

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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PROPHECY

We shall thank our God for graces
That we've never known before;
We shall look on manlier faces
When our troubled days
are o'er.
We shall rise a better
nation
From the battle's
grief and grime,
And shall win our soul's
salvation
In this bitter trial time.
And the old flag waving o'er
us
In the dancing morning sun
Will be daily singing for us
Of a splendor new begun.



When the rifles cease to rattle
And the cannon cease to roar,
When is passed the smoke of battle
And the death lists are no
more,
With a yet undreamed-of
beauty
As a people we shall
rise,
And a love of right and duty
Shall be gleaming in our
eyes.
As a country, tried by sorrow,
With a heritage of worth,
We shall stand in that tomorrow
With the leaders of the earth.

—Edgar A. Guest

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THE APOSTLES' MISSIONARY FIELDS

Smith N. Brickhouse, 5713 Logan Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64136; 816-356-9214
Frank Fann, 3808 Queen Ridge, Independence, Missouri 64055; 816-373-4346
Placido Koyoc Matu, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico
Mike McGhee, 18907 E. 6th Street N., Independence, Missouri 64056; 816-796-6255
Brian McIndoo, 18824 N. 30th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-1900
Donald E. McIndoo, 18830 N. 30th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-1240
Alvin J. Moser, 18829 N. 29th Place, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-2414
Roland L. Sarratt, 15910 E. 36th Terrace, Independence, Missouri 64055; 816-373-6605
William A. Sheldon, 1011 S. Cottage, Independence, Missouri 64050; 816-461-8956
Joel Yates, 2924 E. Rockwood Drive, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-9296
Placido Koyoc Yam, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

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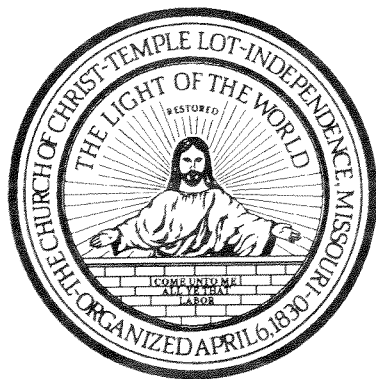
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GENERAL CHURCH OFFICERS

SECRETARY, COUNCIL OF APOSTLES

Apostle Smith N. Brickhouse
5713 Logan Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64136

SECRETARY, GENERAL BISHOPRIC

Elder Leslie P. Case
8312 Lee's Summit Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64139

GENERAL CHURCH SECRETARY

Elder Robert W. Oldham
5709 Logan Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64136

BUSINESS MANAGER

Elder Alvin L. Harris
Church of Christ
P.O. Box 472
Independence, Missouri 64051-0472

ZION'S ADVOCATE STAFF

EDITOR

Apostle Michael McGhee
18907 E. 6th Street N.
Independence, Missouri 64056

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Jim Gordon
1528 Dickenson Road
Independence, Missouri 65040

David Rudd
4917 Casey Court
Independence, Missouri 64055

FEATURE EDITOR—"Pathlights"

Melissa McGhee
2533 Glen Lane
Independence, Missouri 64052

PRODUCTION STAFF

Harvey L. Seibel

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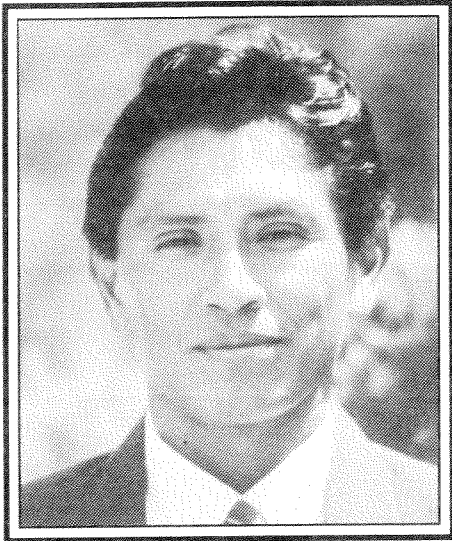
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

The Most Important Thing



By Apostle Placido Matu

INTRODUCTION

A lady is walking on the street with a dog who is not trained; the dog has fun but it only goes from one place to another. A person could ask, "Why does this woman take this dog out?"

This is similar to what happens to us when we allow ourselves to be guided by incorrect moral and spiritual concepts. You can't control your life, and sometimes you can do things that you don't really want to.

Any goals you have that don't have God's direction can be fatal. Most of these human goals don't offer a lasting satisfaction. But a dedicated life to

God will really satisfy you. You need to trust in Him and be guided by Him. This is the key to having a victorious life.

Where do you put your heart?

If you are a Christian, your goal should be to imitate Christ. This means to deliver your heart to Him and fulfill God's plan in your life.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:21: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

If the most treasure you have is your house, your job or your bank account you are really very poor.

Let's consider two aspects:

DON'T WORRY

It's easy to forget spiritual things when we are involved in this life, working, having friends and so forth. Many people are very worried about these things that they forget to enjoy the emotion to trust in God and let Him take care of all our necessities.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold

Jesus tells us that what we need to do is to seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. This is the most important thing in your life.

the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he

not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" Matthew 6:25-32 (III Nephi 6:3-10).

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" Proverbs 3:5-6.

TRUST IN GOD

It's not enough to know that God is in control. You need to trust in him. Do you remember when you were little your parents put you in a high place and told you to jump into their arms? You knew that they were not going to make you fall, and they have the capacity to hold you, but first you have to trust in them before you jump.

It is the same with God. He tells you that you can reach Him; He tells you that He has the power to do anything for you, but He is not going to make you jump. You have to do it. And you have to trust in Him.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" Matthew 6:33 (see also III Nephi 6:11).

God knows the way you should go and He has a plan for you to reach to the end. Jesus tells us that what we need to do is to seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. **This is the most important thing in your life.**

Trust with all your heart in God. And sometimes the trust will be like jumping from a high place having a blindfold over your eyes, but remember your heavenly Father is waiting for you with open arms. Then the eyes are not necessary.

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) II Corinthians 5:7.

YOU NEED TO BE A GOOD EXAMPLE

"Therefore let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven" III Nephi 5:63.

HOW

Sharing the gospel with others. Teaching your children in the word of God.

"And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up" Deuteronomy 11:19.

Obeying God with all your heart.

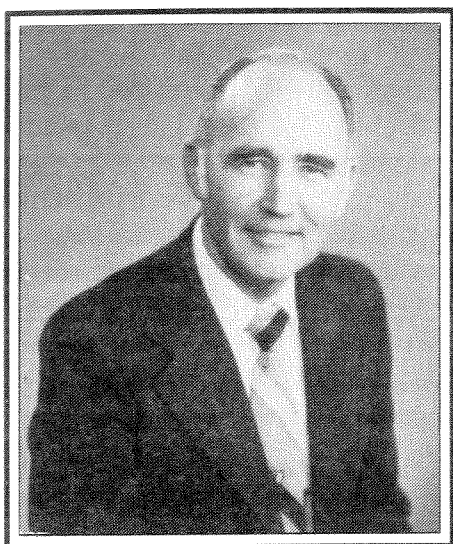
"And it shall come to

pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; And then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and else ye perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you" Deuteronomy 11:13-17.

CONCLUSION

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" Philipians 4:13.

A Book of Mormon CRITIQUE



By Apostle Don McIndoo

The beautiful poem below was written by Renan Chuc of Ticul, Yucatan, an Elder in the Church of Christ. I believe it captures the very essence of this marvelous book. Each month, for seven months, we shall use one of the elements of his poem as our guide for a critique of the Book of Mormon.

Part 1

OH, BOOK OF MORMON

(TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH)

Eternal book, thou art hidden
In Cumorah's lonely hill;
Plates of immortal wisdom
Revealing the story of the past.
Venerable book, blessed and full
Of profound and inspired
philosophy;
Thou hast come to unite in joy
The houses of Joseph and Judah.

The marvel is that with all of today's knowledge gained by the studies of thousands of archaeologists, no one is able to repudiate this first description of the ancient civilization we find in the pages of the Book of Mormon, translated "...by the gift and power of God."

History of America, told in radiant
brilliance
Of wondrous and mystical splendor:
The doctrines which the prophets
spoke
Were the flowering paths of the
Nephite.
Oh, book of eternal and simple
truths
Containing verities announced by
prophets;
Thou art the wisdom of sage and
poet;
Enlightening the world through the
ages.

"ETERNAL BOOK, THOU ART HIDDEN IN CUMORAH'S LONELY HILL." Mormon, the final leader of his people and servant of Jesus Christ, wrote the following words on one of the last plates, and today they are found in the introduction of the Book of Mormon on page iii. **"Written and sealed up, and hid unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni and hid up unto the Lord..."**

Just what was the purpose of the Lord in hiding this record in the earth? The ancient traditions of the Toltecs of Mexico give answer. Quetzalcoatl, the White God of ancient Mexico (also called Viracocha by the Incas and Itzamná by the Maya), gave the Toltecs a warning concerning the coming of the conquerors from Europe. After this He told them, **"Carry your great books into the jungles. Place your histories deeply in caverns where none of these men can find them.... For children of War are these bearded strangers. They speak my precepts, but their ears do not listen"**¹

This ancient tradition (prophecy) alludes to the coming of the Spanish conquistadors. The accuracy of the tradition, and the danger to the Book of Mormon, is borne out by the coming of Bishop Diego de Landa to ancient Maní, Yucatan. Landa's impact on history rests, in large part, upon the **"...famous Auto de fé of July 1562 at Maní, at which,**

in addition to some 5000 'idols', he burned as he tells us twenty-seven hieroglyphic rolls, all he could find but could not read...."²

Moroni, the son of Mormon, wrote, **"I am the same who hideth up this record unto the Lord ... Yea, it shall be brought out of the earth, and it shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people: and it shall be done by the power of God..."** (Mormon 4:17 and 21). These words of Mormon and his son, Moroni, fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah, given 1200 years before these events took place.

Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem, and he prophesied that after her destruction the words of her inhabitants would speak as if from the earth. **"And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust"** (Isaiah 29:4).

In the latter day this same Moroni, as a messenger of God, appeared to a young man named Joseph Smith. Joseph writes that on the twenty-first day of September of 1823, **"...while I was thus in the act of calling upon God I discovered a light appearing in the room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage ap-**

peared at my bedside standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor.... He called me by name and said unto me...that God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil, among all nations, kindreds, and tongues.... He said that there was a book deposited written upon gold plates giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent...."³

Three times the angel appeared to the young man that night and told him the same things on each occasion. He said that God was going to restore the true doctrine of the Church of Christ and the authority and power to represent Jesus Christ in the world once again after the long duration of the apostasy. This divine work would fulfil the prophecy of John: **"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people..."** (Revelation 14:6).

On September 22 of 1827, Joseph, following the directions of the angel, obtained the ancient record. It would be translated, even as Mormon had written, **"...by the gift and power of God."** Joseph obtained the services of a scribe named Oliver Cowdery. Oliver, also a young man, had heard of the young prophet, his visions and his possession of some ancient and sacred plates. These stories

had a profound impact on his mind. Wanting to know if it were true, he drew near to the Lord in prayer and obtained a firm conviction that this was a work of God.

On the fifth of April in 1829 Oliver renounced his post as a teacher and appeared at Joseph's door. Joseph received this young man as the answer to his prayers. Two days later they began the translation. While Joseph was translating the ancient plates with the help of the "interpreters" (see Mosiah 5:73-83), Oliver was writing the translation. Listen to the words of this young assistant:

"These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom. Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,' the history, or record, called the 'Book of Mormon'"⁴

Young Joseph was not a learned person, nor was he well educated; nevertheless, within sixty and ninety days of actual labor, this book of 777 pages—a prodigious accomplishment—was completed in 1829. In this period of time no one remembered the ancient civilizations of Mexico or Central America, nor did they understand the history of the ancient inhabitants

of this area. The world would have to wait ten more years for the explorer, John Stevens, to rediscover the ancient cities of the Americas. The marvel is that with all of today's knowledge gained by the studies of thousands of archaeologists, no one is able to repudiate this first description of the ancient civilization we find in the pages of the Book of Mormon, translated ***"...by the gift and power of God."***

After his work was concluded, Joseph Smith delivered again into the hands of the angel the plates and the interpreters. Nevertheless, the Lord did permit eleven other witnesses to see these sacred plates. The testimony of these witnesses is found on pages iv and v of the Book of Mormon. None of these witnesses, though suffering great persecution and affliction, ever renounced their testimony about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon nor their privilege to have seen these plates through the power of God. Some of them later, because of personal problems, left the church, but they always affirmed their testimony about the veracity of the Book of Mormon.

After completing the translation of the book in July of 1829, Oliver made a copy of the translation and it was sent to a printer. This book is the ancient history of some of the descendants of the tribes of Joseph and Judah that left Jerusalem before the destruction of that great city by the Babylonians. According to the plan of God, these persons were guided

to the Americas. With the first printing of this sacred book we now hear their words, the prophecies and the preaching of those refugees from Jerusalem, founders of the great civilizations of ancient America. Their voice comes to our ears as a "voice out of the ground"; a voice whispering ***"from the dust,"*** as prophesied by Isaiah.

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Only the BIBLE?



By Jim Gordon

From the late 1300's through the 1500's occurred what is known as the Protestant Reformation. The ancient church had always claimed that only those who had ecclesiastical authority could understand and interpret the scriptures. On the other hand, the Protestants claimed that the hierarchy of the church had

rationalized away the real meaning of the scriptures, and ignored the teachings of morals and ethics. With the exception of Henry VIII, King of England, all of the reformers made the Bible the authority of their churches. The first settlers in the English colonies were almost all Protestants. It was they who fought the revolution and dominated the religious lives of the Americans during the Civil War.

In 1830, for the first time in several hundred years, a church was organized which believed in modern day prophecy and visitations of heavenly beings. Those beliefs had already produced a book called the Book of Mormon and in subsequent years would produce a large body of prophecies. The Church made a number of converts, but as a whole this nation rejected the church and the new message of the Book of Mormon and prophecy as an added authority

of the Church.

The Protestant reformers had taken the stand that the Bible, as God's word, was the ultimate authority of God. Their followers in America asserted that no authority was needed beyond the Bible, and persecuted anyone who taught otherwise.

Then came the slavery issue!

The debate about slavery had been going on since the day slavery began in this country, but it hadn't caused a great deal of trouble up until the year the church was organized. The early anti-slavery leaders were usually good Christians. They soft-pedaled the slavery issue because the Bible sanctioned it. Let's take a look at a few samples of what the Bible had to say about the subject.

In the book of Leviticus, chapter 25, Moses created a form of slavery that was designed to rehabilitate a man

who was a habitual debtor. This was for their fellow Israelites only. They were forbidden to make their fellow believers permanent slaves. Israelites had to be released every seven years and furnished with enough food and cattle to make a fresh start. Deuteronomy 15 reaffirms this.

The New Testament doesn't change this. In first Corinthians, chapter 7, Paul is indifferent as to whether a man is a slave or a freeman in his Christian service. The book of Philemon is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to Philemon on behalf of a run-away slave named Onesimus. Paul had converted Onesimus and then sent him back to his master with a letter asking Philemon to forgive him.

The Southern slaveholders could read all of this and more in the Bible, and were not bashful about quoting any of it. The South considered the anti-slavery movement an attack on the authority of the Bible since the Bible sanctioned slavery.

On the other hand, the North handled the problem several ways. First let's deal with the radical abolitionists. In 1831, the year after the Church was organized, an antislavery movement was organized with William Lloyd Garrison as its leader. Most of these people were outside of the pale of Christianity, and either didn't believe in Christ, or the Bible, or wanted to leave religion strictly out of the matter.

The Northern ministry had to walk a tightrope. They had to convince their congregations that slavery was wrong while

not appearing to be undermining the authority of the Bible. One approach was to point out that the Bible did indeed sanction a form of slavery, but it argued that its form was disposed to gradually improve the slave until he could function alone in this hostile world. They pointed out that slavery, as practiced in the South, was not doing this.

The Southern slave owners answered with the scripture Leviticus 25:44 and 45 where the Lord allowed Israel to buy bondsman from the nations of heathen around them. They claimed this was the kind of slavery they were practicing and therefore this precept did not apply to them.

Another way for the ministry to deal with this was to take a very liberal approach to the scriptures, and to claim that one must look not at the letter of the law but to the spirit of the law. There were many variations of this theme, but the upshot of all of this was that during this hassle over slavery America underwent a religious change. It was the first time that a liberal approach to the Bible was taught and preached on a large scale.

There were liberal Christians before the slavery confrontation, but they were mostly rich, highly educated and a small minority. They were called Deist and the South was not tardy in hurling the Deist insult at the liberal North.

Now let's look at the Book of Mormon. I find no evidence that slavery was practiced among the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. The Lamanites did

own slaves, but on several occasions when they were converted to the Gospel they were miraculously freed. This corresponds beautifully with the Book of Judges in the Bible where in times of wickedness Israel was overrun by another nation and enslaved. Then they would cry unto the Lord and he would raise up a judge and free them.

There was among the Protestants in this nation a small movement that preached that when the blacks joined a Christian church they should be freed because they were no longer heathen. This movement didn't gain much ground, but if the Book of Mormon had gained wider acceptance it would have greatly strengthened this movement.

The other big issue that we need to look at is secession. In I Kings, chapter 12, we find that after the death of Solomon the northern part of Israel seceded from the southern part of the kingdom which was ruled from Jerusalem. They were preparing for a civil war, much like our own, when the Lord sent his word through a prophet to turn them away from war. This didn't seem to attract much attention among the Bible readers during the secession.

A similar situation occurred in the Book of Mormon.

On page 622, starting with verse 52, we read:

"And it came to pass in the thirty and first year, that they were divided into tribes, every man according to this family, kindred and friends; Nevertheless they

had come to an agreement that they would not go to war one with another; but they were not united as to their laws, and their manner of government, for they were established according to the minds of them which were their chiefs and their leaders. But they did establish very strict laws that one tribe should not trespass against another, insomuch that in some degree they had peace in the land...."

Again I believe that if the Book of Mormon had received wider acceptance it could have strengthened the Bible by a second witness in this matter. The Civil War came and went but the liberal interpretation of the scriptures has not departed even in our day.

After the Civil War the most immediate change we see in America was the growth of industrialism. The ideal democracy of Thomas Jefferson, the nation of small shopkeepers and farmers, was over. The Southerners had kept this concept of democracy alive. The industrialism of the North, possibly the real cause of the war, had total freedom to grow. Mark Twain did not put his opinions about this matter on paper, but confided to a friend, Mrs. Elinor Glyn that, "The Republic, in name, remained. The Republic, in fact, was gone."

With this kind of opposition to our freedom in this nation and by such powerful men, it

seems our freedom should long ago have been gone. To me one of the ongoing miracles of this land is that with all of the forces opposing our freedom God has kept his promise to Moroni as stated on page 470 of the Book of Mormon.

"And he bowed himself to the earth, and he prayed mightily unto his God for the blessings of liberty to rest upon his brethren so long as there should be a band of Christians remain to possess the land." Also, "And he saith, Surely God shall not suffer that we, who are despised because we take upon us the name of Christ, shall be trodden down and destroyed, until we bring it upon us by our own transgressions."

I am persuaded that our freedom does not rely on our efforts, but on God's promise. Our efforts have already failed.

Now to get back to the growth of industry. Materialism and worldly prosperity were always a big goal of those who came to America. However, the simple lifestyle of cities and the rough crude life of frontier America did not lend itself easily to materialism. The growth of industry began after the Civil War and by the early 1900's had grown into mass production, and from that beginning materialism began to dominate the lives of the common people as it does today.

This world's Christian ministry fell into step and marched with the new order. It

seems that when they began to take liberties with interpreting the scriptures there was no place to end.

About the turn of the century the evolution theory caused some churches to compromise their beliefs about Genesis. Later, as the social sciences came of age, they caused even greater disparity between what Christians believe and what the scriptures teach. And so this gap has widened until this day we have people who want to rewrite the Bible and take out some things that Christ said and did. Indeed, there just seems to be no place to stop. Then consider this. The place to stop was where they started back on square one when they rejected the Book of Mormon!

But let us deal with the next question. Was this God's judgment? Let me acquaint you with some scriptures I believe apply and you be the judge. On April 6, 1833, in Kirtland, Ohio, Joseph Smith brought this message of which I now quote part.

"Now, I speak unto you, concerning your families; if men will smite you or your families once, and ye bear it patiently and revile not against them, neither seek revenge, ye shall be rewarded; but if ye bear it not patiently it shall be accounted unto you as being meted out a just measure unto you.

"And again if your enemy shall smite you the second

time, and you revile not against your enemy, and bear it patiently your reward shall be an hundred-fold.

“And again if he shall smite you the third time, and ye bear it patiently, your reward shall be doubled unto you four fold; and these three testimonies shall stand against your enemy, if he repent not and shall not be blotted out.

“And now verily I say unto you, If that enemy shall escape my vengeance that he be not brought into judgment before me, then ye shall see to it that ye warn him in my name that he come no more upon you, neither upon your family, even your children’s children unto the third and fourth generation;

“Nevertheless thine enemy is in thine hands and if thou reward him according to his works thou art justified...”

In the first chapter of Amos we read in verse 3,

“Thus saith the Lord: For three transgressions of Damascus and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof...” Verse 6, *“Thus saith the Lord: For three transgressions of Gaza and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof...”*

In the first two chapters

that phrase is used seven times with different names of cities and nations.

Another example: In I Samuel, chapter 18, verse 11, Saul tried to kill David with a javelin. In chapter 19, verses 11-18, Saul thought to kill David by having his bed brought to him so he could kill him in bed, but David escaped. In chapter 24, verse 4, Saul was hunting for David to kill him. And while he rested in a cave David cut off the skirt of his robe, but was then reconciled to Saul. The fourth time Saul tried to kill David he was hunting for him with an army. David eluded him until Saul and his army went to sleep. David came into their camp and took Saul’s spear and water and after he left and had shouted Saul awake they were reconciled. The story of this is in I Samuel chapter 26. After this Saul went into battle against the Philistines and was killed.

Joseph Smith and the Church were persecuted in five areas. I believe that only four of these were for religious reasons. The people of Kirtland, Ohio, did not agree with our religion, but the Church was not treated too badly. Then the leaders of the Church decided to go into the banking business. They lost the savings of quite a few people in Kirtland. Persecution in Kirtland was more about money than religion and the leaders of the Church were wrong.

In New York; Jackson County, Missouri; Gallatin, Missouri and Nauvoo they were persecuted for their religious beliefs. After this the Church was given rest, and a period of

spiritual erosion set in among the churches that persecuted us. Part of that erosion of doctrine was the liberal interpretation of the scriptures. Thus, if the Book of Mormon had been accepted they could have interpreted the spirit of the law without departing from the letter of the law when confronted with the slavery issue. This nation could have read the many admonitions against greed and selfishness in the Book of Mormon which are much plainer there than in the Bible.

Be that as it may, I think that it could have been no accident that shortly after Joseph Smith was murdered and the Church scattered into factions that this occurred. The Churches that had persecuted us for believing in the Book of Mormon were confronted with an issue that could not be resolved with the Bible. And by trying to solve that problem by their own understanding they set off a whole string of problems that have worsened into our time. And all of this after they had vowed and declared they could solve any problem they had spiritual, social or political with only the Bible. And still more to the point, Luke 8:18 says,

“Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath to him shall be given: and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”

Those that have ears to hear let them hear.

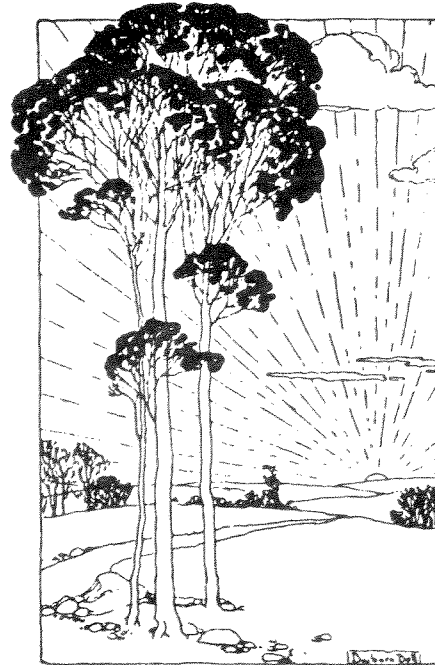
In Your House

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family.

Mom taught me to love the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Bill, and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies, and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars.

The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up...while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places...go to her room, read her Bible, and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave. You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honor them.

Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house—not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four letter words that burned



P A T H L I G H T S

my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My Dad was a teetotaler, who didn't permit alcohol in his home, not even for cooking. But the stranger felt like we needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked

freely (too much, too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that the stranger influenced my early concepts of the man/woman relationship. As I look back, I believe it was by the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents, yet he was seldom rebuked and was never asked to leave.

More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morning-side Drive. But if you were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? ...We always just called him...TV.

I haven't missed "Cable" since I had it disconnected almost three years ago!!!

(A friend of mine, here in Collins, sent this to me and I thought you might enjoy it too.)

*Czerna Kauffman
Collins, Missouri*

—Posted on the CCEG

Raymundo's Legacy

On February 24, 1978, a young brother, Raymundo Polanco of Yobain, Yucatan, passed from this life. The cause of his death was kidney failure. Our brother was only twenty-two years old when he passed away, but he leaves behind him a powerful spiritual testimony to comfort and strengthen his family and his many loved ones in the Gospel.

Raymundo first heard the Gospel story from Bro. Jeremias Koyoc in 1972, as they were working together in a cornfield. Prior to this time Raymundo led a very worldly life...going to dances, drinking, fighting with his parents, etc. Bro. Jeremias felt a great compassion for him and told him of a better walk of life that was available through the Gospel of Christ.

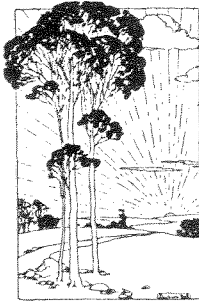
Jeremias invited his friend to go with him on a trip to Kopte to attend religious services. While there, Raymundo greatly enjoyed the services.

Upon arriving home he told his parents that he had enjoyed it much and was going to obey what he had heard.

How true this declaration was to be. He quit all his wild ways and began to go to church and to read the Bible and the Book of Mormon. He then began to explain to his parents and brothers and sisters all that he had learned of the Church of Christ. He was received into the Church through baptism on March 21, 1974. He then began to assist in the services, to contribute to the church, and to pray for the Church in Yucatan and in the United States.

He invited the elders to come to his home and hold services there.

Raymundo had been sick for a long



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time. After a sickness of three years he asked to be administered to because, he said, he was becoming more ill. His parents wished to take him to a cura (a sort of spiritualist healer).

Although he did not wish to go, he felt obliged to honor his parents. That night they traveled by rented car to the town of Uman where this cura lived. But as the boy did not wish his services, they waited until he was sleepy to perform the ceremony. When the spiritualist began his prayers, Raymundo heard a voice from Heaven.

"My son, what are you doing here? Do you not know that you do not belong here?" Immediately he arose, left the house, and began to walk home. As he was walking, he saw a bright star in the east and a vision of Jesus in the heavens. Again a voice spoke. "Son, today you are safe." He saw the name of Jesus and these words. "Come unto me all ye that say Jehovah."

Later the affliction that was to take his life made itself manifest in our young brother. He lay very ill, facing imminent death. His family was very distressed and sorrowful. They received much persecu-

tion from relatives and neighbors, who maintained that Raymundo's illness was a result of having joined with the Church of Christ and believing in the Book of Mormon.

One evening, as they gathered around him, Raymundo posed this question to his family.

"Have you ever seen God?" After much thought they answered, "No, only in that we have seen Him through His works and miracles." "Well," said Raymundo. "I have seen the Lord. And He has told me that it is necessary that I go into His kingdom. Therefore, do not grieve for me, because now I am going to a far better place."

This story of a young man and his experiences has been translated from letters written by Elder Placido Koyoc, of Yobain. He tells us that this last testimony of our young brother has had a pronounced influence on the lives of Raymundo's family. Their belief has been strengthened and they have been able to withstand the persecution that surrounds the Saints in Yucatan. He asks that you will each remember the Polanco family in your prayers, that God will lead them each into His Kingdom, as He did young Raymundo.

Apostle Don McIndoo

—Posted on the CCEG

Betsy's Testimony

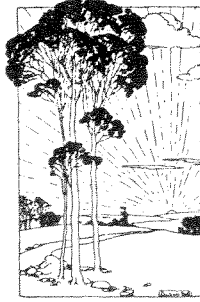
When we first got to Guatemala I had a rash on my hands from cleaners and I couldn't get rid of it. It had been months of constant itching and swollen hands that would crack and bleed. Somehow just a simple swipe on the counter with a dish cloth would break my hands out. We debated getting a maid. We could afford one, because the wage is low here. I thought that by having someone in our home it would help the rash go away and at the same time I would be providing a better home and food that they could not otherwise afford. Also, it would be nice having a helper. Many forget we are alone without relatives or Church members to help us when one is sick, to help watch the dog when out of town, or help when visitors come.

As we were looking, everyone here had different advise. Some would say it is dangerous, they steal, they start bossing you around and making demands.

Others would say it was a good idea for security reasons—so the house was never left empty. I interviewed a lot of maids. They all were very bossy and wanted to work on Sundays. Besides that, paying someone to work on Sundays really bothered me. I prayed to God that if it was meant to be He would pick one for me. Out of millions of people needing work here, He would know the one person that would be right for our family.

Just when I felt like giving up I got a call from a lady in the Embassy. Her maid had a cousin that needed work. After meeting her, I noticed that she had this humbleness about her. She was not demanding at all. After I said I would hire her, I asked her name (this might seem strange not asking at first, but I spoke very little Spanish). Her name was Dominga, meaning Sunday. This was my sign, but not the only one. I've had several after.

We made a great team. She helped me and I helped her. We cooked together and cleaned up together. We wanted to give her an



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hour a day to study the Bible. We found she couldn't afford one and also she couldn't read well, not ever having had any school. We decided to purchase a Bible for her in big print. Then we started having a teacher come in twice a week to teach her to read and write. Many times I passed her room with her reading the Bible on her knees. Many times I heard people coming to the door for food. We had a cupboard full of food but she would give food from her own plate.

Looking back now, I feel that God was taking care of her in her final days. He was preparing her by putting her in our home but also, God was taking care of us by putting her in our home. She helped me so much with my Spanish and many other things. Even though I am in my mid 30's, she was like a mother figure to us because of the way she took care of us. But she was never bossy, she did everything in a kind way.

As we went a few months without a maid, I continued to grieve the passing of my friend. I continued to pray for Christ to open a door here in Guatemala for the Church of Christ, to help me with my Spanish, and perhaps pick another maid for our family if it was meant to be.

A friend of ours had a maid that quit and she hired another. I liked her new maid. She seemed very nice and my friend spoke highly of her. When she told me the maid's name,

that it was also "Dominga," this feeling went through me. I knew she was for our family. But how could she be? She was working for my friend. After a week my friend's other maid called and wanted her old job back. What was she to do? She liked them both. Her kids wanted the first maid. After talking about it with Dennis and praying to God, I decided to hire her.

Not only has she talked my ear off (which has been great for my Spanish and for Amanda's), she actually studies her Bible (not just reads it). She is Quiche Mayan (very traditional in their culture). She wants to learn English, and she goes to the 7th Day Adventist Church. I prayed for another sign. As we were talking, I asked her last name. She told me what sounds like Dominga Grabe, was actually Dominga Grave. The literal translation is Sunday Grave (or grave can mean seriously ill). As odd as this might seem, I knew this was the sign I was looking for.

We have talked about the Book of Mormon and she asked if she could read it.

I know two of the requests I prayed for have been answered. Maybe God is working on the third. Please remember to keep her in your prayers and that God will open a door for the Church of Christ here in Guatemala. The Quiche Mayan are part of a few that have held on to their traditions, language, and beliefs in their religion. Could this be the doorway? I don't know, only God does. But continually praying for the work and will of God in the Americas can only help.

*Your sister in Christ,
Betsy Trudgen
Guatemala*

—Posted on the CCEG

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSOURI REUNION

The Missouri Reunion Committee would like to invite all to attend the 2000 Missouri Reunion, which will be held August 4th, 5th and 6th, 2000. All meetings will be held at the Church of Christ headquarters building located on the Temple Lot in

Independence, Missouri.

We will again organize an ice cream social for Saturday evening after the final preaching service of the day. The social will be held either just outside the Visitors Center or in the basement.

For information please contact:

Roland Sarratt

15910 E. 36th Terr.
Independence, MO 64055
(816) 373-6605

Mike McGhee

18907 E. 6th St. North
Independence, MO 64056
(816) 796-6255

TRI-STATE REUNION 2000

The Minnesota locals of the Church of Christ invite all to attend and worship with us at the Tri-State Reunion.

The reunion will again be held at the indoor group camp in beauti-

ful Whitewater State Park. The park is about seven miles north of St. Charles, Minnesota. The camp will be open for our use from noon Friday, September 1, through noon Monday, September 4.

Lodging is available at the camp. Bring your own bedding.

For more information contact:

Merlin Eddy

3370 203rd St. W.
Farmington, MN 55024
(651) 463-2218
spikeeddy@aol.com

PHOENIX REUNION

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his

bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" Isaiah 40:9, 11.

The Phoenix Local wishes to invite all to come and join us in worshipping our Lord on Friday, November 24th through Sunday, November 26th, for our annual reunion.

Please contact the following people to help you make preparations for your visit with us:

Gordon McCann, Pastor

18808 N. 30th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 569-2341

Bob Hedrick

2908 E. Rockwood
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 494-9661

Glenn Orsted

1327 E. Wescott Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85024
(623) 780-8764

YUCATAN REUNION

We invite you to our reunion to celebrate our 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Church in Mexico.

This event will be held in the city of Merida, on the 25th of February, 2001, beginning at 9:00 a.m. There will be preaching services and a special music program.

Please let us know if you are coming. For more information contact:

Placido Koyoc Matu

calle 24 #99 H x 17 y 19

Yobain Yucatan Mexico

Phone: 50-14-42

e-mail: p_matu@hotmail.com

We're looking forward to seeing you. Please come and worship with us on this special day.

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CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 2000 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 2. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 3. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on March 31 & April 1. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 2000 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 7, 8 and 9, at Independence, Missouri.

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