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

Volume 73

Independence, Missouri — January 1996

Number 1

Even so I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long suffering towards you unworthy creatures,

And humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel;

And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins;

Mosiah 2:20-23

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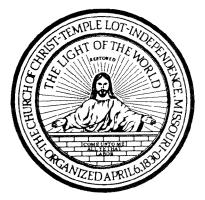
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Zion's Advocate is ...

To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour; To promote His Teachings & His Church, the Church of Christ; To be a voice of warning to His people; To be Zion's advocate.

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Priesthood articles and sermons, testimonies for "Path Lights," submissions to other regular monthly Z.A. features, and news items of Church-wide interest are requested, and should be sent to the Editor as listed above. Deadline for material requiring publication in any certain month is the 10th of the previous month.

Format of Submitted Material: Please type all submissions (if possible), on one side of the paper only. Please avoid overuse of underlining, ALL-CAPS, and italics. The most important thing, though, is to send the material - the staff can arrange for typing or otherwise prepare anything you send.

Word Processors/Computers: We can utilize text files on an IBM[®] or compatible computer floppy disk of any size or format and nearly any word processor. If you have this capability, it is a big help to our process.

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Declarations and notices authorized by the General Conference reflect the practices and beliefs of the General Church.

HOW IS IT WITH YOUR SOUL ?

(Alma 3:46-50)

"46. And now behold, I say unto you my brethren, If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, Can ye feel so now?

47. Have ye walked, keeping yourselves blameless before God?

48. Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble?

49. That your garments have been cleansed and made white, through the blood of Christ, who will come to redeem his people from their sins?
50. Behold, are ye stripped of pride? I say unto you, If ye are not, ye are not prepared to meet God."

I have preached from these verses many times, and I have pondered them in my heart even more. I would ask you, as you read these very words that Alma has spoken, have you truly pondered these things in your hearts ? both young and old. We're never too young to die, I have preached as well as attended funerals of people of all ages, from high school children to older adults. No one is exempt from death.

As we look at these word's, Alma ask many example to follow. If He can do nothing with questions, "Have you walked keeping yourselves seeking God, why should we even attempt to.

blameless before God?" and that's what's important before God and not man. God even knows all our thoughts and that's scary to know that God can read your very mind.

He asks if we have been sufficiently humble? Recently I attended the Phoenix Reunion. We heard five sermons, all which were built around humility. It says that the natural man is an enemy of God, so many times we, the natural man, thinks that we don't have to be humble that we can do things by ourselves, we don't need God.

Christ said in (John 5:19)

"19. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

And again in verse (John 5:30)

"30. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

Christ said that he can do nothing of His own self but through the will of God. Christ is our example to follow. If He can do nothing without seeking God, why should we even attempt to. Back in the third chapter of Alma, He is speaking to the people of the Church, to those that have accepted the gospel and Christ as there savior. He says that our garments have been cleansed and made white through the blood of Christ. Alma asks us if we have been stripped of our pride? What is pride? "Insolent, overbearing," It's something that God doesn't approve of, in (Proverbs 16: 18)

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall "

In (Al. 3:51) it says that we must prepare quickly, for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand, and those with this type of behavior will not have eternal life with Christ.

Paul says in (I Peter 3:15)

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

Are we able to do this, to tell people that we have a hope of salvation? The big question is, are you prepared to meet God? In Alma 9: 40-41, Alma tells us that in this life is the time to prepare ourselves to meet God.

(Alma 3:27-36)

"27. And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church, Have ye spiritually been born of God?

28. Have ye received his image in your countenances?

29. Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?

30. Do ye exercise faith in the redemp-

tion of him who created you?

31. Do you look forward with an eye 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 which have been done in the mortal body?

32. I say unto you, Can you 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?

33. Or do ye imagine to yourselves that ye can lie unto the Lord in that day, and say, Lord, our works have been righteous works upon the face of the earth, and that he will save you?

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;

35. Yea, a perfect remembrance of all your wickedness; yea, a remembrance that ye have set at defiance the commandments of God?

36. I say unto you, Can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands?"

Again Alma, speaking to his brethren of the Church, also speaks to us today through these same words. Consider strongly the question in verse 31, do you look forward with an eye of faith to stand before God, to be judged according to your deeds? What will God say? Will He say that you have done well or not so well? Can we look up to God having a pure heart and clean hands, having done good works in this life? The choice is yours and mine. We have the right to choose good or evil. No one can force you to do one or the other.

(James 4:13-14)

"13. Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

James asks us, "what is your life?" This is something we should all sit down and consider. Am I living my life the best that I can, to edify God, and letting my light shine for the exaltation of Christ- or for my own glory? James says that our life is but a vapor. It's here for a moment and then it's gone. We never know when our life will be taken. As we get older life seems to go by faster and faster and then it's gone. Can people look back on your life and see all the things that you've done for the Gospel's sake? Can God look at you in that day that you stand before him and say, well done, thou good and faithful servant, or will he say, depart from me, ye that work iniquity,- for I never knew you.

(Matthew 7:21-23)

"21. 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.

22. 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?

23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

I couldn't and wouldn't begin to say who these people are. God knows. I will leave that to Him, but please don't let it be you and me. Consider the parable of the ten virgins, (Matthew 25:1-13). Let's hope that we're one of the wise and not the foolish. Verse 13 says to watch therefore we know not the day nor hour when the Son of Man will come. Also we know not the time that we may die. As I said earlier, death is no respector of persons or age. It is appointed unto men once to die. But after this the judgment. May God keep us in the hollow of His hand, to help us do good works and glorify God and his son, Jesus Christ.

Allen Kauffman, Elder

THE MILLENNIUM Part Three

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" Matt. 24:31.

This language —"from the four winds and from one end of heaven to the other" — signifies the uniting of saints upon earth with those whom Christ brings with him, which are the resurrected dead. In Jude 14 we find:

"...Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints ... "

Apostle Paul informs us:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on in corruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" 1 Cor. 15: 51-53.

Therefore, when Christ comes with his ten thousands of saints, they will be resurrected at that time (their spirits and bodies reunited), following which the saints who are alive upon the earth shall be instantly changed from mortality to immortality, their bodies becoming incorruptible by the same power of the resurrection possessed by Christ. Thus Paul also said:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise

first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" 1 Thess. 4:16,17.

When he says, "So shall we ever be with the Lord", we are not to understand, as some would have us believe, that the saints will forever be with Christ in the air. Of course, the saints will meet Him there, but their inheritance is upon the earth for a thousand years; and, following the Final Judgment, when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and when the New Jerusalem shall come down from the heavens. they shall inhabit that new earth.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" Matt. 5:5.

Again: Resurrected souls shall come upon this earth, in its Edenic restoration, with those who had been caught up to meet them in the air. This, then, shall be the beginning of that millennial reign, and they shall be kings and priests of Christ (see Rev. 5:10).

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" Rev. 2: 26,27.

The original apostles (with the exception of Judas Iscariot because of his betrayal of Christ, and he being supplanted by Matthias - Acts 1:26) are to sit upon twelve thrones to judge (govern) the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28), including those who are truly latter day saints:

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" Dan. 7:27

What a marvelous inheritance for the saints of God! On this earth, before the final judgment of Jesus Christ upon all nations of men! Saints need not worry, but rather, should rejoice! They who will show compassion, mercy, forgiveness and love to their fellow-men shall never be moved (see Ps. 15).

Now let us see concerning the great peace and prosperity upon the earth, following the cleansing which shall have occurred; when the Lord shall have gathered his saints to Zion to preserve them by his matchless power; after the first resurrection, and the Lord has brought the righteous ones of the nations, living and dead, to dwell upon the earth.

These will be tremendous in number: 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel (both the living and those resurrected (see Rev. 7:4-7), who shall stand upon mount Zion (see Rev. 14:1); and also, *"a great multitude which no man could number, of all* nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues", which had come through the terrible time of tribulation, having *"washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"* (because they had repented through the teaching of an endowed ministry of the gospel). See Rev. 7:9,10,13-17.

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create (that restitution of all things/Acts 3:21/w.a.s.): for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days (infant death/w.a.s.), nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die and hundred years old (changed from mortality into immortality instantly/w.a.s.); but the sinner (those outside of Zion and Jerusa*lem/w.a.s.*) being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they (the saints/w.a.s.) shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vinevards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long (1,000 years/w.a.s.) enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them (this refers to those who had been changed from a mortal state/w.a.s.). And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor

destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord" Isa. 65:17-25; see also Isa. 11:5-9.

In summary of the events preceding the second coming of Christ, and of his millennial reign, but not necessarily in consecutive order, we have found that there is to be, or has been:

- (1) The fall of man from life and favor with God affecting everyone.
- (2) A universal shaking and fiery cleansing of the earth in judgment.
- (3) Preservation of the saints in Zion, including the gathering of Israel.
- (4) All nations to come to Jerusalem and to Zion (the New Jerusalem) to worship the Lord, or else to suffer the wrath of an offended God.
- (5) The sun and moon darkened, and stars to fall.
- (6) The sign of the appearance of Christ through a seven-fold manifestation of the sun's power and of the glory of the moon.

- (7) His appearance in the heavens with thousands of the saints (the first resurrection).
- (8) Saints alive upon the earth caught up to meet them in the air.
- (9) Their descent to dwell upon the redeemed earth.
- (10) Unexcelled peace and prosperity for 1,000 years; no war of man with man, or beast with man, or of beast with beast; the rest prepared of God.

The follow-up of earthly events with Satan's release following the millennium, the final great battle between good and evil, resulting in the forces of evil being destroyed, and of the final judgment of mankind are beyond the scope of our consideration here. Be assured that for those who have a part in the first resurrection and millennial reign with Christ, the second death shall have no power.

Apostle William A. Sheldon

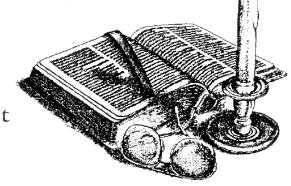
Philippians Chapter 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

Let your moderation be known unto all men, The Lord is at hand.

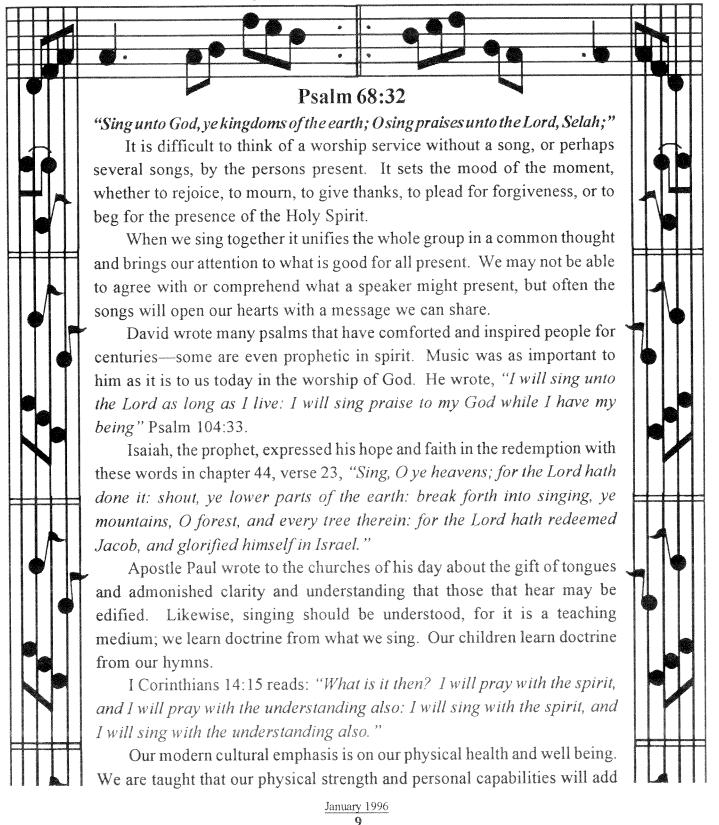
Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus



The Importance of Songs In Worship

By Elder Arthur G. Smith



to our happiness. Sensual pleasures are to be enjoyed to our limit of endurance and resources, and we are encouraged to glorify one's self. Nationally we spend a tremendous amount of our resources on the sport's world and the entertainment enterprises. Our children are drawn into this secular world of false glory where God and the spirit of man is ignored or denied.

What do we do to encourage the enjoyment of the spiritual nature we all have that needs expression? The spiritual part of us that God created needs to be exercised and nourished. Music and song are one of the natural modes of expressing our feelings of joy or sorrow, our hopes and faith, and our love for our fellow creatures.

There are evil spirits in our society today that use songs and music to teach us to worship man and the lusts of the world. The marketplace and media today are so full of their evil products that we can scarcely escape. Even the secular people in society and the politicians of our times are 'grappling with the corruption of our moral standards, the cause of crime and sins that threaten our national well being. We are being overwhelmed with the evils around us and wonder how long that God will withhold the judgments due us.

What can we do to protect ourselves and our children from these evils? What can we do to encourage the rightful use of music and song in our families? Apostle Paul again has some wise words for us in Colossians chapter 3, verse 16 and 17. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Apostle John had a great vision of the end time in the book of Revelation. Music and songs will play a part in this marvelous age as we read, "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne..." chapter 14, verse 2 and 3. Again in chapter 15, verse 3 we read, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are they works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The praise of God, the principles of truth, the practices of the ordinances, of the gospel, and the admonition to a godly life are incorporated in our hymns. As saints of these latter days let us make sure that our testimonies in song teach the true doctrines of our Lord and King, Jesus Christ.



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Houston local

The Houston local would like to wish all of the locals and isolated members a merry Christmas and a safe happy new year. Many new things have been happening at the Houston local over the past several months. On June 25th, Apostle Marvin Ely was voted in as our new Pastor and his wife Bernice was accepted as a new member of our Houston local. We are so happy to have Marvin and Bernice Ely and their daughter Janice as part of our local.

(This may have already been reported.) Alexis Grace Pounds was born on April 12 to Jennifer and Mark Pounds. The grandma is Theresa Jones and great grandma is Mary Jane Medders. Alexis was blessed on May 14 by Elders Gary Housknecht and Virgil Addie. We have had many visitors to our local and we love having new and old friends visit. In addition, the Houston local has enjoyed visiting other locals as well. the health of many of our members needs your prayers.

Recently, Cheyanne Ashley Rachelle Carney was born on November 9th at 12:29 p.m. and weighed 6 lb. 14.5 oz. the parents are B.J. and Jeremy Carney. Congratulations ! Cheyanne was blessed on December 3 by Apostle Marvin Ely and Elder Virgil Addie.

Again, many wishes from the Houston local and may God's love and grace bless you and your families. Please keep the Houston local in your prayers for all of you are in ours.

OBITUARY

Atla Leona Sheldon was born September 22, 1905 at Little Sioux, Iowa, the third child of Martin and Emma Case. She passed away December 7, 1995 at the Blue Springs Care Center, Blue Springs, Missouri, where she had been for about nine months, having suffered a fall which fractured several bones. In recovery, she was able to walk somewhat, but a later fall and injury further reduced her mobility. An attack of influenza contributed to her decease.

Atla was athletically inclined during high school years and was prominent in the school's basketball team.

She became a member of the RLDS Church in her youth, where her father was an active minister until he transferred to the Church of Christ (Temple Lot). The family also transferred. At the time of the temple building program of the Church of Christ in the early 1930s, Atla managed a cafe which also fed laborers in that effort.

She married Thomas Arthur Sheldon on March 30, 1932, and became a loving, capable mother to his three

children (whose mother had passed away) during those financial depression years.

In later years, she fed those at the McCune Home for boys, and also fed little children in the government's Head Start Program for several years.

She was a sympathetic listener to those of her older neighbors, and other friends and acquaintances in their problems of life.

She is survived by Arthur A. Sheldon of Grants Pass, Oregon; William A. Sheldon and Virginia Neely, both of Independence, Missouri.

Her parents, husband, a brother, James M. Case, and a sister, Alta Richardson have preceded her in death. In addition to the above-mentioned children, there are six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and several nephews and nieces of the Case family who remain to mourn her death.

Interment was in the old Salem Cemetery near Independence, Missouri.

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1996 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, March 31. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 1. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on March 29 & 30. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1996 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 21 through 23, at Independence, Missouri.

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*NOTE: Donations will be accepted to cover postage & printing costs. (Multiple copies available: 6-50¢ / 100-\$5.85 plus postage)

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Allow adequate advance time for handling and shipping, and for your own preview of the programs. Write to the AVVAA Committee, Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, MO 64051.

LAMP UNTO MY FEET, A (32 minutes) — Directed specifically toward American Indian viewers, compiled from three other programs.

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PRIESTHOOD VISITATION

If you or someone you know (member or non-member) would like to be visited by a member of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ, please call or write to the Council of Apostles at Church Headquarters in Independence. The phone numbers and addresses are listed on the inside front cover.