

A DISSERTATION
ON THE
Faith and Doctrine
OF
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST



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V. James Lovalvo

The Church of Jesus Christ
Headquarters, Monongahela, Pennsylvania

A Dissertation on the Faith and Doctrine
of The Church of Jesus Christ

by
V. James Loalvo

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Sincerely yours,
V. James Lovalvo

Foreword

While many churches today base their doctrines upon the teachings of Jesus Christ, The Church of Jesus Christ established in 1862 with headquarters in Monongahela, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. claims to be the only church to follow and practice the pure and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness, as established and taught by Him during His lifetime on earth.

How can this church make such a claim? Upon what foundation can it base this assertion?

Certainly, no mortal man can dictate the proper way to serve an immortal God. We must approach this God and look to His revealed Word for the answers to our questions, and The Church of Jesus Christ endeavors to do exactly that. The faith of this church is based wholly upon the Word of God. No doctrine is embraced, nor is any belief supported by the Church, except it be borne out in the scriptures.

In the following pages, Apostle V. J. Lovalvo has elaborated upon the articles of faith and doctrine which are the basic precepts of The Church of Jesus Christ. Each point of doctrine is followed by a thorough discussion of the issue,

FOREWORD

with supporting material from the scriptures that justify and uphold the beliefs of the Church. The author has also drawn upon historic sources, where appropriate, in order to verify the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and to establish a sequence of future events. In all instances, he has adhered strictly to the accepted dogma of The Church of Jesus Christ, clearly indicating with footnotes wherever personal opinions have been included.

Ministers, members, and men and women interested in The Church of Jesus Christ will greatly benefit from this book. The elder or teacher, in his study of the Word of God, will gain a clearer understanding of the Church's interpretation of key scriptures, insuring a more unified presentation of the Gospel by those who are called to promote it. The church member, in his endeavor to gain a deeper personal understanding of his commitment to Christ and his role in the Church, will find this book most valuable in explaining exactly *why* the Church believes the way it does, pointing the reader always to scriptures for substantiation of these beliefs.

Those who are yet seeking the Truth may want to read this book cover to cover, in which case it assumes the form of a narrative of the great and marvelous plan of the God who created heaven and earth. The events surrounding the establishment of His Church, and its subsequent apostasy and restoration, are dealt with in chronological order as the doctrines of the Church are unfolded to the reader. The author has been sensitive to the many readers who may not

be familiar with the Book of Mormon, using the Bible wherever possible to refer to, and in many cases corroborate, the scriptures found in the Western Hemisphere.

I would urge all readers, whether or not they are familiar with the ideas contained herein, to maintain a prayerful attitude and an open heart while reading this volume. Allow the Spirit of God to work within your heart and mind, and judge for yourself whether or not the doctrines set forth in these pages point out the Way, the Truth, and the Life, in its original purity and simplicity, as taught by the Lord Himself.

Anthony J. Scolaro, Editor
The Gospel News

Preface

Since its organization, The Church of Jesus Christ has printed only a brief pamphlet on its Articles of Faith and Doctrines. The following work is an attempt to delve into a comprehensive description and in-depth study of the Church's Faith and Doctrines.

The definitions presented are in accord with the basic tenets of the Church; the additional explanations are merely a desire on the part of the author to facilitate and enable the Church to reach a unity of understanding of its Faith and Doctrines.

The writer expresses deep appreciation and gratitude for the willing and excellent assistance given him by those who took the time to check references and verify quotations.

It is also the prayerful hope of the author that this book will prove to be an invaluable source of information to the reader, and will guide him/her to earnestly investigate the Restored Gospel of the Son of God as expounded by The Church of Jesus Christ.

V. James Loalvo

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ARTICLE 1

We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. These three are the great matchless power that rules all things visible and invisible, for it is of Him and through Him that we receive all things both for this life and that which is to come.

ARTICLE 2

We believe God, the Father, to be a personage of glory (Ephesians 1:17; I Nephi 1:8). The Son is the express image of the Father, and He was with the Father before the foundation of the world. In the fullness of time, He came from the bosom of the Father, was born of the Virgin Mary according to the scriptures, became man, and suffered and died for the sins of the whole world. On the third day He rose again and brought about the resurrection (according to the scriptures) and ascended up on high to sit at the right hand of God. Principalities and powers are subject to Him, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether

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they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Colossians 1:15-19). We believe, also, that He will come again the second time to judge both the living and the dead according to the scriptures (Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:30-36).

We believe the Holy Ghost to be:

- A. The mind of the Father and of the Son (I Cor. 2:16).
- B. The unseen power and glory which emanates from God and can, at His will, manifest itself in various forms (Matthew 3:16; I Nephi 11:11).
- C. The witness of God (I John 5:6; III Nephi 11:35-36; III Nephi 28:11).
- D. The gift of God (Acts 2:38; John 14:26; III Nephi 19:13).
- E. Pure and holy, just and good, omnipresent, full of light and knowledge, and a discerner of thoughts and intents of mankind.

GODHEAD

Throughout the ages of time, man has tried in many ways to describe or to worship God. These different descriptions were adapted to serve particular philosophies and religions. To some, God was only the air they breathed. To others, He was an entity without form or passions. Others elected to serve the sun or moon as god. Some chose fire and worshipped the flame. Some adored and worshipped water, seeing in it a mystic or divine relation. Some worshipped beasts of the earth. And still others hailed material things as gods. The worshipping of man-made gods is always associated with extreme and revolting cruelties, such as the custom of sacrificing children to the god Molech, the slaughter of human beings by the Druids and by some of the Indian tribes of South and Central America. William H. Prescott's, *The Conquest of Mexico* and *The Conquest of Peru* and other Western Hemisphere antiquity writers speak extensively of the human sacrifices to appease and/or to worship their gods. Why man, throughout the ages, has chosen gods who demand such pitiless worship will remain a mystery. Poor, weak man, being pitiless himself, has directed his venom and his cruelty upon other unfortunate human beings, justifying such acts by calling it religion.

Despite the many abominable concepts of gods, religions, and worship, the scriptures console the true believer. The poignant words of Christ, like the resonant

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chords of a mighty organ, come sounding through the ages,
“God is love.”

We believe in a God who has a form, who can speak, hear, see, feel, who moves about freely; a God who has emotions such as love, hate, compassion, forgiveness; a God who has no beginning or end, who has been and will be from eternity to eternity. Let us then proceed to describe these attributes, not from the vain imaginings of man, nor of his own created philosophies, but rather from the Word of God in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

A GOD WHO HAS A FORM

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, . . . in the image of God created he him; male and female created He them” (Genesis 1:26-27).

“Men . . . made after the similitude of God” (James 3:9).

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, . . . sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high . . .” (Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father . . .” (John 14:9).

“. . . and it would be the image after which man was created in the beginning; . . . that man was created after the image of God . . .” (Mosiah 7:27).

“. . . and man in the beginning was created after the image of God . . .” (Alma 18:34).

It is recorded in the Book of Mormon (in the Book of Ether) that Jesus appeared to a great prophet many hundreds of years before His birth, and spoke with him saying:

Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. . . . And never have I showed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that thou art created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit . . .” (Ether 3:14-16).

According to these scriptures, God has a body, a form after which man has been created. God is an entity that has shape and contour. To deny that God has a body or form, is to deny the very existence of God.

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A GOD WHO CAN SEE

“And God saw everything that he had made . . .”
(Genesis 1:31).

“The Lord looked down from heaven . . . to see . . .”
(Psalms 14:2).

“The eyes of the Lord . . . are always upon it . . .”
(Deuteronomy 11:12).

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro . . .”
(II Chronicles 16:9).

“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous . . .”
(I Peter 3:12).

“. . . and they shall quake and tremble, and shrink
beneath the glance of his all-searching eye” (Mosiah 27:31).

A GOD WHO CAN HEAR

“. . . and his ears are open unto their prayers”
(I Peter 3:12).

“Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any
man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he
heareth” (John 9:31).

“. . . and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears” (II Samuel 22:7).

“I sought the Lord and he heard . . .” (Psalms 34:4).

“And it came to pass that the Lord did hear . . .” (Ether 1:40).

A GOD WHO CAN SPEAK

“And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11).

“And they heard the voice of the Lord God . . .” (Genesis 3:8).

“And the Lord said unto Moses . . .” (Exodus 19:21).

“And God spake all these words . . .” (Exodus 20:1).

“. . . they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven . . .” (III Nephi 11:3).

A GOD WHO CAN FEEL AND TOUCH

“. . . behold, the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger” (Ether 3:6).

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“Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth” (Jeremiah 1:9).

“. . . I the Lord thy God am a jealous God . . .” (Exodus 20:5).

“And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel . . .” (Judges 2:14).

“. . . for all these are things that I hate . . .” (Zechariah 8:17).

“. . . the tender mercies of the Lord . . .” (I Nephi 1:20).

“The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression . . .” (Exodus 34:6-7).

“. . . but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of a great kindness . . .” (Nehemiah 9:17).

“. . . for God is love” (I John 4:8).

“. . . and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love” (II Nephi 1:15).

“O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace!” (II Nephi 9:8).

“ . . . his wisdom, and his patience . . . ” (Mosiah 4:6).

A GOD WHO MOVES THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE

“ . . . the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day . . . ” (Genesis 3:8).

“ . . . and I will make the place of my feet glorious ” (Isaiah 60:13).

“ . . . and the clouds are the dust of his feet ” (Nahum 1:3).

“ . . . and there was under his feet . . . ” (Exodus 24:10).

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT (EVERYWHERE)

God, through His spirit, can be everywhere. He can observe and penetrate any part of the universe of His creation. This does not mean that God is physically everywhere, but His spirit, which is in communication with all things at all times, is everywhere. It is like the fragrance of a beautiful bouquet of flowers that permeates an entire house, although it is in only one room. God moves from place to place through the medium of His spirit, which is infinite and powerful. He can communicate, see, and hear all things.

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David, the Psalmist, was moved to declare:

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day. . . . (Psalms 139:7-12).

Therefore, understanding how God works through His spirit, we can truly say, "God is everywhere; He is omnipresent."

GOD IS OMNISCIENT (ALL-KNOWING)

His knowledge and foreknowledge encompass all eternity, from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning or end. It is an incomprehensible mystery, as deep as the sea, and higher than the loftiest mountain. Although man, in his insatiable thirst to know more, can reach pinnacles of learning, his knowledge in comparison to the knowledge of the Almighty is like a grain of sand compared to the universe. God's knowledge is immeasurable and incomparable. It is written, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Also, "Him, being

delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God . . ." (Acts 2:23).

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God . . ." (I Peter 1:2).

"For whom he did foreknow . . ." (Romans 8:29).

It is difficult for man who is finite, to comprehend God who is infinite. Suffice it to say, "He knoweth all things. God is OMNISCIENT."

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT (ALL-POWERFUL)

"God can do all things." This says it all. He creates. He destroys. He has set the universe in motion. The winds and the waves obey His will. The stars and the planets testify to His power. All nature declares His handiwork. In Him is the power of life, the power of death, the power to forgive, the power to redeem, the power of resurrection, the power to heal, and the power of salvation.

"I AM THAT I AM" echoes like a clarion call throughout the ages, and across eternity. "I am the Lord thy God . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:2-3).

In some earlier translations of the Old Testament, several words are used to designate God, such as the word

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El or Elohim, indicating vital power. These, of course, are names in the original Hebrew language. The English translation is God, Lord God, God Almighty, etc. "EL" is sometimes used in compounds, as in "El-elyon" (the Most High God, Genesis 14:18-20). And "El-Shaddai" (the Almighty God, Genesis 17:1). The prophets commonly used "Yahweh" for God, the English translation being Lord, and sometimes, Jehovah (Exodus 6:2-3). When Moses posed the question unto God, "What is his name? What shall I say unto them?" God said unto Moses, "I AM THAT I AM." Hence, the name Yahweh originated in the revelation of God to Moses; it there appears as the so-called imperfect tense of the verb "to be", and is accordingly rendered, "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:13-14). That is to say, God is one who exists and who can never cease to exist (*Harper's Bible Dictionary*, Page 230).

God said to Moses, ". . . And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them" (Exodus 6:3). The patriarchs knew Him as the God of personal existence, known only to them. He was their God, and belonged to no one else. He belonged only to them. He was their own special God. But Moses was made to understand that God was the God of the whole universe. All nations and people can come to Him if they wish. He can be depended upon for everything. He revealed His universal power not only to Moses, but also to the prophets. With their prophetic insight into His character, they helped give the name Yahweh its universal significance. Many times He

reveals His greatness and power by the words, "I am the Lord, thy God" or "I am the first and I am the last."

The Psalmist, David, was made to exclaim, "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH (I AM)*, art the Most High over all the earth" (Psalms 83:18). The prophet Isaiah cried out, ". . . for the Lord, even JEHOVAH (I AM)*, is my strength. . . ." (Isaiah 12:2).

In the words of His Holy and Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, are found the all-encompassing conclusions, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen" (Matthew 6:13).

The Church of Jesus Christ affirms its belief in a God who is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent; a God who is and shall be from eternity to all eternity, without beginning or end, with a body of parts and passions.

In the face of all the indisputable evidences found in the written word of God, and by His own revelations, who dares to challenge His existence? With such overwhelming and abundant witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ asserts its belief in a TRUE AND LIVING GOD. Throughout the eternal ages His name shall ring out, yea the mighty name of the Lord, "I AM THAT I AM."

* Writer's inclusion

ARTICLE 2

THE SON OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, as told by the scriptures. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). It is almost impossible to imagine the indescribable joy that filled Mary at this glorious announcement. It evoked an immediate response from the depth of her heart as she cried out, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:46-48).

One of the most beautiful masterpieces of historical truths is the heralding of His birth to the shepherds who were watching their flocks. It is written:

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be

a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men (Luke 2:8-14).

The Old Testament scriptures abound with references relative to the birth and ministry of the Son of God, some of which are Psalms 22 and 45; Isaiah, chapters 9, 11, and 53; Daniel, chapter 9. However the Jews, who expected deliverance by a mighty conqueror, failed to accept Jesus as the true Deliverer because of their lack of understanding of the scriptures relative to His advent. When He began His ministry, the Jews refused to accept Him because the method of His coming and His preaching were so utterly different from their concept of the coming of a Messiah. Therefore, their minds were completely shut to the true interpretations of the prophetic revelations.

The Book of Mormon is filled with predictions and declarations relative to His birth and ministry. In a vision had by Nephi, an ancient prophet, an angel stood before him and said, "Nephi, what beholdest thou? And I said unto him: A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins." The angel continued, ". . . Behold the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh." Then she reappeared in the vision, bearing a child in her arms. And the angel said to him,

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“. . . Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!” (I Nephi 11:14-21).

The following references are some of the predictions of Christ’s birth and ministry, paraphrased from the Book of Mormon and Bible:

His mother’s name should be Mary (Mosiah 3:8).

She would be a virgin in the city of Nazareth (I Nephi 11:13).

She would be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost (Alma 7:10).

God Himself should come down from heaven (Mosiah 15:1).

He would be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mosiah 3:8).

At His birth, a new star would appear in heaven (Helaman 14:5).

The Holy Ghost would come down upon Him in the form of a dove (I Nephi 11:27; II Nephi 31:8; Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:22).

He would call twelve disciples (I Nephi 12:8).

He would go among the people in great glory, casting out devils, healing the sick, raising the dead, and performing many mighty miracles (Mosiah 3:5).

He would suffer temptations, pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; blood would come from every pore of His body because of His anguish for the abominations of His people (Mosiah 3:7).

He would be lifted on the cross and slain for the sins of the world (I Nephi 11:33; John 3:14; John 19).

He would be buried in a sepulchre, where He would remain for three days (II Nephi 25:13).

He would rise from the dead after three days and eventually make Himself manifest by the power of the Holy Ghost unto the Gentiles (I Nephi 10:11).

At His resurrection, many graves would be opened and would yield up their dead (Helaman 14:25; Matthew 27:52).

He would redeem all those who should believe on His name (Helaman 14:2).

ARTICLE 2

SIGNS OF HIS BIRTH

Angelic announcement to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-14).

His star appearing (Matthew 2:2).

Samuel, the Lamanite, another Book of Mormon prophet, predicted that:

“ . . . There shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day. Therefore, there shall be one day and a night and a day, as if it were one day and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born (Helaman 14:3-5).

NAMES AND TITLES GIVEN TO CHRIST

(Found in the Book of Mormon)

Mediator, Messiah, Redeemer, Great and true shepherd, Lamb, Lamb of God, Son of God, Son of righteousness, Son of the eternal Father, Creator, The Eternal Father of heaven

and earth, King, King of all the earth, God of Israel, God of the whole earth, Most High God, Lord Omnipotent, Mighty God, Holy One, Holy One of Israel, Mighty One of Jacob, Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Life and Light of the world, and many others.

NAMES AND TITLES GIVEN TO CHRIST

(Found in the Bible)

The second Adam, Advocate, Alpha and Omega, Amen, Apostle of our profession, Author and Finisher of our Faith, Beginning of the Creation of God, Blessed and Holy Potentate, Captain of Salvation, Chief Corner Stone, Dayspring, Desire of all Nations, Emmanuel, Everlasting Father, Faithful Witness, First and Last, Good Shepherd, Great High Priest, Head of the Church, Heir of all things, Holy One, Horn of Salvation, I Am, Just One, Lamb of God, Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Messiah, Lord god Almighty, Morning Star, Prince of Life, Prince of Peace, Resurrection and Life, Root of David, Savior, Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, Son of the Blessed, Son of the Highest, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Word of God, Word of Life, The Head of the Church, and many others.

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BEFORE HIS BIRTH

Of His existence in heaven prior to being born in the flesh, there is no doubt. It is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Jesus Christ (the Second Personage) appeared and evidenced Himself at His birth. Yet, He existed before the world was created. He once said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Also, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). He also said, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

He was praying to the Father now as the Son, born in the flesh. Certainly, He knew of the wonderful glory that was in heaven. He was in the bosom of the Father. He was One with the Father. Because He was born of the flesh, He was called the Son. He said to the brother of Jared, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. . . . and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh" (Ether 3:14-16). Ether was a Book of Mormon prophet.

Abinadi, another Book of Mormon prophet, who understood the mystery of the Godhead, declared to the people:

I would that ye should understand that God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son—The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son—And they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth. (Mosiah 15:1-4).

Abinadi suffered death by fire because he said that God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son were one God. The Lord had revealed to this great prophet that Christ would be born of a woman (Mary) and take upon Himself flesh and blood, which he called “a tabernacle of clay,” and eventually be crucified for the sins of the world. Prior to this, another wonderful man, Nephi’s brother Jacob (in the Book of Mormon), said, “And he also has shown unto me that the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, should manifest himself unto them in the flesh. . . .” (II Nephi 6:9). Besides the above references, the Bible and the Book of Mormon contain many more evidences that Christ was with the Father from the very beginning of time.

AFTER HIS BIRTH

Jesus Christ came into the world in the flesh as a human being; and He took upon Himself the sins of the world. He

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suffered temptations but did not yield to them. He was despised and rejected of men, but suffered it because of His love for mankind. He was scourged and mocked, cast out and disowned by His people (the Jews), and finally crucified for the sins of the world. And yet, He loved mankind dearly. He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Then on the third day, He arose triumphantly from the grave and brought about the resurrection, that great conquest over death, that wonderful victory over the grave.

Those who have accepted Him as their Savior, love Him not only because of His divinity but also because of His humanity. Truly He displayed love beyond degree, compassion beyond belief, mercy without limit, meekness and lowliness of heart to an extraordinary degree, and gentleness and kindness without end. He was stern in His rebuke of sin, but divine in His forgiveness. One of the writers of the Gospel says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25). He suffered pain and agony, and yet did not complain. Neither did it deter Him from the path that would lead Him to Calvary. He prayed, saying, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

Of His divinity and heavenly powers, the scriptures are replete with references dealing with His power of healing,

of raising the dead, of great and mighty miracles, of forgiveness, and of eternal salvation. Of His humanity (humane qualities), the scriptures are filled to overflowing with examples of His deep understanding of human frailties, of compassion, of other human emotions and His great capacity to feel the needs and requirements of other human beings. Certainly, this is what endears Him to those who have opened their hearts and allowed Him to enter into their lives. It is written, "For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:56).

The Word of God abounds with references of His sufferings, anguish and pain. None could have said it with more pathos than the Book of Mormon prophet, King Benjamin, "And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people" (Mosiah 3:7). Another Biblical prophet, Isaiah, wrote, "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. . . . Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: . . . But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. . . . He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. . . ." (Isaiah 53:3-7).

Christ suffered all this that He might bring salvation to the human family. He subjected Himself to cruelties which only human beings are capable of administering. He allow-

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ed Himself to be crucified, that upon the cross of Calvary He would draw all men unto Him (John 12:32).

By putting Him to death, the Jews thought they got rid of the thorn in their flesh, little knowing that someday they too, must acknowledge Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It is written, "I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isaiah 45:23). Also, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Treating Jesus like a criminal, they nailed Him to the cross, not realizing that it was the Savior of the world that they were putting to death. "Crucify Him, crucify Him," the cruel and enraged mob cried out. "Liberate Barabbas." Pilate conceded to the cry of the mob. But even in death, Christ was the Victor. On the third day, He arose, taking away the sting of death and the victory from the grave. The Bible says, "And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. . . . Behold, two men stood by them, in shining garments. . . . They said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!" (Luke 24:2-6). Having risen, He now stands at the right

hand of the Father as our Intercessor, our Advocate, our Redeemer and Savior.

He is the Head of the body (the Church), the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega, the Author and Finisher of our faith. We give Him all praise and honor, exalting His name in our every prayer and testimony. We give Him all thanks from the depths of our hearts for His unflinching love and care. To Him we give our earnest devotions. Paul, the Apostle, writes, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature. . . . the first-born from the dead that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:14-18).

THE HOLY GHOST (OR HOLY SPIRIT)

The Holy Spirit is the invisible power and glory that emanates from God. It is present and active in the spiritual experiences of men.

The King James version of the Bible uses the term "Holy Ghost" frequently. It also uses the term "Holy Spirit" many times to indicate the same thing. For, without a doubt, the two terms, "Holy Ghost" and "Holy Spirit" have the same meaning. Some of the Bible translations that use the term "Holy Spirit" instead of "Holy Ghost" are: The American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, R. B. Rotherman's translation, the New Testament in basic

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English, and many others. However, despite the many translators who use only the term "Holy Spirit", there is conclusive evidence in the King James version, as well as in the Book of Mormon, that both terms were used to indicate the same entity.

EXAMPLES OF THE HOLY GHOST

"But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. . . ." (Acts 2:4).

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. . . ." (Joel 2:28).

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive. . . ." (John 14:16-17).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

". . . Him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me

at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not” (III Nephi 9:20).

“And behold, the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words” (Helaman 5:45).

In many foreign languages, the term “Holy Ghost” can only be translated, read, or written as “Holy Spirit.” In Hebrew, as in the Greek, the word “Spirit” means also “wind” or “breath.” In *Harper’s Bible Dictionary*, the following is written: “It is as though men were aware of a form of existence which had no material shape or form; the closest analogy they could think of was that of wind or breath. Jesus Himself used the analogy in His conversation with Nicodemus about being born of the Spirit.”

While some theologians and Bible students like to refer to the Holy Ghost as the Third Personage of the Godhead, nowhere in the Bible or Book of Mormon is this idea supported. Rather, the Holy Ghost is called a third witness. Example: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one” (I John 5:7-8).

“And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth” (I John 5:6).

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“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16).

“. . . of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record, from the beginning of the world. . . .” (I Nephi 12:18).

“And the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me. . . .” (III Nephi 28:11).

“And ye have received the Holy Ghost which witnesses of the Father and the Son. . . .” (II Nephi 31:18).

If the Holy Ghost was a distinct and separate personage, why is there no record anywhere of someone seeing it as a distinct entity? The answer is very obvious. It is not a personage like the Father or the Son. The Holy Ghost takes on a symbolic form, from time to time, as it pleases God. It appeared as a dove resting upon Jesus at His baptism, as cloven tongues of fire that rested upon the Disciples in the “Upper Room,” and as a man to Nephi. The prophet of old saw God sitting on His throne. (Isaiah 6:1). Stephen at his martyrdom, saw the Heavens opened, and the “Son of Man” standing on the right hand of God. (Acts 7:56). Isaiah had his vision before the birth of Christ, and Stephen had his vision after the birth (and death) of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost is exactly what the scriptures say it is: the Power, the Glory, and the Witness that comes from God.

REFERENCES TO THE HOLY GHOST

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4).

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word” (Acts 10:44).

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. . . .” (Acts 10:38).

“. . . That ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:13).

“Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God. . . .” (Romans 15:19).

God imparts the Holy Spirit, fills men with the Holy Spirit, and uses it to control the universe. The Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit) is the very essence or life principle of God, whereby He performs all His works. In Creation: Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalms 104:24-32; Isaiah 40:12-14; II Peter 1:21; Acts 8:29; Acts 10:19-20. He endows men with special gifts: Exodus 31:3; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:6.

If the Holy Ghost was a personage like the Father or the Son, it would be impossible for Him to guide all of

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mankind, or control the countless millions of stars and planets. Logic dictates that He could only occupy one person at a time, or only be in one place at a time. Then, it would require that the Holy Ghost have a spirit of his own to use in order to be able to be everywhere, and in many people simultaneously. This would create a very confusing situation indeed. Also, if the Holy Ghost were a personage, how could Christ have breathed a personage upon His Apostles? It is written, "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22). Another important and pertinent question: If the Holy Ghost were a separate personage, and the Virgin Mary conceived by this entity, would that not make Jesus the Son of the Holy Ghost instead of the Son of God? However, the scriptures declare differently. Jesus Christ was not conceived by the "Spirit of the Holy Ghost," but by the Holy Ghost which is the Holy Spirit of God Almighty.

When this mystery becomes clear, one can readily understand what is meant by "baptizing in the name of the Father, and in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Ghost." It means: "In the name of the Father, who is God almighty with bodily form and passions, to whom we pay the highest honor as the Creator and Ruler of the entire universe; in the name of the Son, who is God incarnate and Savior of the world; and, in the name of the Holy Ghost, who represents God in man (but is not God in His totality), who is the great recorder, the Divine Witness, through whom the will and the work of God is accomplished."

Because God uses this Divine Agency (Holy Ghost), it is only fitting and proper that it be recognized by its own individual name. It is also very appropriate and just that we recognize these three divine entities as the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent GODHEAD, which includes God, who bears record of the Son, Jesus Christ; the Son, who bears record of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, who bears record of the Father and the Son (III Nephi 11:32-36).

To quote further: "It is imperative therefore, that the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) is recognized as distinguishable from the Father and the Son, and yet, as inseparable from them in the total life of God" (*Harper's Bible Dictionary*, Page 266).

In conclusion, whenever the pronoun "HE" is used, in reference to the Holy Ghost, it is only because it is regarded as a reality. Therefore, "HE" instead of "IT," is used in the Holy Scriptures.

ARTICLE 4

ARTICLE 3

We believe in the Church or Kingdom as set up by the Savior to be sufficient for life and salvation for all people.

Ref: Bible—I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:1-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 27:7-11.

ARTICLE 4

We believe that the New Testament scriptures contain a true description of that Church or Kingdom as established by our Saviour at Jerusalem, and that no principle or doctrine inconsistent therewith ought to be practiced or respected, or any principle or doctrine consistent therewith rejected.

ARTICLE 5

We believe The Church of Jesus Christ in this age (in order to be worthy of the name) must be molded substantially and minutely after the pattern left us by Christ. These scriptures bear witness that its officers consist of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (all inspired) for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ref: Bible—I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:13; Titus 1:5;
Book of Mormon—III Nephi 27:1-11.

CHURCH OR KINGDOM

(Articles 3, 4, and 5 Combined)

Contrary to the opinions of some theologians that the Church is an invisible or ethereal influence composed of the honest of heart anywhere and/or everywhere on earth (or, that no matter what church organization one belongs to, it will lead to the portals of Heaven), there is sufficient scripture in the New Testament to prove otherwise. The Church or Kingdom of God is visible, spiritual and a physical church. Jesus called Twelve Apostles (Matthew, Chapter 10), and

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Seventy Evangelists (Luke, Chapter 10), whom He authorized to preach His gospel and administer His ordinances. Later on, the Church added Elders (Acts 14:23), Teachers (Ephesians 4:11), and other officers "for the perfecting of the saints," etc. Christ gave the Church gifts and blessings in abundance (I Corinthians, Chapter 12). He also said to them, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34).

It is quite evident that He meant for the Church to be visible to the world. How else could the Church be recognized, except that the world could "see" the love one had for another? Again, He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). It is also quite evident that there should have been only **one** church on the face of the earth. Paul, the Apostle, said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4-5). Also, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:16-20).

The Holy Scriptures are abundant in proof that Christ established His Church to the end that the world could **see** the evidence of His Kingdom in the lives of His disciples,

not only for that day, but for all time. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

If the Church had continued in His admonitions and commandments, there would still be **one** church on the face of the earth today. But because the evil one was able to enter into the hearts of the followers of Jesus, the Church that developed years later was as different from the Church which Jesus set up as night is from day. The Apostle Paul, knowing by the Holy Spirit what was going to happen in the future, said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

Our Lord gave His life that a way could be made for man's salvation. Christ gave Himself for the Church. He is the head of the Church and Savior of the body. The Lord added to the Church daily such as "should be saved" (Acts 2:47). ". . . He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). All doubts should be dispersed, and all faith and hope exalted by the reading of the Word of God, that His Church and Kingdom must be that **ONE** Faith, **ONE** Lord, **ONE** baptism, **ONE** Church, whose light must

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shine before men, "that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

It is also imperative that the Church today, in order to be truly called The Church of Jesus Christ, must have all the qualifications, all the principles, all the gifts and blessings that were evident in the Church set up by Christ Himself. To say that some of the principal doctrines and commandments of Jesus are not necessary today only betrays ignorance of the "Word," and is merely a rationalization to justify an adulterated church or churches. It is an admission to retrogressive, so-called "modern thinking." The greatest weapon that Satan uses to confuse the minds of people in this day of affluence and "liberal" thinking, is nondenominationalism. "Go to the church of your choice. There is no need of baptism, if you do not desire it. Only sign your name on some church record. Or, as long as you believe in your heart, you shall be saved." Thus cries the liberal religionist of today.

The Church of Jesus Christ is a denominational entity in that it is a religious organization uniting many branches and missions worldwide in a single legal and administrative body. The "Faith and Doctrine" of the Church is based upon the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Most importantly, it is united by the same name, i.e., "The Church of Jesus Christ."

In order, then, to combat this formidable weapon, the Church must be vested with love, compassion, tolerance, and with all the necessary equipment spoken of by Paul when

he admonishes the Saints to "Put on the whole armour of God, . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:11-17). Whether learned or unlearned, whether great or not, the hue and cry is the same. "We do not need **one** church per se. Men must do what they want and go where they wish, and no one may tell us what to do."

In this affluent society, in these days of prosperity, the likes of which this nation and others have never known, men can say the above with unveiled hypocrisy and disregard for the written word of God. However, the day will come, when the scriptures are fulfilled, in which men will cry out to the rocks and the mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelations 6:16).

Let men mock with derision if they will, for so did they mock even the Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples. In the final analysis, the truth will be revealed, to the glory of some and to the shame of others. Thus, the Church must continuously practice the doctrines and commandments established by Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And, in the face of all criticisms and unbeliefs, the Church must stand out as a "Rock in the weary land, a shelter in the time

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of storm; a beacon to the struggling seaman, an oasis to the tired and heavy-laden.”

ARTICLE 6

We believe that mankind will be punished only for their own actual transgressions and not for the sins of our first parents, as is clearly implied by the Savior in representing little children to be heirs of the kingdom. “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).

Ref: Bible—Ephesians 2:15-16; Colossians 2:14; I Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5; Book of Mormon—Alma 40:21; Mormon 9:12-13.

SIN—INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

To believe that the offspring of parents who transgress the laws of God will themselves carry the stigma and punishment of their parents is to deny the mercies and justice of God. It smacks of gross superstition. Some may rise up in indignation and say, “What about the commandment of God given to Moses relative to visiting the iniquity of the fathers to the children, up to the third and the fourth generation?”

If the reader will look well into that commandment, he will surely notice that it specifically relates to the worshipping of idols instead of the One and Only God. (Read Deuteronomy 5:9).

The greatest sin, other than sinning against the Holy Ghost is, beyond a doubt, the sin of IDOLATRY! It is written, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Also, "that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods" (Deuteronomy 12:30-31). But for the individual, the scriptures say, "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deuteronomy 24:16). Also, "But every one shall die for his own iniquity" (Jeremiah 31:30). Likewise, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (Ezekiel 18:20).

To believe that mankind will be punished for the sins of our first parents (Adam and Eve) is an absolute admission of the ignorance of the Word of God, which clearly tells us of His love, compassion, and justice. The most beautiful insight to the excellency of His goodness and affection are the words of Jesus, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). Christ was slain on the cruel cross of

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Calvary that He might reconcile us to God. For so it is written, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5). Paul, the apostle writes, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Hebrews 9:28). Thus, shall every man answer for his own sins, and for his own transgressions.

ARTICLE 7

We believe that divine inspiration is an indispensable qualification to preaching the Gospel. General information about the world is advantageous to man when properly used. Theological education is good only when spiritually correct; such instruction, however, is not absolutely requisite to teach the Word of God. Furthermore, formal schooling or practical training which fosters the belief that inspiration and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are unnecessary in the ministry of Christ's Gospel is erroneous and harmful (See II Timothy 3:14-17). Moreover, we believe in preaching the Gospel without purse or scrip according to the Savior's instructions; "freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). The language is of supreme importance as containing the full force of both Christ's authority and example.

Ref: Bible—Luke 10:21; Galatians 1:12; Ephesians 3:3;
I Corinthians 2.

DIVINE INSPIRATION REQUIRED

Divine inspiration, an “indispensable qualification for the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” is required. There are all kinds of inspirations. Poets, authors, and composers are inspired by issues, ideas, or events to write beautiful compositions. Sculptors, painters, and other artists or scientists are greatly inspired to create masterpieces which have thrilled the hearts of millions. Inspired music, for example, will penetrate the very core of the heart. However, if it is not inspired, it will never affect human emotions. Poetry that is not inspired will never reach the soul of man. Paintings that are not inspired will only be oil on a piece of canvas. In like manner, a sermon that is not inspired by the Holy Spirit will never reach, touch, or motivate the human heart to any degree. But the preaching of the Gospel by divine inspiration will enter the heart, lift the spirit, and enliven the soul of man until he cries out, “Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?” and, “Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Preaching by divine inspiration not only helps the sinner to find the way of life, but also helps the downcast and the discouraged to reach “upwards” from the depths of adversity and cling, with renewed vigor and hope, to the Rock of Ages. It helps the forlorn and the hopeless to find that life is “worth the living.” The inspired Word will reach down into the heart and cleanse it from doubt and fear like the pure air after a storm.

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However, one does not achieve this “divine inspiration” without studying of the Word of God and without praying and fasting. Above everything else, it requires personal application to the scriptures. Like a violin virtuoso, or a concert pianist, who must study for hours every day to develop technique and expression, so the man of God must apply himself daily in a comprehensive study of the Word of God if he wishes to reach that goal of “divine inspiration.”

Theological education will only serve to give one extensive knowledge, broaden one’s scope of human behavior, etc. These are admirable assets. But without divine inspiration, all the knowledge one gains is of no real value; it cannot reach or touch the heart sufficiently to encourage a person to “look up” and seek God. Whether one memorizes the Word of God from Genesis to Revelations or from I Nephi to Moroni (Book of Mormon), it will not avail very much unless the Word is delivered in power, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

It is a sad thing indeed when men reach a point in life and think that “learning alone is sufficient” to preach the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Without divine inspiration, the preaching of the Gospel is like a cloud without water. It is like faith without works, like a vine without fruit. Preaching the Gospel merely on the basis of formal learning, without inspiration, is on a par with what the Apostle Paul said concerning the lack of charity, “I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” To paraphrase the above: “Though I preach with the eloquence

of learning and education and have not divine inspiration, I am like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." What a source of power and inspiration the Apostle Peter received on the day of Pentecost! When he was endowed with the Holy Ghost, thousands were motivated to accept the Gospel. And what a wonderful vessel of the Lord was Paul, who, considering himself a fool to know Christ, said, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (I Corinthians 1:17).

ARTICLE 8

We believe that all men must obey the Gospel before they can be saved.

Ref: Bible—Mark 16:16; St. John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 10;
Book of Mormon—II Nephi 9:23-24.

OBEDIENCE NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

In this one simple sentence is summed up the substance of the commandment of Jesus Christ relative to eternal salvation. Obeying the Gospel merely means to fulfill the commandments of Our Lord and Savior, adhering without deviation to the principles that He laid down for the human

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family. He said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). He also said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-5).

The word "saved" has been used and abused, quoted and misquoted, understood and misunderstood until great confusion has arisen about its meaning. There is a time when man is "saved" from sin by obeying the first principles of the Gospel: faith, repentance, and baptism, which, unless he continues in the commandments of Jesus, can also be the means of his damnation. This "earthly" salvation should not be confused with the "eternal" salvation. The former has saved us from sin; the latter shall save us eternally by continuing to abide in the commandments of Our Lord.

No man, regardless what position he may occupy in religion, can deny the words of Our Blessed Lord Jesus when He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

If being "baptized" only were the means of eternal salvation, there would have been no need for the Sermon on the Mount, nor for the splendid admonitions of the apostles and ancient men of God. And, as the Bible reads, "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong" (Ecclesiastes 9:11).

The Apostle Paul, in his exhortations to the Corinthians, said, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. . . . I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:24, 26 & 27).

Why all these admonitions if salvation were to be had only by believing, and doing nothing afterwards? Some will no doubt say, "But these are merely works, and no man is justified by works alone" (Galatians 2:16). However, James says that faith alone is dead. It takes the combination of both. James continues, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:17-18).

So then, eternal salvation comes about not only by believing and being baptized, but also by constant watchfulness and keeping the commandments of Jesus Christ to the end.

Also recorded in the Book of Mormon is this admonition:

And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent

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and believe in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it" (II Nephi 9:23-24).

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We believe the first principle of action required in the Gospel is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, the once crucified and now risen Redeemer. The second is repentance, which signifies nothing more or less than feeling a Godly sorrow for our sins with a fixed determination to sin no more. The third is baptism by immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for the remission of sins. The fourth is the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus Christ, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Ref: Bible—Acts 2:38; Acts 19:2-7; Acts 8:17; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; I Peter 3:21; Book of Mormon—Mosiah 18:8-17; III Nephi 18:36-38; Moroni 2.

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We believe in being buried with Christ by baptism, and planted together in the likeness of His death, and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and that we should walk in newness of life. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal

body, being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Therefore, yield ye yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.

Ref: Bible—St. John 3:5; Romans 6:3-13; Colossians 2:12;
Book of Mormon—III Nephi 11:23-27

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BELIEF

Very frequently, in the English language, the words “belief” and “faith” are used synonymously or interchangeably, to wit: “whosoever believeth in him should not perish” (John 3:16); “I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Galatians 2:20); And Jesus saith unto them, “Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” (Mark 11:22 & 23).

While “belief” and “faith” are used synonymously, or regarded as such, it would be wise to also understand that

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each word has a special meaning, depending upon the context in which it is used. Belief is a conviction (or persuasion) of truth. Hence, to believe in Jesus Christ is to be fully persuaded, or convicted, that He was born of a virgin and is the Son of God, the Christ, the Redeemer of mankind. Faith implies a complete confidence and assurance in Him that He will motivate one to instant action. It is impossible to have faith without belief. In other words, faith is the end result of a firm belief.

On the other hand, it is possible to have a certain amount of belief without faith. Does this sound absurd? Then consider the words of James, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). Satan and his evil cohorts believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They have knowledge that He is the Christ, but they can in no wise escape the fate of eternal damnation that awaits them. However, the consequence of man's belief and faith in God and Christ is eternal salvation.

Belief then, must come before baptism, through either hearing or reading the Word. On the day of Pentecost, thousands were so moved to believe by the preaching of the Apostle Peter that they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Likewise, the Ethiopian eunuch, reading the words of the prophet Isaiah concerning Jesus, became a disciple quickly after Philip interpreted the scriptures for him (Acts 8:26-38).

Astronomers say that this earth is but one of a number of planets in our solar system, which, in turn, is but one star in countless billions of star systems in the universe. Those of us who know very little, if anything, about astronomy, have accepted these theories because of the confidence we have in the combined testimony of the many scientists who have observed the stars through powerful telescopes and plotted the course of planets using mathematical calculations. We have accepted their conclusions as facts. By the same token, then, should not the combined testimony of the ancient prophets and disciples of Jesus Christ prove conclusively the existence of an Almighty God, and of His Son? History has established, over and over again, that the lives and testimonies of the saints and martyrs are not myths, but realities. Likewise, we believe the testimony of the wonderful Disciples of Christ.

Therefore, belief in Jesus Christ must come through the willingness of the individual to "want to believe," as did the father of the afflicted child who said to Jesus, "help thou mine unbelief." If a person does not *want* to believe, then all the proof in the world will mean nothing.

Once a person has this conviction, or persuasion of truth, he then becomes motivated to do something about it. Faith takes over. It compels him to act. This action takes him to the next step, repentance, which is the second requirement for becoming a follower of Jesus Christ.

REPENTANCE

Repentance necessarily ranks as the second principle of the Gospel. It is closely associated with the first principle, faith (or belief). It is an act of contrition, or Godly sorrow, for one's sins, coupled with an inward desire to amend one's life. It stirs a person to seek God's divine forgiveness and compels him to feel his nothingness in the presence of His divine mercy. For instance, the publican said, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

Repentance is also an admission of one's guilt, a confession of one's sin. It is written, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8-9). Also, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Psalms 32:5).

Repentance also brings about a desire to forgive another's transgression, for the Savior instructed the disciples to implore the Father to, ". . . forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). There is no assurance of divine forgiveness toward us if we do not forgive those who have sinned against us. Jesus said to His disciples, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have

ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25-26). In conjunction with this, Paul the apostle admonishes the Colossians, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:13). Hence, as we desire the forgiveness of God for our sins (regardless of the many times we do so), there must be a corresponding desire to forgive others, no matter how often they "trespass" against us. Jesus commanded, "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:4).

Repentance also is essential to one's salvation. This was taught not only by Jesus but by His disciples, both in Jerusalem and upon this land. Christ said, "Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). In his second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul said, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner. . . .for Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (II Corinthians 7:9 & 10).

It is written in the Book of Mormon, "Therefore, for this cause, that men might be saved, hath repentance been declared. Therefore, blessed are they who will repent and hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; for these are they that shall be saved" (Helaman 12:22-23).

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When this Godly sorrow (or repentance) comes into the heart, a person is compelled to turn to God for comfort, for forgiveness, and instruction as to "what to do."

The answer today is the same as that given by that indomitable "fisher of men," Peter, when he cried out to the thousands, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Now we come to the next step in the great plan of salvation, baptism.

BAPTISM

Baptism is the third principle of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Water baptism is the result of faith and repentance by the candidate, who is now willing to exhibit his desire to make a covenant with his God. He openly promises to serve and walk in the commandments of Jesus Christ. As a result, God promises to grant him a remission of his sins. What a wonderful means of admission to the fold of Christ that God has given to the repentant sinner: Baptism, the washing away and cleansing of his sins! For, having heard the word preached and the Gospel declared, believing and feeling a Godly sorrow for his guilt, he cries out, "What shall I do?" Of a necessity he feels that something further must be done, another step toward the fulfillment of the great plan of salvation. Either by the scripture or by the preaching of His servants comes the answer, "Repent, and be baptized." The words of Jesus must be fulfilled, that a man must

be "born again," first of the water, and then of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5).

Contrary to the belief of some who seek to remove this ordinance from their tenets by saying baptism is only a symbol, the ordinance of baptism is definitely for the remission of sins. The Bible says, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4). Peter also said, "Repent, and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

The Book of Mormon is filled with references concerning baptism for the remission of sins, viz.: ". . . therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins" (Alma 7:14). And, "For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins" (II Nephi 31:17). Another scripture says, "Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins" (Moroni 8:11).

BAPTISM IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION

In the preceding articles, there has been sufficient evidence given that obedience to the Gospel is absolutely necessary for salvation, and that baptism is for the remission of sins. If the remission of sins comes through baptism, and no soul can be saved in the kingdom of heaven with un-

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forgiven sins, it is quite evident that baptism is essential to salvation! It is a reasonable conclusion that baptism must be considered one of the most important ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And, since it was a commandment of Christ, it must be essential to the salvation of the soul.

Another conclusive evidence to the correctness of this doctrine is the fact that Jesus, who was without sin, was baptized to “fulfill all righteousness.” This astonished John the Baptist, who hesitated to administer baptism to Him whom he had previously declared to be the “Lamb of God.” Hundreds of years before this memorable event, Nephi foretold the baptism of Christ, and in his exhortation to righteousness declared, “And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water!” (II Nephi 31:5). To a certain ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, whose very first words acknowledged Christ as a “teacher come from God,” the Savior said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” And, seeing the perplexity of Nicodemus, Christ continued, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3-5).

Christ’s last admonition and commandment to the eleven apostles was, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19 & 20). He also left no doubt as to the results of baptism, nor to the consequences of its denial and abstention. He declared unequivocally that, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Certainly these words of Christ ought to dispel any doubts as to the doctrine of salvation through baptism. It should increase the faith of the reader in this fundamental principle of the Gospel, which remains unchanged today as a vital doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Jacob, a Book of Mormon prophet, in declaring this great truth to the people of his day said, “And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God” (II Nephi 9:23). Upon this hemisphere, Christ reiterated His doctrine of salvation through baptism: “And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned” (III Nephi 11:33-34).

MODE OF BAPTISM

The method of administering baptism is as important as the administration of any of the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While many Christian sects use water as a necessary symbol in their rites, they have departed from

the true mode of baptism by adopting sprinkling or pouring in lieu of immersion.

The verb baptize, translated from the Greek language, comes from the word "baptizo" or "bapto", meaning literally to be "dipped" or "immersed." While it is true that words undergo great change in their meaning as time rolls onward, it is equally interesting to note that the disciples of Christ, who had received His teachings and instructions, plainly understood the significance of baptism by immersion. They practiced the same until the first half of the third century, when sprinkling was initiated by Cyprian, the learned Bishop of Carthage, who introduced a new mode of reinstating the heretic Novatus into the church, rebaptizing him by sprinkling water on his head, rather than immersing him (See Mosheim 3rd Century, part 2, page 253).

If the reader would like to ponder upon a type or foreshadowing of baptism by immersion, he need only to consider the great example when the entire world was immersed in the deluge of water, to purify it from the stench of sin that had reached the throne of the Almighty. Likewise, baptism by immersion in water is intended for the remission of sins, whereby one may walk in newness of life.

The Bible records that "there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." And again, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jor-

dan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him" (Mark 1:5, 9 & 10).

Although modern definitions have been given to the word "baptism" and a modern application has been instituted, no one can gainsay the fact that immersion was the original definition of the word "baptism," and that it was literally put into effect by the Lord's disciples.

Many of the ancient writers used the word "baptized" or "baptism" to denote a dipping or burial in the waters. A certain historian Polybius, in referring to the passage of the Roman soldiers through the river Trebia, writes, "When the passage over the river Trebia came on, which had risen above its usual current on account of the rain which had fallen, the infantry with difficulty crossed over, being 'baptized up to the chest' " (History by Polybius, Book 3, Ch. 72). He continued describing another catastrophe: "Some were upset, but the greater number, their prow being thrown from a height, were 'baptized' and became full of sea" (Naval battle at Syracuse).

Strabo, another writer who lived during the time of Christ, used the word "baptized" quite often. In describing an instrument used in fishing, he wrote, "And if it falls into the sea it is not to be lost; for it is compacted of oak and pine wood; so that even if the oak is 'baptized' by its weight, the remaining part floats and is easily recovered" (Talmadge's Articles of Faith). One can see that

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the above writers as well as other historians were well acquainted with the word "baptism" meaning immersion in water.

The interested student, by studying the scriptures and perusing through the pages of history, can effectually understand that the word "baptism" had, and can only have, but one definition: immersion.

One of the most important and greatest references is the commandment of Jesus Christ on this very subject. It is recorded in the Book of Mormon:

And again the Lord called others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. And he said unto them: On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be no disputations among you. Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them—Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them. And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying: Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water. And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name. . . . And according as I have commanded you thus shall

ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you (III Nephi 11:22-28).

The above reference is a commandment from the Lord Jesus Christ concerning the manner in which His disciples on this land of America should baptize. And yet, man always finds a way to circumvent the commandments of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Man attempts to change Christ's laws to suit his own purposes. But the only thing that this has done is to substitute sand for rock; the subsequent result is a great fall! Puny little man, thinking he can improve on the things that God has ordained, will always find that he is no match for the great wisdom of God. When the Lord's immutable decrees are tampered with by man, the consequences are dire and have dangerous, far-reaching results. One thing is certain, man can improve on other men's inventions or discoveries, but no one can improve on what God has created or commanded! History has vilified man for his vain presumptions, but always justified God for His wisdom.

History furnishes us with abundant proof that in the first century after the death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, baptism was administered by immersion. Justyn Martyr, in describing the ceremony as practiced by himself says:

After that they are led by us to where there is water, and are born again in that kind of new birth by which we ourselves were born again. For upon the name of God, the Father, and Lord of all, and of Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, and of the Holy Spirit,

the immersion in water is performed, because the Christ hath also said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (See Millenial Star, vol 21, pp 769, 770 from James Talmadge's "Great Apostasy").

BAPTISM AS A TYPE AND SHADOW

That baptism is something spiritual cannot be denied or refuted, as the scriptures are very clear on this matter. The type and shadow of the baptismal ordinance is one of birth, death, and resurrection. Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). How can one be born of water except by baptism? Hence the type and shadow of birth. Even nature herself envelops the unborn creature in water before the miracle of birth takes place.

Paul the apostle, in his admonition to the Romans, wrote:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been

planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Romans 6:3-5).

The Apostle continues to expound the same illustration to the Colossians. He writes, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12).

BAPTISM ADMINISTERED ONLY TO THOSE OF AN ACCOUNTABLE AGE

The scriptures emphatically state that only those who are capable of understanding the fact that they are sinners and the meaning of repentance are eligible candidates for baptism. For, in all of His ministry, Christ never spoke to little children about repentance. In all of His sermons and exhortations, Jesus always preached repentance to adults; to those who were accountable for their sins. Jesus blessed little children and used them as an example of sinlessness to His apostles. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:2-4).

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Mormon (a Book of Mormon prophet), in his epistle to his son Moroni, decries the absurdity of baptizing little children, and reveals the threat of eternal damnation for those who believe that children should be baptized:

Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them. . . . Wherefore, my beloved son, I know that it is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children. Behold I say unto you that this thing shall ye teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children. . . . Behold I say unto you, that he that supposeth that little children need baptism is in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; for he hath neither faith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must go down to hell (Moroni 8:8-14).

Mormon states that the above was not his own doctrine, nor his own teaching, but rather that the Holy Ghost

manifested this truth unto him (Moroni 8:9). Now, if this is the commandment of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, the future is very bleak indeed for those who may believe otherwise. We pray rather, that men will turn to God in repentance and embrace the truth that has been restored in these last days.

OPEN-WATER BAPTISM

The Church of Jesus Christ believes in open-water baptism, not in any man-made pool. In our Ministers' Manual, it is written, "Whether it be a river, lake, sea, ocean, creek, or running stream, as long as it is an open, outside body of water" (Ministers' Manual, Section 2, Page 1, Paragraph 4).

History is very vague as to exactly when pool baptism was instituted in the Church. Bible scholars at least agree that it was around a hundred years after the death of the apostles. "Pool baptism," whether it is an inside pool or an outside one, is not consistent with the original example of baptism set by Christ and His disciples, who did so in the "open waters." Regardless when "pool baptism" was instituted, it was indeed a degeneration from "open water baptism," just as other doctrines, which the Lord had commanded His Church to keep, degenerated without fail (Matthew 28:18-20). Is it not strange, that it was a hundred years or more before the church realized (and I say it very critically) that it was "erroneous" to baptize in the open waters? Why

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did not Jesus command His disciples to do so? There were many pools around Jerusalem. Why was not He baptized in the pool of Siloam? It would have been very convenient. He chose rather to be baptized in the river Jordan, to set an example, as He did with everything else.

It is recorded in the Book of Mormon, "And when they had thus prayed they went down unto the water's edge, and the multitude followed them" (III Nephi 19:10). Now it seems very unlikely, and positively impossible, to gather at the "water's edge" when people are gathered around a pool. No doubt many have said, and will continue to say, "What is the difference? Water is water!" The latter statement is true. As a matter of fact, most often pool water is cleaner and uncontaminated, because it has been purified with chemicals. But in spite of this, are not those who believe and indulge in pool baptism saying, in effect, that Jesus and His Apostles were wrong in baptizing in the open waters? However, if Jesus was not wrong, why do the adherents of pool baptism persist in their beliefs?

The rationalization of baptizing in a pool in lieu of the open waters is not a novel one. Tertullion, one of the historians, once said, "There is no difference whether one is washed in the sea, or in a pool, in a river or in a fountain, in a lake or in a channel . . . we are immersed in water." So men keep up this rationale, and teach the same as doctrine.

It is quite evident that one of the reasons that open-

water baptism was abandoned in favor of pool baptism was because it became a hardship to walk great distances to the river, lake, or some other body of water. Therefore, a pool or fountain became more convenient and eventually, more fashionable. Another reason was baptizing on cold winter days. Probably breaking through the ice was looked upon with horror; therefore, the eloquent speakers found a very favorable objection to outside baptism and were able to convince the listeners that to be baptized in a nice, warm, comfortable pool would be just as acceptable to the Lord and to the Church. However, what men ignore and still do is, "How does God feel about this?"

Let us search the scriptures and see just how God has felt about the things He has ordained! The Lord commanded Moses one day to build an altar. Hear what the Lord spoke at that time. "And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it" (Exodus 20:25).

"And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them" (Deuteronomy 27:5).

"As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron" (Joshua 8:31).

There is no doubt but that Moses would have preferred

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to build a beautiful altar for the Lord, one that would be chiselled to perfection. The Lord, however, warned him that if any man laid any iron tool upon it, the altar would be polluted. Just think for a moment. An embellished altar would become an abomination to the Lord! Have not men done the same to the commandments of Our Lord Jesus Christ? Are not the "open waters" the altar of "whole stones" that the Lord wants us to raise? And if men lift an iron tool to it (making a convenient pool or beautiful fountain) are they not polluting the same?

The Church of Jesus Christ has proof beyond any question that no one who has been baptized in open waters has ever suffered any ill effects. But rather, the Church has documented evidence, by the testimony of many of its members, that upon coming up out of the waters, some have been miraculously healed of serious afflictions. In some cases, eyesight has been restored to the blind and others have been healed of terminal diseases. Many of the above-mentioned members were baptized on cold winter days, when ice had to be broken up to make room for their baptism, and all this without any adverse affects! Praise God for these blessings.

BESTOWAL OF THE HOLY GHOST

There are two things required of a person to gain admission to the Kingdom of Heaven: birth of water and birth of the Spirit. As it takes a man endowed with priesthood

authority to baptize someone so that candidates can truly be “born of the water,” it also requires priesthood authority to bestow the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the “abiding” gift of God, bestowed upon the candidate (after baptism) through the ordinance of a blessing invoked by one (or several) having priesthood authority, by the “imposition of hands” (laying-on-of-hands). The following references are some proofs found in the Bible and the Book of Mormon:

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . .Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 8:14-17).

“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied” (Acts 19:5-6).

Even Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Master, touched with His hand whomever He wished to endow with power or with a special blessing. So it is recorded in the Book of Mormon: “And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of these sayings, he touched with his hand the disciples whom he had chosen, one by one, even until he had touched them all, and spake unto them as he touched them. And the multitude heard not the words which he spake, therefore they did not bear record; but the disciples bare record that

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he gave them power to give the Holy Ghost. And I will show unto you hereafter that this record is true" (III Nephi 18:36-37).

The greatest proof that can be given as to the mode of bestowing the Holy Ghost is the explicit commandment of Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith:

The words of Christ, which he spake unto his disciples, the twelve whom he had chosen, as he laid his hands upon them—And he called them by name, saying: Ye shall call on the Father in my name, in mighty prayer; and after ye have done this ye shall have power that to him upon whom ye shall lay your hands, ye shall give the Holy Ghost; and in my name ye shall give it, for thus do mine apostles. Now Christ spake these words unto them at the time of his first appearing; and the multitude heard it not, but the disciples heard it; and on as many as they laid their hands, fell the Holy Ghost (Moroni 2:1-3).

And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called, and received power and authority to baptize, was twelve) and behold, he stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your ser-

vants; and unto them I have given power that they may baptize you with water, and after that ye are baptized with water, behold, I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am (III Nephi 12:1).

While there are instances recorded in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon where the Holy Ghost came upon an individual, or a group of people, we can only conclude that God, the giver of all good things, can give the Holy Ghost when and as He pleases. Nor can anyone say to Him, "Thou hast not done things right." Nor, as Paul the apostle says to the Romans, "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, 'Why hast thou made me thus?'" It is God's prerogative to act and do as He wills. It is also His to say, "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not" to the human family, especially to His Church. It remains for us to simply say, "Thy will be done, and not ours." To deviate even one iota, from His commandments or established principles will unquestionably result in dire consequences. Therefore, if He commanded His disciples to "lay on hands" for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, it is our duty (and privilege) to adhere to this very important principle.

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We believe in the promises of the Savior as they are written in Mark 16:15-18. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Ref: Bible—I Corinthians 12:1-12; Book of Mormon—Moroni 10:8-25.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS PROMISED

In effect, we are saying that we believe in the various gifts of the Spirit, as recorded in I Corinthians, 12th chapter and in Moroni, 10th chapter. Mark mentions five special gifts or signs that shall follow "them that believe;" those who have taken upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord (Mark 16:17-18). Paul the apostle elaborates on this. He mentions nine gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12). However, these two men have mentioned only a few gifts, great and mighty as they are. The storehouse of God is filled with indescribable and glorious gifts that He abundantly gives to whomever He will. Who can really describe or

number all of the wonderful gifts of God? There is not a person on earth who can.

The Bible and Book of Mormon affirm that any man who would officiate in the ordinances of the Gospel must be endowed with divine authority. And, as a consequence, God perpetuates His name and His glory by manifesting His power and bestowing upon His servants the proof of His divine commission, through the various gifts of His Spirit. Very often these gifts are manifested to encourage His Church, to strengthen the faith of its members, and to prove also that in these last days the power of the priesthood is operating by divine consent in The Church of Jesus Christ.

These gifts are an essential demonstration of God's love and power, or else the priesthood of the Son of God could not operate. While some gifts, such as tongues, interpretation of tongues, dreams, visions, etc., are bestowed upon lay members of the Church, there are some gifts that are given only to men endowed with priesthood authority, such as healing, performing of miracles, casting out devils, etc. One has only to read the scriptures to verify the truth of these statements.

According to Moroni, the days of miracles (gifts) shall not pass from the Church as long as there is even one man upon the earth to be saved (Moroni 7:36). He also said that ". . . all these gifts of which I have spoken, which are spiritual, never will be done away, even as long as the world shall stand, only according to the unbelief of the children

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of men” (Moroni 10:19). Therefore, as long as the Church has faith and keeps the commandments of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the gifts of God will always be forthcoming in abundance and to His glory.

The hardened “I-don’t-believe-in-a-God” atheist and the indifferent “prove-it-to-me” agnostic have tried to belittle the idea of divine gifts. They do not know nor do they understand that God only works with men according to their faith. Without faith, man cannot move the hand of God. Neither (without faith) can they receive the divine gifts of His Spirit. When considering the blessed and miraculous gift of healing, for example, “common” sense often says, “It cannot be!” Then faith takes over, and that which “cannot be” becomes real.

Ask the blind man to whom science said, “There is no hope,” and then, by the power of prayer, he was made to see. Ask the lame and crippled man, to whom it was said, “You’ll never walk again,” but who was healed by the power of faith and prayer. It is a certainty that the gifts of God are forthcoming only according to the faith of those who will exercise it. When faith ceases among the children of men, then, too, the gifts of God will disappear.

And Christ truly said unto our fathers: If ye have faith ye can do all things which are expedient unto me. And now I speak unto all the ends of the earth—that if the day cometh that the power and gifts of God shall be done away among you, it shall

be because of unbelief. And wo be unto the children of men if this be the case; for there shall be none that doeth good among you, no not one. For if there be one among you that doeth good, he shall work by the power and gifts of God (Moroni 10:23-25).

Hundreds of years after Moroni had warned the people concerning the decline of the spiritual gifts due to unbelief, another religious leader, John Wesley, had this to say relative to the same subject:

It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit were common in the Church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after that fatal period when Emperor Constantine called himself a Christian, and from a vain desire of promoting the Christian cause thereby, heaped riches and power and honor upon Christians in general, but in particular upon the Christian clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased; very few instances of the kind were found. The cause of this was not, as has been supposed, because there was no more occasion for them—because all the world was become Christians. This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was nominally Christian. The real cause of it was the love of many, almost all Christians, so called, was waxed cold. The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other heathens. The Son of Man, when He came to examine His Church, could hardly find faith on

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the earth. This was the real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian Church—because the Christians were turned heathens again, and only had a dead form left (Wesley's Works, Vol. 7, Ch. 89:26-27. From James E. Talmadge's "Great Apostasy").

John Wesley, with a remarkable insight to the real cause why the gifts of the Spirit were no longer with the Church, confirms the words of that noble servant of God, Moroni, who said that the gifts of God would be done away with because of the unbelief of men.

Some religious writers have insisted that miracles ceased to exist after the fourth or fifth century, while other writers claim that the performing of miracles has always been prevalent in their particular church. However, the miracles that are ascribed to the bones and other relics of the dead saints and martyrs cannot be compared with the miracles and healings through the anointing with oil and "laying-on-of-hands" as recorded in the scriptures.

In studying the Word of God, one can readily see that the Church cannot exist as God's kingdom without the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The unalterable words of Christ, "These signs shall follow them that believe," refute the arguments of certain writers that the Church can exist without necessarily being in possession of these spiritual gifts. It is also quite obvious, when we study the history of mankind,

that diseases, possession by evil spirits, poisonous substances, etc., are curses upon the human family because of its wickedness. Hence, in order to combat these curses, Jesus gave these gifts to the Church, as long as there would be "them that believe" and as long as His Church kept His commandments. History, however, proves that the Church did not continue to keep His commandments. As a result, the "falling away" or "apostasy" took place. Nevertheless, these gifts and blessings have been restored again in these last days to counteract and overcome the curses that are upon the human family due to their wickedness.

THE GIFT OF TONGUES

The gift of tongues was included among the many other gifts as a special sign which would follow "them that believe." Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17). This gift of speaking in tongues was made manifest to the apostles of old on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and they began to speak with other tongues (Acts 2:4). It was also manifested in power when the Gospel was introduced to the Gentiles, in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:46). It was a gift that frequently followed the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, by the imposition of the hands. It is a gift whose function, among others, is one of speaking unto

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God, according to Paul the Apostle: "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God" (Acts 10:46 and I Corinthians 14:2). It is also a sign to the unbeliever (I Corinthians 14:22). Tongues can be understood by one person or by thousands, depending on the occasion. On the day of Pentecost, while the apostles were speaking in the gift of tongues, fourteen nationalities understood them in their respective languages. In this instance, tongues served as a source of prophecy and instructions (Acts 2:8-11).

The Church of Jesus Christ possesses this gift of tongues, which is manifested not too infrequently. Many members have spoken in tongues foreign to their own, and have testified that they were motivated to do so by a heavenly power over which they had no control.

Interpretation of tongues is another gift of God. It may be possessed by the person speaking in tongues or it can be a special gift given to another person. (Read I Corinthians, chapters 12 and 14). While it is more profitable to the Church to have an interpretation when tongues are spoken, it is not necessarily a *must*, for tongues can edify the speaker alone as he prays or praises God. Tongues when spoken without interpretation while someone else is testifying, praying, or preaching, can serve as an affirmation to that which is being said at the time.

TAKING UP SERPENTS

This is not to be understood that serpents can be picked up at will to demonstrate how much faith the individual has. Rather, it is to be understood that if one should be accidentally attacked or bitten by any species of serpents, it will not harm the victim. There is an excellent example of this when Paul was bitten by a viper, which he shook off into the fire. He suffered no harm, to the astonishment of those who witnessed this miracle (Acts 28:3-6). There is nothing in the scriptures saying that anyone should take up serpents to demonstrate his faith, but rather we are admonished, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

THE GIFT OF HEALING AND MIRACLES

Healings and miracles were prevalent and abounded in the days of the apostles. The blind received their sight, the lame walked, the dumb were made to speak, the deaf heard again, the palsied were made well, the lepers cleansed, and even the dead were brought back to life. All this was done by the power that God bestowed upon His servants. Now, in the Restored Gospel dispensation, The Church of Jesus Christ enjoys these same blessings. Hundreds can testify that they have been healed miraculously by the anointing of oil (which has been previously consecrated) and the "laying-on-of-hands" by the members of the priesthood. It is written:

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Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:14-15).

While the authority to administer to the afflicted is given to all the elders of the Church, some of the priesthood are given a greater degree of this power as a special gift to them.

In I Corinthians, chapter 12, Paul speaks of other gifts given by the Spirit of God, such as the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, prophecy, and the discerning of spirits. All of these gifts are given by the self-same Spirit of God, “dividing to every man severally as he will.”

In the early Christian Church, many, such as the apostles and evangelists, were endowed with these gifts. Wise men arose in the Church who were able to astound the very learned of that age. God gave them knowledge of the hereafter to confound their enemies and convert many souls to Christ. They were able to prophesy of coming events as the spirit gave them utterance and to preach under divine inspiration so that thousands obeyed the Gospel. They were given the power to discern the spirits, that is, to be able to understand whether the spirit in a person was of God or the evil forces. One very good example recorded in the Bible reads:

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour (Acts 16:16-18).

This is only one of the many instances where the gift of discernment was made manifest.

In The Church of Jesus Christ, restored in these latter days, God has given these same gifts of wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, and discerning of spirits to many men, who under the influence of the Holy Spirit have used them to the glory of God and to the perfecting of the saints.

ARTICLE 12

We believe in partaking of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week, the bread as His body and the wine as His blood, in commemoration of His death and His suffering.

Ref: Bible—Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; I Cor. 10:16 & 17; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 18:1-9; Moroni, chapters 4 and 5.

THE BREAD AS HIS BODY

This is indeed one of the great mysteries which has been given to mankind, until one begins to peruse prayerfully the holy scriptures, where the answer is forthcoming. Jesus once said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). He indicated that unless believers ate of His flesh and drank of His blood they could never have eternal life. He also declared that by eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, they would "live" in Him and by Him (John 6:54-58).

Jesus used bread to relate to His body since bread is the universal sustaining food for all people. Likewise, His body would be the greatest sustaining spiritual food for all those who believe. However, the very words "eat of my

body” scandalized the multitude which heard them. The very thought of eating a man’s flesh brought visions of cannibalism and disgust to the listeners. This happened, however, because they did not understand the spiritual significance of His words. Jesus attempted to make them aware of the fact that “their fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died” because that was a natural substance and of short duration. But He said to them, “I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger. . . .”

To “eat of His flesh” must be understood spiritually. It is not only in partaking of the Lord’s Supper, but also to abide in His Word, to study and meditate on His Word, to believe on His Word. To accept without doubt all of His commandments and to live by and in His Word is like “eating of His flesh.”

Jesus is called, “the bread of God,” “that bread of life,” and “the living bread” (John 6:33, 48, 51). He also alluded to Himself as the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, etc. A Shepherd because He watched and cared for His own; a Vine because one extracts the greatest amount of blessings by “abiding in Him.” But in His reference to Himself as being the heavenly “bread,” there is a wonderful significance that transcends the imagination. Just as bread has to be eaten in order for one to receive nourishment from it, Christ meant for believers to obey His word and His teachings and live by them. And, as natural bread is called the “staff of life,” so Jesus, as the “Bread of God,” is the spiritual “Staff of Life” to all believers.

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These examples serve as wonderful allegories; however, Christ left a visible and tangible principle for all to remember Him as long as the world exists: The breaking and eating of natural bread in commemoration of His body that was broken for the sins of the world. It is written:

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me (I Corinthians 11:23-24).

Also, Christ said to His apostles, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

In the Book of Mormon, it is recorded that after Jesus had administered the bread to the multitude, He said, "And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread and blessed it and given it unto you. And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shown unto you" (III Nephi 18:6 & 7). So, the breaking, blessing, and partaking of bread is a visible acknowledgement that we are abiding in His word, living in His word, and remembering His body, which was broken for the sins of the world on Calvary's cross.

THE WINE AS HIS BLOOD

The Book of Mormon records, "And it came to pass that Jesus commanded his disciples that they should bring forth some bread and wine unto him." Also, "he commanded his disciples that they should take of the wine of the cup and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it" (III Nephi 18:1 & 8).

The Bible also says, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28).

It is a well-known fact that blood is the life of a body. Without it, the body would die. Also, blood, unless it is diseased, has healing qualities in it. Under the law of Moses, the blood of animals was used to sprinkle and purify the altar and the vessels in the temple as a means of sanctifying the whole:

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the

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vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:19-22).

This was a "type and shadow" of what was going to happen in the future, the fulfillment of which was the shedding of the blood of Christ on the cross. He was the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish. He was the ultimate sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world. It was of a necessity that Christ shed His blood to purify and sanctify the altar of sacrifice for the remission of sins.

Christ used wine to typify His blood. The pouring of the wine into the cup, a symbol of His blood being shed, and the drinking of the wine as a symbol of the partaking of His life, are the two most important "types" for the institution of the "Lord's Supper." Paul the apostle says, "After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Corinthians 11:25). In the Book of Mormon, it is said:

And it came to pass that when he had said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take of the wine of the cup and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it. . . . And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you (III Nephi 18:8-11).

Other than the wine being a symbol of His blood, Jesus also told the disciples in America that it represented their willingness to put into effect all that He had commanded them to do. He spoke to them in this wise: "Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you" (III Nephi 18:10). Also, "that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you" (III Nephi 18:11).

Paul the apostle reminded the Church that the cup was the new testament in the blood of Christ, and to drink of it in remembrance of Him (I Corinthians 11:25). The Apostle also warned the saints that "whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (I Corinthians 11:27). Jesus corroborates the consequences of "taking of the bread and wine unworthily" in His words to the Nephites:

And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it; For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him (III Nephi 18:28-29).

Also Mormon, in one of his final admonishments to his people, tells them, "see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily" (Mormon 9:29). Incidentally, this is the only scriptural reference to the Lord's Supper as "sacrament."

One of the most marvelous incidents which took place during Christ's visits on this land was when He administered bread and wine miraculously:

And it came to pass that he brake bread again and blessed it, and gave to the disciples to eat. And when they had eaten he commanded them that they should break bread, and give unto the multitude. And when they had given unto the multitude he also gave them wine to drink, and commanded them that they should give unto the multitude. Now, there had been no bread, neither wine, brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude; But he truly gave unto them bread to eat, and also wine to drink (III Nephi 20:3-7).

In the following verse of that same chapter, Jesus tells them of the great blessing there shall be (and is) for them when they partake of His sacrament worthily. "And he said unto them: He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul; and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul; and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled" (III Nephi 20:8).

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE PRIESTHOOD
ADMINISTERS THE LORD'S SUPPER

The ministers stand at the sacrament table, and, if possible, never with their backs to the congregation. The bread is gently broken in remembrance of the Lord's body. Then the ministers kneel, along with the congregation, and one of them asks God's blessing upon the bread. After prayer, the ministers administer the bread (only baptized persons in good standing may partake of the Lord's Supper). After the bread is administered, one of the ministers pours the wine into the cup (or cups, as the occasion demands). Again, the ministers, along with the congregation, kneel and God's blessing is asked upon the wine. Following prayer, the ministers administer the wine. After the meeting is closed, if there is any bread or wine left, it should be administered to those convenient to the table until it is all consumed.

Many churches and theologians have advanced the theory that the "fruit of the vine" spoken of in the Bible is not wine but merely grape juice. That is the reason they administer juice instead of wine to their congregations. However, it is a well-known fact that the early Christian Church administered wine, not grape juice, to its congregations. To quote from a reliable historian:

The prayers of Christians were followed by oblations of bread, wine, and other things, for the support of

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the ministers of the church and the poor. For, every Christian who had anything to spare, brought his gift, and offered it in a sense to the Lord. From these gifts, so much bread and wine as were requisite for the Lord's Supper were set apart, and consecrated by prayer (Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Book 1, Century 1, Part 2, Ch. 4:7).

Also, the administering of wine is firmly substantiated in the Book of Mormon.

If one were to take the expression "fruit of the vine" literally, it would simply mean grapes. The fruit of a peach tree is the peach, not the juice of the peaches. Wine is the product of fermented grapes and its subsequent aging. So, despite the theories taught by opponents of the administration of wine, the blood of Jesus Christ must be taken by the drinking of real grape wine, not substitutions.

The partaking of the Lord's Supper is indeed one of the greatest commandments given by Jesus Christ to His Church. It must be observed with all due reverence, as it represents His body and His blood, which was offered on the cross of Calvary for the sins of the world. It must also be taken worthily in remembrance of Him, and to witness to the Father that we are willing to do all things that His Son has commanded us.

ARTICLE 13

We believe in the washing of feet as an ordinance instituted by our Lord and Savior to be observed in the Church. We further believe it to be our duty to attend to that ordinance at least once within each three months.

Ref: Bible—St. John 13:1-17.

WASHING OF FEET

The 'washing of feet' was introduced by Jesus Christ to the apostles at the Last Supper:

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded (John 13:4-5).

The apostles looked upon their Master with great astonishment. "Why is He washing our feet?" must have been the question running through their minds. None dared to question the Lord except Peter, who, seeing his Master bow before him to wash his feet, exclaimed, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" The Lord answered that Peter would not understand why He was washing his feet now but that

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he would later on. Moreover, if he did not allow Jesus to wash his feet, he would have no part with Him. This signified that unless Peter was willing to believe and do all things whatsoever the Lord instituted and commanded, he would not enjoy the blessings forthcoming in this life nor the greater joys of immortality in the mansions of heaven prepared by Christ, His Lord. Whether Peter understood fully the import of the words of Jesus is irrelevant; what is important are the words that came from the depths of his soul, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." In so saying, Peter was conveying the thought that he was willing to have his whole body washed to be recipient of God's blessings.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that this is another ordinance to be kept and taught. He said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:12-15). He also said to them that, if they would perform this ordinance, and would understand the significance of it, they would be happy indeed (John 13:17).

It stands to reason that Christ expects us to obey His commandments. He once said that heaven and earth would pass away, but His Word would never pass away. He had instituted baptism, the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, prayer

for the sick by anointing with oil, and the "washing of feet." In all of the ordinances that Christ established, He always gave the example first. It is obvious that He intended the ordinance of "washing of feet" to be observed with as much reverence as all the others, including the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper. To refuse to partake of "feet washing" or to deny its importance as an ordinance, would deny anyone the blessing of "having part" with Him. Certainly, no one would want to jeopardize his part with Christ by eliminating such a wonderful ordinance from the list of commandments given by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even before its formal organization and ever since, The Church of Jesus Christ has gladly, and with deep reverence, adopted and implemented the ordinance of "feet washing." This is done not only among its ministers, but with the entire congregation: sisters washing the sisters' feet, and brothers washing the brothers' feet. And because they have obeyed the commandment of the Lord concerning the "washing of feet," everyone has enjoyed the blessings of His Spirit to the fullest. They have experienced having "part" with Him.

ARTICLE 14

We believe in saluting the brethren with a holy kiss.

Ref: Bible—Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 16:20; II Corinthians 13:12; I Thessalonians 5:26; I Peter 5:14.

HOLY KISS

There are different kinds of kisses which human beings give each other. There is the kiss of friendship, the kiss of Christian love, the kiss of affection, the kiss of feigned affection, the kiss of welcome, and, lastly, the kiss of betrayal.

A kiss is an outward expression of inward emotions. In the parable of the "prodigal son," the father kisses his long-lost son as he arrives home from his wasted wanderings (Luke 15:20). David and Jonathan kissed each other after a period of separation (I Samuel 20:41). Joseph kisses his brothers after many years of absence (Genesis 45:15). Jacob kisses Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:10). Samuel kissed Saul when he anointed him (I Samuel 10:1). These were kisses of affection, of love, of compassion, of welcome. They expressed the feelings stirred up by these various occasions. The kisses were sincere and honest in their delivery, especially when reciprocated. It became tradi-

tional among people to exchange kisses and, eventually, this custom was adopted by the early Church members as a sign of Christian (or saintly) affection and love in the Lord.

Paul the Apostle taught the saints to greet one another with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16; I Thessalonians 5:26; II Corinthians 13:12). Peter taught the saints to greet each other with a kiss of charity (I Peter 5:14). These two great apostles use the phrases "holy kiss" and the "kiss of charity," which mean the same thing—to kiss one another in the love of Christ.

There is an instance in the Bible where Christ reprimands a man for not kissing Him. He said to this man, Simon, "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head." He continued, "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet" (Luke 7:44-45). This happened because Simon did not really consider Jesus his friend. The custom in those days was that the host would meet his friend at the door and greet him with a kiss.

Then there is the meaningless type of a kiss. Two people meet and greet each other by giving their cheeks and kissing the air. There is also the hypocritical kind of a kiss. Two people meet and greet each other with a kiss that has no affection whatsoever nor any feeling of friendship; a kiss that is empty and void of emotion.

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There is another kind of kiss which no one who claims to love Christ would ever display. That is the kiss of betrayal. It is given with an impure motive and/or devious heart. Judas kissed Christ treacherously as a sign to the captors to apprehend the Master. With much pain and anguish, the Lord said to him, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Oh, the cruelty of it all, to betray an innocent being with a false kiss? Judas could have pointed a finger at Jesus to identify Him to His enemies, but he chose to give Him the traditional form of greeting, a kiss. The finger of accusation would have been bad enough, but to kiss the Lord as a friend was the ultimate in betrayal.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes in this form of greeting "each other with a holy kiss," (preferably on the cheek) not as a habit but in the true love of Christ. Therefore, when a brother kisses another brother, and a sister kisses another sister, it is signifying that they are greeting each other in the love of God.

ARTICLE 15

We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as recorded in the scripture, which was a victory over the power of death and a reintroduction of the principle of continuous or eternal existence; that this principle of continuous existence was not only attained for Himself but for all Adam's race, the wicked as well as the righteous, by which the former will be accountable for their conduct during this life and receive due punishment. Also, that the latter may be duly rewarded for their righteousness or good conduct. We also believe that the righteous that lived previous to the days of Jesus Christ expected their resurrection through, and as a direct result of, Christ's resurrection; also, that there was a general resurrection of the righteous that lived before the days of Christ (in the flesh) immediately following Christ's resurrection. The scriptures inform us, "and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, . . . and appeared unto many." A few moments of reflection by a person acquainted to a reasonable degree with the principles of God's divine justice will force him to conclude that God could not grant this great privilege of the resurrection to some (at that time) and deny it to others, who were equally worthy and expectant, and deprive them of the enjoyment of the benefits of Christ's resurrection until a period still beyond our day when Christ will come again. We believe, also, in a future resur-

rection of those that die after Christ, according to the scriptures.

Ref: Bible—Matthew 27:52-54; Book of Mormon—Alma 40; II Nephi 9:4-22; III Nephi 23:9-11.

THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was and is hailed as the greatest miracle of all time and ages. That a being could take up His body after being dead for three days is one of the most unfathomable mysteries confronting mankind. Nevertheless, this great event must be accepted by faith, by those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God. However, in order to establish the truth of His ability to rise from the dead, He showed Himself to His apostles more than once as He did likewise to some of the women.

It was not a discredit to the apostles that they did not fully understand the words of their Master and Lord when, after the “transfiguration,” He commanded them not to tell any man what they had witnessed “until the Son of Man was risen from the dead.” “And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean” (Mark 9:10). It was merely that “rising from the dead” was the strangest thing they had ever heard. Their fears, however, were dispelled when they were assembled on the first day of the week and Jesus came in through the shut doors and stood in their midst saying,

“Peace be unto you.” Then He showed unto them His hands and His side (John 20:20).

After seeing that the Lord had arisen from the dead, the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and boldly proclaimed to the world the resurrection of Jesus Christ, because their faith had now become knowledge. On the day of Pentecost, after the Holy Ghost had descended upon them in full power, Peter delivered a most inspiring sermon saying,

Him (Jesus Christ)*, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it (Acts 2:23-24).

Referring to the Psalmist David (who foresaw the glory of the resurrection of Christ), Peter continued in verse 27, “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Psalms 16:10). And then, Peter interpreted the Psalm by saying:

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn

* Writer's inclusion

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with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. . . .For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand (Acts 2:29-31, 34).

Paul, the apostle, also used the same Psalm in speaking to the people of Antioch:

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption (Acts 13:34-37).

The Book of Mormon is replete with evidences relative to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Hundreds of years prior to His birth, prophets and other men of God predicted His "rising from the dead." One such recorded prediction states:

. . . and begin to believe in the Son of God, that he will come to redeem his people, and that he shall

suffer and die to atone for their sins; and that he shall rise again from the dead, which shall bring to pass the resurrection, that all men shall stand before him, to be judged at the last and judgment day, according to their works (Alma 33:22).

Also, “. . . and believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God, and that he was slain by the Jews, and by the power of the Father he hath risen again, whereby he hath gained the victory over the grave; and also in him is the sting of death swallowed up” (Mormon 7:5).

After His ascension into heaven, He came to this land of America and showed Himself to the Nephites, fulfilling their faith in Him and their belief in His resurrection. They heard the voice of God saying, “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him” (III Nephi 11:7). And then He descended from the sky to their astonishment and delight. No one could speak because of the beauty and solemnity that surround the Lord, and the glory that emanated from Him. He spoke to them:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suf-

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ferred the will of the Father in all things from the beginning (III Nephi 11:10-11).

The multitude fell to the earth. They recalled the words of the prophets, that Christ would show Himself to them after His ascension into heaven.

Jesus invited them to come unto Him and touch His side, to feel the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet. He wanted them to know that He was the God of the whole earth, that He had been slain for the sins of the world and was now resurrected from the dead. What a glorious experience the people felt as one by one they went forward and touched Him, assuring themselves and bearing record that He was of a certainty the One the prophets had predicted would be resurrected from the dead. Then, with one accord, they raised their voices in one triumphant hallelujah, shouting, "Hosannah! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him" (III Nephi 11:17).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ brought about the eventual resurrection of all members of the human family, both good and evil. Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25). In conjunction with this, Peter said, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in

the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (I Peter 3:18-19).

One of the greatest expositors of the resurrection of the human family was Alma, a Book of Mormon prophet. After much praying that God would reveal to him the mystery of the resurrection, the Lord revealed to Alma that all men, good and evil, would rise from the dead. But prior to that, the spirits of all men would go before God to receive either the reward of rest in Paradise or be cast into a place of outer darkness. Alma also states that there would be a resurrection of all people from Adam to Christ, and that there would be another resurrection of all who died after the resurrection of Christ. It was not made known to him whether both the righteous and the evil ones would arise together. But it did not matter to him. What concerned him was that there would be a resurrection from the dead (Alma, chapter 40).

Jacob, another Book of Mormon prophet, declared that if there had been no resurrection of Jesus Christ, the spirits of all mankind would have become subject to the devil. He continued to exhort the people that through the power of the resurrection of Christ, mankind was spared the endless torment of becoming "angels to a devil." The human family received the ultimate blessing of escaping from the "grasp of that awful monster," death and hell. He tells how the spirits of the unrighteous shall dwell in hell, while the spirits of the righteous shall dwell in paradise. Each place, paradise and hell, shall deliver up their spirits at the time of resur-

rection appointed by God. The graves shall deliver up their bodies to be reunited with their own individual spirits: the righteous, to eternal salvation; the wicked, to eternal damnation (II Nephi, 9th chapter). Jesus spoke on this subject in words very easy to understand: "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29).

Reviewing the scriptures, one has to conclude that Christ arose from the dead and that He brought about the resurrection from the dead of all mankind. Otherwise, we would have all been subject to the devil. To substantiate this great event, the scriptures say, "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matthew 27:52-53).

The Word of God also states that the resurrection of the just, from Christ's resurrection to the end of the world, is called "The First Resurrection." This concerns the resurrection of all the righteous from the time of Christ to the end of the world. The Word reads, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

After the "First Resurrection," there is something more (Revelation 20th chapter). "But the rest of the dead

lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5). Therefore, there is more than one resurrection. They are as follows:

1. The resurrection of Jesus Christ.
2. The resurrection of the righteous who lived from Adam to Christ (at the time of Christ's resurrection).
3. The resurrection of the righteous who lived from Christ to the end of the world, or at the second coming of Christ. (First Resurrection)
4. The resurrection of all of the remaining dead, that is, those who did not come forth in the First Resurrection, which occurs after the thousand years are finished. (Second Resurrection)

Alma calls the resurrection of all from Adam to Christ, the First Resurrection. And, it certainly was their "First Resurrection." John calls the resurrection at the end of the world our First Resurrection. And, it certainly shall be *our* "First Resurrection."

The resurrection following the "First Resurrection" spoken of by John where "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," has been called by The Church of Jesus Christ the "Second Resurrection" (Revelation 20:5). What shall take place in this "Second

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Resurrection" has always been a matter of conjecture and individual opinion. However, no matter what happens, the irrefutable fact is that there is a "Second" or a last resurrection following the expiration of the thousand years (the First Resurrection).

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We believe in observing all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded us, and on these conditions He has promised to be with us always, even to the end of the world.

Ref: Bible—Matthew 28:20; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 12:19-20; III Nephi 27:6-22.

OBSERVANCE OF HIS COMMANDMENTS

It is written in the Bible:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am

with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).

The above was and still is a very strict commandment to Jesus' disciples and His Church. The importance of this did not expire with the death of Christ's apostles, nor will it end as long as the world exists. Everything Jesus taught was to be carried out by His Church without exception. This was indeed the "everlasting covenant" that He made prior to His ascension into heaven. It was also the covenant that the prophet Isaiah said would "be broken" (This will be dealt with in another article.).

The instructions of Jesus Christ are clearly spelled out in the scriptures. In order to be a true follower of the Lord, and to achieve spiritual heights that will enrich the soul, it is necessary to put into effect every commandment that He has given us. In the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew's gospel is the formula for saintly living. No greater sermon of instruction, exhortation, or teaching was ever delivered than this. Jesus' words were life-giving, uplifting to the soul, and refreshing to the spirit. In the short span of years that He was on earth, His words impressed themselves on the hearts of those who heard them and believed. With love and tenderness He taught the disciples, seeking to fashion and mold them after the pattern He desired. Today, His words still ring out with majesty: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The apostles strove to teach His commandments until their deaths, not wavering in their determination despite the fiery darts of persecution, malice, and hatred

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that were hurled at them daily. Nonetheless, they persevered in keeping His commandments and converted thousands to the Lord. Jesus also said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10). Therefore, keeping His commandments not only paves the way for salvation, but guarantees that we shall abide in His love. Obeying His word also brings about a greater knowledge of the Lord, as it is written, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (I John 2:3).

The invitation to all people to accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, the Son of God, was given by Christ himself. As it is recorded in the Book of Mormon, he said:

And behold, I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Behold, ye have the commandments before you, and the law is fulfilled. Therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (III Nephi 12:19-20).

This language is clear; keeping the commandments of Jesus Christ will bring salvation; not obeying them will deprive a person of the kingdom of God. As the Psalmist once said,

“Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold” (Psalms 119:127).

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We believe there has been a gross and widespread apostasy among men from the true order and doctrine of the early Church as set up by the Saviour. Few scriptural subjects are treated more extensively in the Sacred Word, and to make anything like a comprehensive statement of the matter would be an extensive task. We refer the reader to several very pointed passages on the subject.

Ref: Bible—Isaiah 24:5-6; Acts 20:29-30; II Thessalonians 2; I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 3:1-4; II Peter 2:1 & 2; Book of Mormon—IV Nephi v. 24-49.

APOSTASY

Many prophets foretold, by the Spirit of God, that there would be an apostasy from the laws and commandments of the Lord. It was also predicted that the Church (depicted as a woman, in Revelation 12th chapter) would be taken into the wilderness for a period of “time, and times, and the dividing of time,” or 1260 days or years, (V. J. Lovalvo’s *Truth Shall Spring Out of the Earth*). Isaiah declared, “The

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earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant” (Isaiah 24:5). If man only knew the dire consequences that follow the transgression of the law and commandments of the Lord, they would tremble and quake. The prophet said that the very earth would be defiled because of transgression. Think of that! The earth, literally speaking, would bear the brunt of man’s transgressions. Both Bible and Book of Mormon reveal the many times that famine came on the earth because of breaking the commandments of the Lord. He withheld the rain, and the earth became parched until the prayers of the righteous reached God. Then, He caused the rain to fall again. Spiritually speaking, the Lord withdrew His Spirit from the earth, and His priesthood power from men because the Church transgressed the laws and commandments of Jesus Christ, breaking the “everlasting covenant.” The prophet Amos also predicted a spiritual famine, “. . . not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11). He also declared that the earth itself would suffer because of unrighteousness: “The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt” (Amos 8:7-8).

The apostles were made aware of a forthcoming apostasy by the Spirit of the Almighty. Paul, in his writings to the various churches, warned them that “after my depart-

ing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). To Timothy he wrote, “Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (I Timothy 4:1). Peter told the Church in general, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (II Peter 2:1). Read the entire chapter.

The Book of Mormon records:

And now, in this two hundred and first year there began to be among them those who were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world. . . . And they began to be divided into classes; and they began to build up churches unto themselves to get gain, and began to deny the true Church of Christ. And it came to pass that when two hundred and ten years had passed away there were many churches in the land; yea, there were many churches which professed to know the Christ, and yet they did deny the more parts of his gospel, insomuch that they did receive all manner of wickedness, and did administer that which was sacred unto him to whom it had been forbidden because of unworthiness (IV Nephi v. 24, 26, & 27).

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The writer of IV Nephi also said that the various churches multiplied because the power of Satan “did get hold upon their hearts,” and they denied the Christ and His gospel.

Paul the apostle, in writing to the saints in Thessalonica, told them that the second coming of Jesus Christ would not take place until the “falling away,” or the apostasy of the church. He also warned the Church at another time that the “mystery of iniquity” was already among them and at work in their hearts.

One has only to study the Word of God, and then corroborate it with history, to get a full and comprehensive account of the apostasy. There were two kinds of apostasies. One was from the Church, meaning that an individual or individuals departed from the faith and introduced false doctrines to gain converts to their way of thinking. These people were referred to as wolves in sheep’s clothing. Many of these people departed from the Church and fashioned their own philosophies, drawing many others to them.

The other form of apostasy was that “of the Church,” meaning that the Church itself elected to substitute its own laws and doctrines for the initial commandments of the Lord. Baptism was changed from immersion in the open waters to baptism in pools, and shortly after that to baptism by sprinkling or pouring. Instead of baptizing converts on request, the Church baptized only on Whitsuntide (Whitsunday), or Easter. It thus forced converts to go through a period of “catechism.” When the baptism was performed,

the Church dressed the converts in white. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the partaking of bread and wine as instituted by Christ, was changed. In its place the Church substituted a wafer, said to be, actually, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. This new concept was called "transubstantiation." Subsequently, the doctrine of "Feet Washing" was no longer practiced, nor were the rest of the commandments of Jesus. Instead of love and humility, arrogance and self-esteem were the order of the day. Mosheim, the great historian, wrote, "They (the Bishops) advanced doctrines concerning the church and episcopal office. . . . Many were addicted to dissipation, arrogance, voluptuousness, contention, and other vices" (Mosheim, Century 3, Part 2, Ch. 2). Another historian writes, "A change to pride and sloth came over our affairs, we fell to envy and fierce railing against one another. . . . But, like some kind of atheists, imagined that our affairs escaped all heed and oversight, we went on adding one wickedness to another" (Eusebius; Ecclesiastical History, Book 8, Ch. 6). History is replete with the infractions of the laws and commandments of the Lord committed by the Church.

Looking into the future, some prophets predicted that this kind of departure from the commandments of Christ would occur and that "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" (Isaiah 60:2). It was also said by Christ that the "night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). However, the Lord was not to leave the earth forever without the light of the Gospel and without the benefit of the true Church.

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We believe that this apostasy from the true Gospel was so widespread, complete and general, that man himself was utterly unable to provide a remedy, and we recognize all efforts at reformation as utter failures to reproduce even a faint resemblance of the duties and privileges of the ancient saints or the order and excellence of the ancient church as established by the Savior. We will further state that we know of no scripture that in the least degree intimates that a reformation of the Gospel and Church of Christ ever would take place from the aforesaid apostate condition. The scriptures, however, do foretell a restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter ages of time, in the hour of God's judgments. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." We should all remember that in the time of John, there is no doubt of the true Gospel then existing, and that he saw in visions occurrences of future times. It necessarily follows, then, that this scripture foretells the restoration of the Gospel by an angel, calling back mankind from erroneous religion to the worship of the true God and announcing the hour of God's

judgments, reminding people that worship a god without body, parts or passions of the necessity of contrasting him with that God, who is the author of this vast creation. The next angel that John mentions declares that Babylon is fallen and thereby clearly locating the period of these occurrences.

Ref: Bible—Revelation 14:6-7.

RESTORATION

If God had left the earth void of the power of His saving grace, of His priesthood power, and of His Son's Church, it would have been a complete victory for Satan and an utter failure for Christ. But this was not to be, for God's plan could never be thwarted by the devil. The very fact that the scriptures declare that the "woman" in the 12th chapter of Revelation was to be in the wilderness only 1260 days (years), and that she was to be nourished all of that time, indicates that God had a plan for her after the 1260 years were finished. Every attempt on the part of the "dragon" to destroy the "woman" was defeated and brought to naught because the Lord was to restore her (the Church) in the latter days. Some writers have attempted to call the "woman" mentioned above, a "fallen woman" or an apostate church. If that were so, why should she be nourished for 1260 years? Why would the Lord be interested in a fallen woman? But, contrary to this opinion, The Church of Jesus Christ believes that the "woman" in the 12th chapter of Revelation represents the Spirit of the Church taken away from the

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physical church, which had transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant. So, while there would be a physical church on earth, it would be without the glorious power and Spirit of God until He would restore the true Church with all its attendant gifts and blessings as bestowed by Jesus Christ. After all, what is the Church without the Spirit of God? It is like a body without a soul. Joseph Smith was told by divine revelation that the Lord's Church was not on the face of the earth. God said that the churches of that day were merely worshipping Him with their lips but not with their hearts. Jesus told the people on this land that though a church might have His name, unless it was built upon His Gospel, it would not be His Church. Any church that deviates from Christ's commandments or doctrines cannot presume to be His Church, because whosoever would break the least of His commandments is guilty of breaking them all (James 2:10).

However, in the Lord's great plan he had prepared a wonderful event that would occur at the end of the 1260 years that the "woman" had spent in the wilderness and during which God's Spirit and Authority had been absent from the earth. The event is recorded in the 14th chapter of Revelation, where John saw an "angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth." In other words, an angel would restore the Gospel and the Church again in the latter days. This prophecy was fulfilled when Moroni, the personage of the Book of Mormon prophet, appeared to Joseph Smith, telling him of the records that were hidden in a hill near

his home. The records contained a history of the progenitors of the American Indians, describing how the Lord brought a man called Lehi and his family from Jerusalem to this land of America approximately 600 years before Christ was born. (More on this matter under Articles 19, 20.) The prophecy in Revelation was further fulfilled when an angel (Whether it was this same Moroni or another is not known) bestowed upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the priesthood authority in May of 1829, thereby restoring once again the power of the priesthood that had been taken away by God.

If the Gospel of Jesus Christ had continued in its purity, as established by the Lord and executed by the apostles, there would have been no need for another angel to fly from heaven, bringing the everlasting Gospel to be preached on earth again. But since the Lord had taken to Himself the "Man-child" (or priesthood authority) and had placed the "woman" (the Church) in the wilderness for 1260 years, it was then, out of necessity, that He restored the Church and priesthood when the 1260 years were finished. This work the Lord fulfilled from 1823 to 1830, commencing with the first visitation of Moroni to Joseph Smith (1823), the giving of the hidden records to Joseph Smith (1827), the translation of the records (1829), the bestowal of the priesthood (1829), and the organization of the Church (1830).

However, it is also the belief of The Church of Jesus Christ that this restoration experienced some difficulties. After it was organized in 1830, the Church adopted doctrines that cannot be substantiated by either the Bible or Book of

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Mormon. Consequently, in process of time, God used a man named William Bickerton to again establish the Church in its restored purity in 1862, at Greenock, Pennsylvania.

William Bickerton was born January 15, 1815. In the year of 1845, he heard the Restored Gospel from one of the elders of the Sidney Rigdon organization. He was baptized and became a member of that organization. Sidney Rigdon was the First Counsellor of the Church at the time that Joseph Smith was killed at Carthage, Illinois. When the Church refused to recognize him as the true successor to the office of President, he left it and, shortly afterward, organized a branch of the Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Eventually, William Bickerton was ordained an elder and subsequently ordained into the Quorum of Seventies, or the office of an evangelist. He testified that the power of God accompanied him in preaching, teaching, and in the gift of healing. He also claimed that the Rigdon organization eventually "fell away" and became dissolved. He then joined the Utah Mormon Church for a short space of time until he heard the doctrine of polygamy advanced, causing him to separate himself from that group. He testified that he now found himself alone, having no church with which to affiliate himself. God then revealed to Brother Bickerton that he must continue to preach the Restored Gospel or he would suffer His displeasure.

He began to hold meetings and, over the years, baptized many people. He reported many cases of healings and

demonstrations of heavenly gifts received by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Eventually, with others whom he had ordained into the ministry, Bickerton organized The Church of Jesus Christ in Greenock, Pennsylvania.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that William Bickerton was used as an instrument in the hands of the Lord to re-establish the Church. This was necessary because the early church of 1830 had accepted doctrines that were foreign to the Bible and Book of Mormon, practices that could not be substantiated by either book.

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We believe that the fullness of the Gospel shall soon be taken from the Gentiles because of their iniquity; and they will be punished for their disobedience. Moreover, God will remember His covenant to the House of Israel and bring them to a knowledge of the fullness of the Gospel.

Ref: Book of Mormon—III Nephi 16:10-11.

A. We believe in the restoration of Israel as it is spoken of by the prophets; and that God will use men as His instrument for its accomplishment in this age, as He did in ages past. We believe, also, that in order

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to bring about these events, God must and will reveal His will to man as He did in days of old. (Bible—Ezekiel 34:11-16; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 20).

- B. We believe that God will employ this Church for that purpose. “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10). “Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks” (Jeremiah 16:16).
- C. We believe, also, that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Romans 11: 25-26).
- D. We believe that the aborigines, or native Americans, upon this hemisphere are a part of Israel, descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, and that this land of America is theirs by an original God-given right. Also, that it is the land referred to by Jacob as a land given of God to Jacob and of Jacob to Joseph. Also, that it is the land referred to by Moses when blessing the children of Israel before

his departure from them, as the land of Joseph. It is the land referred to by Ezekiel and Isaiah. In short, it is the land of restored Israel, where the "stone of Daniel" will smite the image at the feet and bring about the wonderful results by him described. (Bible—Genesis 49:22-26; Deuteronomy 33:17; Ezekiel 37:25; Isaiah 33:17-21; Daniel 2:34-35).

See page 122, FUTURE EVENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

ARTICLE 20

We believe the Word of God, wherein He says, "I have written to him (Ephraim) the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." We also believe that the Book of Mormon is that strange thing, or the great things of God's law to Ephraim; also, that it contains a true record of the Gospel of Christ as given to the tribe of Joseph by Christ, in person, after His resurrection, whom He recognized as the sheep of whom He spake that had to hear His voice and become one fold and have one shepherd.

Ref: Bible—Hosea 8:12; John 10:16; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 15:16-24; III Nephi 16:1-3.

See page 122, FUTURE EVENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

ARTICLE 21

We believe that the Book of Mormon is the book spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah, and also the book that Ezekiel refers to as the stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim.

Ref: Bible—Isaiah 29; Ezekiel 37:16-19; Book of Mormon—II Nephi 27:6-22; II Nephi 29:6-8.

See page 122, FUTURE EVENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

ARTICLE 22

We would just state, that the Book of Mormon has been shamefully misrepresented, and we desire every lover of truth to read it for themselves, as they cannot afford to rely on common report concerning any matter connected with their soul's salvation. We hereby assure all men that it teaches nothing contrary to purity and sound doctrine and is a history of the dealings of God with the aborigines of this land. It also contains a vast amount of prophetic matter of unlimited importance bearing upon the future. It is impossible for lovers of truth and virtue, who are reasonably free from prejudice, to carefully peruse its contents without

experiencing delight and satisfaction; or for persons who are soaked in greed, hypocrisy and sensuality to read this book without being maddened by its stinging reproaches of their character and conduct. It affords cold comfort for polygamists or bigamists. Jacob, the ancient prophet of the Lord of this land, writes as follows: "Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old (meaning David and Solomon with their many wives). Wherefore, my brethren, hear ye me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts." This is not the only instance, by any means, where polygamy is condemned in the Book of Mormon. The Almighty commanded Lehi, when he brought him to this land, positively against the practice of polygamy. Old King Noah was condemned by Abinadi for the same offense. Riplakish is also condemned in the Book of Ether for the same abomination. Therefore, we believe that a man shall have only one wife and a woman but one husband, and base our faith especially upon the Book of Mormon in this particular.

Ref: Book of Mormon—Jacob 2:23-28; Mosiah 11; Ether 10:5.

FUTURE EVENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

(Articles 19, 21, and 22 Combined)

The Gospel was restored in these latter days to the Gentiles, beginning with Joseph Smith, with instructions to preach the Gospel to all peoples of the earth and especially to the Seed of Joseph (the American Indian). The phrase "fulness of the Gospel" means the Gospel was brought back to earth with the same gifts and blessings of the Holy Spirit as enjoyed by the early Church in Jerusalem. The same commandment was made by the Lord in this latter dispensation as was in the first: to teach men everywhere all things whatsoever Christ commanded, not deviating one iota.

Many churches abounded before the Restoration of the Gospel, and many thereafter. They teach various interpretations of the Word of God. Baptism was, and is, administered in different ways. The Lord's Supper is observed in different manners. Some of Christ's doctrines have been altogether deleted. Having the "fulness of the Gospel" requires strict observance of His doctrines and commandments. As Christ told the people on this land, if a church is not founded on His Gospel, it is not His church, although it carries His name. (III Nephi 27:8-11).

The Gentiles, who were the last to receive the Gospel in the early church, were first to receive the Restored Gospel in this last dispensation. However, because of increasing sin and transgression among the Gentiles, there will come a day

when they will refuse to hear and obey the Restored Word of God. At that time, the Lord will pour out His displeasure upon the Gentiles to a greater extent than ever before. He will turn His eyes upon the House of Israel and remember His covenants that He made with them. It is written:

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them. And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel (III Nephi 16:10-12).

The Lord, however, made a provision for the Gentiles. "But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel" (III Nephi 16:13). The Church of

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Jesus Christ, which is blessed with the “fulness of the Gospel,” has indeed a mighty work to do among the Gentiles, which number into the many millions, before God turns to Israel and its subsequent gathering from its long dispersion.

History records that the Seed of Joseph (the American Indian) was scattered by the Gentiles (I Nephi 22:7), meaning that they would be persecuted (Genesis 49:23) and driven from their homes to abide on reservations against their will. However, Nephi said that God had a plan for the Gentiles in which they would play an important role in His hands. He said, “After our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders” (I Nephi 22:8).

The “marvelous work” did not start immediately after the scattering of the American Indians (Seed of Joseph). One has only to read the history of the United States of America to substantiate the above statement. But, The Church of Jesus Christ believes that this “marvelous work” began with the Restoration of the Gospel in these latter days, and especially since the organization of the Church in 1862 in Greenock, Pennsylvania. We believe that the Lord has chosen The Church of Jesus Christ—from among the Gentile nations—to be that people which would “nourish” the Seed of Joseph by taking the “pure and unadulterated Gospel”

to them, which would be likened unto "carrying them in their arms and upon their shoulders."

Jesus Christ told the Nephites on this land of America:

And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign—for verily I say unto you that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them; Verily, verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you; For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with this people, O house of Israel; Therefore, when these works and the works which shall be wrought among you hereafter shall come forth from the Gentiles, unto your seed which shall dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity; For thus it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles,

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that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles, for this cause that the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and come unto me and be baptized in my name and know of the true points of my doctrine, that they may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel" (III Nephi 21:2-6).

Hundreds of years prior to the coming of Jesus Christ upon this land of America, Nephi, the son of Lehi, prophesied to his people that "as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord" (II Nephi 30:2). He also told them, "For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed" (II Nephi 30:3). The "book" referred to by Nephi is the Book of Mormon (Please read II Nephi 27:6-25).

Mormon, another Nephite prophet, also predicted that the believing Gentiles (The Church of Jesus Christ) would be instrumental in taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ, found in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, to the Seed of Joseph. To the descendants of the Lamanites who were spared, he said, "Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews,

which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you” (Mormon 7:8).

God has a great work for the Gentiles (The Church of Jesus Christ), not only in taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ restored in these latter days, (which Gospel is found in the Book of Mormon and also in the Bible) to the Seed of Joseph—the American Indians, but He has also promised that the Gentiles shall carry the Jews and the rest of the House of Israel to the lands of their inheritance. It is written:

And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion” (II Nephi 10:8).

In these latter days, the Gospel of Jesus Christ was restored to the Gentiles with the express commission to take (preach) the Gospel to the Seed of Joseph (the American Indians). The Church of Jesus Christ believes that its role has been determined by the Lord in these latter days to preach the Gospel to every kindred, tongue and people, that the “marvelous work” which He promised to do among the Gentiles can be fulfilled, and that the very important commission to take the Gospel to the Seed of Joseph will be uppermost in the Church’s priorities so that the Word of God will be accomplished and reach its spiritual fruition.

The Bible and Book of Mormon are filled with references about the gathering of the House of Israel by the Lord in the last days. The gathering of the House of Israel will be

one of the greatest events to take place in the last dispensation of time. Only one other event will be greater: The second coming of Jesus Christ. Paul, in speaking of the gathering of Israel says, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:25-26). Paul said earlier, "For I speak unto you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Romans 11:13-15).

The Prophet Ezekiel, having the revelation of God concerning the gathering of Israel, spoke thusly:

For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon

the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country (Ezekiel 34:11-13).

While it seems like an impossible thing, the above scripture (and others as well) speak with authority and assurance that in the latter days, God will gather the whole House of Israel: the Jews, the American Indian, and the ten lost tribes, who have also been visited by Jesus Christ.

The Prophet Jeremiah also speaks about the Lord sending for fishers and hunters, to seek out the "lost" tribes and gather them together again. Jesus Christ spoke with absolute certainty when He told the disciples on this land,

And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for the inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father. And it shall come to pass that the time cometh, when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them; And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name (III Nephi 20:29-31).

Three things are involved in this scripture—God will remember His covenant that He made with Israel a long

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time ago; He will gather them together again in the last days; and He will give unto them the land of Jerusalem for their inheritance. In the meantime, this land of America will be the land of inheritance for the Seed of Joseph, or the American Indian, as promised by the Savior. He said to them, "And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you" (III Nephi 20:22).

Great indeed are the blessings pronounced upon the Seed of Joseph. They shall build a New Jerusalem on this land, with the help of the Gentiles and others from the House of Israel. Christ shall visit this city periodically with His glorious presence. What a time of rejoicing that will be!

Meanwhile, the Prophet Ether wrote, the House of Israel (the lost tribes) shall be gathered from the "four quarters of the earth" and from the "north countries" to the site of the Old Jerusalem. The city shall be built up again, a Holy City unto the Lord. The prophet also said that the inhabitants shall be made white (their garments)* through the blood of the Lamb. He also prophesied concerning the American Indians, who shall be established on this land. They shall also build a city called the New Jerusalem (Ether, chapter 13).

* Writer's inclusion

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that all twelve tribes of Israel shall be represented on this land in the last dispensation of time. The prophecies of Ether and others will be fulfilled. One may ask, "How shall the twelve tribes be represented, in light of the Word of God which says that the land of Palestine (or Jerusalem of old) shall be for the gathering of the House of Israel in the latter days?" The answer is found in the Holy Scriptures. First, Jacob prophesied that Joseph's "branches," or descendants, should go over the "wall," or the sea, to this land of America. The Seed of Joseph coming to this land can be compared to Joseph being brought to the land of Egypt, where the rest of the House of Israel later followed for food during a time of famine. This is a type and shadow of the remnant of the House of Israel coming to this land where the Seed of Joseph is established, where spiritual "food," the blessings of the Restored Gospel, can be obtained. Events shall develop which will motivate Israel to seek shelter on this land and companionship with their brother, Joseph.

The sequence of events will probably unfold as follows:

First, the Gospel was restored to the Gentiles, who introduced the Gospel to the Seed of Joseph. In process of time, the Seed of Joseph will build a New Jerusalem with the help of the Gentiles and as many of the House of Israel that shall come (III Nephi, chapter 21).

Second, the House of Israel (including the lost tribes) shall gather in old Jerusalem, the land of their inheritance,

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and build up the city again, a holy city dedicated to the Lord (Ether, chapter 13).

In the interim, a mighty prophet shall arise from the “loins” of Joseph, called the “Choice Seer,” who shall be likened to Moses and shall do a wonderful work among the American Indians (Seed of Joseph), convincing them of those things which they have already heard (II Nephi, chapter 3).

As to the assertion that the whole House of Israel would be represented on this land, the words of the Savior must be taken into consideration. He said that when the New Jerusalem was built upon this land, the “work of the Father shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away from Jerusalem.” He added that the Father would prepare a way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance (III Nephi, chapter 21).

While the above scripture, and others, definitely state that the “lost tribes” shall gather in old Jerusalem, a confirmation that the whole House of Israel would be represented on this land of America can be found in the words of Jesus Christ wherein He states that “as many of the House of Israel as shall come” (come to this land)* would help the Seed of Joseph to build a New Jerusalem (III Nephi, chapter 21). The House of Israel may be prompted to leave old Jerusalem and come to this land because of persecution

* Writer's inclusion

by war or other causes known only to God. Whatever the causes may be, God will do whatever is necessary so that the representation of Israel on this land will come to pass.

Nephi, a Book of Mormon prophet, predicted that the Lord would “gather his children from the four quarters of the earth in the latter days,” and that “there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (I Nephi 22:25). The Lord will make events happen so that there will be “one fold and one shepherd.”

Isaiah speaks of the “mountain of the Lord’s house” being “established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills,” a description of The Church of Jesus Christ clothed in its glory. All nations will seek this glory by means of learning the ways of God and walking in His paths. The prophet continues, “For out of Zion (the kingdom of God)* shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

If there will be only one fold and one shepherd, it must happen on this land. God will cause those who have gathered in old Jerusalem and the Seed of Joseph in America to become united in America so that the prophecy of Daniel about the “Stone Kingdom” will become reality. There cannot be two folds in the latter days. The Word of God declares that His saints would gather unto Him (Psalms 50:5). Isaiah prophesied, “I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather

* Writer’s inclusion

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them from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name" (Isaiah 43:5-7). Also, God said, "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jeremiah 3:14 & 15).

God will cause a highway to be there, a road called, "the Way of Holiness," where the "redeemed of the Lord shall walk; And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:8-10).

God can do all things. Only He knows whether those of Old Jerusalem will leave to follow the Holy Spirit to America, or whether the city of Jerusalem will suffer attacks from the enemies, forcing the inhabitants to flee. No matter how it happens, eventually the entire House of Israel, along with the faithful Gentiles, will comprise one fold under one shepherd upon this land of America, when the Kingdom of God (the "Peaceful Reign" or Zion) is fully established.

The lands of North and South America were identified by some of the old prophets as the land "shadowed by eagles' wings." Examine the map of the above continents, and you will notice a likeness to wings of a bird in flight. It is the

land given to Jacob by the Lord. It is written, "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Genesis 49:26). This land was promised to Jacob, as the above scripture indicates. From Jacob, it was transferred to Joseph and then to Ephraim and Manasseh. Before he died, Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, giving Ephraim the birthright blessing. For this reason then, the genealogy of the Tribe of Joseph will be reckoned through Ephraim rather than Manasseh, as recorded in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel. Read how the birthright blessing was taken from Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, and given to Joseph, because of the sin of Reuben (I Chronicles 5:1). Then, years later, Ephraim was the recipient of the birthright blessing, reconciling the prophecy in Ezekiel's account.

THE CHOICE SEER

God also has pronounced a special blessing upon the Seed of Joseph—it shall produce a mighty prophet. Paul, the apostle, refers to this prophet as the "deliverer" that shall come out of Zion. This could not refer to Jesus Christ, as He had already come, was crucified, buried, arose, and

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ascended to heaven, where He sits at the right hand of the Father. The coming of this great prophet also was predicted by Jacob when he blessed his son Joseph:

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel): Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of the heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb (Genesis 49:22-25).

Please note that Jacob predicted that a shepherd and a stone of Israel should come from the Seed of Joseph. Again, this could not refer to Christ. He came from the loins of Judah. Therefore, the Lord has promised to raise up a prophet that shall come from the Seed of Joseph.

Lehi, in speaking to his sons, told how that Joseph of Egypt had prophesied concerning a wonderful prophet whom he likened to Moses. He, Joseph, called this prophet a "Choice Seer." The prophecy predicted, "A seer shall the Lord my God raise up who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins" (II Nephi 3:6). Lehi continued Joseph's prophecy:

Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers. And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work. And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O House of Israel (II Nephi 3:7-9).

The Lord has predetermined what the work of this "Choice Seer" shall be. It is written that he should have power to bring to fruition the Word of God. He will have power to convince the Seed of Joseph about the truth of the Restored Gospel (as delivered by the Gentiles, i.e. The Church of Jesus Christ)*. Lehi continued to cite the prophecy of Joseph of Egypt, "But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins—and not to the bringing forth of my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them" (II Nephi 3:11).

Joseph promised that this Choice Seer would be

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persecuted, with an attempt on his life, but the adversaries would fail. Also, that this Seer should be named Joseph, after his progenitor, Joseph of Egypt. His power will be like the power of Moses. Like Moses, this Seer will be given a spokesman. The record further states:

Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled. Behold, I am sure of the fulfilling of this promise; And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation. Yea, thus prophesied Joseph: I am sure of this thing, even as I am sure of the promise of Moses; for the Lord hath said unto me, I will preserve thy seed forever. . . . And the Lord said unto me also: I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it (II Nephi 3:14-18).

It is with great anticipation that The Church of Jesus Christ looks forward to such wonderful blessings promised to the Seed of Joseph in the latter days. It is also gratifying to know that the Church will have a very important role

in the plans of God to bring to fruition the restoration of the House of Israel, beginning with the Seed of Joseph (The American Indians).

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Many hundreds of years ago, the Lord moved upon the hearts of faithful men to write a history of their people upon plates, which they made with their own hands. Beginning with Nephi, the son of Lehi, and others who followed, men wrote upon small and large plates of ore to keep this record. What meticulous care it must have taken to write upon metal plates! Certainly, it was a most laborious task. Without question, the Lord inspired these men, who possessed much faith, patience, devotion, and dedication, to painstakingly write for future generations. Their prayers and their fastings were addressed to the Almighty, that He would preserve these plates from the ravages of time and erosion. They received revelations from time to time that God would use the Gentiles in the latter days to bring forth these plates, translate them, and bring this record to the American Indians (the Seed of Joseph).

This record, known as the "Book of Mormon," is a history of the American Indians: how they came to this land; their social, cultural, and religious development, and their wars and contentions. It is also a history of a remnant of people who came from the land where the Tower of Babel

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was built. It is an inspirational record, kept for hundreds of years by the hand of the Almighty, to be revealed in the last dispensation of time; first to the Gentiles, and eventually, to the American Indians, who are descendants of Joseph of Egypt.

The American Indians are a part of Israel because they descend from Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph. God promised them the land of America for an inheritance, a land upon which they would also build a New Jerusalem.

The prophet Ezekiel foretold of the Book of Mormon, using the language of his time. He called this record the "Stick of Joseph" and also the "Stick of Ephraim." A "stick" was a scroll upon which men wrote. This was the form their books took in that period of time. He prophesied, saying:

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions (Judah's record is the Bible)*: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the House of Israel his companions (This is the Book of Mormon)*: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou

* Writer's inclusion

meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand (Ezekiel 37:16-19).

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that the above-mentioned "Stick of Joseph . . . in the hand of Ephraim" is the Book of Mormon, which was translated from the plates given to Joseph Smith by the Angel Moroni. It is also the book mentioned in the 29th chapter of Isaiah, which reads:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned (Isaiah 29:11-12).

The above prophecy was literally fulfilled during the process of translating the plates. Joseph Smith gave Martin Harris (one of the three witnesses who saw the angel and the plates) a few characters from the plates. Harris, in turn, took them to one Professor Charles Anthon, of Columbia University in New York. When the professor asked Martin Harris concerning the origin of the characters and was told about the plates, a portion of which were sealed, he literal-

ly repeated the words of Isaiah when he said to Harris, "I cannot read a sealed book." (For a comprehensive account of the Book of Mormon, read the Author's book, entitled, *It Is Written: Truth Shall Spring Out of the Earth.*)

Another prophet, Hosea, declared, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing" (Hosea 8:12). Certainly, no other book has been as controversial as the Book of Mormon. Indeed, it is counted as a strange thing. Many writers have attempted to discredit the book, but in the light of sincere inspection, it has proven itself to be of divine origin. One has merely to study the book from I Nephi to Moroni with real intent and purpose, and he will find information that will pleasantly surprise him. The book tells of the cultures, the constructions of cities, and buildings that have been discovered by archeologists subsequent to the translation by Joseph Smith. No amount of criticism will ever diminish the value of the Book of Mormon as an historical treasure that will withstand the onslaughts of atheists or agnostics. It is compared to the Bible by the Prophet Ezekiel, who said the "two sticks" (the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph) shall become one in the hands of the prophet as well as one in the hand of God, thereby putting the two books on an equal basis. If Judah deserved a record (or stick), which is the Bible, so did the descendants of Joseph. These two tribes were separated from each other by thousands of miles, but the Lord inspired men of faith to write a record of their respective people, unbeknown to each other.

The Book of Mormon is a history of three expeditions to the North and South American continents. The first of these arrived some time after God confused the languages at the building of the Tower of Babel. This expedition, led by Jared and his brother, occupied the whole of North America. Their civilization, however, went into sin and transgression, and eventually destroyed itself after being on this land for over sixteen hundred years. A man called Ether, their last prophet, wrote their history upon plates of gold, and placed them in the earth to be later discovered by another nation.

The second expedition was led by a man called Lehi, who came to the western hemisphere with his family, which included his wife, sons, and daughters. It also included a man called Ishmael and his family, and a man named Zoram. This colony was of the Tribe of Joseph (descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh—See “Ephraim and Manasseh” by Joseph and V. J. Lovalvo).

Lehi and his followers arrived on this land from Jerusalem about 600 B.C. They became a mighty people, eventually splitting into two nations—the Nephites and the Lamanites. There was a continual struggle between these two nations. The Nephites, on the whole, were a more righteous people (although they sinned against God from time to time), while the Lamanites were a rebellious people. Many prophets arose among the Nephites, foretelling of future blessings and calamities. The Savior appeared to them after His ascension into heaven, and established His

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Church among them in America. Prior to their destruction, a prophet named Mormon abridged their history, which had been handed down to him, and then gave it to his son Moroni, who continued to add to the record before he deposited it in the earth around A.D. 420 (Moroni was the last person to receive charge of all the sacred records, temporal and spiritual, including the small and large plates of Nephi. The record also included his own writings upon plates, as well as the plates upon which was recorded the history of the Jaredite nation.). These records remained in the earth for approximately 1400 years, until they were given to Joseph Smith in 1827 by the Angel Moroni. In 1829-30, the translation of the Book of Mormon (from the plates) was finished. The translation was accomplished by the power of God's Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of the Urim and Thummim, given to Joseph Smith by the Angel (The Urim and Thummim were in the same box with the plates). The Church of Jesus Christ regards the Book of Mormon and the Bible as one and equal, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel.

The third expedition was made by a man named Mulek, one of the sons of Zedekiah, king of Judah. This Mulek, along with some others, left the land of Palestine after his father and brothers had been killed (Helaman 8:21), and crossed the sea to arrive on the North American continent about eleven years after Lehi and his family left Jerusalem. However, not having the scriptures with them, they forgot, in process of time, the very Word of God; even their language degenerated because they did not have the written word. After many, many years, they were discovered

by some of the people of king Mosiah (Omni, verses 14-15 in the Book of Mormon). These descendants of Mulek were led by a man called Zarahemla (at the time they met the people of Mosiah). However, their language had degenerated so badly that neither Mosiah nor his people could understand them (they probably used sign language).^{*} Subsequently, they joined the people of Mosiah and became integrated with them.

The Book of Mormon has been shamefully attacked by its opponents for reasons imagined or otherwise. They reject the book because of the polygamous history of the Utah Mormons, overlooking the fact that the book itself condemns polygamy. It is written therein:

But the word of God burthens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus saith the Lord: This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things that were written concerning David, and Solomon, his son. Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord. . . . Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old. Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you

^{*} Writer's inclusion

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have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none (Jacob 2:23-28).

It is remarkable indeed that the antagonists of the Book of Mormon attack it unmercifully, yet they preach in glowing terms about David and Solomon who indulged in polygamy and adultery with many concubines. Solomon even allowed idolatry to be practiced until his old age, when he finally repented and called everything "vanity." He may have been the wisest man on temporal matters, but he certainly was not on spiritual or religious affairs. The opponents of the Book of Mormon are sincerely invited to scrutinize it carefully. They will, to their astonishment, find not one man of God in that record who ever indulged in polygamy or had any concubines. Some men did indulge in polygamy, but they are identified as wicked and evil men.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes in the doctrine set forth in the Book of Mormon that, "One man shall have only one wife, and a woman but one husband." The very thought of practicing polygamy or having any concubines (or mistresses) is repugnant to the saints of God. The chastity of women and of men should be and is regarded as a sacred thing.

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We believe in the fulfillment and ultimate establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth while men are still in the flesh. We refer to this period of time as the Peaceful Reign, which shall precede the Millennium, or Thousand Years with Christ.

Ref: Bible—Isaiah 2:1-5; Chapter 35; 51:3; Chapter 55; 65:18-25; Hosea 2:18-19; Job 5:22-25; Ezekiel 34:25-26. Book of Mormon—I Nephi 22:4-28; III Nephi 20:22; 21:23-29; Ether 13:4-12.

THE PEACEFUL REIGN

Throughout the many years before and after the restoration of the Gospel, many clergymen, theologians, and scholars have predicted the second coming of Jesus Christ was an imminent event; one that was going to happen immediately or in the very near future. Books and articles have been written about the Battle of Armageddon, the Rapture, and even predictions about the end of the world. What these interpreters of future events have failed to see is that the scriptures abound in prophetic utterances about a period of time when a peaceful condition will exist on the earth *prior* to the end of the world.

In the timetable of the Lord, there is a time and place for everything. That is why He has inspired holy men of old to predict that an Eden-like condition will "cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." The prophets of doom are constantly obsessed with the destruction of the earth and mankind. However, the prophets of God have given us a picture of the kind of peace that shall take place on earth before the second coming of Christ. How, then, shall the exponents of destruction explain the scriptures that relate to the kingdom of God being established on the earth, and in the flesh, if the world shall be destroyed before these prophecies are fulfilled?

Read, for example, the predictions of Isaiah, who declared:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword

against nation, neither shall they learn war any more (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3).

Think, O prophets of doom, and ponder upon the beautiful words of Isaiah; try to explain when the nations shall "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks." And when will the "Mountain of the Lord's house" be exalted above the hills and established in the top of the mountains?" If the world is going to be destroyed by nuclear war, when will the words of Isaiah be fulfilled? Certainly not in the first resurrection. There will be no need of turning the implements of war into tools of peace in the millenium. It stands to reason that the prophecy of Isaiah must have its fulfillment prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The prophet Isaiah, as well as others, declared that in the "Holy Mountain" none should hurt nor destroy. That Holy Mountain is the Kingdom of Christ on earth. And when that kingdom is established, there will be a peace such as never has been seen. Isaiah continues his prophecy:

And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a lit-

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tle child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:4-9).

If the earth is going to be destroyed soon, and the coming of Christ is imminent, when will the nature of the ferocious beast be changed? And when shall "none hurt nor destroy" in God's holy mountain? These two prophecies of Isaiah must be literally fulfilled before that great day of the coming of the Lord to wed His bride, the Church. The words of Jesus Christ must also be fulfilled before the end of the world, when He said, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Another prophet, Hosea, also predicted that the time would come when the very nature of the beasts would be changed by the Lord:

And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me forever: yea,

I will betroth thee to me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord (Hosea 2:18-20).

All of the above must come to pass before the millenium, while men are still in the mortal state.

Ezekiel prophesies similarly to Hosea concerning the change that shall come upon man and beast: "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land" (Ezekiel 34:25).

Isaiah prophesied that, in the kingdom of God on earth, there should be no "infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." He also said life will be prolonged as the "days of a tree," that the people of God shall long enjoy the fruits of their labors (Isaiah 65:18-25). He also predicted that the Lord would change the very atmosphere and climate of the earth when Zion should be established: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isaiah 51:3).

Who cannot but give thanks to the Almighty God for the marvelous blessings that are in store for the saints of the Lord in the latter days? The prophecies are a wonderful encouragement to the believers in Christ, who are waiting

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in faith for these events of peace to take place upon the face of the earth.

Daniel, the prophet, saw the day when the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands (representing the kingdom of God)*, should break into pieces the image which made up the kingdoms of the earth. This stone would become a "great mountain and would fill the whole earth" (Daniel, chapter 2). Daniel also saw the time when all people, nations, and languages, would serve God; that His kingdom would not be destroyed; and that the saints of the Most High would possess the kingdom (Daniel, chapter 7).

The Book of Mormon concurs with the Bible in predicting these blessed events. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, men of God inspired by His Holy Spirit foresaw and prophesied concerning the kingdom of God which would be established on the earth. Nephi, a Book of Mormon prophet, wrote the words which God revealed to him, and he taught them to his people. Nephi said that God would preserve his people, and he predicted the destruction of all churches set up for gain. He also said God's people would be spared the destructions coming upon the face of the earth because of the great sin which would prevail upon it. Nephi said God would gather His children (the House of Israel) from the four quarters of the earth and that, because of the righteousness of the saints, Satan would have no power over

* Writer's inclusion

them. All this would occur while mankind was in the mortal state (I Nephi, chapter 22).

Jesus taught the people on this land when He appeared to them that the Seed of Joseph would build a New Jerusalem. Christ said the powers of heaven would be in their midst and that He would make His own appearance from time to time. This is not the new Jerusalem that shall come down from heaven, as recorded in the Bible, but a city made of material substances and built as the capital of Zion, the kingdom of God on earth (III Nephi, chapters 20 and 21).

The preceding prophecies, recorded in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, are incontrovertible scriptures describing the events that shall take place on the face of the earth in the latter days. And all of these events shall occur prior to the first resurrection as recorded in Revelations, 20th chapter. The Church, referred to in the Bible and Book of Mormon as Zion and/or the kingdom of God, shall enjoy the blessings of the Almighty to their fullest, receiving all the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit, which shall manifest itself continuously to the joy of the saints.

The Church of Jesus Christ refers to the establishment of Zion, or the kingdom of God, as "The Peaceful Reign." It is indeed a Peaceful Reign when even the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air and the creeping things of the earth shall dwell together and man shall enjoy a life of longevity and harmony until Christ comes again to wed His

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Bride. At that time, those who are living shall be changed in a twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality, to be caught up in the air with the Lord along with those who shall resurrect from the dead. Therefore, there shall be a Peaceful Reign—or Zion—upon the earth, while men are in the mortal state.

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We believe in the second coming of Christ, that He shall appear in glory at the end of the world, which takes place immediately following the conclusion of the Peaceful Reign, at which time He will wed His Bride (the Church) to gather unto Himself all the righteous to dwell with Him for a thousand years (the Millennium), and then for all eternity.

Ref: Bible—Matthew 24:36-42; Luke 17:23-37; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 19:7-9; Acts 3:20-21; Book of Mormon—III Nephi 28:7-8.

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The scriptures contain many predictions on Christ's second coming, but mankind has misinterpreted the pro-

phesies. No one who has studied the Word of God can deny the prophecies that must be fulfilled before the second coming takes place. Christ said that there would be wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes all over the world, and other calamities. The prophecies are fulfilling themselves as the years pass. Since 1939, for example, there have been wars throughout the world. Volcanoes are erupting after lying dormant for many centuries. The land and air throughout the earth is becoming polluted. Yet, Jesus said that these were merely "beginning" signs of coming events.

There are important events that must take place before Christ returns to earth the second time. The House of Israel must be gathered together from the four quarters of the earth. The American Indians shall come to a knowledge of their Redeemer and of their ancestors through the preaching of the Restored Gospel by the Gentiles, and the Indians (Seed of Joseph) shall direct the building of a New Jerusalem on this land. The kingdom of Christ (Zion and/or the Peaceful Reign) shall be established with the blessings and the power of God among His people, and with Christ's periodic visitations. All of the above prophecies must be fulfilled before the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As to the exact time when He shall appear, no man knows. Christ Himself said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). While man has endeavored to set the time when Christ should come, he has forgotten that Jesus told His disciples, "It is not for you to know the

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times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power'' (Acts 1:7).

Jesus also said that, before His coming, the sin upon the earth would be comparable to the days of Noah, and Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:26-30). It is also written that His coming shall be glorious indeed. Paul, the apostle writes,

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (I Thessalonians 4:15-17).

When Christ visited America, He said to three of His twelve disciples,

Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven. And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my

glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father (III Nephi 28:7-8).

What a glorious hope and expectation for the saints of God—to know by faith that the day of His second coming is going to be one of the most wonderful times of rejoicing since the beginning of the world. Three events must surely be the highlights of the hope of His saints: His birth, His resurrection, and His second coming. The events of His lonely life on earth, His pain and sufferings that led to Calvary's cross, are so harrowing to the soul, so heartrending, that tears must flow unendingly when one remembers His sacrifice and His love. Nevertheless, He also said that "tears shall be turned to gladness, and sorrow into joy." The tears shall be wiped away, and sorrow shall be no more when He descends in glory to wed His Bride, the Church. From the east to the west, from the north to the south; from one end of heaven to the other shall be heard one vast "Hallelujah" at His second coming. The skies shall be filled with the song of the saints, "Blessed be the name of the Lord! Glory and honor to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords!"

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We believe in continuous divine revelation. Such revelations are consistent with the holy scriptures. The Lord reveals Himself through the Holy Ghost in dreams, visions, signs, gifts, and His Word. God speaks when, where, and through whomever He chooses.

Ref: Bible—I Corinthians 12:3-11; Joel 2:28; Book of Mormon—Alma 9:21; II Nephi 26:13; II Nephi 29; Moroni 10:8-24; Mormon 9:7-8.

DIVINE REVELATIONS

Revelation is a phenomenon that occurs when God, through His Holy Spirit, communicates with a human being, or beings. This communication may be in the form of a dream, as was given to Jacob when he saw a ladder whose top reached the heavens (Genesis 28:12); or the dream given to Joseph, the son of Jacob, concerning the future (Genesis 37:5). God gave a prophetic dream to Nebuchadnezzar, which was interpreted by Daniel.

God reveals His will in visions also. He gave visions to Lehi, his son Nephi, and to John while he was exiled on the Isle of Patmos. Revelations by dreams or visions can be

strictly for personal benefit or instruction, or they can relate to future events for mankind. Revelations can come through hearing the voice of God's Spirit speaking either in one's mind, or actually hearing the voice of God with the ear, as Moses did. It is written, "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friends" (Exodus 33:11). The scriptures tell us that many prophets heard the voice of the Lord.

God also reveals Himself in signs and in wonders. He sent the cloud that hovered over Israel in the daytime and the pillar of fire that guided them at night. He reveals Himself by healing the sick and raising the dead. He reveals Himself in the various gifts that He bestows on man: Speaking in unknown tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, and understanding the scriptures, to name some of the many different ways.

But, whether it be in dreams, visions, or otherwise, a revelation must stand the test of being consistent with His written word, the Bible and the Book of Mormon. This simply means that, if a revelation believed to be of God does not comply with the scriptures, it should not be accepted at face value. For example: If one has a dream or vision which shows that he may have more than one wife, that experience must be cast aside because it is contrary to the word of God which says that one man shall have but one wife. Or, if one has an experience indicating that baptism could be administered in a pool or by sprinkling or pouring, then the experience must be discarded as false in the light of the scrip-

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tures that teach immersion in open waters. Furthermore, if a dream or vision indicates that candidates for baptism should wait for certain times of the week or year to be baptized, it must be discarded as contrary to the word of God which shows that candidates were baptized upon the admission of faith and desire to do so (Acts, chapter 2; 8:12; 8:36; 10:47; 18:8).

A revelation from God must stand the tests of common sense, intelligence, and, above all, the confirmation of the Holy Spirit. It must be confirmed not only in the mind of the individual, but also in the mind of two or more other persons. The Lord can reveal Himself or His will to whomever He wishes. God reveals Himself today as He did in the past, and will do so in the future as well. The Church of Jesus Christ believes there must be continuous communication between the Lord and His people. It is indeed a foolish thing for any person to think that God does not reveal Himself in this day and time. He is the same as He always has been. Therefore, He cannot change, or else He would not be the perfect God He has been in the past and will be throughout all eternity.

The Book of Mormon states, "And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues; Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea,

he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them” (Mormon 9:7-8). A church without revelations is like a cloud without water—it has shape and form—but no substance. The Church can only know that there is truly a living God looking upon it, directing it, by His revelations in countless ways.

ARTICLE 26

We believe that marriage between man and woman is a holy institution. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). We believe that a man shall have one wife and a wife but one husband, except when death takes one of the parties, in which case the survivor is at liberty to remarry.

Finally, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; and everything virtuous, praiseworthy, and upright, we seek after, looking forward to the recompense of reward.

Ref: Bible—Philippians 4:8.

MARRIAGE

Marriage is truly a wonderful union between man and woman. It can be a holy union to husband and wife if love is the basis of their marriage. There must be a constant awareness of each other's needs, and understanding and tolerance of each other's faults. There must be a deep-rooted desire to please one another and to forgive one another. Paul, the Apostle, tells the wives and husbands to love one another in holiness. He realized that the institution of marriage was a mystery, and he used that "mystery" as an allegory of the marriage between Christ and His Church. For, as Christ gave His life for the Church, so a man should love his wife as he loves himself. Also, the wife should love her husband with the same fervor and respect (Ephesians, chapter 5). When this love and respect is mutually given, it becomes the foundation of a happy and lasting marriage.

John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw the Church as a bride ready to wed her bridegroom. She was clothed in white linen, which was typical of the righteousness of the saints. The scripture says, ". . . and she made herself ready." Those who were invited to the wedding supper were called "blessed." Likewise, a marriage between a man and a woman can be a blessed experience. The children of a happy marriage are bound to absorb the influence of a joyous environment and, in turn, they will endeavor to seek mates who will help create a similar blessing in their lives. Love,

in great quantities, is the prescription for a delightful marriage. One of the foremost composers of music once wrote a song entitled, "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life."

Ah! sweet mystery of life, at last I've found thee.
Ah! at last I know the reason for it all," etc.

He ends the song with the words, "For it is love alone that rules for aye."

How true! The mystery of life is solved at last! It is love alone that must rule between husband and wife. Nothing else will ever take its place. Understanding, tolerance, compassion, are merely the fruits of love between a man and his wife. Without love, a marriage may soon dissolve into the bitterness of divorce; a very agonizing experience for everyone concerned.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that, when there is a divorce, there can be no remarriage except when one of the parties is taken away in death, in which case the survivor is at liberty to remarry. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans said, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Romans 7:2-3).

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It is the prayerful exhortation of The Church of Jesus Christ that its members seek God sincerely in prayer and fasting when contemplating marriage, so that their married lives will be joyful, both naturally and spiritually.

In conclusion, The Church of Jesus Christ counsels all of its members to continually seek after truth, to be honest and above reproach, to be pure of heart and mind, and be just in all their dealings. Above all, they must have a good report among men, for “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Proverbs 22:1). It is also mandatory that the saints live a virtuous life, which will cause the blessings of the Almighty to overshadow them daily. As the Lord said to His disciples, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).
