israel. We request that the signed cooperative agreement between the United States

and Israel be reactivated and a formal treaty of cooperation be negotiated between the United States and Israel. This is in harmony with Bible prophesy.

Howard Leighton-Floyd
Support Israel Association
Anderson, Missouri 64831

WHO IS THE SPIRITUAL LEADER OF THE HOME?

Ephesians 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."

This means the husband is to be the spiritual leader in the home, as Christ is the spiritual leader of His church.

Verse 25 says, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it;"

Verse 33 continues, "Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Verse 22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

So we see the wife has a spiritual responsibility also. If husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church, and wives are to love their husbands, as unto the Lord, this is a spiritual responsibility for both. The husband is to take the lead in spiritual things, and the wife is to walk right by his side, leading their children in righteous paths. This is what the Lord intended.

But, if the husband neglects to take the spiritual lead in the home, or refuses to take it, then the wife must assume this responsibility all by herself, in order that her children might come to know the Lord and His ways and be brought to salvation. Or if the wife neglects her responsibility in the spiritual teaching of their children, then this all falls upon the husband. Either way the burden can become very heavy, when not shared by both, for this creates a lopsided home.

The Lord intended for a husband and wife to be partners in the home, as servants of God; but sin has come in and destroyed this partnership in many homes, so one often must struggle alone seeking to bring Christ into their home, and to teach His laws to their children. If they give up, all will suffer the result. As committed disciples of the Lord, we must never give up the effort to teach the commandments and teachings of Jesus to our families.

Stella Winegar

Truth is truth where 'tis found,
On heathen or on Christian ground.

AMERICA, GOD'S CHOSEN LAND

(Tune, Nearer My God to Thee.)

This land America,
God's chosen land;
Nation of nations touched
with His holy hand.
"Chief of the nations" named;
"One out of many" called;
To Joseph's seed was given,
By God's hand installed.

Foretold by prophecy,
Explored and proved -
By men who were inspired,
On whose minds God moved,
To witness for the truth
Brought forth by God's own hand,
Our land America,
God's chosen land.

This land, America
Land of the free;
Preserved for those who came
Across the sea.
God's Spirit moved on those
Who came upon this land;
Brought out of darkness drear,
By His holy hand.

America is blest,
For those who choose
To follow faithfully
God's most holy news.
The righteous shall be blest;
The wicked shall be cursed;
Blest land of liberty,
With Him is first.

One nation all shall be,
God willed it so;
There are no gates or bars,
Forward we go.
This is America,
Home of the nations free;
He caused this to be
Land of liberty.

Through Joseph's seed 'tis blest,
God's chosen land
No king shall prosper here,
There's no contrabrand.
For Christ, himself is king,
He is our only king;
America is His,
Praises to Him bring.

Lucinda Scott

A PRAYER

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself,
that I am growing older and will some day be old.

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say
something on every subject, and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out every-
body's affairs.

Make me thoughtful . . . but not moody . . . helpful,
but not BOSSY! ! With my vast store of wisdom, it
seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord,
that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless de-
tails; give me wing to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are
increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming
sweet . . . as the years go by. I dare not ask for
grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains . . .
but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a
growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when
my memory seems to clash with the memory of others.
Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally . . . I
may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonable sweet, I do not want to be a
saint — some of them are so hard to live with — but
a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the
devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpect-
places and talents in unexpected people, and give me,
Lord, the grace to tell them so. Amen.

—Unknown

HIS LOVE HATH NEED

Peter lent a boat
To save Him from the press;
Martha lent her home
With genuine kindness.

One man lent a colt,
Another lent a room,
Some threw down their clothes,
And Joseph lent a tomb.

Simon lent his strength
The cruel cross to bear;
Mary spices brought
His body to prepare.

What have I to lend?
No boat! No house! No lands!
Yet, Lord, I gladly send
The toil of heart and hands.

Author Unknown

REJOICING IN GOD

"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." (Hab. 3:18)

There is a faith unmixed with doubt
A love all free from fear;
A walk with Jesus where is felt
His presence always near.

There is a rest that God bestows,
Transcending pardon's peace,
A lowly, sweet simplicity
Where in ward conflicts cease.

There is a service God-inspired,
A zeal that tireless grows,
Where self is crucified with Christ,
And joy unceasing flows.

There is a meekness free from pride,
That feels no anger rise,
At slights, or hate, or ridicule,
But counts the cross a prize.

There is a patience that endures
Without a fret or care,
But joyful sings, "His will be done;
My Lord's sweet grace I share."

—The Evangelical Messenger

HE KEEPS THE KEY

Is there some problem in your life to solve,
Some passage seeming full of mystery?
God knows; who brings the hidden things to light
He keeps the key.

Is there some door closed by the Father's hand
Which widely opened you had hoped to see?
Trust God and wait - for when He shuts the door
He keeps the key.

Is there some earnest prayer unanswered yet,
Or answered NOT as you had thought
'twould be?
God will make clear his purpose by-and-by,
He keeps the key.

Have patience with your God, your patient God,
All wise, all knowing, no long tarrier he,
And of the door of all your future life
He keeps the key.

Unfailing comfort, sweet and blessed rest,
To know of EVERY door he keeps the key,
That he at last when just he sees 'tis best,
Will give it thee.

—Unknown

To walk in love with saints above
Will be a wondrous glory.
To work below with saints we know —
Well, that's another story!

COLORADO STATE REUNION

An invitation is issued to all to attend the 1982 Colorado Reunion to be held at the Orchard Mesa Local Church, 3233 B½ Road, Grand Junction, Colorado, on June 11, 12 and 13.

We very much appreciate hearing from you so we can arrange for your housing and meal needs. Please contact one of the committee listed below:

We look forward to seeing you and sharing with you the worship of God at these meetings.

Enid E. Bell, Secretary

Allen D. Downs 303-243-5777
299½ Holly Lane
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Ron W. Church 303-434-5846
449B Shirt Drive
Grand Junction, CO 81501

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

PHOENIX, ARIZONA LOCAL REUNION

The annual Phoenix Local Reunion will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, November 26, 27 and 28, 1982. We anticipate your presence as we meet together and wait before our Lord.

If you desire to attend, please contact one of the following people prior to your arrival to make provisions for housing:

Jim Lacy, pastor 602 992 7072
18829 N. 29th Place
Phoenix, Arizona 85024

Jay Moser, asst. pastor 602 971 6697
4062 E. Danbury
Phoenix, Arizona 85024

Hubert Yates 602 992 3613
18819 N. 29th Place
Phoenix, Arizona 85024

1982 MISSOURI REUNION NOTICE!

Efforts have been made for a more suitable arrangement for the Missouri Reunion in 1982. It was suggested that the reunion be held at Warrensburg, Missouri, at one of the college dormitories. After an investigation was made into the matter, it was agreed upon and the following arrangements have been made:

Date: Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 13, 14 and 15, 1982. The first meeting will begin at 9:00 a. m. August 13.

Place: Warrensburg, Mo. at the East Hudson Conference Center. The building contains rooms sufficient to house all who come, as well as a kitchen and a meeting hall which is plenty large enough for our gatherings.

Location: East Anderson Street, east off Hiway 13 in Warrensburg, Mo.

Lodging: All rooms contain two twin size beds. Rooms rent for \$12.00 for one person only (one bed used) and \$16.00 for two persons (adults). It is permissible for two small children to sleep in the same room with their parents in sleeping bags on the floor. Two rooms share one bath. Bedding and linens are furnished. Lodging is available in the dormitory for Friday and Saturday nights only; you can rent for one night (either night) if you choose. Pay for lodging must be made as you enter. Each family will be responsible for the cost of their lodging. Arrangements can be made for disabled and elderly if we are notified before time.

Food: Meals will be furnished, desserts included. Noon and evening meals will be served on Friday. Breakfast, noon and evening meals will be served on Saturday and Sunday. Money donations will be accepted from those who dine with us. No food donations will be accepted as all food is catered and will be paid out of the reunion fund. Only college hired personnel will be allowed in the kitchen for food preparation, etc.

The expected result of this arrangement for the reunion will be that all the necessities - food and sleeping quarters - will be taken care of in a way that we might all enjoy the time together in spiritual feasting. We can leave behind our worldly cares for a time and worship God in openness if we will. We encourage you all to attend and help make this the best Missouri Reunion ever.

**The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask;
Room to deny ourselves — a road
To bring us daily nearer God.**

TRI-STATE REUNION

MINNESOTA - WISCONSIN - IOWA

We have reserved the Zuya Group Camp at Lake Shetek, Currie, Minnesota for our 1982 Tri-State Reunion. The dates are July 2, 3, 4.

You are welcome and invited to come and meet with us for worship, prayer, and praise. This early notice will help you to plan.

For more information contact:

Elder Thomas S. Maley
615 Sheridan Ave. N.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411.

MICHIGAN STATE REUNION

The Michigan State Reunion will be held on June 19 and 20, 1982, at Maple City, Michigan. Camping is available at the Lime Lake Campground. For housing and other information, contact:

Elder Conley Addington
Rt. #2, Box 45
Maple City, Michigan 49664
Phone: (616) 334-4922

Let's all set aside this week end and make it the the biggest and best Michigan State Reunion ever.

Reunion Committee - Norman Trudgen
Jeff Butts
Jay Lee

HOUSTON, MO. LOCAL REPORT

Elder Isaac Brockman from Independence, Mo. was our guest speaker in February. He fed us a spiritual feast in two sermons that day. Some jewels of wisdom I remembered: "If you can't sleep, don't count sheep; talk to the Shepherd." "Give it all to Jesus, troubled dreams, shattered hearts and broken toys." He told us we had an abundance of talents in the Church of Christ and advised us to use them for God's work, for His praise and glory. Use your talent and it will grow; leave it idle and it will diminish and be taken away.

God's beautiful message needs to be applied in our daily lives. Don't fret about the rest of the world's cares and problems. You can help make it a place of stability and peace and love. If we are to receive the gifts and blessings God is waiting to give us, we must reassess our evaluations of what is important. So much good is in store if we believe the the words of the scriptures and do as we are told. Man is the most wonderful creation of God, who loves and cherishes us. If He didn't, He wouldn't tolerate us one minute longer.

Before the 1830 restoration of the gospel, people thought they had invented everything but just think

how the world has changed since then. From the horse and buggy travel to a flight to outer space and the moon in less than 150 years is just one small example of the fantastic change and progress made. A great increase in all knowledge has occurred since then. Some 2500 various religious denominations and still the proper way to reach God is on your knees in prayer and fasting.

Total obedience to God's law is necessary. Pray for enlightenment when you study. Heed it when you receive it. Without God's Holy Spirit directing us we're lost. He is the giver of all good things. If any of us accomplish anything it's because God inspired us to do it. He didn't promise us a rose garden. If we had it all we would not appreciate it! Count your blessings and love God with all your might, mind and strength.

Tony Grzincic told us of the many blessings we take for granted. Jesus is our number one blessing. Look to him for all; He never changes.

If we look to Jesus, rather than the movie star or famous athlete, our spiritual life would be improved. We are the only keeper of our spirit. We are responsible for our soul. Jesus gives us the right to choose our life journey which hopefully is to become closer to Him and God. We have to take the word of God wherever we go; live it, not just on Sunday but everyday. Let our light (the Son) shine.

It's not what you put in your mouth that defiles you, but what comes out. We will be shown great works if we "tune in" to God and follow Jesus' examples. You must be sincere in heart to serve God. Honor Him with your heart and deeds and not just with words. Let go and leave the driving (of your life) to God. Don't miscount your blessings.

Brother Truman Medders spoke on the effects of stress in our lives. More attention to spiritual needs is in order, and a way to achieve Christ's peace. Stress needs not be damaging, but can help us; it can be used to a good advantage in the trial of our faith. We must care for the temple of God, our bodies. Let God take over your life.

"A Light At Evening," a slide presentation of the Joseph Smith story, was shown here February 28th and was enjoyed by all. This was acted out by members of the Phoenix Local a few years ago.

Our brother, Ern Keeney, was in St. John's Hospital in Springfield recently for cataract removal. Many sincere prayers went with him for his speedy recovery. He was home in about three or four days, so I would say that was a short stay, compared to many other's experiences with the same operation.

We enjoyed many beautiful specials lately from the young people. A small choir has been organized and we've enjoyed their beautiful young voices. Jennifer Medders, age nine, made a solo debut one Sunday eve-

ning singing "America, the Beautiful," thank you, Jennifer; you did a nice job. Dianna Taylor demonstrated her new dulcimer for us. James Addie has sung and accompanied himself on his guitar several times. DeAnna Hutchison and Johna Ely have favored us with their beautiful voices a few times. We thank each of you for your specials.

Your Houston reporters,
Mary and Janeen Addie

CHURCH OF CHRIST at Ava

The Ava congregation met the first Sunday in March for the regular Sacrament service. Brother Arthur Smith was in charge of the meeting and chose a scripture reading from Matt. 26, the story of the last Passover supper.

Brother Arthur Smith was the preacher the second Sunday and took his text from the third chapter of Colossians, "Set your affection on things above." What motivates us is the spiritual heart, or the spiritual creature, inside us.

Brother Larry Beem and his family were visitors the third Sunday and Brother Larry was the preacher that day. He chose the ever renewable subject of repentance for his sermon, saying it was the church's business to prepare a people for the second coming of Christ. "And He gave some . . . for the perfecting of the saints. If ye believe all these things, see that ye do them. Stand steadfastly." He chose to close and sum up his sermon with song No. 356 in our hymnal, "The time is far spent, there is little remaining, to publish glad tidings . . . repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . Be fixed in your purpose . . . Press on . . . determined . . . and feast at the supper of Jesus the Lord."

There were a few other visitors during the month. Roger and Peggy Engle and Amber visited from western Oklahoma. Cathy Jones and boys were down one Sunday. Dorothy Burgin's friend, Inez Detheridge, visited another Sunday.

More of our members have had trouble with fires in their homes. Catherine Lane's small trailer burned completely. Steve and Joyce Burgin had their kitchen destroyed by fire, and smoke and water damage in the rest of their mobile home. In both accidents no one was injured.

Brother Arthur Smith preached again the last Sunday. He spoke of commitment, "Keep that which is committed to thy trust. If ye love me, keep my commandments. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. The Spirit of Truth will guide you."

Ella Engle, reporter

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1983 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will commence Sunday, April 3, 1983. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A. M. Monday, April 4. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, April 1 and 2, 1983.

The 1982 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 18th, 19th and 20th at Independence, Missouri.

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