

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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The King Of Kings

*The King of kings, and Lord of lords,
Was born in Bethlehem,
Cradled in a manger bed,
Where shepherds came to worship Him,
And wise men journeyed from afar
Their precious gifts to bring,
Guided by a special star,
They laid their gifts before the King.*

By Helen Taubert



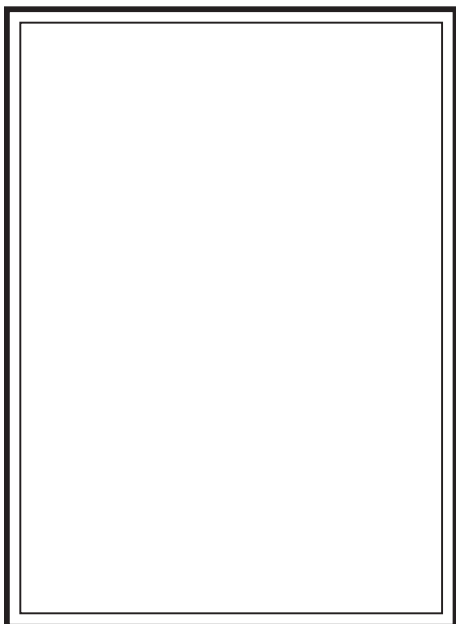
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ARTICLE

Is It MIDNIGHT?



By Elder Ken Oar

On August 8th, 2004, as I was preparing a sermon, this thought suddenly came into my mind in such a way that I knew it was God that spoke to me. *It is midnight. The Bridegroom is about to return.* As I contemplated this I realized that indeed over the past several months the Lord has been crying to us to be prepared for that day. We have been admonished over and over that the time is short, that we must come out of Babylon and be more righteous vessels of the Lord. It was forcibly brought to

my mind that it is the midnight hour.

Let us examine the scripture that tells us of this time. In Matthew chapter 25, verses 1-13, we find Christ relating a parable concerning ten virgins. We find in the 1st verse that the kingdom (Christ's church on earth) is likened (compared to; represented as) ten virgins. These ten virgins, maidens, or unmarried daughters, are going to meet (this Greek word indicates a friendly encounter; thought by some scholars as an official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary) the bridegroom.

In verses 2-4 we are told that five were wise and five were foolish. To be wise is to be thoughtful, prudent, sensible and practical. They were carefully considering who they were, their spiritual condition and what might be required for them to be ready to meet the Lord. To be foolish is to be heedless, dull, and sluggish. This gives the impression that they were unaware of the time of day they were in and had not given sufficient thought to their spiritual condition.

All ten virgins took their

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lamps. The wise took oil in their vessels for their lamps, but the foolish took no oil for theirs. The lamp would be a light. The light that we are commanded to show to the world is Christ (3 Nephi 8:55). That God's people are to be the light to the world is a commandment found in Matthew 5:14. We show our light by our works and our righteousness before our brothers and sisters and the world. Quoting 3 Nephi 8:55, "Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do." The world should be seeing Christ through each of us.

The oil is the portion of the Spirit that we carry, and the portion of the Spirit that we have is dependent on our walk before the Lord. The wise had oil but the foolish did not. If our interpretation is correct that our lamps are the light of Christ, and the oil is God's Spirit, our physical bodies would be the vessel to carry the oil necessary to keep the lamp burning.

In verse 5 we are told that while the bridegroom tarried, (delayed His coming) all the virgins slumbered and slept. Each of us from the most ready to the least ready all slumbered and slept. To slumber carries the thought of nodding in sleep, being dull in our awareness, much as one would be while doing a task during the day and having a difficult time staying awake. To sleep implies to lie down to rest, to be unaware of our surroundings, to be indifferent to spiritual things. We all have not been at the top of our game, each of us are not fully aware of the dangers around us, and certainly not aware of the time in which we live or we would be more diligent in our labors. To slumber and sleep would indicate a lack of activity.

In these first five verses we seem to be in a time of preparing to go to meet the Lord when the cry is made that Christ is coming. Now in verse six we are told "...the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." Now begins some urgent activity. All the virgins arose, (to awaken; i.e., to rouse; literally from sleep or inactivity). We awake from

our sleep, our inactivity and begin to "trim" our lamps. To trim is to put in proper order; to arrange; to adorn.

We have for centuries been in a time of waiting for the Lord's return; we now are in the day when that return is imminent.

In verse six we are told that the "cry" has gone out that the bridegroom is coming. To cry is an outcry, a clamor, an uproar, a vehement continued expression, certainly signifying the great urgency of the proclamation that the Lord is coming. The Greek word implies the imitation of a raven's cry, a distinctive, easily recognized sound, a call, a warning, to his fellow ravens.

It seems to this writer that the first five verses cover the 2,000 years since Christ gave the parable. We are living in the only time that the cry has gone out that the Lord is actually coming. We have for centuries been in a time of waiting for the Lord's return; we now are in the day when that return is imminent.

The virgins are on their feet and trimming their lamps, attempting to put their lives in proper order and discovering, as we read in verse 9, that they

have just enough for themselves. The foolish, apparently now realizing that they are not ready, that their lamps have gone out, discover that they have no oil. They go to the wise in an attempt to get some oil. The wise say, "We don't have enough. Go and try and buy some."

This does not mean that the more righteous do not want to help; it means that they cannot. It seems that we are in the time when perhaps the wise have done everything they can for the foolish. We can pray for each other, we can love and support each other, but the time comes when we are each responsible for our own salvation. *The wise cannot save the foolish.*

These events would signify a period of time is elapsing. Perhaps some are under the false assumption that when the cry is made at midnight that it was over. The Lord is coming and time has ceased. This is not the case. We see that there is a time where there is much urgent activity. The cry has gone out. The virgins have arisen and had time to check their oil supply, some finding they have barely enough and others discovering they do not have any (for their lamps had gone out). They are told to go and buy. So some period of time is going to elapse between the cry that the Lord is coming until His actual appearance.

The foolish are told to go their way. The significance of the word "go" is that it marks the end of a conversation. They were told to go to those that buy

and sell. To buy is to go to the marketplace and purchase. To sell is to exchange or barter. Sadly, it is a fruitless command, as we cannot purchase oil from the marketplace, we can only receive it from God.

While they were gone the Lord comes and He closes the door. When the five foolish return they call to the Lord, "...open to us." Sadly, the Lord's reply is, "...I know you not." This word, *know*, means He has no knowledge of, He cannot tell who they are.

In verse 13 we are admonished to "watch," to keep awake, to be vigilant. The time has come to keep awake, to be aware of the dangers around us, to be more aware of the time we are now living in.

In Luke 21:36 we are told by the Lord to, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

It appears to this writer that the cry has gone out. We have been admonished to prepare, to come out of Babylon, to get our spiritual houses in order. The time is far spent; we have little remaining. The Lord is sifting His people, calling to us to be ready. Judgment begins at the house of the Lord. He is cleansing His sanctuary, readying His church for His glorious return.

If it truly is the midnight hour then our time of preparation is close to being over, we only have time to make a quick, last minute check to see if all is

in order. Let's liken it to several people going together on a trip, who have agreed to leave at an appointed time. When the time

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comes and our friends call and say they are on their way, we should have already done all our preparing for the trip. We now should only need to take a few moments until they arrive to check the house and to run through a final checklist of things we have packed. We should be ready to go. It is not the time to discover we need new tires or an oil change. It is very significant that the cry went out at midnight. The end of the day, everything is closed, no place to buy tires. The scripture tells us we work while it is day (while we are alive), for the night (death) comes when we no more can work.

It is the same when we hear the cry that the Lord is coming; we have only a very short time to make a final check of our spir-

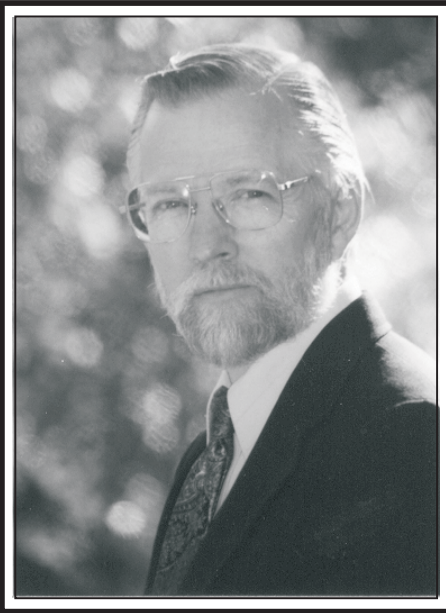
itual life. Is our lamp burning? How is our oil supply?

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" Revelation 18:4.

We are at the time when we need to arise and check the oil in our lamps. *It is not yet too late.* The Lord is granting us a **short** period of time to be prepared to meet our Savior.



A Holy People



By Harvey E. Seibel

In recent weeks I have pondered the difference between the righteous people in the Book of Mormon (the Bible also) and everyday run-of-the-mill society of today. What is it that sets society, and perhaps many of us, apart from those who served the Lord in ancient times? Perhaps it is our focus. Consider:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth

nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 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 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,

...Our focus should be single to the glory of God and the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

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. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6:19-34).

These words make it plain that our primary focus is not in fulfilling the needs of the body, nor the desires of the flesh. Rather, our focus should be single to the glory of God and the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

In this world of materialism, the name says it all. It is not just clothes and shoes, but they have to be a particular brand. The same is true of cars and practically every other thing. Some things are in, others are out. Restaurants? They have to be gourmet or among the elite to even qualify. Of course, money is not a consideration in all this. We have to keep abreast of the latest fashions. Our children become preoccupied with the latest fad and practicality concerns go by the wayside. There are also fitness centers where one may spend money to improve one's physical body. In the old days people worked hard on the farm (had plenty of exercise) with little or no leisure time to run the streets as many of our youth do today. The devil makes use of idle hands, and boredom becomes the rule. For pleasure, one may attend the ball games, go to one of the many amusement parks, or worse, to the

casinos, watch television, movies, play the internet or whatever else takes one's fancy while giving little or no thought to spiritual matters,

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or at best, putting those matters on the back burner while giving some allegiance to them on Sundays, and maybe Wednesday evenings if one has a mind to. This appears to be the picture of pleasure-ridden American society. As a nation we have become lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. But if we love the things of the world more than the things of God, what does that say other than that we have made the world our idol? The Lord speaks bluntly when He says:

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is

not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16).

What is our real purpose here? Is it to gratify our senses, or is there a greater purpose for our existence? The Book of Mormon tells us we have a higher calling.

"Therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state, which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead" (Alma 9:41).

From the Bible we read:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

What do we think about, or what goals do we have each day when we awaken? Do we think first on the spiritual, or more on the worldly? What do we look forward to on our days off? What about the Sabbath? Do we truly love God more, or does the world win out over the Lord? How do we occupy ourselves on the Lord's day? Do we dedicate that day to the Lord, or do we make up for what we weren't able to do during the week?

Do we engage in the Lord's pleasure on His holy day, or our own? There is a promise attached to doing the Lord's pleasure rather than our own on His holy day.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:13-14).

Some people, on entering the business world, focus on what they can gain materially or purchase for themselves, fulfilling their dreams. These include expensive cars, homes, the beaches of the world, etc. Yet few emphasize the furtherance of the gospel of Christ to the nations of the world. Few are concerned with the millions who know not God and for which we are commanded to pray and fast. Few dedicate such wealth for the glory and work of God. Paul Harvey recently mentioned one well known billionaire who, in just the past 12 months, doubled his wealth from \$45 billion to \$90 bil-

lion. Broken down, that equals to an increase of approximately \$125 million for every day of the previous

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year. One wonders how much good is truly being accomplished with such wealth for the benefit of mankind. One popular singer made millions, and among other things, provided for himself 35 expensive new cars. These stories can be multiplied many times over. Yet the scriptures say,

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil

surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.... Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (I Timothy 6:3-11, 17-19).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in

him?" (1 John 3:17).

Solomon, who had this world's goods and every possible thing that life could offer, said, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. It is evident, then, that wealth alone does not bring contentment nor happiness. Rather, Christ has instructed us as follows: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from the mouth of God.

Of Babylon, the Lord said:

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).

Again,

"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence" (Jeremiah 51:6)

Do we desire to reside in Zion? This question is asked:

"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1).

Then he gives answer by saying:

"He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not

with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a

Do we passively acquiesce with the world's entertainment and excuse ourselves for any indulgence in them?

vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved" (Psalm 15:2-5).

Again:

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation" (Psalm 24:3-5).

Finally we have this word:

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath sur-

prised the hypocrites" (Isaiah 33:14).

Then he asks the question.

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14).

The answer given is:

"He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil" (Isaiah 33:15).

If he does these things,

"He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty..." (Isaiah 33:16-17).

One of the criteria is that one stop his ears from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil. In light of this what of television, movies, magazines, the Internet, computer games, etc.? What about the violence, sex, and all manner of wickedness that we see portrayed every day in those mediums? Do we watch them? Do we passively acquiesce with the world's entertainment and excuse ourselves for any indulgence in them?

How much are we addicted to the world as compared to our seeking the kingdom of heaven, the salvation of those who know not God, and the redemption of Zion? Is all well in Zion? If not, then what is our responsibility? Alma and Ammon could not even bear the thought of one soul perishing in hell. They had a divine mission and dedicated their entire lives to the work of the gospel. They could not rest. Their entire focus was set on the kingdom of heaven, not on the things of the world.

They had great zeal for the Lord. As for us, where are our hearts, or on what is our heart set? What do we dwell on from day to day and from year to year? What do we think about or what do we desire most, or set our priorities on?

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not”

(Malachi 3:16-18).

Moses also made choice between good and evil. We read:

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s

Though there may be pleasures in sin, these are at best transient, and never bring happiness.

daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Hebrews 11:24-26).

Moses realized that the eternal reward was of far greater value than the pleasures of sin for a season. True joy comes through serving the Lord. The palmist expressed it this way:

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psalm 16:11).

These pleasures will be everlasting. But the pleasures of the flesh can only

reap for us corruption. Though there may be pleasures in sin, these are at best transient, and never bring happiness. And so we are told, *“Behold, I say unto you, Wickedness never was happiness”* (Alma 19:74). Again, *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4).

My father once told me of a man who inherited a great fortune. On his father’s death, he said to himself, *“Now here’s to pleasure.”* And so he spent his life in riotous living, partaking of every worldly pleasure. Yet he soon learned, as Solomon also learned, that all was vanity. His was a most unhappy lot, so much so that he found life not worth living, and so he committed suicide, for he had discovered too late that money could not and does not bring happiness. The one thing that could bring happiness he had not sought, his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This brings us to priorities.

“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition” (1 Timothy 6:9).

But if we seek first the kingdom of heaven, all these things will be added unto us. This is what is meant by the

scripture in Jacob:

“Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you. But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ, ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them, for the intent to do good; to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick, and the afflicted” (Jacob 2:22-24).

This is the sole reason for seeking for riches. It is not to consume them upon our own lusts or desires for possessions, more than is needful. Otherwise the admonition is:

“. . . Seek not after riches, nor the vain things of this world; for behold, you can not carry them with you” (Alma 19:20).

This was Alma’s admonition to his youngest son, whose charge was the ministry. Yet the Lord does bless His people with riches, but those who are so blessed must be careful.

“And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches. And because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren, ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks,

and high heads, because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren, because ye suppose that ye are

The thing that characterized the saints of old were that they were of one heart and one mind and their eyes were single to the glory of God.

better than they” (Jacob 2:15-16).

And again,

“They did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need” (Alma 1:46).

But the danger is always there if one is not careful.

“But they grew proud, being lifted up in their hearts, because of their exceeding great riches; therefore they grew rich in their own eyes, and would not give heed to their words, to walk uprightly before God” (Alma 21:28).

The thing that characterized the saints of old were

that they were of one heart and one mind and their eyes were single to the glory of God. On the other hand, the scripture says,

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8).

But these ran a strait course and persevered until the end of their lives.

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

BOOK OF MORMON HEROES

SAMUEL THE LAMANITE

INTRODUCTION

The Bible tells us that on the night Jesus was born in Bethlehem a beautiful new star appeared in the sky. This brilliant star led the wise men to the place where the child would be found. Far across the world God's people saw that same star and knew their Savior had been born. They had been watching and waiting for this star. Just five years earlier Samuel the Lamanite, a prophet of God, had proclaimed that a beautiful new star would soon appear. When this star shone brightly in the heavens it would be a sign that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had come into the world. This is the story of Samuel the Lamanite.

SAMUEL THE LAMANITE

Long ago on this land there was a great city called Zarahemla. The Nephites, the people of Zarahemla, had once been good people. They loved God. Now they had forgotten Him. The people of Zarahemla had become so evil that some of them had even joined with a group of bandits called the Gadianton Robbers. Nephi, a man of God, had gone back and forth through the land preaching that their evil ways would only bring them trouble and sadness. No one would listen.

God loved the people of Zarahemla. He wanted to give them a chance to change and live in the happiness of His love. One day a dark skinned prophet appeared in the land. He had been sent by God. His name was Samuel. Samuel's people, the Lamanites, had once been very wicked. Now they loved God far more than the Nephites.

"God wants to bless you but you must stop doing evil. You must love and serve Him!" Samuel cried. Samuel preached for many days in Zarahemla. His words made the people of Zarahemla angry. "Get out of our city!" they shouted. How badly Samuel felt. He shook his head sadly as he walked away from Zarahemla. "They won't listen; they just won't listen." Then God spoke. "Samuel, go back to Zarahemla. I will give you the words to say."

Samuel trusted God. Back he marched to Zarahemla. Samuel didn't try to enter the city. He jumped up on the wall and began to cry to the people. "People of Zarahemla! God has sent me to tell you that you must repent or terrible things are going to happen."

A crowd began to gather near the city wall. "You love money more than God," Samuel cried. "If you do not change, your land will become full of thieves. If you leave something lying on the ground it will be gone by morning. Someone will steal it."

"In just five years the Son of God is going to be born into the world. On the night He is born the sun will go down but the sky will still be light. A new star will appear in the sky. This star will shine more brightly than any star you have ever seen. You will be so amazed that you will fall to the ground. Watch for this sign."

"He's telling the truth," some in the crowd said. "The Son of God IS coming." The few true believers remembered how Nephi had preached to them for so long. "We must find Nephi," they said.

The rest of the crowd just got angrier and angrier. "He can't talk to us like that! Stone him!" Some even took out their bows and arrows and began to shoot at Samuel. Some of these men were great hunters. They could hit an animal from far away, but they could not hit Samuel. The power of God was with Samuel. The stones and arrows flew past him. Samuel had done his job for God. He jumped down from the wall and returned to the land of the Lamanites. He was never seen in the land of Zarahemla again.

The few humble believers gathered with Nephi and he began to teach them about God. Soon the five years passed. It was time for the sign prophesied by Samuel the Lamanite to appear. One day a decree was made. "If the sign foretold by Samuel the Lamanite does not appear by the day we choose, all the believers will be killed!" Nephi went away from the city and fell to his knees. "Oh Lord, please save your people. Please give the sign." Then God spoke, "Don't be afraid Nephi, tomorrow the sign will come."

The next day all the believers were rounded up. The wicked leaders of Zarahemla were going to put them to death. They all waited, watching the sky. Night came and the sun went down. The sky was still light! What was that shining so brightly in the heavens? It was the brightest, most beautiful star anyone had ever seen! The unbelievers were so afraid that they fell to the ground! The sign foretold by Samuel the Lamanite had come. The Son of God had come into the world!

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

A MESSAGE FROM SAMUEL THE LAMANITE

Samuel promised that a sign of Christ's birth would appear. Decode the secret message below to find out what that sign was.

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A B C D E F G H I J K L

M N O P Q R S T U V W X

Y Z

FROM the ARCHIVES

Reverence in the House of the Lord

By William F. Anderson

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” 1 Timothy 3:15.

It has been said that order is heaven's first law, yet we find that when the people of the Lord meet together that disorder and confusion and noise are indulged in, and few there are that seem to realize to the extent they should that the place and time set apart for worship should be kept sacred and quiet, each one going directly to his seat, and in order approaching the Lord.

At the time Christ visited this continent He found many gathered together on the lawn of the temple, marveling and wondering about the signs that had been made manifest, and conversing about the Christ that was to visit them. They were not concerned about the gossip of the day; there were things more vital to them, and they were concerned. Their conver-



FROM the ARCHIVES

sation was about the Christ, and in following the account of that bit of history we find them on their knees when together, praying to God for needed blessings.

When we come together we talk of most everything but the purpose of our meeting, and few quietly take their seat and bow and ask God to bless us in our service of worship. I am wondering if we would not receive

more and greater blessings if we were to enter the place of meeting with the thought that we were going there to commune with God, and to seek His favor, leaving the worldly things on the outside, refraining from entering into common conversation, and each moment being spent in silent prayer or meditation. The writer suggests that all try it for a time and see if greater blessings will not result.

We are living in the “time of the end” and of preparation for the coming of the Christ to us as a people. We believe that the gospel has been restored, and that its restoration came at the eleventh hour. If that be true, then we are far advanced in that hour, and the coming of Christ is much nearer than when the gospel was first restored. There is much to be done, and to accomplish that which has been given us to do we must get nearer to God, and to do that we must become very earnest and prayerful.

The writer may be considered an extremist, but he is of the opinion that when we as-

semble together to worship God that the time we are together we should be prayerful, and our visiting should be done at some other time than in the place of worship: that should be sacred to God. The place where we meet is, at least for the time, dedicated to God, and should be so considered. Whether it be in a home, a hall, or a church, confusion is unseemly, and we can not enter into a worshipful attitude in an instant of time from a period of levity and, I will say, useless talking. True, there may come a partial blessing, but how much more we might receive if we were to spend the few minutes before or between services in prayer and meditation on the things of God?

The sectarian churches set an example before us. I have gone into some of the sectarian churches and have noted the quiet and worshipful attitude assumed; no loud and unseemly conversations or laughter, for we are told that much laughter is sin. We should be sober, thoughtful and quiet in the place of meeting. We are told that God is a jealous God; we should be careful not to warrant His displeasure.

There is a disposition on the part of some to think we are going into apostasy if we do anything that is done by the other churches. I noticed in the different churches that a voluntary is played preceding the opening of the meeting, which brings order

and quiet. I have found it in a few of the Church of Christ congregations, and with good effect. Music is good, and will cause a spirit of worship to come over us.

We look forward to worshipping in the Temple, and we will need enter there in a prayerful manner, not in a light or thoughtless way. "By your lives and by your teaching you must prepare a people who shall be worthy to meet Christ at His coming." Can we expect to receive an endowment of his Holy Spirit if we indulge in the light vein? God expects us to be sober and prayerful. Let us begin to practice deportment in the place of meeting now. I am sure God will bless every effort thus put forth in sincerity.

No visiting should be done in the meeting place. A kindly greeting to all is sufficient. The discussion of things foreign is not uplifting. Let us refrain from it and be an exemplary people in all things.

"If you will keep my sayings, my Father and I will come and take up our abode with you." Christ always keeps His promises when we comply with the requirements.

May God help us all to see the need of "behaving ourselves" in the "House of God," that we might attain to greater blessings.

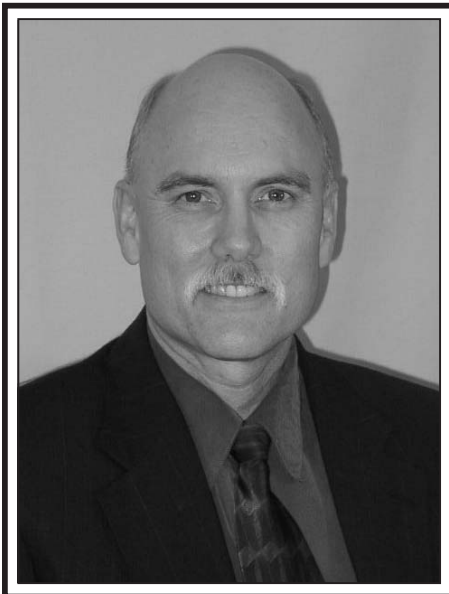
This work we are engaged in is serious and we should take it seriously—work, watch, and

pray, must be our motto if we expect to attain.

—From the *Zion's Advocate*,
February 1933



Articles of Faith & Practice



By Elder Gordon McCann

Article #24

We believe that a New Jerusalem shall be built upon this land “unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph...” “...Which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot.”

The above quote is from a revelation that came to the church when the elders had gathered to Kirtland from their missions. The revelation was delivered through Joseph Smith over a two-day period on September 22 and 23, 1832 (Saturday & Sunday), and was titled, “On Priesthood,” which was the main theme of the revelation. The practice of the

Church of Christ is to accept only revelations that can be supported scripturally from the Bible and Book of Mormon. The following is offered as supporting evidence from the scriptures that the revelation given through Joseph Smith was of God by the power of the Holy Ghost working within him.

First, we must establish our belief that the voice of the Lord will be proclaimed from two sources in the last days, and the Lord will sanctify those who promote His cause.

“...For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3).

“The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem...” (Joel 3:16).

The following scripture from Zechariah provides us a clue as to who or what makes up “Zion.”

“...Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem” (Zechariah 1:17).

The key to understanding those who are identified with “Zion” is in the word “prosperity.” If the verse were written today it would say the

Article #24

We believe that a New Jerusalem shall be built upon this land “unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph...”
 “...Which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot.”

following:

“My cities who are of the good, fair, lovely, favoured men and women shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion.”

The following scriptures would support the statement made by Zechariah:

“And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the

Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; And they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory” (1 Nephi 3:230-231).

“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).

We believe a “New Jerusalem” will be built upon this land “unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph.”

“...This people will I establish in this land.... And it shall be a new Jerusalem” (3 Nephi 9:57-59).

“...And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem” (3 Nephi 10:1-3)

“And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph.... ...And they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old...” (Ether 6:6-11).

These last references found in the Book of Commandments are used by the church, which identifies where this city will be built: 30:8-9 (pg 53); 44:47 (pg 75); 48:59-67 (pg 87); 59:8, 16, 48, 62-70 (pg 106).

NEWS

TEMPLE LOT LOCAL, INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

With October's shortening daylight and cooling weather and thoughts turning to the warm comforts of family and home, we have taken hold of the days to gather in fellowship and celebration with loved ones. We ushered in the month with cleansing of heart and home, donating our neglected household goods to support the annual United Workers Garage Sale. We continued in a celebration of love and commitment, sharing congratulations with Pat and Jo Hiatt on their 50th wedding anniversary.

At the second Women's Retreat an inspiring number of women met to study and praise God with one another. God's spirit touched each of us as we spent our time together focusing on how to let our light shine and how to enrich our life and reach others with a personal commitment to prayer and study.

Gifted with one of the season's truly perfect days we joined together in fellowship at Don and Bonnie Case's home for

the annual Cider Press. Blessed not only with perfect weather, we also shared the joy of seeing familiar faces long missed, and those of our newest family members: Amanda Faith Wiley, daughter of Luke and Jennifer Wiley, James Micheal Jimerson Morris, son of William and Michelle Morris, Anna Jean Case, daughter of Nathan and Stacey Case and Jenna Rose Wiley, daughter of Tommy and Sarah Wiley. The day highlighted the abundance of God's gifts and the beauty of His creation.

We completed the month with an evening of dining and entertainment at the Riverside Café, the YPCL's annual fund-raiser. This year the generous gifts of those attending, along with the proceeds of the previous week's cider sales, are dedicated to a special project for the school in Honduras. The church's dining room was transformed to a Parisian style restaurant with the Young People bustling to and fro in service to their patrons. The Young People also contributed their musical talents as

entertainment making the evening an enjoyable success. Neva Housknecht and her siblings gifted us with a special treat and performed the closing numbers for the evening.

The month was filled with reminders of God's blessings. His spirit has been evident in the services and social gatherings to keep us mindful of Him as we head into the busy Holiday season.

Sister Aubrey Case

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