

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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### Toss the Old Testament?

I've been interested in a recent group of letters discussing whether the Old Testament should be used because of the view of God that the Old Testament provides. Of course, those wishing to do away with the Old Testament as scripture are probably trying to get rid of other scripture as well.

That this discussion should be held among those who have access to the Inspired Version of the Bible completely misses the differences in understanding of God in the Old Testament that the Inspired Version provides.

The God of the Inspired Version Old Testament makes it clear:

-- that God created all things spiritually before they were created physically.

-- the reason God cast down Lucifer was because he rebelled against God and sought to destroy the agency of man which God had given them and because he wanted God to give him his power.

-- that God taught man from the beginning about the gift of Christ and the way of salvation.

-- that the God that could destroy most of the world in a flood was a God who wept over the wickedness and misery of those he was about to destroy.

-- that God called people to respond to his love by following his commandments that Zion could return to the earth and people could dwell with him in righteousness, peace and joy.

The God of the Old Testament of the Inspired Version is much like the God of the rest of the scriptures. Those who reject the Inspired Version may or may not find reason to reject it as scripture. Those who believe the Inspired Version is scripture have no such problem.

## TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

### On Call -- How Will You Answer?

May 7, 2006, a Communion Sunday, the emblems of the Last Supper were served and the oblation offering was received early in the service. Sue Beck provided a very appropriate musical introit. Priest Ed Anderson delivered the Communion message. He began by questioning, "What should I say to the choir? We have Seventys and High Priests in the group. Everybody seems to have it all together. Do I preach a hellfire and brimstone sermon or do I preach an all-praise-and-we-are-all-good -- we are almost to Zion type sermon? Or just exactly, where should I start?"

Opening his cell phone and laying it on the pulpit, our speaker apologized to the congregation. "I am on call. If this happens to ring while I am speaking, I will really need to answer it." Then he explained that these cell phones are just marvelous, really. They do all kinds of things. They have different kinds of ring tones on them to suit whatever you like. You can even buy them on the internet with different ring tones or with different songs. It replaces my watch. I don't wear a watch any more. It has the time right on it and I can adjust it whenever I want. If I don't feel like answering it, I don't have to because it takes the message for me.

Did you ever realize how many of you can't not answer a phone? You can be doing all kinds of things in the house, in the yard or anywhere. I keep telling Diane. I say, "Diane, you don't have to answer that." She insists, "Yes, I do! Yes I do!" I don't know what she is expecting on the other end of the line, but it must be something really, really special because she always answers it. And Brandy - I am talking to her and she says, "Oh, I have a call on the other line! I need to answer this call!" "Well, Brandy, who do you expect that to be? You know you are talking to your one and only Dad. What can be more important to you?"

Anyway. This is the cell phone. It is the kind of connectivity - that's the word. (I am not up on these fancy terms.) The only reason I have one is because I had to have it to talk to Diane. We have a free conversation with each other wherever we are. This is my connectivity to the rest of the world. If anybody wants to call me, here I am. I answer this on occasions when I feel like it. But there it is.

## The Call to Service

I have selected a scripture for today aside from the cell phone which I may or may not answer if it rings. My scripture is from Matthew, 25 beginning at the thirty fifth verse. "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee; or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in?; or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Now i kind of have a question about who is the "least of one of My brethren". Just who is classified among the least of His brethren? Is that the one in the gutter? Is that the President of the college? Just exactly who are we talking about here? I would say it would be anyone of His creation. He does have a love for all mankind because every last one of us is His creation. So I would say that maybe we all qualify as "the least of His brethren".

I have a hobby, so I brought one along today for a kind of a quiz type situation, so hang on just a second. (Ed reached into a bag and brought out a small piece of polished wood.) It's in little parts. The quiz is this - can you tell me what I am making? What in the world is this? I am making something. this is part of something I am making. (There were guesses and for his part our speaker confessed he did not yet know where it went in the finished product.) The next part was a dowel that flew from his hands accidentally. The next piece was more nearly formed, and he commented, if I give you enough pieces, you are probably going to guess it, but I am going to help you out a little more. (He produced a large sheet on which was a blue print of the object under construction.) I must say, I am remiss. This is one of those projects that Diane's Dad bought for the kids about four years ago, and I am just now putting it together - a Christmas gift for maybe 2008 - somewhere in there.

If you can see this, you can kind of see all of the parts. Now what is going on? (The immediate response was, "a train!") That first piece probably was an axle as someone suggested. Eventually I will end up with a train, if I follow the directions right. That is the question. Can I follow the directions?

As far as the church goes, we are kind of trying to follow the blue prints. Our blue prints consist of the Bible, Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, and we are trying to reach a goal. Our end goal is to wind up with a product. (He displayed another part of the train in process which was identified as the boiler). If I keep hard enough at this, I am going to wind up with a train, and the kids are going to say, "It took you that long?"

Let's just hope that God isn't saying the same thing to us as far as our quest of Zion is concerned. You know, "It took you that long? Where have you been, and what have you been doing?"

When I was working for the government, they also had books. They had big books - lots of big books! You know, they had the big folder type books and i guess there were probably eight or ten of them, and they were all full - that thick! (And he measured with his fingers). And these were the rules and regulations of meat inspec-

tion The plant was supposed to abide by these rules and regulations. They even signed a little promise - you know, "I promise to do everything that is written in these books". Well, it is kind of like the scriptursss. You read through the manuals and think, "Oh! There is something new that maybe we can get the plant to do!" Eventually they kind of understood what was going on. They also knew, and I also knew, when they were not fulfilling certain responsibilities. There were rules and regulations that they promised to keep. The goal was to get them, step by step, to come to full compliance with the rules and regulations.

There were a couple of approaches. You had a lot of responsibilities and a lot of power. You could make them do certain things or you could convince them or cajole them and bring them around to the point where they were willing and wanted to do it for themselves. One of the techniques that I used - i always told them, "Look, you are not living up to your responsibilities in this particular area. You need to be doing this, this and this." they would say, "Yeah, you are right. I am not living up to it. I would say, "I am going to give you a week, and if we don't see some sort of response - if we don't see some movement on your part toward getting there, I am going to have to take some action, and I told them exactly what i was going to do. The week goes by, you know, and you are put on the spot. You said you were going to do something, so what do you do?

There are a couple of approaches you can take. You can come in with all of your power and authority and shut them down and put on a condemned slip! They and condemned. Or you can say, "You know, you just haven't quite lived up to that responsibility yet. It was verbal before, Now I m going to give you a letter. This is what I expect out of you." They are progressively digging their own grave if they get down to the official stage of the paper work and what not. But they knew what was coming all along. If they didn't live up to their responsibilities, it was very clear to them what their problem was going to be - what official action was going to be taken and the discipline.

It's kind of like with God here. We have got some promises. We have got some rewards promised. We have got some commandments, and we also know what is not going to happen and what will happen to us if we don't keep the commandments. And I think God is being along the same lines as I was trying to be with the company. They knew what was coming and I was cajoling and prodding them on. I don't think God wants to send down fire and brimstone from heaven and wipe us all out because we are a little shy of where He wants us to be. I don't think that or anything like it is His intent.

### Our Response?

(Suddenly Ed reaches for his cell phone saying to his audience, "Excuse me.")

"Hello. God. You want me to do what? Well, I can't do that right now. I am kind of busy! Well, I am serving you already. I can't do this. Oh, really. Amazing! I mean ----"

Ed returns to his audience and reports, "I had to hang up on Him. I am busy! I can't serve God now."

When we see that stranger, are we attentive. This is an activity for us. I guarantee God has access to us every moment of every day to give us His will and wishes. As long as we have prepared ourselves, as long as we have put all of the pieces together in our lives according to the Bible, Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants - as long as we are paying attention to Him, if we are in contact - without the cell phone - we will be able to bring ministry to those people with whom we come in contact. We will be able to

determine who “one of the least of My brethren” is and those who need the ministry. We will be cajoled by God to be where we should be. We will be ready and willing and able at all times. “I’m busy!” No. that doesn’t quite ring a bell to God. I don’t believe that is the kind of response He would expect us to give. Hopefully as we come closer, we put our parts together not only in the congregation but individually, we will be able to respond to God’s promptings appropriately, effectively and with love and kindness bring ministry to those around us.

High Priest Robert Rolfe was in charge of the service and commented, “I hope I don’t hang up on Him!” Then he asked if there were testimonies that people just could not wait to share. If so, he asked that they be shared during the time remaining of the worship hour. Several people responded.

One told of the acquisition of a book for which he had been searching four years and the early delivery of a check he was anticipating. Another told of the Book of Mormon Club’s church history tour on Saturday that was both successful and safe.

One spoke of the wonderful ministry received from the Kenyan Saints both at the joint prayer service in Decatur City and in the homes. Brother Rolfe commented, “They are remarkable ministers and we are certainly fortunate to have men like that out spreading the gospel. When you think about this, you know that it has been about ten years since the gospel went back in Kenya, and I think if I have this right, they have gone from zero to four hundred new members in ten years. I think they have fifteen or twenty Priesthood and have more people asking them to come than they can go to. They are blessed, and you can see why when you meet Eric and Tom and the Saints from that place.”

There was a testimony of the ministry of the congregation to the Mount Ayr community through music. Especial mention was made of the Ringgold Singers, in which several members of our congregation are participants. Mention was made of the support many of the Singers gave our congregation when we presented the Easter cantata to the community. Their spring concert was beautifully performed Friday night, and conversation with many there indicated their appreciation that we are sharing with the community. Brother Rolfe explained that the building in which we meet is the home of the Singers. We house their equipment and host their weekly rehearsals. People from many churches meet here and consider this their home for that purpose.

One testimony told of the errant wedding invitation that came Friday for a wedding in Independence, Missouri on Saturday. Those invited went at the last minute. The folks were able to assist their daughter in her search for a house to purchase, and in conversation with a cousin rarely seen received word that will be useful for another family member in planning their future. The testimony was that God was interested in their being at that wedding. Even though the invitation was lost for a time, it arrived just in time for the whole family to benefit from it.

One testimony was of the joy of being with “the best people on the earth”, the people of God, during the recent past. There was especial thanksgiving for the finding of a lost purse that had caused much concern and elicited many prayers. The return to the home to care for the possible complications of losing credit cards, health cards, etc. instead of going to fulfill a dinner date turned out to be a blessing from the Lord. There was a call from one who had not been seen for sixty five years who bore witness to the value of the work done that long ago in another part of the world.

One couple had just returned from a cruise to Hawaii on which

there had been the loss of a bearing in a propeller and a storm. Between the two events, they were delayed two days on their return and expressed thanksgiving for being at home safely. “The ship broke a part but didn’t sink!” was the sister’s thankful pronouncement.

With joy we sang, “Sent forth by God’s blessing, the people of God from this dwelling take leave. .... The supper is ended. .... His grace did invite us. His love shall unite us to work for God’s Kingdom and answer His call.” Brother Rob pronounced the benediction.

## May Fasting and Prayer Service Honoring Mothers

Seventy Ronald Smith was in charge of the service May 14, 2006. He invited the congregation to worship. This is the day, the second Sunday of the month, when we have been asked to come in fasting and prayer for the church. There are lots and lots of things going on right now. I had the opportunity to talk on the phone with Brother George Thomas the other night. He said, “I have a really difficult problem for you. Would you help me with it?” I said, “Well, what is the problem?” Brother Thomas said, “Ram Baral is in Beijing China. He has 50 people he is teaching. He has baptized twenty six of them so far and ordained an Elder. He needs to know if he needs to stay in Beijing and get the others baptized or go back to Nepal because Indra Thapa and Francis Harper are there meeting with some of Ram’s people. They have a whole lot of them who want to be baptized, and he needs to know, should he go back to Nepal before Francis has to return, or what should he do?” Ron replied, “You are asking me? The obvious thing is to stay in Beijing until they have a group that is self sustaining.”

So we will have a congregation of the church in Beijing with somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty people as well as new congregations in Nepal. The Lord is just opening up the work in a number of places. So it is an exciting time to be alive.

We sang “The Lord Is My Shepherd”, with the injunction to remember all of the good things the Lord has done for us. “Amazing Grace” followed, and the invocation prayer was offered by Alan Smith.

From Psalm 105:1-5 we read, “Oh give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him; talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face forevermore. Remember his marvelous works that he hath done; his wonders and the judgments of his mouth; ... .”

This morning, as we have come together to share in prayer and in testimony, we want to have an opportunity to give thanks to the Lord. We want an opportunity to share some of the wonderful works that He has done. I was going to begin with prayers this morning, but as I have been trying to understand the Lord’s will for us, I think we will begin with sharing just some of the wondrous works that He has done. If any of you think of one thing that the Lord has done that you want to share, now would be the time. What wonders has He done for you?

Lynda Rolfe told of her delight in sharing with her class this



morning. Taylor and Ashlan Ballantyne were in it and were able to speak so freely about the scriptures because of their experience in the Center Place Restoration School. She thanked the Lord for the gift of the school.

Valle Smith followed up on Lynda's testimony because Friday night she and others of her family were privileged to go down to Independence and listen to the choirs at CPRS as they performed their spring concert. First of all, it is amazing to see so many children up there in a choir - especially at the high school level where it is optional if they participate, and to do so they have to get up early Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings to practice. It is just a wonderful ministry that they have, and it was wonderful to be there. And on Mother's Day, it is wonderful to share in the accomplishments of your children and to know of their acknowledgment that they have God given gifts and that they are desirous to serve Him with those gifts. That has been a real blessing.

Carnie Anderson said, one of the things the Lord has done for him was to extend his life many times miraculously. Many of his testimonies have been shared before, but, he said, "If you like to share testimonies, I am willing any time. The Lord has just blessed us many times just like many years ago I was putting tubes on an elevator. I was up, probably fifty feet in the air, and I didn't have a railing around the top of the elevator at the time. The pipe started to go, and instead of shoving the pipe and me falling back, I held onto the pipe and stayed there anyway. That was just one example, but there are many times that I could name through my lifetime that my life has been extended when without too many doubts I could have been taken more easily."

Sherman Phipps said, "I wouldn't know where to start. Like Carnie, I know the Lord has extended my life many times, and I know I have already shared probably all of that with you. But sitting here this morning thinking about the marvelous things the Lord has done, it makes sense that it is Mother's Day. That is probably one of the most marvelous things in my life - my parents. They are both gone, but I am very, very grateful for them - that they taught me the gospel."

Fran Parker said, "I want to say, the Lord gave me a car. Now, that may sound a little bit ridiculous, but I needed a car. I was looking for one, and I made a promise to Him saying that if He got me a car that I could afford, I would use it for His work. I forgot about that until this past week when a church lady there at Crown Colony was talking to me when all of a sudden her nose started bleeding. She had no way to go to the doctor. I ended up taking her, and they had to cauterize it because it was a vein that had broken. So I am really grateful that I have that car where I can help people who need it." Howard Parker expressed his thankfulness for the Lord's blessing with a new position for employment. "The Odessa Camp Grounds needed a care taker. I am not the most skilled at those things, but we prayed about it and I put in my resume. They wanted an interview with me - then a second interview with my wife and I, so we fasted that day and said, 'Well, if this is Your will, Lord, we will have to get the house sold and all these sorts of things.' They wanted me, and two days later the neighbors came up and said, 'Our daughter wants that house.' So we sold the house without even having to get a realtor. It has really been a sabbatical for me to have time with my children during the day. I really have taken a lot of irons out of the fire and devoted more of my time to my family and the branch. So we have been able to do that, and with all that I am still able to walk on holy ground, work every day and participate in every retreat and camp that comes along. It has really been a blessing for us all.

Cede Smith said, "I am grateful for my parents."

George Knotts said he was just reminded when Sherm said what he did about his parents that his father was isolated from the church and wasn't a member of the church for most of his life. He gave George the philosophy, "Don't lie, don't steal, and always leave them laughing." His mother was a Cherokee and she gave him her faith and her cherishing the Book of Mormon. "I appreciate that!" was his final testimony.

Mildred Smith gave the Lord the credit for having a wonderful family that not only loves her but has done so much for her. "One of the things I have been very especially thankful for is the wives our sons have chosen who are also mothers and great mothers, as you can see from their children and the way they are being raised. I am very thankful for those mothers as well as for my own."

We sang, "God is so good. God is so good. He's so good to me. He cares for me, He loves me so, He answers prayers. God is so good to me!"

Our attention was then called to the needs of the church for our prayers. Some suggestions were listed in our bulletin which read, "Pray: that the whole church would:

- Seek wisdom in the time of confusion
- Seek healing in the time of hurt
- Seek personal humility and repentance
- Seek for a unified vision
- Seek the Lord's will regarding His church
- Testify of His goodness.

Our presider said, "I know that there are people in the church that need our prayers right now." He named the missionaries, Frank Frye and Neil Simmons, who are in Liberia, and for Neil it is really an act of faith. Neil is diabetic and his insulin has to be refrigerated. They don't have electricity in Liberia, so it is not just a small matter of going and finding a refrigerator in which to put your insulin. Reports are that things are going well, but we need to pray for them. We need to pray for the new saints in Beijing, China. And in Nepal there are some new congregations, and they are in the midst of civil war. The king did step down, sort of, but they are still having difficulties there. And there are congregations all over who are trying to find their way. If we could have some prayers for the church and the Kingdom, now would be the time.

High Priest Robert Rolfe was the first to respond. "Our Father in Heaven, as we consider the things before us, we pray now that throughout this land and all the other lands in which You are gathering Your sheep, that we would turn our hearts unto you and that we would repent of those attitudes and traditions that would keep us from being able to enter Your Kingdom. We pray that that spirit of supplication and grace that can only come from Your Son, Jesus Christ would move upon us, and that marvelous things would happen among the Saints as we consider our response to the building of Your Kingdom.

"Father, for the missionaries in so many places, we pray that they would have great success in reaching those souls who would listen to the message of Your gospel. We would ask for their safety, but we know that primarily the most important thing is that they would be able to bring many souls unto You. To that extent we pray that they have Thy power to bear witness to the message of the scriptures and the love that Your Son, Jesus Christ promises for all those who will repent and come unto Him.

"We pray for those who are opposing and obstructing the things that You are trying to do, that You particularly move upon them that they have a different vision of what needs to be done to

bring about Your Zion.

“Father, we thank You for the Saints who are in this place and for the nurture and sustenance they give to all the members of Your family here. We pray that You will bless each one, particularly those who have special needs these last few weeks. And we ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Yvonne Galusha prayed, “Dear, heavenly Father, hallowed be Thy name. Father, we come before Thee unworthy knowing that it is only through Jesus that we can approach Your throne of grace. Please, Lord, forgive us. We ask, Lord, that Thy Spirit might grow among us that we might be more unified and become more fully Your body. Lord, we are sensing Your Spirit moving in power going out into the vineyard. And we know, Lord, this is Your work, and You are leading. We ask You, Lord, that You will help us to be instruments in your hands that many people might be brought unto You. Wherever people would respond, we pray there might be Priesthood there to perform those ordinances to bring those souls to You.

“Father, I hold these Priesthood up - those who are taking care of Your church at home, strengthening it, nurturing the young they have brought in and raised up in Your fold, caring for us. And I pray for those who are going forth. I hold them up to You that they might be kept safe, that they might be especially blessed with Your Spirit to go and do that which You would have them do.

“And, Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that You will help us trust each other, to come out of the world, to allow You a greater place in our homes, in our work places, in all that we say and do that others might see that there is something different in our lives. And, Father, I pray that Your Spirit would come and help the body to be healed, that trust may grow, and that we might turn our eyes to You and be able to humble ourselves and allow You to come in and govern Your church. We pray this, Lord, with all our hearts, for we recognize our need for You. It’s our only hope, for the world is going the way that Your prophets told us. So, Father, be merciful and may Your Spirit bless us. Help us to see each of the things that we need to remove that You might be allowed a greater place in us, and we are so very, very grateful! We give You all honor, glory and praise, and we pray this in the holy name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.”

Carnie Anderson prayed, “Our Gracious God, our Heavenly Father, the giver of all good things. All good things come from Thee, and we are so grateful for the many blessings that You have given each of us, especially the many blessings that have been given to the people in many of these countries that have been mentioned, and we realize there are many of them. And these Saints - I can just feel the joy that they have as they have found the true church, and they look to Thee for all things. We pray that each one of these groups and Saints, as they move forward might have Thy Holy Spirit to be with them continually, even all the time during their days that they might find this joy that You find joy in giving each and every one who will walk with Thee and close to Thee.

“Especially be with the servants who are serving Thee and trying to do their best to bring the gospel to many areas. We know You have blessed them in many ways. We pray that they might have a continued faith that grows stronger all the time, and that they might never doubt that You might be able to save them for the purposes that You have in them. Protect them as they go forth in the missions that they are on.

“We are so grateful for these things, and we pray that You might be with the churches in this country, even in the United States, that each one of them might be able to come closer to Thee

in their separation and struggling with things that push or hurry them to have enough faith to even think they can keep everything going here. We pray that You might be able to bless each one of them, for we know that there are many opportunities if we can just increase our faith to go forward. So guide and direct each one of them and their leaders that they truly might find joy in coming closer to Thee, too. Guide and direct each of us, then, as we go forth in these Latter Days, that we might be able to find new joy and look to Thee for Thy coming. In the name of Jesus Christ we humbly pray. Amen.”

Gerald Bolingbroke: “Our Heavenly Father, I pray that Your church will seek unity and humility, and the Restoration church will grow in unity. We pray, also, for the ones in Liberia, Frank and Neil, that You bless them as well as they bring many souls to You. We pray for the ones in China, as well, that many will be coming to Your church and that the missionaries will be able to bring many unto you. And we pray for those in Nepal, as well, that they will be protected, that they will have safety and be able to bring many souls there as well.

“We thank You for this Restoration Gospel, and we pray this in the name of Thy Son, Jesus. Amen.”

George Knotts prayed: “Our Father in Heaven, we are thankful for this church You restored on the earth. We are thankful for the faithful ministers who are ministering in the many countries. Please, be with their wives and families at home that they will be blessed - their ministry will be blessed. We pray for the ones who are faithful to You outside the Restoration that they will be blessed and encouraged to stay true to what they know. We ask this, Father, in Jesus Christ’s name. Amen.

Howard Parker prayed: “Our Father and our God, in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus, I stand before You with these, my brothers and sisters and plead on behalf of this church. Father, we know that “The Bride” is beautiful and that, Father, You are aware of her needs. Yet, Lord, we stand before Thee, in so many ways needful of Your direction in all things. May we first remember that this is Your work and our place within this work is simply subordinate. Our joy is found when we do Thy will, and the blessings that flow from that, Lord, are the kind that are of eternal value. And, Father, I pray for all those who are making decisions. I pray that You will inspire and guide them in that which they do.

“We pray for the Pastors and the leadership of the branches that we might be able to work with them in such a way that the people in the homes might be set in order in the way that Your church may be strong from the very foundation.

“And, Father, I would also pray for Your Priesthood. I pray that You would humble us that we might turn ourselves to Thee on bended knees, our Father, and understand our relationship with You - where it needs to be and where it is not at this time - that, Father, we might sacrifice our own wills, and give ourselves to You in such a way that we might be a light to Your people.

“Father, we thank you for the struggles of the last days that we suffer. And, yet, Father, we are so concerned with those who are becoming disenchanted or losing their way. We pray that we might humble ourselves and become the people that You have called us to be that Thy church might be seen in glory and that these people might see the light that was sent to this earth, Father, and was crucified on that cross - that they might see that light in the way that it should be seen, and come to that light, that they would know Your true Son, Jesus Christ as their Savior and all these things might be

brought back to You to Your glory and to Your honor.

“So, Father, I just pray that You will continue to be patient with us, and yet work that work within our hearts and minds that we might become the people You have called us to be - that our will will be swallowed up in Thy will, and our joy will be found in Thee. I pray it in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Ronald Smith, closed the prayer session with his prayer: “Father in heaven, we are grateful for the many, many blessings that You have given. We know, Lord, that this is Your work and that You gave everything for your church. And we know that You restored the gospel in this Latter Day so that the earth - the world could come to You - so that the standard of the Everlasting Covenant would be raised, that all nations should flow unto it. As we see Your power working in many places, we would pray that You would remember Your church and that we would remember Your church that we might be able to come together in unity and love - come together as You would have us come that the gospel may go forth as has been promised.

“Father, we do pray for those who are seeking to share the gospel in all the world, and we pray that You will multiply their efforts and bless them; but mostly we pray we might all be engaged in Your cause and in Your will and Your desires. Help us to be the people that You want us to be, to remember You always and to do Your will, for we know that it is only as we come humbly together and walk in love that we can be Your disciples.

“So, Father, I would pray that You would remember Your church and that those who will respond may yet have the opportunity, and that we may come together and rejoice at Your table and be Your sheep -the sheep or your pasture. These things we ask in the name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

After the offering was received the mothers in the congregation were recognized and honored. Our Pastor first read this scripture from the bulletin, a combination of Proverbs 6:20-23 and Proverbs 23:25: “My son, keep Thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of Thy mother; Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about Thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life; Thy father and Thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.”

Children whose mother was present, or husbands whose wife was there, were called forward to get a rose for their mother or the mother of their children. As each rose was presented to a mother, the congregation sang, “The Lord be with you and bless you, (name of the one being honored). The Lord be with you, (\_\_\_), and bless you every day.” When all present had received their rose, other mothers who were not present were remembered with roses given to those who remembered them, to be delivered to them later. Their names were also sung in blessing.

When all had received their blessing, High Priest Sherman Phipps offered a special prayer of thanksgiving for all of our mothers:

“Heavenly father, we are amazed at how good and merciful You are unto us, and we are especially grateful here in this group for the rich blessings that You have granted us in terms of our mothers, and of the mothers of our children and grandchildren. We know that this makes all the difference in the world as to how we grow up. We know, of course, that You are free to reach out to those who have not been so blessed to rescue them and to provide them with the love that they need, and we pray that You would do that. But we are

especially grateful today for the living love that You have put in our lives through our mothers. We thank You for this and for everything good that is in our lives. We thank You in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.”

Before the close of the service, Brother Phipps made a statement designed to further our progress toward Zion living. “I hope this is appropriate this morning. It may sound to some of you like it just comes from left field. Do we believe in Zion?” The answer was, of course, “Yes!”

“I have a little thing I want to share with you, and I don’t want anybody to be offended by it. I think if we really believe in Zion, we really think someday we are going to gather together and live together. So I believe it may be important to share these things. I have to be really careful how I say it, because I want you to understand that - hopefully you will understand.

“Last week when I was here, - and don’t anybody jump up and say, “I did this.” because I don’t want to know. I kind of think I know why somebody did this. It had to be an awful temptation. My car was filthy dirty. It always is because I drive up and down gravel roads. And somebody put a design on it, which we have probably all done at some point in time. And I know whoever did that did it without any malice. They didn’t intend to hurt anybody. But you know, and this is what I wanted to share this morning, and again, don’t tell me who it was, I just want whoever did that to understand so they don’t do it to somebody else who would really be offended by it. When you do that (with gravel dust) it is just like using a piece of sand paper, and my car now has a permanent design on it that won’t come off - which I don’t really care. Okay? “My point is that if we are going to live together, little things like this happen and might trouble us or it might trouble somebody else. We need to share those things with each other. We need to make sure we know what is going on with each other. So I do that this morning in hopes it may be a little example of how we can start sharing with each other to let other people know how we feel, how we interact. It doesn't really bother me, except I thought, ‘Whoever did this doesn’t know what that does, and they might get themselves in serious trouble with somebody else. I don’t want that to happen to them. So, hopefully that is not inappropriate this morning. Hopefully it is an ensample of how we can learn to live together, because I believe we are going to be there.”

Our presider affirmed, “We need to live together in righteousness.” We sang, “God Be With You ‘Til We Meet Again”. and were invited to take the hand of someone close to us as the benediction was pronounced: “Father in heaven, even as we have come together this morning to share Your love and the love of our mothers, the love of our families and the love that would call us to righteousness and repentance, we would pray that each one who has felt Thy Spirit this morning might go from here and be the people that You want is to be- the people that You have called us to be!

“We have prayed for Your church. We have prayed for Thy coming. We have prayed for the coming of Zion, and we acknowledge You as our Lord and our Savior. May we ever be blessed according to Thy word and our faith in Jesus’ name. Amen.”



# Memory

High Priest Robert Rolfe read the message Paul sent to the Saints in Corinth as recorded in 1 Cor. 15:1-10. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; After that, he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James, then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; for I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

We are celebrating the time of year that we call graduation or commencement. There are people who are getting their degrees or diplomas or some measure so they can say, "I earned this." We talk about them achieving a particular measure in life. How long do you have to go to school in Iowa? How old do you have to be before you can quit? Sixteen is the age. Would you agree that if you go until you are sixteen, the ordinary person would have passed the eighth grade by then?

My father had applied to graduate from the eighth grade, and when he did the school board wasn't going to let him because he was too young. He was only sixteen at the time. That shows you how times have changed. If he was too young at age sixteen, maybe that isn't such a good age as we think to allow children to quit.

Lynda is passing out an eighth grade test. I know we have a lot of people here who have education beyond the eighth grade. I would just like to ask you, as you look this over, whether you think that you might be able to pass this test. This is actually a test from Salina, Kansas, that was used for the eighth grade in 1895. That's not that long ago. That was the year Graceland was started. I will just give you a few moments to look that over and think whether you could take this test and pass.

I know we have people out there with college educations. Can anyone define for me the word orthography? Or how about diacritical letters? Or something easier, what's a diphthong? Do you know what a diphthong is? It's two vowels together and you make the sound of both at the same time - like e and i in neither. You don't really recognize that unless you are recording the voice and see what is happening.

Just out of curiosity, I tried to find these words in my computer, and my computer didn't recognize them. They were in my dictionary, however. I was just curious whether my computer, with the word bank that it has, would have any of that material.

I grant you, some of this is a little bit harder. If a load of wheat weighs 3942 pounds, what is it worth at 50 cents per bushel, deducting 1050 pounds for tare weight? You might not have experience with that as much as they did in 1895, but you would need to have a little bit of basic information which is not given you in this particular question, like how much does a bushel of wheat

weigh. You have to know that before you could solve the problem, but anybody would know that, surely. So, anyway this is only a hundred and ten

## Lost Memory

I am not handing this out to talk about how education has changed. That's not the point. What I am going to talk about today is lost memory. Any of you had any trouble with your memory in the last week or so? Or year? Or whatever? Probably, if you are like some of the people who have seen this test, they would say, "I used to know this, but I can't remember. I used to be able to solve this kind of problem. I just can't remember that right now"; and it might very well be that they are suffering from physical memory loss. Lynda and I have talked about this now that we have gotten to our age. If we were trees, we would still be pretty young! As humans, we have gotten up there where you might expect a little bit of memory loss.

If you can't remember things, why do you think you can't remember? Is it that you are getting old? Is it normal to lose your memory as you get older? Is it because we know so much that we forget more? If it is normal, what part of losing your memory is normal and what part isn't? When you really need to be concerned is when you are losing parts of your memory that you shouldn't. The experts talk about short term memory and remote memory. Short term memory would include the last question I just asked you. Do you remember what that was? That's presuming that you are paying attention. The last question was, what is normal and what isn't? Remote memory includes those things such as you had in childhood and other things such as, what I did wrong, or what I said wrong to my wife forty years ago. Those are all in that remote memory.

What about, if you have a word that you are trying to say, such as a name. You know the name, but why can't you remember it? Some say that is a glitch - that's a fancy name for some reason that our memory can't recall that name. But if you think about it long enough, usually you will remember that word or name. It is frustrating, but it's not serious to have that kind of problem.

How can you tell whether your memory loss is serious. If it affects your daily living. For example, what if you can't remember how to brush our teeth, or comb your hair, or where the bathroom is. Those kinds of things are serious because they really do affect your normal living. There are problems that are not normal. One of those is forgetting things much more often than you used to or forgetting how to do things that you have done many times before. I had a friend who would get outside her house and couldn't remember how to get back inside. So she would stand in her front yard, and she was lost! That may sound a bit humorous, How could you be lost in your own front yard; but if your brain doesn't tell you how to get back in, then you are lost! Or, I have noticed that I am repeating phrases or stories in the same conversation. So, if I do tell you the same story that I just told you fifteen minutes ago, tell me that I have already told you that. A day or two doesn't count, but if I am telling it to you and fifteen minutes later I am telling you again, I would like to know that. How about trouble making choices or handling money? Or just not being able to keep track of what happens every day?

I don't want to just leave you with the negative. Here are some helpful hints if you think you are having trouble with your memory. You get these free. Like hints from Heloise, these will help you out. Keep lists. Follow routine. Make associations like connect things in your mind, like land marks. Keep a detailed calendar. Put

important things like keys in the same place each time so you are not always running around looking for the car keys.

Repeat the name when you meet new people. Do things that keep your mind and your body busy. If you are really concerned about it, see if you can repeat the a,b,cs every day. Just run those through your mind. You ought to be able to go from a to z each time. We do that sometimes with drunk people. If they are drunk, they can't say their a,b,cs. They can't count from 1 to 20. Their brain just doesn't work right. Or, if you want, you can take the Herb Carneige course. Have you ever heard of that? No, it's not Herb. It's Dale Carneige.

The truth of the matter is that this is a subject that is going to affect us all - either us personally or our family or those close to us. There is an author whose name is Gabriel Garcia Marquise who wrote a novel called One Hundred Years of Solitude, in which residents of a certain village in Columbia are struck by a bizarre plague of mass amnesia forcing them to post signs everywhere like, "I am a cow. Milk me." "I am a gate. Open me", just to keep up with the routine. That is the ultimate situation of not being able to remember.

### **What About Spiritual Memory?**

Do you think you have all suffered some degree of physical memory loss in your life? What about spiritual memory loss? Is this a problem for you today? Or maybe you don't have a spiritual memory. How many of you remember the Scripture that I read at the beginning of my message and what it said about memory? It was rather significant. I will read it to you again. It says, "You are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you." I would say that is important to remember if you want to be saved. Why do you think Apostle Paul said that to the Corinthians? Because they had a lot of problems in terms of their departing from the faith and doing things that they shouldn't.

Do you think God is concerned with your spiritual memory? If God made us, He kinda knows how we are. Are we quick to forget? In the Mosaic law, in Deuteronomy, over and over God says to the people through Moses, "Lest thou forget what you have seen." Well, they had seen a lot of things. "Lest you forget the covenant you have made. Lest you forget the Lord. Lest you forget how you provoked the Lord." If you read Psalm 119, it mentions that problem of forgetting seven times. God did about everything that He could to make sure that the people wouldn't forget. And He told the Hebrew people, in addition, to take the words that He spoke and they were to do certain things with them. Do you remember what it was that they were supposed to do? Write them on their door posts was one. What else? On your hands and between your eyes. They actually took little boxes and they would tie those around their head and their left hand so that would remind them to keep the oaths that they had made. They are called phylactery. If you were a good Hebrew person, you had them on your hand and on your forehead, and that was a way of identifying who you were. You were one of God's people.

Have you ever thought about in the book of Revelation, where there is another being who is going to want you to have a mark in your hands and in your forehead? Is it just a coincidence that he wants it in your hands and your forehead, too? Only he is identifying you with another person when you have that mark. They say copying is the sincerest form of flattery. So maybe he liked this idea that he got from God as to how he was doing. In fact, when I got this little bottle of oil the first time, the fellow who gave me one said, "Keep that in your pocket. It will remind you of who you are." And

that's true. We need to be reminded sometimes of whose are.

So Jesus, when He was having this last meal with His disciples, said, "Do this in remembrance of Me!" when they were eating the bread and the wine. Why do you think He pointed that out? He told them, "When you do it, you will remember this hour." They would remember that time together. That is what He is telling them. And when He talked about His second coming in Luke 17, verse 32. He said (and this is all He said), "Remember Lot's wife!" He didn't say anything else. He just said, "Remember Lot's wife!" Well, that presumes you know who Lot was and what his wife was and the whole story. If you don't remember the story, it is hard to remember Lot's wife! What was the point in remembering her? It was more than turning around. I think it has to do with faith and what our focus is in our life. What are we looking for in life?

### **Focus of Our Faith**

You know, all that we have, our bodies and everything. It's all transitory. We are only going to be here for a short time, then we are gone! What are we looking for? When we meet together, we talk about us being the body of Christ as members. What is it we are supposed to remember? What are we looking for?

I am going to read this real commercial to you since I don't have it on tape. This is a phone call that actually comes off of a radio commercial. "Hi!. I am calling about your church. Do you have exciting music?" "Sure do". "Is your Sunday school a lot of fun?" "Absolutely!" "Does your church promise that its members never have to face pain, sorrow or difficulties ever again?" "We guarantee it!"

Wouldn't you like to go to a church like this? I wonder if they put the guarantee in writing. Don't we all want to feel good and have a carefree life? Don't we believe that enjoyable existence is a God given right? And what would you do to avoid pain anyway? So if life isn't easy, comfortable, and trouble free there is something wrong, isn't there? Radically wrong! You know, we are not supposed to be suffering all that stuff.

Is that the truth? Would you respond to that kind of an ad? Don't you want to go to a place that has great music, a fun Sunday School and a guarantee that you are not going to have any problems again - that the money will just keep pouring in so that you don't ever have to face any trouble?

The fact is, in my experience at least, we can't avoid pain or other problems. I have noticed that cancer, which seems to be a big problem, seems to strike the faithful just as well as the faithless. You don't avoid it. I have noticed that people lose their jobs. Children get killed in accidents. And all of those bad things happen to the good as well as to the wicked. So, if that is the way it is, why should we stay in here. I would like to suggest to you, because of what we are focusing on - what should be the true focus of our faith - what's behind it.

(Our speaker turned and looked behind him). On, yes, I wasn't sure I remembered. There is a picture of Jesus. There is a reason that there is a picture of Jesus right behind the pulpit because that is where we are supposed to be focusing our faith. So, are you more interested in the easy life or in knowing Christ? Is religion like athletics - no pain, no gain? In someway, perhaps.

One of the more interesting scriptures to me is in the first Book of Nephi, chapter 4. Nephi is talking to a couple of his brothers. His brothers are arguing about their father's vision, which Nephi also had, and they are saying to each other and to Nephi, "We don't agree with this." Nephi finally says, "Why are you arguing?" Do you know what the answer was. "We don't understand all this about the



olive tree business and the Gentiles. So Nephi asked a very pointed question. "Have you asked God?" What do you think the answer was? "Well, no!"

But James says, "You have not because you ask not." Very simple. It was Jesus' brother who wrote that book, and he says, "Ask in faith! You have not because you ask not!" If you are complaining about what you have, have you ever asked, have you ever asked for anything different? Have you ever asked God to help you with those kinds of problems.

At any rate, at this point we see really the difference between Nephi and his brothers. They had the same parents. They were raised in the same home. In theory, which is probably not quite true, they were raised the same. We all say we raise our children the same. We offer them the same advantages. What was Nephi's brothers' answer? Their answer was, "No, we haven't asked God." And you have to say, "I wonder why they didn't". I would like to read the next couple of verses here because they make a significant conversation. And this isn't all, but I don't want to go into the whole conversation here this morning. I am going to start at verse 10 to see exactly what they said.

"We have not, for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us." Why not? "Behold I said unto them, How is it that you do not keep the commandments of the Lord? How is it that ye will perish because of the hardness of your hearts? Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said, If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely, these things shall be made known unto you?"

So, if you are reading the scriptures and you say, "I don't understand what it means.", the scripture says, "Ask God!" If you keep asking, I can give you a guarantee. God will answer that prayer. He wants us to know what these scriptures mean. There is a challenge. Start reading your scriptures. The first time you come across something that you do not understand, say, "I am going to start praying about this until I get the answer." Don't be like the preacher in the cartoon where he says, "Lord, what do You think about me running for President?" (I am talking about the one with the big black hat.) He says, "God, I want You to give me a sign so I will know whether I should run." Right then there is a bolt of lightning that incinerates him. He is sitting there all black and still on his knees. Then he says, "Something really obvious that I can't miss, Lord!"

Don't be like that. if the Lord gives you the answer, tend to remember what it is that you are asking for. From there on, Nephi rehearses the whole plan of salvation. I wonder sometimes if he had read Romans 8:9,10 and 11 or whether maybe Paul had read Nephi because it sure sounds like they are talking about the same thing. You know, there is something worse than not remembering. Do you know what that is? Not being remembered by God - if God forgets who you are because of your conduct. In the sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7, the question is asked as to who is going to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus talks about that, and guess what it says. Not everybody who is calling on the Lord saying "Lord, Lord," is going to be admitted. He says only those who do the Father's will are going to be admitted into heaven. So much for just believing! The book of James says the devils also believe and they tremble. They know who the Christ is! It talks about being judged at their time, and the Lord says there are people who still say to Him, "Lord, we prophesied in your name. Lord we have cast out devils in Your name. Lord, we have done many miracles in Your name."

And Jesus' answer is going to be, "You don't even know who I am! Get out of here!" I am sure He will know, but He won't remember who that is.

### **The Thing to Remember**

I don't want to leave you with that kind of ending, because that is not a good thing to think about - when the Lord says you have to get out of there. So I would like to leave you with the promise that He gives that is in Hebrews 8:12. That is, God will remember our sins no more if we covenant with Him, repent and become one of His children. I like that a lot better than being faced with, "You don't know who I am. Get out of here!" I like the idea that He is not going to remember our sins. Really, when you talk about grace, that is what that is. It isn't that He doesn't remember them actually, but He is not going to count them, and they will be remembered no more.

So, Saints, this morning, I would like to encourage you to think about your spiritual memory and whether you are having trouble with that. Remember where the strength comes from as far as improving that memory, as Nephi said to his brothers in chapter four."

(As Brother Rolfe had previously arranged, his wife, Lynda began immediately to sing:)

"According to thy gracious word, In meek humility,  
This will I do, my dying Lord, I will remember thee.

"Thy body broken for my sake, My bread from heaven shall be;  
The cup, thy precious blood I take, and thus remember thee.

"Gethsemane can I forget? Or there thy conflict see.,  
Thine agony and bloody sweat, And not remember thee.

"When to the cross I turn mine eyes, and rest on Calvary,  
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice, I must remember thee!

"Amen"

## **The Gathering**

Elder Gerald Bolingbroke brought us the message for the last Sunday in May. He opened his sermon by reading to us from the Doctrine and Covenants 1:3 a, b, d:

"Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all will hear; prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh; and the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth; and the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; ...for they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; they seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness." Brother Bolingbroke continued by expressing how good it was to be there with us that morning.

This is an interesting time of year. School is out. The summer months are approaching with many activities planned for most people. The weather in Iowa is usually cooperative during these months. The Lord has blessed us with beauty and joy. This morning I would like to talk to you about the Gathering -- the Gathering of the Lord's saints to the land of Zion. The promise has been made to us that Zion will be. It has been in God's plan since the beginning of the world. We first heard about it in the scriptures and when Joseph Smith Jr. brought many details to light.

The Lord called upon Joseph Smith, Jr., and told him about the

calamity which shall come on the inhabitants of the earth. The Lord gave commandments to us, that we might proclaim these things to the world, that faith might increase in the earth, and that His everlasting covenant might be established. D&C 4 a, d. The awareness of a covenant has always been very much a part of the Restoration movement. Abraham and Moses could not have sensed the covenant more than did Joseph Smith and others who rallied the Restoration cause.

As God has spoken in the Old and New Testaments, inviting people in the past into a special relationship with him, just so the call of God has been extended to people today. The early Latter Day Saints were unsure where they should locate to best fulfill their part of the covenant. They received this instruction from the Lord.

God spoke through Joseph Smith and said, From the place where they were, they should go to the regions westward, and they should build up His church in every region which they pass until the time to come when the city of the New Jerusalem should be prepared, that they may be gathered in one, that they might be His people, and God said "I will be your God." D&C 42: 3 a, b. The covenant agreement was once again in full operation. There was the promise of spiritual fellowship through gathering. The purpose was that the Saints through association and encouragement might prepare themselves to fulfill their role as the body of Christ.

The revelation came which said, as it is written, what you shall ask in faith and prayer according to his command, you shall receive. You are called to bring to pass the gathering of His elect, for his elect hear His voice and do not harden their hearts. Joseph further told them that the decree has gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in one part of this land which is Independence to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things. D&C 28: 2 c, d.

We know that the saints at that time did not establish Zion, and it is left to us and God to do it. We know that even before the church was organized the cause of Zion was mentioned by revelation. This revelation tells the saints to keep his commandments and to seek to bring forth and establish the cause Zion. D&C 6: 3 a Zion is to be a community of the covenant purpose in which the Gospel of Christ can find expression. In order to achieve interpersonal relationships in harmony with the principles of Christ it would be very helpful to have the gathering of saints who support each other in Christlike living.

The gathering is not unique to our times. The Jews for instance have for centuries gathered into communities within a larger society. Often these Jewish communities were not well accepted by other communities surrounding them. The local synagogue became the place for the devotional and educational development of the Jewish people in the nations of the world. A definite "gathering" movement was attempted in the early 1830's among the Latter Day Saints. In the Doctrine and Covenants Sec. 108:2 a they were told to prepare and sanctify themselves and to gather themselves together upon the land of Zion, all of them who have not been commanded to tarry. The covenanted people were instructed to gain the land of their inheritance by legal purchase.

In Doctrine and Covenants 45:12 the scripture tells the saints with one heart and one mind to gather up their riches so that they might purchase an inheritance which would be appointed to them. It further says that it will be the New Jerusalem, a land of peace and a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the most high God at this time. People of today are told to save all the money they can so that they might in time purchase lands for an inheritance. D&C 48: 2 a.

The location of the New Jerusalem was finally appointed. The location is in the land of Missouri in the city of Independence for the gathering of the saints. And the spot is westward upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse. D&C 37: 1a. An effort was made to comply with these instructions at the time, but the community experiment proved unsuccessful. Some unwise persons who did not understand the basic purposes of the plan were among the gathering.

There are many stories about Zion. One of them was written by Raymond W. Huggett. It describes the mood of the era I have just mentioned. It is called "Clouds Over Zion." Raymond spent one day in fasting and prayer in the mountains, by himself, out in the woods. He took his three standard books with him that morning. He took time and meditated and prayed. He began to sense something about the kingdom of God. He built a kind of rock altar that he laid on and studied. He had to come down from the mountains that night, and he preached on the principles of the gospel, the principles of life--for a new depth and appreciation came to him on those principles on that occasion.

He felt a great endowment of the Spirit of God. The next morning the group he had preached to had a wonderful prayer meeting. One of the apostles was present, presiding over that prayer meeting, and Raymond was aware of what was taking place. He felt the movement of the Spirit of God among His people. Raymond saw the apostle before him; but then he had a strange experience. It seemed as though the end of the tabernacle they were in was rolled back. He looked right past the apostle, although he was much aware of the apostle being there, and he saw out into endless space. He saw farther than the eye can see. He saw into the center of eternity. He was amazed that God could part the mantle of His veil and permit an individual such as himself to catch a glimpse for a few seconds of that which is beyond time.

He saw a ray of light around which all things centered--so bright he couldn't look up at it directly--- and he wondered, "What is this?" He saw multitudes of people. It looked like countless numbers of people, gathering, drawn toward this light. As these questions formed in his mind, it was as though someone spoke to him and said, "These are the holy men of all ages gathering before the throne of grace."

Raymond had read about the fact that God is beyond time. He had even read in the Scriptures that God knows the past, the present, and the future all together. Raymond had never known it this way before. He didn't know he could even see it. He could see all those men who had already passed on were present, and he sensed their presence; and those who were yet unborn could also be related at one time to God. And this multitude of the faithful were united in their purpose--preparing for the completion of God's marvelous work, Zion.

Raymond marveled at this experience, and he saw, too, the outline of what he perceived to be the Holy City. It was surrounded by clouds, and he knew it must be a beautiful city. What a shame it was to think of those dark, and depressing clouds hanging over it so it was obscure to the vision, and He wondered what it meant. The clouds seemed like such a little thing that he was really surprised that they hadn't been removed long ago. But he was told that those clouds have to do with the way we teach our children regarding such simple things as keeping the Sabbath, to keep it holy--that our children grow up and really never understand that Sunday is the Lord's day, and that it helps us remember the coming forth of our Lord from the tomb. It's not our day at all--it's His day. Our bodies

need to be refreshed, replenished. We need to be restored spiritually. We need to be related to His glorious coming forth on that day. It's not just another day when we need to have communion with God. And Raymond was surprised that such a little thing could sometimes stand in the way of the great culmination of Zion.

He was told that our concept of stewardship has often been narrowed to a mere Mosaic approach to finances--just an accounting of money instead of the joyous accounting for the totality of life for the relating of our lives to His Kingdom's purpose. It should be our commitment fully-- the finances being one expression of that commitment. Our children sometimes grow up not knowing what it is to be a steward under God in the world in which we live; they think only about giving money or filling out papers.

And somehow we've failed to teach our children about the sanctity of marriage and its true purpose. Our children grow up thinking, "If this doesn't work, we'll try another one." They don't seem to understand or to appreciate that marriage in the truest sense is a sacramental relationship. It's where God enters into a covenant between two people. It is where the couple can give themselves fully and wholly, express themselves without remorse of conscience and guilt and feeling of fear. They can have a union that's joyful, that sustains, that's complementary one to another. It can be a union that fulfills and gives joy, happiness, and hope, those things which give strength to each individual who takes part in a true marriage. Sometimes we haven't taught our children how to preserve themselves for this experience so they don't have to look back with remorse, sorrow, and broken hearts upon their experimentation of an earlier day. Such things as not teaching our children these principles have indeed detracted from the bringing forth of Zion.

Sometimes we've not become true disciples because we've lacked mental and physical discipline, and we've been controlled by physical appetites rather than preserving this temple of God. Our bodies should be holy and sanctified

It was impressed upon Raymond that sometimes we accept the standards of morality which the world expresses, and we have not been true to our covenant relationship regarding that communion which we promised to have with Christ and a commitment to His cause--but instead we sometimes compromise these principles and accept those things which are not of His kingdom.

Then, too, he was told that we have failed to worship with a full heart. We have limited ourselves spiritually and have therefore not been able to enjoy the blessings of God's Kingdom. These spiritual blessings are necessary and come to those who have faith in Him and who will make the kind of preparation which brings them about. We sometimes fail to teach our children the fact that they must be dedicated. We must remind them occasionally what happened when they were blessed by the elders in the Church--how we were presenting them to God, how we were accepting responsibility to bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord, and bring them into communion with God. This is our responsibility for which we shall be held accountable. And we have not taught them that eventually they should make a covenant of sacrifice which will help them develop a Zion relationship with God and others.

So one thing after another came before Brother Huggett's vision, and he understood that day. It gave him insight into the truthfulness of this great cause of the Kingdom which shall surely be fulfilled in our time. We are living in a time of crisis. There are evidences that man-centered social structures will not stand. Our philosophers and our historians remind us that all earlier civiliza-

tions have collapsed from within. As a result of our moral decay, we can see that situations today are similar to the downfall of these earlier civilizations. What we need is not reform but rebirth. We must give up the selfishness, and the sinful life and let God be the center of our lives. We must learn how to lose our lives in order to save them. We must become citizens of the kingdom of God or Zion. We can only be saved by becoming builders of Zion with God. Zion is "the city that hath foundations." It begins with individual conversion. It has its root in the change of heart which we have called new birth. But the truth comes to those who are truly devoted.

Jesus told his disciples that the kingdom or Zion is like leaven hidden in a measure of meal; like a hidden treasure; like a merchant seeking a goodly pearl; like growing seed; like ten virgins. Matthew 13:32, 13:46, 13:47, 13:3-7, 20, 21. None of these parables completes our understanding of the meaning of Zion but all of them contain some important portion of truth which will only become clear as we grow in our spiritual understanding.

Zion is a gift of the grace of God. It is the gift of Himself to those who love and serve him. We cannot enter Zion unless we are born of the Spirit of God.

The possibility of Zion was given to us when we were created to be men and women of intellect, but we must also have a vision and be disciples. It is a gift which opens our eyes to the true purpose of life. But Zion makes demands of those who enter in it. The building of Zion will depend on God or Christ who will start Zion. But it is clear from the scriptures that in the fullest sense Zion, or the Kingdom, is Celestial Glory. "The life of the Father and Son are free from the threat of sin and of death." D&C 76:5 and I Cor. 15:24-28. The two are inseparably connected. This can be seen in the people of Enoch, as is taught in the New Testament scriptures.

In Doctrine and Covenants 36: 12e-14e we are told that the heavens will shake and also the earth and there shall be great tribulation among the children of men. God also tells us His people will be preserved. He tells us that He will send truth out of the earth which shall bear testimony of His Only Begotten. It also says that this truth will tell of His resurrection from the dead and of all who have died in the past. He will cause righteousness and truth to sweep the earth as a flood. He will also gather out his elect from the earth to a place which he will prepare. It will be a holy city where his people will gird up their loins and be looking for the time of his coming, and He will be there and it will be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

He tells them what he said to Enoch. He said Enoch and all his city will meet his people there, and we shall receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us. And we shall fall on their necks, and they shall fall on our necks as well, and we will kiss each other. Jesus told us that for a thousand years the earth will rest. He tells us that Enoch saw the days of the coming of the Son of man in the last days to be on the earth for a thousand years. But He also tells us that before that time there will be great tribulation among the wicked. He saw that the sea was troubled and men's hearts were failing them because of the judgments of the Almighty God. He tells Enoch all things even until the end of the world. Enoch also saw the day of righteousness and the hour of redemption, and he received a fullness of joy. Christ tells us that the days of Zion were 365 years. Enoch and all of his people walked with God, and He was in the middle of Zion. Then God took Zion to himself, and the saying went forth that said Zion's fled.

The divine purpose in man is to build Zion in this present life



with the end result that man shall be fitted for the presence of the Father and the Son, Doctrine and Covenants 76:5 and John 14:3. For the fullness of redemption a new heaven and a new earth are required: old things must pass away and all things must become new. Rev. 21-1-5.

But the new heaven and the new earth are not entirely separated from the present earth. There are those who have partaken of eternal life in this present world, but whose fullness of glory awaits the release from mortality.

The purpose of God for his children is beyond our comprehension. But we know the direction in which His purpose lies. It is that we will be fashioned after the image of the Son of God, and we shall share the glory of His presence with others of like heart and mind who shall be gathered together. There will be those who will be in His Kingdom from all generations, and there will be all races of men and women.

Brother Bolingbroke closed his message by reading the scripture from

Romans 8: 14-23: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear. But ye have received the Spirit of adoption; Whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself, beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; And if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be named with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to tribulation willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected it in hope; Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

It is Gerald's prayer that we will all prepare carefully for the coming of Christ and the Kingdom, that we might all take part in that joy which will surely come.



## News and Notes

### Planning Session Held

Following the Zionics dinner of May 7, the congregation assembled to plan events for the summer of 2006. Events scheduled included:

May 21, at 6:00 PM - A women's report to be held with a light carry-in supper at the home of Ron and Di Smith. Mildred and Di Smith are to share with the congregation the insights they have been sharing at women's retreats in Independence, Missouri and Port Orchard, Washington. (Postponed)

May 28 - through the summer, Sunday services begin at 9:45 AM.

June 3 - Family Trip to Omaha Zoo (to be rescheduled).

June 9-11 - Fasting weekend.

June 18-24 - Missionary Family Reunion at Graceland U.

June 25 - Sunday School Picnic in Poe Hollow Park.

July 22 - Service Project.

July 30 - Outreach Outdoor Music Festival at Lamoni.

August 6 - Fall planning session.

August 20 - Family Campfire at the home of Ron and Di Smith.

September 22-24 - Congregational Retreat at Geneseo, Illinois.

### Reunion Approaching

Plans for the Missionary Family Reunion near completion. As of this writing, there are almost 500 registered to attend. Attendance this year will not be as large as in previous summers. Other, more centrally located reunions are scheduled to serve many of the people who formerly had no choice except to come to the Missionary Family Reunion. The Restoration movement has also begun regularly scheduled conferences which many wish to attend. For many, there is not enough vacation time to allow for attendance at both.

Visiting ministry will again include the Restoration Seventy

who sponsor the Reunion. Richard Neil and Neil Simmons of Independence, Missouri, Juan Reyes of Saltillo, Mexico, Frank Frye of Oaxaca, Mexico, Royal Roden of western Iowa, George Knotts and Ronald Smith of Lamoni, Iowa, and George Thomas of Oak Grove, Missouri all expect to give ministry there. Elder Ram Baral, whose native country is Nepal, will be among those giving ministry. Gregg and Jani Thomas of Madison, Alabama are scheduling classes for adults and Rayleen Buckles of Sedalia, Missouri is making provision for children's classes. Alan Smith of Mt. Ayr directs the reunion with the capable assistance of his wife, Valle. Cheryl Phipps is registrar. Graceland University is the host.

Those serving on the reunion staff assemble at Graceland's Memorial Student Center for worship and preparation Sunday morning, June 18. Registration and move in begins at 3:00.

To register contact Cheryl Phipps: Telephone - 641-784-6823; e-mail: registrar@restorationseventy.org. or register on line at [www.restorationseventy.org](http://www.restorationseventy.org).

Registration forms are also available at the Mount Ayr church.

### Fall Retreat Planned

The fall retreat for the south Iowa area is planned to be held at Geneseo, Illinois September 22-24. High Priest Marlin Guin is expected to be a guest minister. Since September 22 is the anniversary of the date on which Joseph Smith received the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, the Book of Mormon Foundation is also invited to bring ministry for the occasion.

Facilities at Geneseo are reported to be excellent with dormitories, cabins and recreational vehicle hookups all available. No registration fee is required. Costs are met by free will offerings.

To facilitate food and housing preparation, each congregation is asked to give Mark Deitrick, telephone number 309-737-5800, an estimated number expected to attend by September 10 if possible.