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April 1970





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August 21 — Second Term Ends

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On the Cover:

This month we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the First Vision, which was experienced by the boy prophet, Joseph Smith, in the spring of 1820 in western New York. There, after gaining confidence in the declaration of James—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God"—the 14-year-old youth turned to prayer in his quest to know "which of all the sects was right." The beautiful painting reproduced on our front cover is used widely by the Church Information Service in visitors centers throughout the world. The artist is Ken Riley.

Of special interest is the photograph below of President Joseph F. Smith, nephew of the Prophet and father of President Joseph Fielding Smith, as he visited the Sacred Grove in the early 1900s.



The Era

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The Editor's Page



"For Thus Shall My Church Be Called"

By President Joseph Fielding Smith

• April 6 marks the 140th anniversary of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this the dispensation of the fulness of times.

People often ask why the members of the Church are called saints. The Latter-day Saints should be all that their name implies. They should live free from sin; their lives should be in strict harmony with the principles of the gospel. They should live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4; Deut. 8:3.) Thus they are commanded.

However, in accepting the title of saints they are not arrogant, pretentious, or self-righteous. They did not choose the name; it was given them by divine commandment. It is the Lord who said: "For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." That the members might be properly impressed with the significance of this title, there follows this admonition: "Verily I say unto you all: Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations." (D&C 115:4-5.)

In accepting this title, Latter-day Saints are conforming to the custom that prevailed among the people of God in past ages of the earth. The members of the Church in the days of Peter and Paul were called saints. "And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda." (Acts 9:32.) Paul wrote: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 1:7.) It is clear, then, that the members of the Church today are conforming to the custom of former times, for they are called in these last days by commandment "to be saints," members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The officers of the Church will gather for sessions of general conference beginning Saturday, April 4, and continuing through Monday, April 6. We desire to have you share in the knowledge of the proceedings of those days, through attendance at the Tabernacle in person, through listening to or viewing the proceedings by radio and television, or through reading the reports of the conference published in the *Era* and elsewhere. We invite your faith and prayers in behalf of the general conference.

One hundred and forty years! As you know, I have been involved for many years in keeping the history of the Church. It is a thrill to reread the records concerning the humble beginnings of this church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized at Fayette, Seneca County, New York, at the home of Peter Whitmer, Sr., on April 6, 1830, with six members: Joseph Smith, Jr., Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer, Jr., Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer. These six members, who had previously been baptized, were baptized again on the day of the organization.

"Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our Heavenly Father," wrote the Prophet Joseph Smith, "we proceeded, according to previous commandment, to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in all the things of the Kingdom of God, and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a Church according to said commandment which we had received. To these several propositions they consented by a unanimous vote. I then laid my hands upon Oliver Cowdery, and ordained him an Elder of the 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints'; after which he ordained me also to the office of an Elder

of the said Church. We then took bread, blessed it, and brake it with them; also wine, blessed it, and drank it with them. We then laid our hands on each individual member of the Church present, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and be confirmed members of the Church of Christ. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree—some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord, and rejoiced exceedingly. . . ." (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 77-78.)

That day a revelation was given to the Prophet commanding that records be kept. In this revelation also, it was made known that Joseph Smith, Jr., was to be called a seer, translator, prophet, and apostle of Jesus Christ, and an elder of the Church. (D&C 21.)

The first conference of the Church was held some three months later, on June 9, 1830, at Fayette. The officers present were Joseph Smith, Jr., Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, and Ziba Peterson, each of whom held the office of elder in the Church. At this conference Samuel H. Smith was ordained an elder; Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Martin Harris were ordained priests, and Hyrum Page and Christian Whitmer, teachers. At the close of this conference there were in the Church seven ordained elders—including Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery—three priests, and two teachers. The total membership of the Church was 27.

Oliver Cowdery was appointed to keep the Church records and conference minutes until the next conference, which was held September 26, 1830. There it was reported that the membership had grown to 62.

David Whitmer was appointed to keep the church records until the third conference, which was held at Seneca January 2, 1831.

Then the Church moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where conference was convened in June 1831. There the first high priests in this dispensation were ordained. At this conference Edward Partridge, who had previously been called to the bishopric, chose as counselors, or assistants, John Corrill and Isaac Morley. Those three brethren constituted the first bishopric of the Church.

The Prophet was sustained and ordained president of the high priesthood at a conference held at Amherst, Ohio, January 25, 1832. On March 18, 1833, the First Presidency of the Church was organized, with Joseph Smith as President and Sidney Rigdon and Frederick C. Williams as counselors. Joseph Smith, Sr., was ordained as patriarch on December 18, 1833.

The first apostles and seventies of the dispensation were ordained at Kirtland in February 1835, after the return of Zion's Camp. The apostles were chosen by revelation and ordained on February 14, 1835, by the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon; the first of the seventies were ordained two weeks later.

From those early days the Church has grown rapidly in strength, notwithstanding the trials and hardships that it and the individual members have had to endure.

To all members of the Church throughout the world I would like to say that this church has a divinely appointed mission to perform under the direction and leadership of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and that nothing will stop his plans pertaining to it. It will fulfill the designs of our Father in heaven. I hope the Saints throughout the world daily thank the Lord for being members of his church and for the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith in restoring the gospel for our joy and happiness. ○



Illustrated by Jerry Thompson

Eight Contemporary Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision - What Do We Learn from Them?

By Dr. James B. Allen

One hundred and fifty years ago this spring, a 14-year-old boy named Joseph Smith, Jr., perplexed about questions on religion, walked on a "beautiful, clear day" to a wooded area where he had been cutting wood, approximately a quarter mile from his father's house, and knelt in earnest prayer. The answer to that prayer, known now as the First Vision, has changed the course of the world and marked with brilliant surety the opening of the dispensation of the fulness of times, a period of preparation for the heralded and oft-prophesied second coming of Jesus Christ. With this vision came a divine call to young Joseph,

who "save Jesus only" was destined to do more "for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it." (D&C 135:3.)

For the past 150 years, the story of the First Vision has been repeated on the street corner and from the pulpit, and has borne testimony to succeeding generations at the family hearthside. It has made the heart of the poet and musician sing, has sparked the mind and imagination, has been studied diligently, and has been submitted to the unrelenting light of research.

Here printed for the first time is a report on eight different accounts of the First Vision.

Dr. James B. Allen is associate professor of history at Brigham Young University and a high counselor in the BYU Fifth Stake.

● In 1965 a graduate student at Brigham Young University presented a gentle surprise to Mormon scholars when he included in his master's thesis a heretofore unknown description of Joseph Smith's First Vision.¹ What made the new discovery significant was the fact that most writers had supposed that the Manuscript History of Joseph Smith, formally begun in 1838, was the place where the Prophet first committed his remarkable experience to writing. Paul Cheesman's find demonstrated that the story of the First Vision had been dictated as early as 1831-32.²

Recently both Mormon and non-Mormon historians have shown new interest in Joseph Smith's testimony. Not long after the 1831-32 narrative was discovered, a second version that also predated the Manuscript History was brought to light.³ Scholars also began to examine the setting of the vision, seeking to determine the extent to which the events described by Joseph Smith can be verified by other contemporary sources.⁴ In fact, Mormon historiography has entered an exciting new era as more sources are becoming available for research, fresh approaches are being taken by Latter-day Saint writers, and many outstanding scholars are publishing the results of their research. (One of the most significant recent publications was the Spring 1969 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*, in which ten Mormon writers presented the results of recent research on "Mormon Origins in New York.")

Apparently Joseph Smith did not relate his First Vision very widely during the early years of Church history, for neither Mormon nor non-Mormon publications of the 1830s carried accounts of it.⁵ Although contemporary literature included several allusions to the idea that Joseph had beheld Deity, none of these brief references gave details of the vision.⁶ Because of the absence of the vision from early publications, one hostile writer suggested in 1945 that Joseph Smith did not even "make up" the story until 1835 or later.⁷

Nevertheless, it can now be demonstrated that the Prophet described his experience to friends and acquaintances at least as early as 1831-32, and that he continued to do so in varying detail until the year of his death, 1844. We presently know of at least eight contemporary documents that were written during his lifetime.

1. *The 1831-32 account.* This important document was written when Joseph Smith was 25 or 26 years old. The Church was hardly more than a year old, and Joseph had only recently been impressed with the importance of keeping such historical records.⁸ Preserved in the handwriting of Frederick G. Williams, it was probably written as it was being dictated by

the Prophet. It is doubtful that the manuscript was being prepared for publication, at least in the unpublished form in which it survives. It seems, rather, to have been an early, crudely written, but fervent effort to express for Church members the Prophet's religious feelings, and to record the powerful spiritual impact that the vision had upon him.

2. *The 1835 account.* On November 9, 1835, Joseph told of his early experiences to a visiting Jewish minister. Warren Cowdery, the Prophet's scribe, recorded the interview as part of the Prophet's daily journal.

3. *The 1838-39 account.* The third account is from Joseph Smith's Manuscript History and is the source for the version of the First Vision published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842 and later in the Pearl of Great Price.⁹ The Prophet began this history in 1838, but the present version was written or copied by James Mulholland in 1839.¹⁰ It is evident that the Prophet intended this narrative to become the basic source for Church literature and that he had a special purpose in mind that does not seem as clear in the earlier renditions. Long the object of almost merciless public abuse, he now told his story "so as to disabuse the public mind, and put all enquirers after truth into possession of the facts. . . ." With such a public purpose in mind, it is likely that this account would be more carefully considered than either of the first two.

4. *The Orson Pratt account (1840).* Orson Pratt of the Council of the Twelve published in England in 1840 a missionary tract entitled *Interesting Accounts of Several Remarkable Visions and of the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records*. Elder Pratt had obviously been close to Joseph Smith and had heard the account of the First Vision from him. His narrative was similar to Joseph's 1838-39 account, except that it elaborated upon several details. Whether these were given to him by Joseph or whether he was using literary license is not known, but some of his additions seem to be verified by other sources.

5. *The Orson Hyde account (1842).* Another member of the Twelve, Orson Hyde, published a missionary tract in Germany in 1842 entitled *Ein Ruf aus der Wüste, eine Stimme aus dem Schoos der Erde (A Cry From the Wilderness, a Voice From the Dust of the Earth)*. It contained an account of the vision similar to that of Orson Pratt, much of it, in fact, having been copied directly from the earlier publication.

6. *The Wentworth Letter (1842).* In the same year that Joseph Smith's Manuscript History began publication in the *Times and Seasons*, the Prophet prepared a brief history of the Church and a discussion of Church doctrine for John Wentworth. The letter was published in the *Times and Seasons* on March 1.¹¹

7. *New York Spectator* (1843). In the summer of 1843 the editor of the *Pittsburgh Gazette* visited Joseph Smith in Nauvoo. His account, which included the First Vision as related to him by the Prophet, appeared in the *New York Spectator* on September 23.

8. *A personal diary* (1844). An entry in the personal diary of Alexander Neibaur illustrates that the Prophet sometimes told the story to small, rather intimate groups. Neibaur, a German immigrant, had been brought to Nauvoo to teach German to the Prophet and others. On May 24, 1844, Joseph told his sacred experience to Neibaur, who recorded it in his diary in the sincere, unpolished style that one would expect from a humble man not used to writing in English. At present, this is the only contemporary diary known to Mormon scholars that contains such an account.¹²

Whenever new historical information is published, a host of questions demand answers, and the disclosure that Joseph Smith told his story more than once has been no exception. Scholars have asked whether the Prophet's description of his experience squares with other known historical events, to what degree the various accounts are consistent with each other, and how one might explain the differences. Several factors undoubtedly affected the over-all nature of Joseph Smith's narratives: (1) his age and experience at the time a particular account was given; (2) the circumstances under which he gave each account, including any special purposes he may have had in mind; (3) the possible literary influence of those who helped him write it; and (4) in the case of versions written by others, the fact that different points would impress different people, and therefore they would record the story somewhat differently. One would hardly expect to find every account to be precisely alike, but it is fortunate that these eight reports come from a wide variety of circumstances, thus accentuating the significance of the consistency that does exist.

Actually, the differences between the accounts may be grossly overemphasized, for the truth is that there is wide and general agreement in detail among all of them. Another impressive fact is that the 1831-32 version, which was the first to be recorded, is actually the most comprehensive of all. This early narrative includes all the essential elements of the more carefully prepared Manuscript History and contains more additional details than any other source. When all the accounts are combined, only two areas appear that may need some explanation: (1) the time of the vision and (2) the fact that the first account appears to make specific reference to only one personage. A brief explanation of each of these areas seems appropriate.

1. *The time of Joseph's early religious quest and of the First Vision.* There are two questions involved in

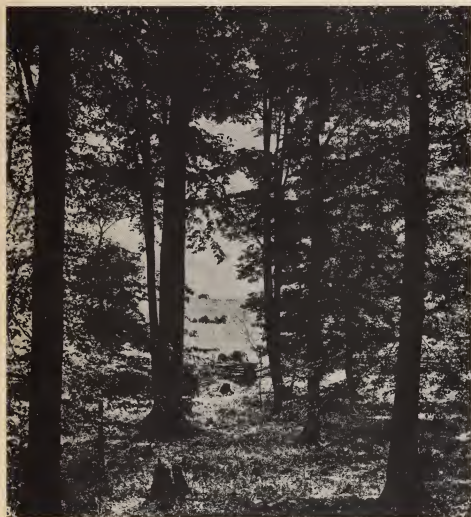


the question of timing: (a) when did Joseph Smith first begin to search for religious truth, and (b) when did he have his vision?

It is only the 1838-39 narrative that gives any detail about the religious excitement that stirred young Joseph's interest (although the Neibaur diary mentions it), and the question has arisen as to whether a general religious movement of the proportions described by the Prophet actually took place in those years mentioned and whether his description squares with the known facts. It has been argued, for example, that no such movement took place in the town of Palmyra in the spring of 1820.¹³ Joseph said that the excitement began "sometime in the second year after our removal to Manchester," which could mean almost any time in the year 1819 or 1820. Further, his narrative does not specifically state that such a movement centered or even began in Palmyra. The Smith family, by 1819, lived outside the village of Palmyra, on a farm that was actually in the township (not village) of Manchester.¹⁴ The phrase "in the place where we lived" could easily refer, in context, not to any town but, rather, to the general area.

In addition, Joseph referred to the "whole district of

Left: Lane approaching the Sacred Grove, from an old photograph by Daniel B. McRae. Below: View inside the Sacred Grove, taken by George Edward Anderson in the early 1900's. Page 10: Distant view of Sacred Grove from the yard of the Joseph Smith Sr. home, also by Anderson.



country" affected by the awakening, and this could be interpreted very broadly. Professor Milton Backman has demonstrated conclusively that there was considerable religious excitement in the general area in 1819 and 1820, and that "spiritual quickenings" were particularly intense in 1819.¹⁵ Joseph had ample opportunity to know of and become involved in camp meetings and other religious activities in the vicinity of his home during 1817, 1818, or 1819, and none of the accounts of his vision are inconsistent with these facts.

Joseph Smith reached his fourteenth birthday on December 23, 1819. In the earliest account of the vision, he said he had pondered his religious concerns from the age of 12 to 15. In 1835 he said that he was "about 14" when he began to reflect upon the importance of a future state. His use of the word "about" indicates that the validity of his history did not hinge on a precise date, and it is significant to note that both Orson Pratt and Orson Hyde merely wrote that he was "somewhere about fourteen or fifteen" when his spiritual awakening began. In the earliest narrative Joseph Smith said that he was in the sixteenth year of his age (that is, 15 years old) when the vision took

place, while in the 1838-39 statement he said it was in the early spring of 1820, which would have made him 14. Later in the same account he said "I was an obscure boy only between fourteen and fifteen years of age or thereabouts."¹⁶

What all of this seems to suggest is that Joseph Smith's main interest, as far as time is concerned, was merely to explain that these things happened in his early teens. But it would not be inconsistent with any of the accounts to suggest that he became involved in the religious excitement of the time during the summer or fall of 1819, while he was still 13 years old; that his concern worked on him for many months; and that it was, indeed, sometime in the spring of the following year that he finally decided to pray. If in his preliminary effort to record the story in 1831-32 he said he was 15 instead of 14 when the vision occurred, he simply made a slight correction in his more carefully prepared history.

2. *Was it one personage or two?* All accounts of the First Vision but one specify that two heavenly personages appeared to young Joseph, and three (Wentworth letter, Orson Pratt, and Orson Hyde) state that these personages exactly resembled each other. There is no doubt that the Prophet intended to convey the message that they were the Father and the Son.

In the earliest narrative Joseph Smith simply said, "I was filled with the spirit of God and the Lord opened the heavens upon me and I saw the Lord and he spake unto me saying Joseph my son thy Sins are forgiven thee. . . ." When relating his experience in 1835, Joseph first told of one personage appearing in the "pillar of fire." Then: "another personage soon appeared like unto the first." The latter gave him the all-important message. The idea that the personages appeared one after the other is repeated in the *New York Spectator*, as well as in Neibaur's diary.

While the other narratives do not describe the event just that way, nothing in them precludes the possibility that he may have seen one personage first, and then the other.¹⁷ The main point of emphasis, especially in the official 1838-39 account, was that "I had actually seen a light and in the midst of that light I saw two personages, and they did in reality speak unto me, or one of them did." Remembering that the 1831-32 manuscript is a rough, unpolished effort to record the spiritual impact of the vision on him, that this was probably the first time Joseph Smith had even tried to commit his experience to writing, and that in the other narratives the important message was delivered by the Son, it is probable that in dictating to his scribe the Prophet simply emphasized "the Lord" and his message. Obviously, the various versions of the event do not contradict each other in this one

essential point, even though they emphasize different ideas and details.

We believe that Joseph Smith was telling the truth each time he related his experience, and that the scribes recorded his ideas as accurately as possible. Thus, a study of the combined accounts presents some fascinating new insights into the experience and personal development of the young prophet. Not only do we discover more details about what may have happened both before and after he entered the Sacred Grove, but we also gain valuable insight into how these events affected him personally and helped him in his spiritual growth. While space does not permit the full republication here of all the accounts, they may readily be found elsewhere.¹⁸ What follows is an attempt to weave them into a composite story of Joseph's sacred experience in order to show their value and their consistency.

In the year 1819 young Joseph Smith and his parents and brothers and sisters lived in what is now Manchester township in western New York. This region has been dubbed the "burned-over district," because of the intense outpouring of religious enthusiasm that characterized it in the early nineteenth century.¹⁹ Itinerant preachers, camp meetings, intense spiritual experiences, and conversions all were common in the area, and in 1819-20 some sort of revival activity took place in at least ten towns within a 20-mile radius of the Smith home.²⁰

With all this religious activity going on, young Joseph Smith found himself influenced in many ways. He undoubtedly attended some of the revival activities, and he saw some members of his family join the Presbyterian Church.²¹ He naturally thought about his own salvation, and many questions came to his mind. According to his earliest statement, he became seriously concerned for the welfare of his soul, and this led to an intensive searching of the scriptures. For two or three years, in fact, he tried to evaluate the different denominations and found that they did not agree with what he saw in the scriptures.

He also became concerned with the "wickedness and abominations" of the world, as well as his own sins. He became almost overwhelmed with the awesomeness of the eternities,²² and finally, as Orson Pratt recorded, he began "seriously to reflect upon the necessity of being prepared for a future state of existence: but how, or in what way, to prepare himself, was a question, as yet, undetermined in his own mind: he perceived that it was a question of infinite importance, and that the salvation of his soul depended upon a correct understanding of the same." He also desired the emotional experience he had witnessed in others, for he later told Alexander Neibaur that in a

revival meeting "he wanted to get Religion too [and] wanted to feel and shout like the Rest. . . ."²³

These concerns quite naturally caused him to look at the various denominations, probably with the intent of joining one of them. Here, however, as recorded in practically all the accounts,²⁴ he became disillusioned, especially with the fact that the ministers would contend so bitterly for converts. It became so bad, he wrote in 1838, that "great confusion and bad feeling ensued—priest contending against priest, and convert against convert; so that all their good feelings one for another, if they ever had any, were entirely lost in a strife of words and a contest about opinions."²⁵

At this point the young prophet became even more confused. He still wanted to join a church, and he actually began to favor the Methodists. When he finally decided to make it a matter of prayer, he had in mind specifically that he wanted to "know what church to join."²⁶ In looking at all the churches, he said in 1835, "I knew not who was right or who was wrong but considered it of the first importance to me that I should be right."

At the same time, young Joseph had begun to suspect that perhaps none of the churches were right. The first time he recorded the vision he declared that in searching the scriptures he "found that mankind did not come unto the Lord but that they had apostatized from the true and living faith and there was no society or denomination that built upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament. . . ."²⁷

Later he explained his feelings this way: "I often said to myself, what is to be done? Who of all these parties is right? Or are they all wrong together?"²⁸ His youthful mind apparently still clung to the hope that one of the contending sects was "right," but at the same time he could not ignore the disturbing possibility that "the true and living faith" no longer existed. Orson Hyde went so far as to write that "he gave up hope ever to find a sect or party that was in possession of the pure and unadulterated truth."²⁹

Amid this war of words and feelings the Prophet's mind was drawn especially to James 1:5. "If any of you lack wisdom," he read, "let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Said Joseph Smith, "Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did. . . . At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, Ask of God."³⁰

Young Joseph decided then, for the first time in his

life, to pray vocally about the matter. After months of struggle, he finally knew the course he must follow, and sometime in the spring of 1820 he went to a familiar spot in the woods near his home to make the attempt.³¹ The months of anguish had resulted in obvious spiritual maturity, and he had at least three serious questions on his mind: (1) He was concerned for his own salvation and sought forgiveness of his sins; (2) he was concerned for the welfare of mankind in general, for, he said, "I felt to mourn for my own sins and for the sins of the world";³² (3) he wanted to know which, if any, of the churches was right, and which he should join.

No one knows how long young Joseph remained in the grove, but it is clear that before the object of his prayer was accomplished he had a long, desperate, and perhaps almost fatal struggle with the forces of evil from the unseen world. His first effort to pray was fruitless, for, he said, "immediately I was seized by some power which entirely overcame me and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak."³³ He later told his friends that his tongue seemed swollen in his mouth, so much so that he could not utter a word.³⁴

As he struggled to pray, several strange things happened. Unwanted and distracting thoughts ran through his mind, and one of his close associates later wrote that "he was severely tempted by the powers of darkness. . . . The adversary benighted his mind with doubts and brought to his soul all kinds of

improper pictures and tried to hinder him in his efforts and the accomplishment of his goal."³⁵

At one point, Joseph said, "I heard a noise behind me like some one walking towards me. I strove again to pray, but could not; the noise of walking seemed to draw nearer. I sprang upon my feet and looked round, but saw no person, or thing that was calculated to produce the noise of walking."³⁶ During the struggle "thick darkness" seemed to gather around him, and he



felt that he was "doomed to sudden destruction" and must abandon himself to the power of "some actual being from the unseen world."³⁷

In spite of this alarm, he was able to gather enough inner strength to continue his fervent prayer and call upon God for deliverance. It was then that he saw overhead a "pillar of light," which seemed to shine "above the brightness of the sun at noon day."³⁸ It seemed gradually to descend, even increasing in brightness so that "by the time it reached the tops of the trees the whole wilderness, for some distance around, was illuminated in a most glorious and brilliant manner. He expected to have seen the leaves and boughs of the trees consumed, as soon as the light came in contact with them. . . . It continued descending slowly, until it rested upon the earth, and he was enveloped in the midst of it."³⁹

As soon as the light appeared, he felt himself freed from his spiritual enemy, and as the light rested upon him he was "filled with the spirit of God."⁴⁰ As described later, "When it first came upon him, it produced a peculiar sensation throughout his whole system; and, immediately, his mind was caught away from the natural objects with which he was surrounded; and he was enwrapped in a heavenly vision. . . ."⁴¹ He then saw within the light a personage, who was soon joined by another personage,⁴² and the two exactly resembled each other in features and likeness."⁴³ They seemed to be standing above him in the air and their own "brightness and glory" defied all description.⁴⁴

The messages and information received by Joseph as the vision progressed were all that a boy with his concerns could ask for, and more. He received a knowledge of the reality of Christ, as one of the persons called him by name, then pointed to the other and said, "This is my beloved Son, Hear him."⁴⁵ He was also told, "Joseph my son thy Sins are forgiven thee," and the Savior declared, "Behold, I am the Lord of glory; I was crucified for the world that all those who believe on my name may have Eternal life."⁴⁶

Young Joseph was undoubtedly astonished at all that was happening, but as he gained possession of himself, he asked which of all the sects was right and which he should join.⁴⁷ He was informed that he should join none of them, for, he said, they "told me that all religious denominations were believing in incorrect doctrines, and that none of them was acknowledged of God as his church and kingdom. And I was expressly commanded to 'go not after them.'"⁴⁸

The personage who was speaking warned him further that certain professors of religion were "all corrupt, that they draw near to me with their lips but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doc-



trines the commandments of men, having a form of Godliness but they deny the power thereof."⁴⁹ He was warned a second time against joining any of the churches, and he was given the promise that "the fulness of the gospel should at some future time be made known unto me."⁵⁰ In addition, he was told "many other things" that he was unable to write,⁵¹ and he saw "many angels" in his vision.⁵²

According to scripture, it would be impossible for man to behold Deity with his natural eyes.⁵³ Joseph Smith made it clear that this profound experience transcended his physical senses and had an exhausting effect upon him. "When I came to myself again," he wrote in 1838, "I found myself lying on my back looking up into Heaven," and he told Alexander Neibaur that he endeavored to rise but felt feeble.

The effect of this vision on the mind of the youthful prophet was great. After all his earlier confusion, he now felt comforted, and his mind was left in "a state of calmness and peace indescribable."⁵⁴ According to his earliest account, "my soul was filled with love and for many days I could rejoice with great joy and the Lord was with me."

abouts and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, Yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me and create a hot persecution, and this was common among all the sects: all united to persecute me."⁵⁰

There is no contemporary evidence (i.e., documents from the 1820s) to show that Joseph Smith told his story very widely in 1820; and it is not clear, even from his own accounts, how long he continued to tell it. With the reception he apparently received, it was probably not very long. The lack of evidence is not surprising, however, for even if certain ministers warned people not to believe young Joseph, they were also preoccupied with many other things that to them were more important. Since this was a time when many were claiming spiritual experiences, the claims of a 14-year-old boy were hardly something the ministers would record. Nor would such a youth have much likelihood of finding his way into the newspapers or diaries of the time, even though he later said that all the "great ones" were against him. To a young boy, the rejection of such an experience by those whom he respected would have been most frustrating, and he would tend to emphasize this frustration as he told of the experience in later years.

A possible clue to the nature of whatever criticism was made is seen in the recollection of a certain Mrs. Palmer, a non-Mormon, who apparently grew up in the vicinity of Joseph Smith's home and later settled in Utah. As an elderly woman, she recalled "the excitement stirred up among some of the people over the boy's first vision, and of hearing her father contend that it was only the sweet dream of a pure-minded boy." According to the reminiscence, she also heard certain church leaders criticizing her father for his friendship with the "Smith boy," and saying that he must be "put down."⁵¹

All of this does not presume, of course, to provide all the details of what happened at the time of Joseph Smith's First Vision. Nor does it presume to answer all the questions that may be raised about the meaning and implications of the vision. It has simply demonstrated that the account was repeated several times and in several different ways, even by the Prophet, and that although each narrative emphasizes different ideas and events, none is incompatible with other accounts. There is a striking consistency throughout all the narratives, and if one wishes he may combine them into an impressive report that in no way contradicts any of the individual accounts. Moreover, the descriptions given of events related to the vision but that happened outside the grove are consistent with our knowledge of contemporary events.



This expresses as well as anything could the tender feelings that must have overwhelmed him. It is little wonder that he should wish to tell his experience to friends and acquaintances, and one can sense his profound disappointment when, as he stated in the same account, he "could find none that would believe the heavenly vision." Later he described in detail the immediate unfriendly reception he received upon telling of the vision. He was particularly disappointed at the surprising reaction of a Methodist preacher who "treated my communication not only lightly but with great contempt, saying it was all of the Devil, that there was no such thing as visions or revelations in these days, that all such things had ceased with the Apostles and that there never would be any more of them."⁵⁵

It seemed to him that he was being attacked from all sides, for, as he wrote in 1838: "I soon found, however, that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion and was the cause of great persecution which continued to increase and though I was an obscure boy between fourteen and fifteen years of age or there-

In the last analysis, the First Vision becomes truly meaningful in a personal way only when one seeks, as Joseph Smith sought, to reach God through private, earnest supplication. ○

FOOTNOTES

¹ Paul R. Cheesman, "An Analysis of the Accounts Relating to Joseph Smith's Early Visions" (Master's thesis, College of Religious Instruction, Brigham Young University, 1965), Appendix D.

² Dean C. Jessee, "The Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision," *Brigham Young University Studies*, Vol. 9 (Spring, 1969), pp. 277-78.

³ This document, discovered by Dean Jessee, was first printed in James B. Allen, "The Significance of Joseph Smith's 'First Vision' in Mormon Thought," *Dialogue*, Vol. 1 (Autumn, 1966), pp. 40-41.

⁴ Wesley P. Walters, "New Light on Mormon Origins from Palmyra (N.Y.) Revival," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 10 (Fall, 1967), pp. 227-44. Milton V. Backman, Jr., "Awakenings in the Burned-Over District: New Light on the Historical Setting of the First Vision," *Brigham Young University Studies*, Vol. 9 (Spring, 1969), pp. 301-20. Wesley P. Walters, "New Light on Mormon Origins from the Palmyra Revival," *Dialogue*, Vol. 4 (Spring, 1969), pp. 59-81. Richard L. Bushman, "The First Vision Story Revived," *Dialogue*, Vol. 4 (Spring, 1969), pp. 82-93.

⁵ Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-32.

⁶ As early as June 1830, a revelation alluded to something like the First Vision: "For, after that it truly was manifested unto this first elder, that he had received a remission of his sins, he was entangled again in the vanities of the world. . . ." *Book of Commandments* (Independence, Missouri, 1833), Vol. 24, pp. 6-7. Cf. *The Evening and the Morning Star*, Vol. 1 (June 1832), and D&C 20:5. There are some slight variations in the latter references, including the dating of the revelation as April instead of June. An 1831 revelation read, "Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph, and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments. . . ." *Book of Commandments* 1:4. Cf. D&C 1:17. In February 1831, Obadiah Dogberry, publisher of the Palmyra *Reflector*, reported on news of the Mormons in Ohio, where, according to his correspondent, Joseph Smith's followers were affirming that he "had seen God frequently and personally." *The Reflector*, February 14, 1831, p. 102.

⁷ Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* (New York: Alfred A.

Knopf Company, 1946), p. 25.

⁸ In April 1830, a revelation required that a record be kept in the Church. In March 1831, John Whitmer was appointed to keep a history. See D&C 21:1; 47:1; 69:2-3.

⁹ There were a few minor changes between the original Manuscript History and the publication in the *Times and Seasons*. There have been a few additional changes in the account found in the Pearl of Great Price. The reason for these changes is not always clear, although in some cases it was probably simply a matter of improving grammatical style. In any case, the essential details and meaning of the account have not been changed, and the changes are not significant enough to discuss in the text above.

¹⁰ Jessee, "The Early Accounts," pp. 277-78.

¹¹ Essentially the same material was published in I. Daniel Rupp, *An Original History of the Religious Denominations at Present Existing in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1844), pp. 404-405.

¹² An excerpt of the diary, which is housed in the Church Historian's office, says: "Br Joseph told us the first call he had a Revival Meeting his Mother, Br & Sister got Religion He wanted to get Religion too wanted to feel & shout like the Rest but could feel nothing, opened his Bible & the first Passage that struck him was if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally & upbraideth not went into the Wood to pray kneels himself down his tongue was closet cleaved to his roof could utter not a word, felt easier after a while—saw a fire toward heaven came near & nearer saw a personage in the fire light complexion blue eyes a piece of white cloth drawn over his shoulders his right arm bear after a while a other person came to the side of the first Mr. Smith then asked must I join the Methodist Church—No—they are not my People. They have gone astray there is none that doeth good no not one, but this is my Beloved son harken ye him, the fire drew nigher Rested upon the tree enveloped him comforted endeavored to arise and felt Uncomen feeble—got into the house told the Methodist priest & said this was not a age for God to reveal himself in Vision Revelation has ceased with the New Testament." Note that the only exception to the idea that the Son delivered the important message of the Vision is found in this account, but Neilbauer could easily have become confused on the chronology of detail by the time he got home and wrote it in his diary.

¹³ Walters, in both articles referred to above.

¹⁴ Actually, Professor Milton Backman has found that this area was called Farmington town when the Smiths moved there, but the name was changed to Manchester township a few years later.

¹⁵ Backman, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 305ff., where he shows what was happening to the Methodists. This is important because of Joseph's assertion that the excitement he remembered began with the Methodists.

The Various Elements of Joseph Smith's First Vision,
As Recorded or Clearly Implied in the Eight Contemporary Accounts

	1831-32	1835	1838-39	Pratt	Hyde	Wentworth	Spectator	Neilbauer
Religious excitement of the period			●					●
Joseph's concern for his soul (or future state)	●							●
Disillusionment with various denominations		●		●	●	●	●	
Joseph's concern for mankind in general								
His quest for forgiveness of sin	●							
His quest to know which church (if any) was right	●	●						
His searching the scriptures	●							
His prayer	●	●						
The strange force of opposition		●			●			
Appearance of the light		●						
Appearance of Deity (Two personages)		●						
The message:								
1. Forgiveness of sins	●	●						
2. Testimony of Jesus							●	
3. Join no church (all were wrong)	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
4. Gospel to be restored				●	●	●		
Joseph filled with love	●							
Unsuccessful effort to get others to believe the story	●		●					●

10 The words "or thereabouts" were not included in the *Times and Seasons* account, April 1, 1842, p. 13, nor are they in the present Pearl of Great Price. It is significant, however, that the Prophet should put them in his manuscript as he was preparing it.

11 In later years, at least one person who had known Joseph Smith wrote of hearing him describe the appearance of one person before the other. See Cheesman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

12 The three manuscript versions (1831-32, 1835, and 1838-39) are in Jesse, *op. cit.*, and the Wentworth Letter (1842) follows that article. The Pratt and Hyde versions are reproduced in Cheesman, appendices C and G. The *New York Spectator* report is in Preston Nibley, *Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City, 1944), p. 31. The Neibaur version is in footnote 12 above.

13 For a full account of the period, see Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-over District* (Ithaca, 1950). Chapter 8, "The Prophet," deals with the Mormons.

20 Backman, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-13.

21 1838-39 manuscript, and Joseph Smith 2:7.

22 The 1831-32 manuscript is full of poignant expressions indicating the depth of young Joseph's feelings: "my mind became exceedingly distressed for I became convicted of my sins . . ."; "I looked upon the sun the glorious luminary of the earth and also the moon rolling in their majesty through the heavens and also the stars shining in their courses and the earth also upon which I stood and the beast of the field and the fowls of heaven and the fish of the waters and also man walking forth upon the face of the earth in majesty . . ."; "and when I considered these things my heart exclaimed well hath the wise man said it is a fool that saith in his heart there is no God my heart exclaimed . . . all these bear testimony and bespeak an omnipotent and omnipresent power . . ."; "I cried unto the Lord for mercy for there was none else to whom I could go . . ."

23 Neibaur journal.

24 Except Neibaur, and this account clearly implies the same thing.

25 Cf. Joseph Smith 2:6.

26 *New York Spectator* account. Cf. 1838-39 manuscript and Joseph Smith 2:10.

27 1831-32 manuscript.

28 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. the Wentworth letter and the Orson Pratt account. Joseph wrote to Wentworth: "I determined to investigate the subject more fully by believing that if God had a church it would not be split into factions." Orson Pratt wrote: "The great question to be decided in his mind, was—if any one of these denominations be the Church of Christ, which one is it? The common point in all these accounts is the possibility that none of the churches would be correct."

29 At this point an interesting problem occurs with respect to the 1838-39 manuscript. After telling of his asking the heavenly visitors which of all the sects was right, Joseph added, in parenthesis, "(for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)." While this seems somewhat inconsistent, it may actually reflect the real confusion of the 14-year-old Joseph. He did not want to believe, deep in his heart, that there was no "true" church, even though his mind already asked the obvious questions: "Who of all these parties are right? Or are they all wrong?" (see Joseph Smith 2:11-12). The account, then, might reflect the actual experience of a young man who had thought the unthinkable and yet had not let it sink into his soul (or heart), because it was not what he wanted to believe. Certainly the deep, personal emotions described in nearly all the accounts could lead to a desire to join some church, and hence Joseph's hesitancy to believe that all were wrong. Cf. *Times and Seasons*, April 1, 1842, p. 748, and Joseph Smith 2:18. The words in parentheses were published in the *Times and Seasons* as well as in all editions of the Pearl of Great Price down to 1902. In the new edition of that year, and in all subsequent editions, it was deleted.

30 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. Joseph Smith 2:12-13.

31 He told an editor, as reported in the *New York Spectator* account, that "I immediately went out into the woods where my father had a clearing, and went to the stump where I had struck my axe when I had quit work, and I knelt down, and prayed."

32 Both of these concerns are clear in the 1831-32 manuscript.

33 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. Joseph Smith 2:15.

34 1835 manuscript. Cf. Neibaur journal.

35 Orson Hyde account.

36 1835 manuscript.

37 1838-39 manuscript.

38 1831-32 manuscript. The "pillar of light" has been variously described as a "pillar of fire" (1835), a "very bright and glorious light" (Pratt), and a "fire tower" (see Joseph Smith 2:15).

39 Orson Pratt account. Cf. Neibaur journal and 1835 manuscript.

40 1831-32 manuscript.

41 Orson Pratt account.

42 1835 manuscript, *New York Spectator*, and Neibaur journal.

43 Wentworth letter. Cf. 1835 manuscript and Pratt and Hyde accounts.

44 1838-39 manuscript.

45 *Ibid.* Cf. *New York Spectator*.

46 1831-32 manuscript. Cf. 1835 manuscript and Orson Pratt account, both of which confirm the statement that his sins were forgiven.

47 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. Neibaur, who wrote that Joseph asked, "Must I join the Methodist church?"

48 1835 manuscript. Cf. Orson Pratt account, this part of which seems to have been copied almost word for word from the 1835 statement. Cf. also the *New York Spectator* and the 1838-39 manuscript.

49 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. Neibaur journal.

50 Wentworth letter, Pratt and Hyde accounts.

51 1838-39 manuscript.

52 1835 manuscript.

53 See John 1:18; Cf. Moses 1:2; D&C 67:10-13; 32:30.

54 Pratt and Hyde accounts. See also Neibaur journal.

55 1838-39 manuscript. See also Neibaur journal.

56 1838-39 manuscript. Cf. Joseph Smith 2:22.

57 This document is reproduced, in part, in Truman G. Madsen's prologue to the Spring, 1969, issue of *BYU Studies*, p. 235. As Madsen points out, we do not know enough yet about the document to rely on its complete authenticity. It is quoted here simply as an interesting document that

may well prove to be genuine as researchers continue to probe the sources. Joseph's own testimony on this subject is corroborated by that of his mother, as well as by accounts of non-Mormon writers who knew him as a young man. Richard L. Anderson's incisive article in the same issue of *BYU Studies* carefully analyzes some of these writers, including Mother Smith, and presents convincing verification for Joseph's claims with regard to what was happening both before and after his experience in the Sacred Grove.

The Spoken Word

"The Spoken Word" from Temple Square, presented over KSL and the Columbia Broadcasting System January 25, 1970. © 1970.

"How could I face my children . . ."

By Richard L. Evans

This was heard from a wonderful, forthright grandfather. He had just talked with a young grandson—one of those searching sessions when a child asks direct, innocent questions—when a child with steady eyes and innocent honesty could make a man earnestly examine himself to see if he detects any deception within his own soul. And then this honest, grateful grandfather asked a simple question: "How could I face my children, my grandchildren, and tell them I had done wrong?" Don't try to hide your heart from a boy. "Boys," wrote Emerson, "know ruth from counterfeit as quick as a chemist does."¹ Too often we hear of abuse of children: cruelty, corruption. One can scarcely conceive of this being so, and it reminds us of this sobering indictment from our Savior: "... whoso shall offend one of these little ones . . . it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."² It is something to think of. Children come here clean and sweet and teachable, from the Father of us all. Innocent they come, and innocent they are, until environment or example is otherwise. "The mind," said William Ellery Channing, "like the body, depends upon the climate it lives in, on the air it breathes."³ Heaven help those who abuse or neglect or corrupt, or are cruel to children, or who are indifferent to the environment that takes their innocence from them. Children have a right to be protected from exploitation and from evil influence. "I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth."⁴ "How could I face my children — anyone's children — and tell them I had done wrong?" Lord, help us to live to feel clean and comfortable with honest, innocent children, and with others also, and with our own souls inside.

¹Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Education*.

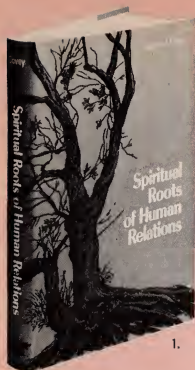
²Matthew 18:6.

³William Ellery Channing, *On the Elevation of the Laboring Classes*.

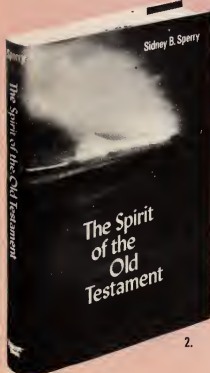
⁴Doctrine and Covenants 93:40.

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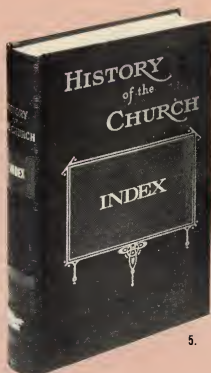
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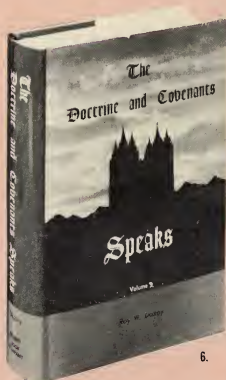
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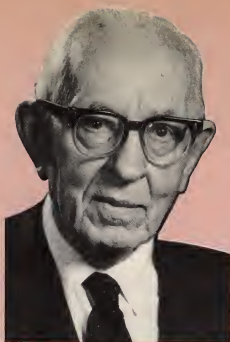
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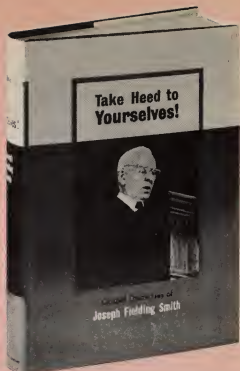
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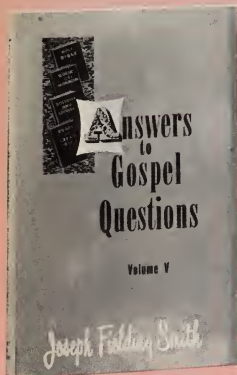
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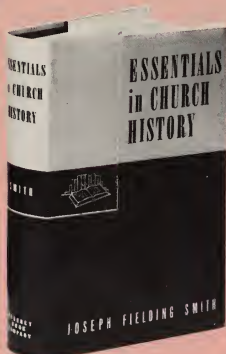


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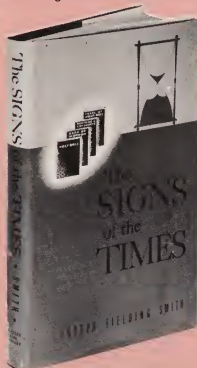
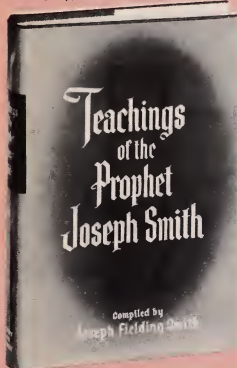
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The House Where the

By Dr. Richard Lloyd Anderson

This article commemorates the 140th anniversary of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On April 6, 1830, a day that had been previously appointed by revelation as the day for organization, six young men gathered in the one-and-a-half story log house of Peter Whitmer, Sr., in Fayette, New York, to meet the numerical requirements of the state in organizing a church. Present were 24-year-old Joseph Smith; Oliver Cowdery, 23; Samuel H. Smith, 22; Hyrum Smith, 30; David Whitmer, 25; and Peter Whitmer, Jr., 20. By September membership stood at 62; it was in the hundreds a year later. By 1840, the membership was 30,000; 60,000 in 1850; 80,000 in 1860; 110,000 in 1870; 160,000 in 1880; 205,000 in 1890; 268,000 in 1900; 613,000 in 1925; 1.1 million in 1950; and in 1970 it is near 3 million. However, numerical growth alone is an inadequate index of the great truths, programs, influence, and accomplishments of the Church and its members that have blessed mankind since April 6, 1830. The day was an important one—and the events of it will forever be cherished in the hearts of millions of persons as “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased. . . .” (D&C 1:30)

• There are both benefits and limitations in touring historical sites. Ornate shrines at supposed locations of Christ's life in Palestine hardly bring one closer to the Lord. Yet tourists, being by nature amateur historians, may judge the authenticity of the spiritual events at Latter-day Saint restoration locations by the care with which are presented historical matters. Hence, Latter-day Saint leaders have constantly sought “authentic findings” (a phrase of President David O. McKay) in telling the restoration story on the farms of its founders in New York.¹

Maximum benefit in visiting these areas is obviously gained by understanding what to look for.

Excavators in 1969 located evidences of habitation at the site of the Peter Whitmer log house, west of present-day house used as visitors center on the Whitmer farm.



Mrs. George Albert Smith and German E. Ellsworth, in 1907, stand on the site of the original Peter Whitmer home. Barn in background was built by other owners of the property.



One-and-a-half story log house, similar to the Peter Whitmer, Sr., home in which the Church was organized in 1830, is still standing. This particular house, built about 1836, is 18 by 24 feet and has an upper story with inside stairway and log construction resting on stones. (Photograph courtesy of John S. Genung)

Church Was Organized

Dr. Richard Lloyd Anderson, professor of history and religion at Brigham Young University, is a Sunday School teacher in the Pleasant View First Ward.

Otherwise, one may be in the situation of Emerson's traveler (who visits ancient locations for status and not study): "He carries ruins to ruins."

Under the leadership of Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve and the direction of Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, the Church Information Service has sponsored a careful reinvestigation of the houses on the farm of Peter Whitmer, Sr., where the Church was organized.* This project climaxes investigation reaching back 80 years, in which the competent

studies of John D. Giles and Carter E. Grant stand out.² The latest work has deliberately involved experts in various disciplines: historians, archaeologists, architects, and even economists. With the gathering of new evidence and testing by professional standards, the findings of these earlier studies are basically confirmed. One may now conclude with assurance that the present home on the Whitmer property is not the place of Church organization.

New information also better describes the actual house that was standing at the time of the great events of 1829-30 and furnishes an approximate date for the erection of the present home.

A detailed study of the home that was Church headquarters in the founding years is of no small value. History of eternal significance was made in or near that house: the completion of Book of Mormon translation; the appearance of the angel displaying plates to the three witnesses; the first successful missionary work and resulting baptisms; the formal organization of the Church April 6, 1830; and the reception by the Prophet of almost two dozen revelations. To research the Whitmer home is to relive modern miracles.

Persons present during those events never forgot them; hence, their vivid recollections are a main source for incidental descriptions

*Information that the present-day so-called Peter Whitmer home was not the home in which the Church was organized is printed in Carter E. Grant, "Peter Whitmer's Log House," *Era*, May 1959, p. 349.



Picture taken in 1907 shows relation of original Whitmer log house (left of barn) to the barn and present-day Greek Revival home.

of the home. For example, Sidney Rigdon was converted in Ohio in September 1830 and soon traveled to western New York to meet the Prophet of the new dispensation. At the peak of Church success at Nauvoo, Rigdon looked back upon a particular New York meeting: "I recollect in the year 1830, I met the whole church of Christ in a little old log house about 20 feet square, near Waterloo, N.Y. . . ."³

The Whitmer home stood some two miles south of Waterloo, in Fayette Township, a geographical area, not a village. Although President Rigdon referred only to meeting "near Waterloo," it is clear that the Whitmer home was intended. Early sources agree that he did not

arrive there until December 1830.⁴ Since he remembered meeting "*the whole church*" in the log home, one must locate a conference, not an ordinary gathering. Official minutes of that period list the second conference as September 26, 1830, at which time Rigdon had not yet arrived, and the third as January 2, 1831. The latter is the only possible conference of his New York stay, and it was held at the Whitmer home. (Orson Pratt remembered both meeting there and the presence of Rigdon.) Therefore, Sidney Rigdon refers to the Whitmer residence as a small "*log house . . . about 20 feet square.*"

Orson Pratt had also been converted in September 1830 (though

in New York) and made the same pilgrimage as Rigdon to see the Prophet and learn his duty before God. Speaking about the power of the 1830-31 events in the Whitmer home, he said: "I well recollect when I was a boy of nineteen visiting the place where this Church was organized, and visiting the Prophet Joseph, who resided at that time in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, at the house where the Church was organized."⁵

Elder Pratt recalled meeting Christian, David, and John Whitmer; recalled his personal revelation of November 4, 1830; and especially recalled the January 2, 1831, conference, attended by Sidney Rigdon, "having just arrived

from the West, where he embraced the Gospel. . . .⁷⁶ This "little conference" contained "pretty much all the Saints who lived in the State of New York,"⁷⁷ in actual number "less than one hundred."⁷⁸ Orson Pratt usually referred to the place of meeting simply as the Whitmer house, identifying it frequently as the organization home of the Church. But his earliest known comments furnish simple descriptions: "In one *small room of a log house*, nearly all the Latter-day Saints, (east of Ohio) were collected together."⁷⁹ Undoubtedly referring to the same house, the historian-apostle recalled that "all who belonged to the Church at that time might occupy a *small room about the size of fifteen feet by twenty*."⁸⁰ Thus Sidney Rigdon and Orson Pratt agree on both the type of home and its approximate dimensions.

David Whitmer also mentioned his father's home in a few of the eighty-odd interviews preserved from him. A reporter who visited with "members of the family" (but not David) wrote, "the house of the senior Whitmer was a *primitive and poorly designed structure*. . . ."⁸¹ It is not likely that the interviewer would make such a statement except on the basis of family information (and David's wife knew the home as well as he). The present house on the Whitmer property is certainly not a "primitive structure."

Some have objected to a log home as not being large enough to hold the entire Whitmer family, together with Joseph, Emma, and Oliver, during the Book of Mormon translation—and the first three conferences of the Church. But the 1830 census lists the Christian and Jacob Whitmer families as separate households from that of Peter Whitmer, Sr., a possible indication of other small residences on or near the Whitmer property. David Whit-

mer's most specific comment on the house, however, mentions about 60 people assembling on April 6, 1830, for the organization meeting of the Church. Edward Stevenson reported, "David's father's two rooms were filled with members. . . ."⁸² Such a meeting would be impracticable in two rooms unless they were on the same floor. The first conference (June 1, 1830) consisted of "about thirty," according to the Prophet, who mentions that many were so overcome then "that we had to lay them on beds, or other convenient places."⁸³ One would assume a close proximity to the main meeting for these beds. So the "two rooms" of David Whitmer's description were probably adjoining on the first floor and one, a bedroom, was perhaps that in which Lucy Smith waited for the return of her son and the three witnesses, and the place of their elated reunion.⁸⁴

Where did Peter Whitmer's house stand? That question, together with further insight into its structure, was answered by Andrew Jenson on the basis of personal investigation in the neighborhood. Given the mission of gathering information still available, Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph S. Black visited the chief scenes of LDS history. They arrived at Fayette October 2, 1888, and joined in reporting their findings in a letter that was evidently composed by Andrew Jenson. (In several later writings, he repeated the same phraseology in describing the event.) Just before locating the Whitmer farm, they "came to the house of an aged gentleman by the name of John Marshall, who had attended meetings in Whitmer's house when a boy and had heard Joseph and a number of other early elders of the Church preach."⁸⁵ Marshall's biographical sketch shows that he was in a position both to

know and to recall later his contact with the Whitmers. Marshall spent his "boyhood days" in rural Fayette, was 15 or more when he attended the meetings in the Whitmer house, and was apparently keen of mind to his death, at which time he was serving as a trustee and deacon in his Presbyterian congregation.⁸⁶

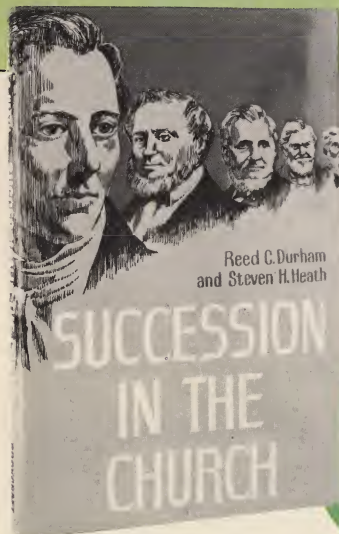
After leaving Marshall, Jenson and his party went directly to the Whitmer farm and talked with the tenant farmer, Chester Reed. He in turn was a source of information on the old home, since the Jenson letter mentioned him as "the present occupant" who "rents" the farm. Although born as late as 1836, Reed can be clearly traced in vital records as living in Fayette to the turn of the century. Since Reed showed Jenson the remains of the Whitmer house in 1888, this farmer undoubtedly had personal knowledge of what it looked like earlier. Even before Reed farmed this land, the location of the Whitmer home and its background were well known. One proof of this is the advertisement offering the property in 1869: "THE MORMON FARM FOR SALE!"⁸⁷ In sum, the Jenson party talked to one who attended meetings in the Whitmer home in 1829-30 and another who knew the building from later observation.

From this identifiable local knowledge, the 1888 investigation reported: "The old Whitmer house, in which the Church was organized . . . was a *one-and-a-half story log house*. It was torn down many years ago, but the *site on which it stood is well known and was pointed out to us*. The old family well is still there; also *several of the logs which once constituted a part of the building*, lay along the fence half decayed."⁸⁸

Edward Stevenson, who appended his name to the foregoing statement, recorded his agreement with it. His handwritten journal

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3

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contains the following entry: "The old well still stands there, but *only a little of the 1½ story log house remains in ruins. We eat apples in the new house.* . . ."¹⁹ Stevenson's description is doubly significant, for he had spent more time with David Whitmer than any other known interviewer, talking with him at length in 1877, 1886, and 1887 about early Church history. There is strong probability that Stevenson knew about the old house independently by talking with David, who had died in the beginning of 1888.

The most graphic picture of what the three visitors of 1888 saw was recorded in Bishop Joseph S. Black's notebook: "Sept. 28th, 5:20. I am now sitting on a rotten log, which once formed part of the Whitmer house, in which the church was organized. *It was a double log house, 1½ story and is now torn down, and some of the logs lie by the well, which is a little northwest from the house and is good yet. They have built a new house a little to the northeast of the old location on a little higher ground. The place where the old house stood is now covered with beautiful clover.*"²⁰

It is now possible to complete an interior description. A "one and one-half story log house" obviously had space upstairs. In one of his most detailed interviews, David Whitmer related a story about the Prophet's translation of the Book of Mormon to show the need of constant humility. Joseph was out of patience with Emma on a household matter. David related: "Oliver and I went up stairs, and Joseph came up soon after to continue the translation, but he could not do anything." Only after "he went downstairs, out into the orchard" to pray, and then made reconciliation with his wife, could he continue the translation.²¹ A story of great spiritual significance, it incidentally

describes the Book of Mormon translation as going on in the upper story.

A remarkable Latter-day Saint source does the same. In 1829 Sarah Conrad was an unmarried housekeeper in the Whitmer home and was converted through watching the unusual process of translation. Oliver B. Huntington met her at an old folks outing in 1897 and recorded her story in his diary:

"I conversed with one old lady 88 years old who lived with David Whitmer when Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were translating the Book of Mormon in upper room of the house, and she, only a girl, saw them come down from the translating room several times, when they looked so exceedingly white and strange that she inquired of Mrs. Whitmer the cause of their unusual appearance. . . ."²²

Obviously the spiritual power of the inspired servants of God was what bewildered 18-year-old Sarah and impelled her to investigate. But once again an occupant of the household fixes "the translating room" as an "upper room of the house." Sarah Conrad Bunnell stressed both points as she told the same story to her granddaughter, Pearl Bunnell Newell, who at 86 vividly remembers her grandmother's description: "And she said they would go up into the attic, and they would stay all day. When they came down, they looked more like heavenly beings than they did just ordinary men."²³

These descriptions help the student of Church history visualize other spiritual events. Orson Pratt remembered the place of the Prophet's revelation November 4, 1830: "He retired into the chamber of old Father Whitmer. . . . John Whitmer acted as his scribe, and I accompanied him into the chamber, for he had told me that it was my privilege to have the word of the

Lord. . . ."²⁴ It is apparent that this "chamber" was a private place, away from the traffic of the main room. One older meaning of "chamber" was an upstairs bedroom, and Lucy Smith in 1845 refers to the upper story of their similar 1830 house as "the chamber."²⁵ One of the notable occurrences of that period was "the voice of God in the chamber of old Father Whitmer, in Fayette. . . ."²⁶ These revelations probably came to the Prophet in the same upper-story room in which much of the Book of Mormon was translated.

One main question concerning Father Whitmer's house has been raised but not answered—its precise location. For this we must return to Andrew Jenson. He evidently kept the location of the old home in his mind without reducing it to writing. John D. Giles talked with Andrew Jenson about this. He also conferred with Samuel J. Ferguson, for many years branch president of Palmyra and district leader in the area. Ferguson had visited the Whitmer farm with Andrew Jenson in the 1920s and was "shown by Brother Jenson the place which he had visited in 1888 when he, Edward Stevenson and Joseph Black had seen some of the logs of the old house in their original positions." Giles and Ferguson prepared a joint statement identifying the location that Andrew Jenson remembered:

"Brother Ferguson took me to the place which had been pointed out by Brother Jenson and which is the same that Brother Jenson told me was the location of the old house. *The location indicated is near the southwest corner of the large barn on the Peter Whitmer farm.*"²⁷ This large barn stood some 70 yards directly west of the present home on the property. Though it is now torn down, its location is known through photographs and its relationship to



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the still existing silo footings. Therefore, the Jenson location passed on to Giles and Ferguson is identifiable.

The Jenson-Stevenson investigations of 1888 are verified by two other historically significant visits to the Whitmer home at the turn of the century. Two missionaries stayed in nearby Waterloo during the winter of 1896-97: W. F. Brim and Theodore T. Burton, the father of Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve. They met another individual with personal knowledge of the Mormon meetings in Fayette in 1829-31: "That person was an old man named Joseph Alleman, now aged 84 years, who knew Peter Whitmer and had heard the Prophet Joseph Smith preach."²⁸ Since Alleman's actual birthdate was January 1814, he would have been 15 or more at the Mormon preaching in Fayette. He surely knew the Whitmer meeting home, for his land was in the neighborhood, and "in boyhood years" he "attended the district schools of Fayette."²⁹ Theodore T. Burton's diary details many visits with this "regular old timer." The two missionaries also went to the Whitmer farm area more than once and wrote about what they learned. The Burton diary has the following entry dated December 14, 1896:

"Bro. Brim and myself went down to the old Peter Whitmer farm, now known as the Dresher farm, owned by Jesse Snook of Waterloo, and stood on the spot where the church was organized. *The old log house has been torn down for a number of years*, but the old well which stood in front of the house is still there. . . ."³⁰ A letter to the *Deseret News* from both elders says the same thing in slightly modified language.³¹

As stated, one source of their knowledge was Joseph Alleman,

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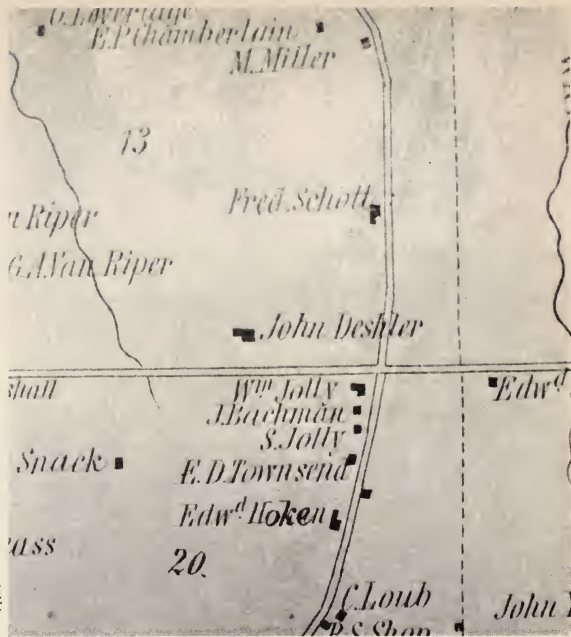
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who heard the Prophet preach, presumably in the Whitmer home. At the Whitmer farm they undoubtedly met Chester Reed, the same tenant farmer who gave information to Jenson and Stevenson. The county directory of two years prior to the Burton-Brim visit lists Chester Reed, who "works on shares for Jesse Snook, of Waterloo, farm 100," the latter figure being the proper acreage for that land.³²

The most significant visit to confirm the Jenson-Stevenson findings was that of Elder George Albert Smith of the Council of the Twelve. He purchased for the Church the Smith farm at Palmyra in the summer of 1907. Intensely interested in historical questions, he took his wife and mission president German E. Ellsworth on a side trip to the place of Church organization. His journal for that day reads in part: "We got our automobile and went to old home of Peter Whitmer at Fayette, where the church was organized April 6, 1830. . . . Chester Reed now lives on the Whitmer farm. The old house is torn down. . . ."³³

Later, Carter E. Grant, teacher-historian and an ordained patriarch, took down the recollections of President Smith's traveling companion. German E. Ellsworth remembered that the party made their visit "with the purpose in mind of locating and photographing the exact spot where once stood the old Peter Whitmer log home." Before the visitors took pictures, there was considerable discussion to satisfy them that the site pointed out was authentic. Specifically, it was reached by "going around the south end" of the large barn, and the party stopped "about fifty feet or so back of the barn."³⁴ The photograph then taken by George Albert Smith confirms the site and agrees with Andrew Jenson's identification, "near the southwest corner



Part of an 1852 map showing the L-shaped John Deshler home on the Whitmer property. Note also neighbor-

ing Schott and Jolley homes, from which came early members of the Church.

of the large barn on the Peter Whitmer farm."

It is important to realize that the person who identified the decaying logs for Jenson-Stevenson in 1888 was the same individual who showed the log house site to Smith-Ellsworth in 1907. Ellsworth remembered his comment, "The old log house was torn down many years ago, but this is the exact spot where it stood."³⁵ Because Chester Reed lived in the vicinity and on that land while the remains of the older house still existed, he spoke in 1907 with knowledge.³⁶

Rockers are more durable than logs, and two former caretakers of the Whitmer farm are still alive who remember what was evidently the

stone foundation of the old house. West of the barn there was a rock outcropping, all the more noticeable because "on the Peter Whitmer farm there is hardly a rock available big enough to throw at a bird."³⁷

John D. Giles located the site as pointed out by Andrew Jenson, the same place as the rock outcropping occurred, as verified in conversations with Owen T. Howard (caretaker from 1941 to 1946) and William Lee Powell (caretaker from 1946 to 1952). In haying operations, the Powells ran equipment over this area and uncovered part of the foundation of a small building: "So my son and I completed uncovering it, and we took

the measurements. It was 20 feet wide and 30 feet long.^{72s}

These stones were subsequently removed in an attempt to preserve them, destroying the markers of the precise location pointed out by Jenson to Giles and by Giles to the caretakers of this property. However, Irvin T. Nelson, Church landscape architect, became interested in the knowledge of William Lee Powell, who returned and identified the location of the stone foundation. After his markers were removed to facilitate farming operations, the Church Information Service authorized another trip this past summer for Brother Powell, who relocated the site of the rock foundation.

The Church Information Service also sought to obtain any knowledge that archaeology might throw on the original Peter Whitmer home. Dale L. Berge, BYU faculty member with considerable experience in excavating Mormon homes in Nauvoo, brought a small crew to the Whitmer site in late summer of 1969. Other foundation stones were found on the site, together with remnants of human activity. These were confined to a location "approximately thirty by forty feet and nearly in the same area pointed out by Mr. Powell." Professor Berge found that objects, "including cobble stones, dramatically disappeared" as trenches moved away from the supposed cabin site. Therefore, he concluded:

"Some type of structure must have occupied this location. If it had been a barn, corral, corn crib, tool shed, or any other type of farm structure, one would expect a completely different assemblage of artifacts than was unearthed. We found bottle glass, glass dishes, porcelain, ironstone, shell cartridges, drainage tile, square nails and coal. All of these artifacts reflect a structure designed for

domestic use."^{73a}

When the tourist arrives at the Whitmer property today, he sees not the rustic house in which the Church was organized, but a white and columned Greek Revival home, which contains exhibits portraying the founding revelations of the Church. Obviously historic in its own right, this house brings inevitable questions concerning its date of construction. Jenson and Stevenson were told in 1888 that the old house was torn down "many years ago," specified as 15 years in one statement. From this the conclusion arose that the new home was built about 1873. But the primitive dwelling was not necessarily torn down at the time the modern one was built. Earlier homes were generally log, replaced by frame structures, but the older buildings frequently remained as barns or utility buildings. If the Whitmer log home was demolished about 1873, in all likelihood the present dwelling was built many years before that.^{73a}

New buildings cause increases in tax valuation, but the early assessment records in Fayette cannot be located. Even though sale prices and census estimates of worth exist for the farm, the nineteenth century dollar fluctuated, and inferences are a matter of probability.⁷⁴ Similar Greek Revival homes in the area reach to about 1840. Nauvoo Restoration architect Steven Baird recently examined the present Whitmer farm home and estimated its construction between 1840 and 1850, but this again is only probability.⁷⁵ Yet one precise historical tool fixes 1852 as the latest date possible for the present home on the property.

The collections of the Waterloo Library and Historical Society contain a large roll-type map (approximately 3' x 4½') of Seneca County, published in 1852, which contains

a plat of all properties and owners. The map is distinctive because it diagrams house shapes. The "Mormon farm" was then owned by John Deshler, whose house appears in the distinctive "L-shape" known to visitors until 1969, when remodeling added an east wing. The 1852 map accurately pictures the outline and directions of the pre-1969 house.⁷²

The discoverer of the above map was John S. Genung, prominent Waterloo businessman and historian of the society, without whose constant help LDS research in Seneca County would not have been possible. Recently he and Larry C. Porter made a thorough check of about twenty houses built prior to 1852, and their shapes all corresponded precisely to the 1852 map.⁷³ Such local correlation insures accuracy. Larry C. Porter is now field representative for the BYU Library in New York and has spent untold hours in Utah and New York to make the conclusions of this article sound.

Since it is now certain that the present home was built by 1852, its builder was evidently John Deshler, who purchased the Whitmer property in 1831. At that time Deshler ("late of the state of Pennsylvania") was a young married man of 25 with a two-year-old child. Six more children were born in the next dozen years. On a new farm, he would probably not have the means to build the Greek Revival home until sometime in the 1840s.⁷⁴

Latter-day Saints visit the Whitmer home to commemorate the spirituality of the infant church. They should envision the pioneer home, a symbol of industry and simplicity of the God-fearing Whitmers. Perhaps the known features of this early log house will provide a model for reconstruction to permit the visitor to "step into 1830."

Orson Pratt had strong feelings about the latter-day realities symbolized by the Whitmer home: "That house will, no doubt, be celebrated for ages to come as the one chosen by the Lord in which to make known the first elements of the organization of His Kingdom in the latter days."⁴⁵ ○

FOOTNOTES

¹ Letter of David O. McKay to John D. Giles, January 28, 1946, Salt Lake City, Utah; Giles papers, BYU Archives.

² See Carter E. Grant, "Peter Whitmer's Log House," and "The Whereabouts of the Whitmer Log Home," *The Improvement Era*, Vol. 62 (May 1959), pp. 349ff., and Vol. 65 (April 1962), pp. 250ff. His study was done for the LDS Historical Sites Committee under the direction of Elder George O. Morris.

³ Conference Minutes, April 6, 1844, *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5 (May 1, 1844), p. 522. Although Rigdon refers to 1830, the actual meeting remembered was held two days into 1831, as the next paragraph shows.

⁴ The historical writings of Joseph Smith, Lucy Smith, and Newel Knight all give December 1830 as the date of Rigdon's arrival in New York.

⁵ *Journal of Discourses* (hereinafter JD), Vol. 13, p. 356, speech of May 5, 1870.

⁶ JD, Vol. 7, p. 372, speech of January 29, 1860.

⁷ JD, Vol. 17, p. 292, speech of February 7, 1875.

⁸ JD, Vol. 17, pp. 104-5, speech of June 14, 1874. Although Pratt made various estimates, most tend to small figures, and this context indicates that he had no definite figure in mind.

⁹ JD, Vol. 7, p. 372, speech of January 29, 1860. Italics added.

¹⁰ JD, Vol. 7, p. 176, speech of July 10, 1859. Italics added.

¹¹ *Chicago Tribune*, December 17, 1885.

¹² *Journal of Edward Stevenson*, January 2, 1887. Italics added.

¹³ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4 (December 1, 1842), pp. 22-23; also cit. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, 1946), Vol. 1, p. 85.

¹⁴ Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Liverpool, 1853), pp. 138-59. Joseph's parents "were sitting in a bedroom," waiting for the group to return. Downstairs is the more likely place, especially on a June afternoon.

¹⁵ *Deseret News*, October 11, 1888; also cit. Andrew Jensen and Edward Stevenson, *Infancy of the Church* (Salt Lake City, 1888), p. 40.

¹⁶ *Portrait and Biographical Record of Seneca and Schuyler Counties* (New York, 1895), pp. 382-83. Birthdate is January 10, 1814.

¹⁷ *Seneca Observer* (Waterloo, New York), October 20, 1869. Cf. the conveyance March 30, 1871, of William Hogan to John Tubbs of the land "known as the Mormon Farm." Seneca County Clerk's Office, Book 87, p. 561. The obituary of Chester Reed's father, John, indicated that he had been "a resident of that town [Fayette] for over seventy-five years. . . ." *Waterloo Observer*, February 1, 1881.

¹⁸ Ref. at note 15. Italics added.

¹⁹ *Journal of Edward Stevenson*, September 28, 1888. Italics added.

²⁰ *Diary of Joseph Smith Black*, 1836-1910, BYU typescript, p. 74. Italics added. Cf. p. 72: "I will now make extracts from my notebook."

Because Dean Jessee located Black's diary, it is appropriate to acknowledge his valuable assistance and that of his associates at the Church Historian's Office. The quotation follows the manuscript, not the typescript.

²¹ Interview of William H. Kelley with David Whitmer, September 15, 1881, *Saints' Herald*, Vol. 29 (March 1, 1882), p. 68.

²² *Diary of Oliver B. Huntington*, 1847-1900, Part II, p. 415 (typescript BYU). He is slightly in error on age, since her birthdate is September 18, 1810. Frank Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah* (Salt Lake City, 1913), Part II, p. 780. Early Provo records show that Sarah was also called Sallie, which the family confirms.

²³ Interview of Carmel Rose Anderson with Pearl Bunnell Newell, February 10, 1970, transcribed by Kristin Bowman. The marriage notices confirm Sarah's residence in Fayette: "MARRIED . . . Mr. DAVID BUNNELL of New Jersey to Miss SARAH CONRAD of Fayette." *Seneca Farmer* (Waterloo, New York), April 21, 1830.

²⁴ JD, Vol. 17, p. 290, speech of February 7, 1875.

²⁵ Lucy Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-64. Her manuscript was completed by 1845.

²⁶ D&C 101:21.

²⁷ Statement of Samuel J. Ferguson and John D. Giles, July 26, 1890, carbon copy in Giles papers at BYU.

²⁸ Interview with W. F. Brim, *Deseret News*, June 2, 1898. Italics added.

²⁹ *Portrait and Biographical Record of Seneca and Schuyler Counties*, New York (New York, 1895), p. 408.

³⁰ *Journal of Theodore T. Burton*, December 14, 1896, an entry appearing at the back of the book under Memoranda.

³¹ Letter of Theodore T. Burton and W. F. Brim, January 19, 1897, Waterloo, New York, *Deseret News*, January 30, 1897.

³² Hamilton Child, *Reference Business Directory of Seneca County*, New York (Seneca Falls, New York, 1894), p. 82.

³³ *Journal of George Albert Smith*, June 12, 1907. Italics added.

³⁴ Statement of German E. Ellsworth, October 27, 1955, Salt Lake City, quoted in full in each article cited at n. 2, pp. 369, 282-83.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Cf. n. 17.

³⁷ Interview of Owen T. Howard by Larry C. Porter, May 7, 1969, typescript, p. 1.

³⁸ Interview of William Lee Powell by Larry C. Porter, July 26, 1969, typescript, p. 2.

³⁹ Dale L. Berge, "Excavations at the Peter Whitmer Home, Fayette, New York," report at the Nineteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures and Allied Fields, Saturday, October 18, 1969. Very minor changes in spelling and punctuation have been made in this quotation and other quotations in the article.

⁴⁰ Since the writing of this paragraph, Larry C. Porter reports an 1859 map (located in the Seneca County clerk's office) showing two homes then standing on the property. *Map of Cayuga and Seneca Counties*, New York (Philadelphia, A. R. Z. Dawson, 1859).

⁴¹ Larry T. Wimmer and Carlton Infanger, economists at BYU, consider that construction of the new home between 1830 and 1850 is most likely based on valuations by decades from 1830 to 1870.

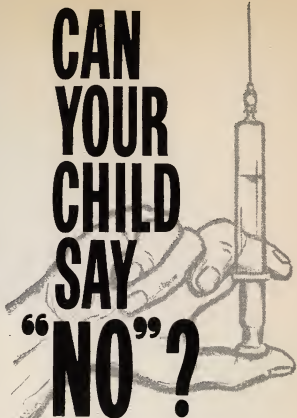
⁴² Letter of Steven T. Baird to Elder Marion D. Hanks, October 10, 1969.

⁴³ *Topographical Map of Seneca County*, New York, made by J. Delafield by William T. Gibson, 1852.

⁴⁴ Letter of Larry C. Porter to Richard L. Anderson, January 30, 1970, Palmyra, New York.

⁴⁵ Information on Desher comes from deeds, the 1850 census, and family genealogy.

⁴⁶ JD, Vol. 12, p. 88, speech of August 11, 1869.



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Of Age

By Virginia Scott Miner

*She filled the years too full
To take the time to count them.*

Right: Elder Hunter discusses new assignment as Church Historian.
 Far right: Elder Hunter examines old minute book in written records section of library.
 Below: Lauritz G. Petersen, research supervisor, and Elder Hunter view painting by C.C.A. Christensen, one of many paintings and photographs in Church Historian's library.



Elder Howard W. Hunter, Church Historian

By Jay M. Todd
 Assistant Managing Editor

● The First Presidency has called Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve to succeed President Joseph Fielding Smith as Church Historian and general Church recorder. Elder Hunter thus becomes the sixteenth man in this dispensation to be charged

with "preaching and expounding, writing, copying, selecting, and obtaining all things which shall be for the good of the church, and for the rising generations that shall grow up on the land. . . ." (D&C 69:8.)

President Smith has served as Church Historian for

49 years, since 1921—the longest period served by any previous Church Historian. During his nearly half century as Church Historian, he has seen the historian's staff grow from 12 employees in 1920 to a present staff of 48. The holdings in the written records, manuscript, and library section are presently estimated at more than 260,000 volumes and about one million documents, pamphlets, photos, and recordings.

"When I was called to a meeting of the First Presidency and they called me to serve as Church Historian, I was taken so completely by surprise that I didn't at the moment feel the impact of the awesome responsibility of this assignment," said Elder Hunter in a recent interview.

"President Smith had been the Church Historian for so many years that I could hardly visualize myself in that position. However, after further consultations with the First Presidency and having reread the revelations of the Lord that refer to the office, I am quite overwhelmed with its importance and responsibility."

When asked about the overall charge of the office, Elder Hunter said, "As I read the revelations, there are definitely two sides of the Church Historian's responsibility. One is as an archivist, to collect and preserve those things that will be of value in the future. This encompasses writings of all kinds as well as objects of art, artifacts, and other things that have relevance to the Church and its organization, growth, and history. The other responsibility is to build the living side of the history by recording the events of the times.

"Truthfully, the assignment as given by the Lord through revelation is tremendously challenging—both in fulfilling the task of collection and writing and in making the material of use to the members of the Church.

"I think that most people have an interest in history, and I, too, have had a very deep interest in history. I have a 20-volume work containing the history of civilizations, which I have enjoyed reading and rereading. I believe that when we understand what has gone on in the past, we can make better plans for the future," Elder Hunter added.

The new Church Historian was born in Boise, Idaho, November 14, 1907. As a youth he was the second boy in Idaho to become an Eagle Scout. He liked music, and toured the Orient with his own band before moving to California to make his home. In 1931 he

married Clara May Jeffs. After marriage he worked in banking until he completed his law studies in 1939.

In 1941 he was called as bishop of the El Sereno Ward, and nine years later he became president of the Pasadena Stake. He was called to the Council of the Twelve in 1959. Five years later he was appointed president of the Genealogical Society. In this calling he has won for the Church immense respect and tribute, as the Genealogical Society has become world famous among professional organizations for its progressive record-keeping activities.

Elder Hunter will continue to serve as president of the Genealogical Society; as supervisor of the missions of the South Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand; as chairman of the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii; as chairman of the New World Archaeological Foundation of Brigham Young University; as a member of the board of directors of Beneficial Life Insurance Company; and on several other Church-related boards and committees.

The office of Church Historian and general Church recorder was one of the first established by the Lord when the Church was organized. Indeed, on the day the Church was organized, April 6, 1830, the first Church recorder was appointed. This was Oliver Cowdery, who was also sustained as Second Elder. He served as Church recorder for about one year. Following are the succeeding Church Historians, recorders, or clerks and their approximate lengths of service (all were assigned in one way or another to fill the charge given the Church Historian and general Church recorder): John Whitmer (4 years), Oliver Cowdery (2 years), George W. Robinson (3 years), John Corrill (1 year), Elias Higbee (5 years), Robert Blashel Thompson (1 year as Church clerk), James Sloan (2 years as Church clerk), Willard Richards (11 years), George A. Smith (16 years), Albert Carrington (4 years), Orson Pratt (7 years), Wilford Woodruff (6 years), Franklin Dewey Richards (11 years), Anthon H. Lund (21 years), and Joseph Fielding Smith (49 years). All who have served since and including Elder Willard Richards have been members of the Council of the Twelve. Six have been called to the First Presidency: Oliver Cowdery, Willard Richards, George A. Smith, Albert Carrington, Anthon H. Lund, and Joseph Fielding Smith. Two have been called as President of the Church: President Wilford Woodruff and President Joseph Fielding Smith. ○



Top left:
"A Prophet,"
in bronze,
by Larry Prestwich

Top right:
"The Iron Rod,"
in acrylic,
by Robert L. Shepherd

Above, left:
"Laman," in plaster,
by Avard Fairbanks

Above, right:
"Old Nauvoo," in oil,
by David E. Garrison



Left: "Scene at
Nauvoo, Illinois:
Mississippi River
from Temple Hill,"
in oil, by Ethel
S. Paul



A Festival of Mormon Art

Reproduced on these pages are representative entries in the first Festival of Mormon Art, held last year at Brigham Young University. More than sixty artists from throughout the Church responded to the challenge to submit something "to contribute to the upbuilding of the kingdom

of God on earth" and to express the message of the gospel through art. Readers will note variety in style, message, and technique.

When the Lord instructed Moses on Mount Sinai about erecting the tabernacle, he gave him the names of talented Israelite artisans who



Top left:
"Moroni Instructing
His Generals in
the Fortification
of Cities," in oil,
by Gary Kapp

Left: "The Prophet
Joseph Smith and
the Plates," in
oil, by Harold D.
Petersen

Top right:
"I See You, God,"
in acrylic,
by James Christensen

Right: "And I
Saw Another Angel,"
etching, by
Dennis Smith



were to create appropriate works of art for the structure. In so doing, he described these men in an interesting manner: "... and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they make all that I have commanded thee." (Exod. 31:6.) This designation of "wise hearted" aptly fits the goal of Latter-day Saint artists who submitted original works to the Festival of Mormon Art. Certainly the description is a chal-

lenge to all who desire to consecrate their talents to the upbuilding of the kingdom of God on earth.

The 1970 festival began in mid-March and will continue through April. This year the festival includes music, drama, some forms of creative writing, and art. Representative entries from this second festival will be published in future issues. ()

Top left: "The Hill Cumorah," in oil, by Donald F. Allan; top right: "Moroni Depositing the Plates," in oil, by Larry Prestwich; bottom left: "Heritage," in oil, by William J. Parkinson; bottom center: "Other Sheep," in wood, by Rodney L. Rowe; bottom right: "Ordination Day," in oil, by Trevor Southey



How Far Is Heaven?

By Sadie H. Greenhalgh

● In Sunday School they talk about heaven. Sometimes it seems so far, far away. Sometimes it seems that it could be closer, but it isn't really.

I like to think of the times, a long time ago, when on some days it seemed a little bit closer than it is now.

When we bought our new house, I wasn't very big. I was big enough to tend my two little sisters and to know that Mama and Daddy were happy.

I liked the big tree on the lawn, and one of the first things Daddy did was to make a swing. I used to think heaven might be right behind one of those pretty white clouds in the blue sky. I'd pump hard and go really high, trying to reach it. It didn't matter much then if I did or did not, because Mama was in the house getting dinner and Daddy would soon be coming up the road from work in the old truck.

That old truck wasn't very pretty, but me and Daddy liked it. We worked on it lots of times. We used to go up in the mountains and look for arrowheads and rocks and things like that.

I think that up in the mountains could be a little like heaven too. It's so still, with nobody hollering around. Wild flowers look more like God made them than fancy flowers in gardens with cement

walks and mowed lawns. The water in the streams sparkles more, and it is so clear you can about see through it. It runs different than in city ditches, don't you think?

When a new baby came to our house, that was a little bit like heaven too. Babies even smell like they come from heaven, and everyone in the house is so happy. I would touch its little soft fingers and toes and kiss its forehead. We would all be quiet when it slept.

I am sure there will be grandmas and grandpas in heaven, because they have so much love, and love has to be up there. I'm not sure about the horses on Grandpa's farm. They would make it happy up there, but maybe they have a heaven all their own—I just don't know about that.

On days when I heard quarrelling, I couldn't think about heaven. When Daddy didn't come home and Mama cried, I felt like heaven was just a made-up story. There wasn't one anywhere.

You can't think about heaven when days get sadder and sadder. You just cry at night so nobody will know about it. When you are the biggest, you don't want your little sisters to cry too. You pretend things are happy, but inside it hurts, and you know they are not happy.

You try to keep saying your prayers and ask God to make things better, but I guess sometimes God hears all the prayers that aren't said.

When it's dark and everything is black, you know there isn't any heaven anywhere. That's the way it was when Mama and us kids left our home and went away.

I was glad there wasn't a swing at the new place. There were no mountains either, so even if Daddy had been there, we couldn't have gone hunting rocks in the old truck.

Last summer it was a little bit like heaven once more. I went to see my daddy. He looked just the same to me. He said I was bigger in three years. His old truck had worn out, but he had made another one with a camper on it. When we went fishing and looking for things, we could even stay all night. Sometimes I'd dream when we got home the next day that maybe, just maybe, there could be a miracle and Mama and my sisters would be there. Before we got there I quit thinking, 'cause I knew they wouldn't. Me and Dad would fry some meat and open a can of beans. We acted like we were happy, and we sorta were.

Only now I know for sure heaven is a long, long way away—farther than it used to be when I had that swing.

Sometimes in Sunday School I shut my eyes for a minute and just play that Mama is sitting on one side and Dad on the other. I pretend Mama is singing. She is a good singer. It feels a little bit like heaven would, but pretty soon I have to open my eyes.

Yes, heaven is a long, long way off. It's always hard to get there, but you could make it if a mom and a dad and a big boy and some little sisters all had hold of hands and were climbing together.

It's too far for a little boy to ever get there all alone, though. ○

Dickie Bird, I'm Sorry

By Mickey A. Goodwin

• Being the father of five daughters is not an altogether easy task, I thought, as the attendants closed the doors of the big airliner behind me. Not an easy task, but it certainly had its rewards. Even with the rewards, however, I had never stopped watching boys, looking for those who appealed to me. Perhaps that was why I had anxiously anticipated the time when I would gain a son-in-law. When that time came, I told myself, I would at last have a son.

Then, just a few weeks ago, Carol had clouded the anticipation of years with the announcement of her engagement to a perfect stranger. It disturbed me to have Carol engaged to a man whom I had never met, a man from the Midwest whose family I didn't even know. Negative thoughts crowded my mind, overriding all the glowing descriptions Carol had written of him.

Consequently I had planned this trip, not just for general conference or business, but, in reality, to meet Carol's fiancé, Brian Birch.

As far as I was concerned, I was sure she was making a mistake. He was not the man for my oldest daughter—even his name was undesirable. But that was probably because the only other Birch I had ever known was Dickie Birch, a boy from northern California who had little appeal to me and who had burdened me for life with a guilty conscience. I didn't need a son-in-law to remind me of him.

Even though 14 years had passed since that Scout trip to the Sierras, I could still see Dickie Birch, his crumpled and faded uniform, his pale, freckled face, his intensely dark eyes, and his resolute chin. No, I didn't need a son-in-law to remind me of him.

That had been a strange circumstance anyway—my having no sons, yet having been called to be the Scoutmaster. But with a good committee behind me, and the help of the parents, we had shaped those boys into a top-notch troop.

Mickey A. Goodwin, a mother of seven children and a member of the Omaha (Nebraska) Second Ward, is a part-time free-lance writer, strongly motivated to write of "our heavenly Father's love for all his children on earth."

We worked all year learning camp skills, earning money, taking overnight trips, with just one big dream in mind—a seven-day back-pack trip in July. Then, just three days before we were to leave, I received that phone call from the Primary president.

She explained what she wanted without apology, as she matter-of-factly asked me to make arrangements for a nonmember neighbor boy to go with us to the mountains. I was stunned. Take an untrained stranger with us?

"It's a real missionary opportunity, Kurt," she had said, apparently oblivious of my concern. "And I know you'll be good for Dickie," she concluded. I couldn't get out of it. Dickie Birch was going with us. I hung up the telephone sharply and stomped off to bed, muttering angrily about "official meddlers."



Illustrated by Jerry Harston

I was still resentful at 4:30 Monday morning as I drove into the parking lot to load the Scouts. When I saw him, I was sure my resentment was justified. Dickie Birch was the scrawniest little 12-year-old I had ever seen.

"Great, just great!" I growled, as I stepped from the car. "We'll probably have to carry him *and* his pack."

Dickie must have sensed what I was thinking, because, as I looked at him, his eyes narrowed slowly, his mouth tightened, and his chin set. He'd show me he wasn't just a scrawny kid.

"You guys met Birch?" I asked the noisy boys who were greeting me.

"Who?" they asked.

"Dickie Birch," I repeated.

"Dickie Bird?" someone queried in mock disbelief,

and laughter rolled quickly through the group.

"Dickie Bird!" they all snorted.

I glanced at Dickie. He gulped a bit, his dark eyes searching their faces. The edges of his mouth moved slightly, as if to smile, but there was no humor in it. We all knew the die was cast. Dickie Birch was going to have to fight to get in. He was like a stray in a kennel full of purebreds, I thought, and we were stuck with him.

"All right, fellows," I said. "Let's get loaded."

Dickie spent a long, silent three hours on the way to the ranger station at the base of the trail. He volunteered nothing, and only Glenn Evans talked to him.

We unloaded hurriedly, because the skies were overcast and threatening, and I wanted to get the troop moving. I was making a last-minute inspection of the boys and their packs when I suddenly realized that Evans and Birch were still down by the cars. I stalked over to them angrily.

"Come on, you two," I said as I reached them. "You're holding things up." Then I saw Dickie's pack. Glenn had obviously tried to do something with it before I got there, but it was still an amateurish mess.

"Who packed your gear?" I demanded.

"I did," Dickie answered without flinching.

I took the pack, untied the strings, and dumped everything on the ground. With practiced precision meant to humiliate Dickie, I repacked his gear. I didn't even take time to tell him how it should have been done.

Glenn waited while I put Dickie into his pack, and then we all moved quickly back to the others. They turned as we approached, silenced by the sight of Dickie, who looked smaller than ever under the mountain of his gear. He returned their gaze without blinking.

"Who's going to carry the Dickie Bird?" one of the boys jibed, breaking the silence and setting the troop to snickering.

"I'll manage," Dickie answered evenly. And he did.

I kept checking on him, hoping that he would need help so I could justify my feelings, but he never gave



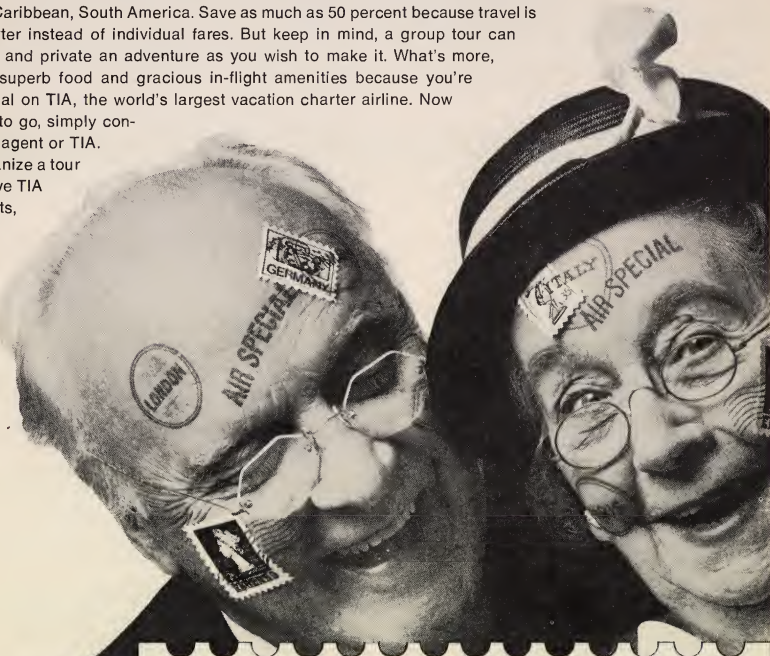
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me that satisfaction. I think he would rather have died in the rain on the muddy trail than to ask for assistance.

The other adults and I pressed on ahead in the last mile, left our gear at the camp site, and went back down the trail to help the stragglers.

Dickie and Glenn had pushed up to the middle of the group, but I could tell when I approached Dickie that he was nearly worn out. I even felt some compassion for him, as he looked up at me, from under the drippy poncho, his fingers grimy with mud, clutching the thick shoulder straps that clung to his thin frame.

"Let me help you with that," I said, laying my hand on his harness.

"I'll do it myself," he answered coolly as he went by me up the hill.

I shrugged at the rebuff and went off with the other men to get the fellows into camp. Dickie and Glenn were the last ones to set down their gear.

Glenn was older and had had no problems, but Dickie just sat limply on a wet rock by his pack. Glenn came quietly over to me, and we both turned to look at Dickie. Unconsciously he was wiping the back of his hands across his eyes and cheeks. It was the only little boy gesture I ever saw him make.

"I guess he'd better bunk with me," Glenn said.

"Yeah, sure," I answered. "Thanks."

Yeah, I had been wrong about Dickie's endurance, but it didn't take long to find out that I was right when I called him green. There wasn't a single knot or lashing that he knew. His mistakes became the favorite camp jokes.

Through it all, Dickie never lost his composure. He just kept his chin set with those youthful muscles tensing under his cheekbones. Glenn worked quietly with him, trying to cover for him wherever he could, but the taunts persisted. By late that evening, the kidding was so incessant that even I was glad when they were all in their tents.

I was just settling down when I saw flashes of light coming from Glenn's and Dickie's tent.

"So, Dickie's scared of the dark," I thought, as I pulled on my boots. "Just wait till the other boys find out that he has to sleep with his flashlight on!"

When I neared their tent I saw that I had underestimated Dickie again. He wasn't frightened at all, but was earnestly studying the Scout book with the flashlight propped beside him and a length of cord in his hands. He was practicing tying knots.

I suppose no one has ever learned the fundamentals of camping faster than Dickie Birch did. He never made the same mistake twice. But by mid-afternoon the next day, the relentless Scouts found a weak spot

that would bring Dickie to his knees—and the rest of us with him.

It had been a beautiful day, quite a contrast to the preceding damp days. It was so warm that we had a hard time keeping the fellows away from the water until they finished their assignments and projects. When we did turn them loose, they whooped, tore off their clothing, and raced to the river. It took them quite a while to realize that Dickie was not with them.

"Hey, where's Dickie Bird?" someone shouted.

"He's probably writing a letter to his mama," a smart aleck retorted, and they all laughed at their own poor humor.

"Hey, Glenn, go get him," another voice directed.

"He doesn't swim," Glenn answered.

"Did you hear that? He doesn't swim," someone cracked.

"Of course, stupid, anybody knows that birds can't swim."

"I saw a bird swim once," called another boy.

"Oh, yeah? Well, let's go get the Dickie Bird and see if he can swim."

With that, four of the boys climbed from the water and raced noisily to the camp to get Dickie. He remained sitting quietly beside his tent until they stopped at his feet.

"Come on, Dickie Bird," they said. "We're gonna teach you to swim."

Dickie didn't answer.

"Yeah, we want to see if birds can swim," one of them said, as he grabbed Dickie's arm.

Dickie pushed him aside. Another boy grabbed, and the scramble was on. There were arms and legs and pine needles and dust flying in all directions for a few moments. From the water came loud cheers of encouragement. Then, as suddenly as it had started, the fracas was over, leaving Dickie standing defiantly, his chest heaving, glaring at four Scouts who couldn't handle him.

"Aw, lay off, you guys," Glenn called from the edge of the water, and the would-be abductors retreated to the river. But I could tell by the expressions on their faces that they had not finished teaching Dickie to swim.

That evening and the next morning the quiet huddles, punctuated with snickers, seemed to portend no good for Dickie. I knew he saw them, and I thought I sensed a new uneasiness in him that I had never seen before.

The boys had only been in the water a few minutes, pretending at their water games, when one of them gave the cue.

"Hey, don't you think it's time for swimming lessons?"

"I didn't know they gave swimming lessons up here," came the reply.

"Oh, yes," chimed in another, "but they're only for birds."

"Stop it, will you?" Glenn interrupted.

"You want to stop us, Glenn?" someone asked.

"Come on, let's go get him," the leader called, and they all scrambled up the bank to get Dickie. He didn't stand a chance that time, although he fought like a wildcat.

They dragged and carried him to the water's edge. Their voices rang out together in a great "heave ho," and Dickie landed out in deep water.

I had been sitting on the opposite bank wondering how far they would go. I saw Dickie's face just before he hit the water. There was no composure left in it—he was scared. He really couldn't swim.

Within seconds the boys realized how foolish they had been as Dickie came up once, and again, and then was suddenly caught in the current and swirled downstream.

I plunged in behind him.

The entire drama had taken no more than four or five minutes. We laid the limp, exhausted, humiliated youngster on the bank. He blinked at the group of us huddled soberly around him. We knew he would

recover, but the light in his eyes and the set of his chin had changed.

An hour later when we checked his tent, he was gone. When he wasn't back by dark we knew we would have to look for him. We searched that evening and all the next day without finding him, and to add to our distress, the rain returned to stay.

By evening we were exhausted. We had accomplished nothing, and we were wet and cold and burdened with guilt. The morale of the group couldn't have been lower.

"His dad should have taught him some responsibility before sending him up here," I grumbled into the darkness.

From somewhere on the other side of the fire came Glenn's quiet reply, "He doesn't have a dad."

Shocked silence fell upon the men and boys gathered there.

"Brother Thomas, do you think we should all kneel here together and pray?" Glenn asked soberly.

We arose from that prayer to a new silence—quite a different group from the arrogant men and boys of a few nights before.

We had brought Dickie Birch to his knees, and he had unwittingly pulled us down with him. We had



humiliated him, but he had humbled us. How small I felt! How desperately I needed forgiveness!

Suddenly we seemed to turn in unison toward a sound at the edge of the trees. There stood Dickie. "Birch," the fellows shouted. Not "Dickie Bird." They had said "Birch." He had won.

How long had he been there? Had he heard us praying for him? I never knew, but our trip was finished. The rain increased during the night, and the skies the next day were dark and wet. There was no sign of relief, so we broke camp and started down the trail.

When I reached home, a transfer was waiting for me. We moved to southern California two weeks later. I never saw Dickie Birch again, but his set chin and his bright eyes still haunted me. How could I have been so hard? Why hadn't someone told me he didn't have a father? Even so, ignorance was no justification for treating him badly, or for allowing the other boys to abuse him. . . .

As the plane touched down in Salt Lake City, I sighed again the sigh of a man who had not yet found forgiveness. Someday, I thought, someday I may be forgiven.

A few moments later I had Carol in my arms, happy to hold her again.

"Oh, Daddy," she said breathlessly, "this is Brian. Brian, this is my father."

"I'm glad to meet you, sir," he said, as he stuck his hand out to me.

As I clasped it, I began to look him over, this man who intended to marry my daughter. He was taller than I had expected him to be, cheerful, intense, obviously intelligent, and, in spite of myself, I liked him.

"Daddy," Carol broke in upon us, "Brian and I just discovered the most wonderful thing! Remember when you were the Scoutmaster in northern California? Well, Brian's brother went with you on that Scout trip. Do you remember him?"

"Not Dickie Birch?" I asked, amazed.

Brian grinned. "Yes, sir, Richard Nelson Birch the third. Do you remember him?"

"But I thought you were from the Midwest."

"We moved to Nebraska to live with my grandparents just a few months after you moved."

"What about your membership in the Church?" I asked, my guilty feelings surfacing again. "How did you happen to join?"

"If you remember Dick's determination, you know it wasn't an accident. He decided on that Scout trip that he was going to become a Mormon. My mother said he couldn't, and my grandfather said he couldn't—but he did, and he brought all of us into the Church with him. Right now he's the branch president back home, and my grandfather is his first counselor."

Did I remember Dickie's determination? I shook my head in disbelief. The world couldn't be that small!

"Dickie Birch," I muttered.

"Yes, sir," Brian broke into my thoughts. "And we sort of owe it all to you, because you let him go on that Scout trip, even though he didn't know much about Scouting."

Because of me? In spite of me was more correct.

I looked again at Brian carefully. He was much like Dickie, and I liked him.

I smiled as we started for the terminal, relieved to have at last found some small hope for forgiveness.

"Cast thy Dickie Birds upon the water," I said half aloud.

"What was that, sir?" Brian asked.

"Oh, nothing," I answered, not wanting him to know. "But I would like a drink of water."

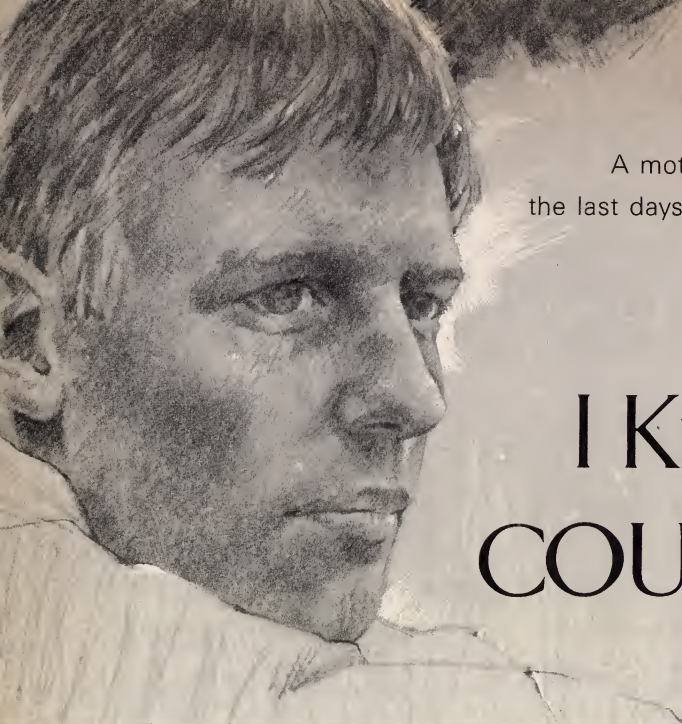
Dickie Birch will always haunt me, and, if I'm wise, he will always remind me of my frailties. But forgiveness is coming, and who knows—if I'm lucky, I may even have a grandson who will remind me of Dickie Birch. ○

Illustrated by Jerry Harston

"Come on, Dickie Bird.

We're gonna teach you to swim"





A mother recounts
the last days with her dying son

I Knew COURAGE

By Jean Hart

Illustrated by Bill Whitaker

● The hot pain in my chest burned in sharp contrast to the cold fear that iced my heart. Here, in the vast, lonesome, black, interminable night, I lay trying to make myself face the possibility that I had cancer.

As days and fearsome, sleepless nights of pain followed, I found myself constantly thinking about what it would be like to die. But it was another drama, a year earlier, that made this thought more poignant. It wasn't until now that a true realization of the depth and breadth of Greg's courage came to me.

Greg was a big, handsome, clean-cut 17-year-old, and a fine runner. When he had announced, five years before, his decision to follow a family tradition of competing in the mile run, my heart sank. He was poorly coordinated, and I could foresee nothing but heartbreak for him. His life had been full enough of this already, I felt. He had always had to do things the hard way; events conspired against him, making everything he desired an uphill struggle. Instead of quitting, however, he always seemed more

determined to work even harder than before.

With his running, instead of the usual practice of training only during track season, Greg trained the year around. He severely denied himself every food or activity that he felt would impair his running. He spent summers working for his grandfather on his cattle ranch. After spending a full, hard day in the hayfields, he would care for a large vegetable garden, which he had insisted on planting, and then go for long runs in the nearby foothills.

Everyone pleaded with him to stop demanding so much of himself, worried about the rigorous schedule he set for himself, but to no avail. He was a perfectionist and had decided this would give him the strength and stamina in running he needed.

When he returned from the ranch to begin school, he didn't look well and always seemed tired. Since

Jean Hart, first counselor in the Bountiful (Utah) Stake Relief Society, is the mother of six children and wrote this true story of her son, "believing that courage stimulates courage, and hoping that his experience could lift others."

he had had rheumatic fever as a child, we watched his heart rather closely. To allay our worry, we had him undergo a cardiogram and complete physical examination. But all tests indicated he was well. We knew he had driven himself too hard all summer and supposed this accounted for his looking and feeling poorly.

Cross-country racing began, and Greg went on driving himself unmercifully. After school each day he would come home, change into old clothes, and sit on the kitchen hearth to chat for a few minutes about how the day had gone, while he laced up his heavy hiking boots. He ran daily in the mountains, wearing those heavy boots to build his strength and stamina. He joked about how good it seemed in competitive racing to run in track shoes after running in heavy boots. There was more to running in the mountains; he loved nature and depended on that time in the mountains to replenish his soul while training his body.

This October afternoon Greg looked unusually tired and commented on the soreness in his upper left leg. He wondered what he had done to injure it. However, it wasn't unusual for him to have stiff muscles. Runners seem to have lots of these, so I was used to it. But what was unusual was for him to allow me to dissuade him from running that day.

Not many days later a race important to the school was scheduled. Though he admitted wishing he didn't have to further strain his sore leg, he insisted on participating. During the race, the leg completely failed, and he was in an agony of pain. When we took him to the doctor, Greg told how his leg had given way during the race. The doctor said he could feel a torn muscle and further told him it would continue to be painful; it would take a long time to heal, and it probably meant that Greg couldn't run again. He had to walk with crutches.

As always, Greg reacted with a determination to find a way through and build back the leg so he could someday run again.

The doctor had told him to come back for a checkup. At school someone kicked the crutch as he was going down stairs and he fell the full flight. The pain was intense, but Greg thought it would just be a matter of being careful and giving the muscle time to heal again, so he didn't go back to the doctor. He steeled himself to suffer it through, but each day he looked worse and he lost considerable weight. The suffering that spoke from his eyes and his wasted body told us how really excruciating his pain was.

When we finally returned to the doctor, we dis-

covered that Greg's "torn muscle" was osteogenic sarcoma (bone-origin cancer). His left leg was amputated near the hip.

Greg faced the rebuilding of a shattered life and dreams. How does one convincingly tell a 17-year-old in December that there is a satisfying life left for him, a boy who in August had had his first date and danced his first dance; who was just learning to drive a car; who had just tasted his first success in sports and was a leading contender for the mile race championship; who at long last could see life going his way after heartbreaking struggles?

Since it was necessary to amputate high, Greg was left with less than a four-inch stump—not much to which to fit a prosthesis. His legs were long, creating a difficult problem in manipulating an artificial limb.

It was some time before he found a way to get into the driver's seat of the car. Then a new problem loomed. Because of the short stump, his artificial limb would lose its suction when he sat squarely. So he sat on one hip, throwing his spine out of line. The resulting pain left him ill. He constantly feared the prosthesis would come loose when he was away from home.

The doctors advised going back to school and being among people as soon as possible, but Greg was determined not to return until he could walk well.

Does anyone ever stop to think how complex the simple procedure of walking is? Together we studied how one walks. I walked across the room and he followed, trying to imitate a natural leg swing with his artificial limb. Hour after hour, day after day, he practiced, stopped only by sheer exhaustion.

Finally came the deadline we had set for his starting school, the beginning of spring term. He knew everyone was watching. Besides psychological obstacles, he faced new physical hazards, such as school ramps and stairs.

Greg resented any efforts to be treated less independently than before the amputation. He didn't want special concessions, even though he desperately needed them. No one will ever know, I'm sure, the mental torment one in such a position endures. I believe the physical pain is minor in comparison.

Having to be driven everywhere he went, passing the track team out for practice as he left school each afternoon, and not being able to run in his beloved mountains were a few of the thorns that pricked him.

I glimpsed the extent of his frustration and his complete mastery of it one day when he had prevailed upon me to drive him up by his mountain

haunts. The snow was deep there, but without his prosthesis he insisted on making his way up the hillside on one leg and his crutches. He reminded me of a great and noble bird with broken wings still trying to fly. I wanted to run up the hillside screaming, why? why? why? But when he came back to the

"I wanted to run up the hillside ; screaming, 'why, why, why?' "

car, he calmly brushed the snow from his leg and said, "Shall we go, mother?" When we arrived home, he shoveled snow from the driveway and sidewalk.

Greg made the adjustments as he had conquered all other obstacles in his life. No one had thought he could possibly do so well. Not content with this, he set about to out-swim and out-wrestle his friends.

At the time of his amputation, we were told that his was a particularly insidious type of cancer that three out of four times attacks the lungs and is fatal. But one always thinks he will be the exception.

Greg wasn't. When he went for his three-month X-ray check, the doctors discovered cancer in both his lungs. From the beginning, Greg had known his full hazard. Now he knew there was no possibility for cure, as it was not possible to perform surgery, and any treatment could merely hold the cancer at bay, if effective at all.

Until now I had been able to build up his morale, but now I could find nothing to say. It was an insult to his honesty and forthrightness to say there was hope, when we both knew there was none. I felt abject desolation.

Greg said little in the ten-mile ride home from the doctor's office. When we arrived home, Greg's best friend was there helping his small brother fly a kite in the March wind. By this time, the little brother had tired of the sport and run off, leaving the kite. Greg liked to see everything in perfect order, so he picked up the kite and let out the string, and it began to soar. Soon he sent for more twine. Higher and higher it soared. A second time he sent for another ball of twine. By this time the kite was only a speck, and we were all breathless at the dizzy heights to which it had flown.

Greg turned to me and said, "A new high, mother." I knew he wasn't talking just about the kite.

The weekend that followed was one of complete

depression. By Sunday night when the rest of the family had retired and Greg, his father, and I were alone, our feeble efforts at cheerful talk finally bogged down in speechless grief and dejection. Finally Greg said, "I can't go on like this. I have to go on planning to live. There is always time for dying, but there isn't always time for living."

And Greg went on "planning for living." He had an exercise set with which to rebuild his muscles. To the last, he exercised, however feebly, his one leg and arms.

Unlike him, I was given a reprieve, and my chest pain proved to have been emotionally induced. But in the interim I was brought to a realization of Greg's true courage. His was not the fright-incited courage of battle heroics; rather, it was calm, calculated, raw courage.

Yes, I saw *Courage*. I saw it in Greg, who kept a calm face when I told him, an outstanding runner, he had to lose his leg. I saw it when he defiantly climbed a mountain, hip deep in snow, with one leg. I saw it in his face, again calm, as the doctor told him he had only a few months before he would die of lung cancer. I saw it when he came home and, in the face of a death warrant, flew a kite to real and symbolic new heights.

I saw *Courage*, as Greg lived nobly up to the final moment in hundreds of mundane words and ways, undaunted by the terrible pain and fear I now know were his to bear.

He dictated to me a final entry for his journal, which is its own testimony:

"Life has been good to me. Although I have had many disappointments, I have had many, many satisfactions. One of the worst kinds of torture I remember is the mental torture . . . the monotony of staying in the same place. Saturday, August 1, my soul was wrought up. It was extremely difficult for me to get a breath, and I hurt every time I tried. Now a feeling of peace has come over me, and I feel as though every night is Sunday night. [Sunday night was a special family night to us.] My prayers have been answered many times, and I am grateful to the Lord for his many blessings. Somehow, the mere physical sports, which I valued so highly before, seem as nothing compared to the tasks that I will soon embark upon. I bid the reader farewell, wishing the Lord's blessings upon him. I have no feeling of bitterness, no malice of any kind, for I know in my heart that this is the Lord's will. I know truly that the Lord does live. And I know that only through obeying his commandments can we be happy on earth."

Yes, I knew *Courage*.

○



The Era
of Youth

April 1970

Marion D. Hanks, Editor

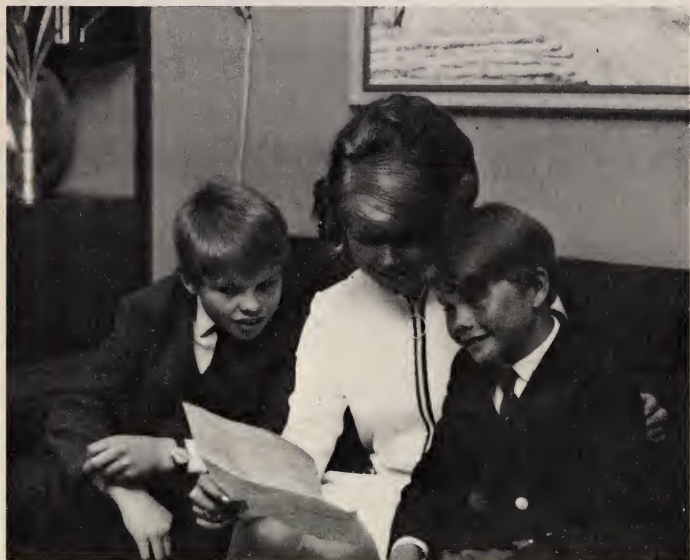
Elaine Cannon, Associate Editor

Laura Dekker
Craig Larson



What It's Like to Be Young in

Sister Ranghild Isaksen looks over her mission call to the British Mission with her brothers.



● Young people of Norway are similar in many ways to American youth. However, they seem to be more open, natural, unsophisticated in their teens, and less concerned about hairdos and clothes. In winter they all wear wool scarves and stocking caps, pulled far down on their heads to keep warm. They dress for the weather—fur-lined boots in winter and high rain boots in the rainy season—and carry their shoes to meetings or parties and change after they arrive. They have few clothes and think nothing of wearing the same “best” dress to everything.

The Norwegian youth love traditions and cling to customs of the past. They enjoy wearing their native costumes, which are beautifully hand-

embroidered. An embroidered costume (*bunnad*) sells in the Oslo shops for about \$200, but loving grandmothers and mothers make them for their children for a fraction of this amount. Almost every young lady can knit, crochet, and embroider.

People who live in the country are far removed from activities other than those that they create for themselves. The extreme change in the length of the day contributes to home busy-work projects. In summer in Oslo, each day has 18 more hours of daylight than in the middle of winter, and further north there is total darkness for part of the winter, so there are plenty of long winter nights to read, sew, and think.

Norway



Youth enjoy sightseeing in Norway, too.



An accomplished musician, Teri Pedersen is the first Norwegian to receive his Duty to God award



Norwegian youth enjoy competing, look forward to the occasions when the trophies are awarded.

Automobiles are not available for the youth to drive; often the family doesn't even own a car. Young people learn at an early age independence in getting to and from meetings, school, and activities. Since few boys have cars, the girl either rides on the back of a boy's motor scooter or they meet at the *trikk* (streetcar) stop.

Norwegian teen-agers love the out-of-doors, and they ski almost as soon as they walk. The country boasts some of the world's most spectacular scenery, and young people often go for walks, hikes, boating, or fishing for their dates. Usually large crowds go together, rather than couples, until the youths are about 18 or 19 years of age. The girl often pays her

own way until the boy starts earning his own living. There are few school functions, but many private parties, and often formal attire is worn at these parties. An interesting aspect of their romantic life is that both boy and girl exchange wedding bands, which they wear on their right hands from the time they first become engaged.

High school students must take big examinations periodically, and they must pass to be allowed to go on to the next phase of their schooling. There is practically no social life at school, nor student activities. The students attend school from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. six days a week.

The Norwegian youth keep physically fit by



Folk dancing in authentic costumes is part of the traditional intermission entertainment at MIA balls. Below: Soccer team that won honors at youth conference.

skiing, skating, rowing, cycling, walking, hiking, running. They train regularly—running in the parks or along the sidewalks of the residential areas. They are extremely adept at kicking a ball and bouncing it off the toe, leg, head, or shoulders.

There are not too many young people in the Church in Norway, and they have to be fairly secure, determined youth to resist the temptation to do what everyone else is doing. There are many youth club activities and all big sports events are held on Sundays, since this is the only free day. This makes church attendance difficult for sports-minded youth. The state church has a televised religious service that seems to satisfy their members who happen to be in the mountains or on an outing for the day.

The youth in the Church in Norway find plenty of activity, and they take much responsibility, espe-

cially in the smaller branches. Dating and marrying within the Church is sometimes difficult, but somehow most of the members seem to work it out—either converting their future mate or finding one in their own branch or a neighboring city.

There is a great deal of musical talent in the Oslo branches. The members there enjoy classical music as well as lighter music.

Their whole culture is founded on tradition and repetition: they seem to like doing things better the second and third time around. (In Oslo the youth presented the same MIA musical two years in a row because they had liked it so much the first year.) This difference in point of view of Europeans and Americans is perhaps the major difference between the youth of these two countries; it affects attitudes, acceptance of new ideas, change, creativity.

○

I Had to Find Out for Myself

"... then do I remember what the Lord has done for me."

—Alma 29:10

By Val Stephens

Junior at Brigham Young University

● Often missionaries hear this statement from people who are not members of the Church: "Well, of course you believe your church is true. You were raised in it!" For those of us whose parents have always been Church members, our first reaction to such a statement is often defensive: "I didn't get my faith from my parents. I had to find out for myself." And although that reply is true, how often I have wanted to say (if only nonmembers could understand) something like this:

"I do know the Church is true, because I was raised in it. As a young child I learned from my family and Church to sing and understand the words, 'I am a child of God.' I prayed together with my family at church and at home and heard my parents call down blessings upon the heads of their children. My own father baptized me into this church and ordained me to the priesthood of God. I was taught in the Church to honor God's authority and the rights of others.

"In the Church I saw teachers, advisers, bishops, and presidents serve tirelessly for my benefit without any material reward or promise. Virtue, courage, and brotherly kindness were exemplified with vigor in this church. I saw no hypocrisy. As a young man I offered prayers on the emblems of the Master's suffering and heard grown men weep for sharing their knowledge of the divinity of Christ and his latter-day work. I saw members of this church serve our family with food and consolation in time of need.

"'The glory of God is intelligence,' 'seek learning even by study, and also by faith,' and 'it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance' were the mind-tingling slogans heard in church. Eternal progression became as much a part of my thinking as the basic doctrines of faith and repentance.

"At a young age I was called by the Church through a living prophet to serve as a missionary. It was in this service that I saw the gospel touch the hearts of others and received for myself the assurance—the unspeakable gift—that what I taught was true.

"Is my witness only a belief? How can it be anything but a sure knowledge? I know because I was raised a Mormon, and how I thank my Heavenly Father for that privilege." ○

If I Were a Junior in High School, I'd. . .

By Dr. Lynn Eric Johnson

Be glad I've completed my schooling this far.

Plan to finish high school.

Earnestly investigate several career possibilities, both college and non-college.

Find out which schools or training locations will get me to my goal, and visit them.

Make sure I am making the right preparation now to qualify for the next steps by checking with my counselor and the prospective schools.

Have a long talk with my parents about my plans, their plans, and our plans.

Get registered for and take the tests being offered to juniors. These include the National Merit Examination, American College Test, Scholastic Ability Test, General Aptitude Test Battery, as well as others required by certain schools or programs. Taking them now will clear the way to plan and apply for admission, housing, scholarships, jobs.

Do my best on all of these.

Improve my grades, if necessary, since the last two years of high school are especially important.

Take all the advanced work I can muster, especially in English, math, speech, and typing, since these are needed in virtually all fields today.

Try to get a part-time or summer job in one of my prospective career fields to see if I really like it.

Apply for housing and admission if these are restricted at the college of my choice.

Sit down and write out a tentative plan that will span the next ten years.

Take advantage of seminary and institute programs wherever I go.

Write to the Church's Educational Information and Guidance Center, 212 Education Bldg., 500 North University Avenue, Provo, Utah 84601, if I need additional information.

Thoughts of the Newest Deacon

By Steve Barrett

- Charley Broderick loved his father.

One reason was that for the past month, everytime the family went to sacrament meeting, Charley's dad had made sure that they sat directly behind the rows reserved for the deacons. Charley hadn't told his father that he wondered about what he was supposed to do when he became a deacon next week—it just seemed as though his dad understood.

Charley was excited about graduation from Primary. The Guide Patrol was okay, but he had his sights already set on Eagle, and besides, the troop was going on a great camp-out up to Miller's pond. The stories the older kids told about Mutual, scouting, and all the fun things to do sounded great—even if you did have to dance with the girls once in a while! Getting to be a deacon was exciting too, but it was also a little scary. It scared him when the bishop asked him to come to the office at two o'clock that afternoon.

What was he going to say to the bishop? Or worse yet, what was the bishop going to say to him? Boy! The time was really dragging—it was only 1:30, and he had been outside the door of the ward for 25 minutes already!

He hadn't told his mom where he was going, because she'd have gotten all shook up about how he looked and what he was going to say. She'd have quizzed him for hours, and he'd still not know what to say or think. It was about time that he was on his own anyway—there were some things that are just better done by yourself.

Was he ready to be a deacon? He was outside the bishop's door now and heard the murmur of voices inside. What were all those things Sister Stone had been talking about in Primary all year long? Authority, John the Baptist, laying on of hands, more power than anyone else in school—was that really true? Did that mean that he could knock that bully Sammy for a loop the next time he started calling him names?

Was he really worthy? It hadn't been hard for him to turn down the first offer of a cigarette. He knew that was dumb. Some of the other things, though, hadn't come quite so easy.

Was it important what you said? Swearing was one thing that troubled him right now. Was some angel really writing it all down? One of these days he was going to get caught by his mom or dad—then he'd be in a lot of trouble. He guessed it must be wrong if he felt this way about it. Sometimes, though, he excused himself, saying that he was the

only Latter-day Saint boy in his class and only one of seven Mormon kids in the whole school—it was hard, very hard! Those other kids would think he was a sissy if he didn't use their language. Was this really a good excuse?

The bishop smiled at Charley when he walked in the office door—it wasn't going to be as hard as he thought! The first question was easy. "Do you want to be a deacon?" Sure he did—didn't everybody? Then the questions got a bit tougher, but he could honestly answer them all, until finally, "Do you ever use profane or vulgar language?" Instead of answering he looked at his shoes. What should he say? What could he say? The bishop was waiting. . .

Somehow it was easy to tell the bishop; it was even easy then to tell his dad later that day when the bishop got them both together. Both of them seemed to understand. It even felt good—when it was all over! There was something to the bishop's advice, "You may be only one, but you are one." Even the extra week that the bishop made him wait wasn't so bad. It made him feel good when he could look the bishop and his father in the face and tell them truthfully that he'd made it. He was going to be a deacon—the bishop had said so!

In sacrament meeting the bishop had him stand up by the pulpit and told the whole ward that Charley Broderick had been found worthy to be made a deacon. That was scary but the warm feeling inside made it worthwhile.

The hands were on his head, and he heard the voice of his father ordaining him to the Aaronic Priesthood. What was he supposed to do now? What was his father saying? "Be honest—let the spirit help you in the tight spots."

At the sacrament table Charley's hands were wet as he stood with his arms behind his back. He hoped that he didn't trip walking down the aisle. His mother had warned him about that. He'd never seen a deacon trip yet, but maybe he would be the first. Right now he was more worried that his new shoes would squeak as he walked.

He passed the sacrament with ramrod stiffness. The last row was the toughest test of all. Without smiling at the grins of his brothers and sisters, he picked up the try from his father, and as he turned to go, with a sigh of relief, he felt the approving clasp of his father's big hand on his arm and caught the wink and smile that was meant for him alone.

Charley really loved his dad, and it felt good. ○

Make the Ideal Real

By Elaine Cannon



• *They got their heads together. They talked off the top of their hearts.*

Then back they came into the auditorium to share the results of their workshop chatter with the entire group of delegates to the youth conference sponsored by the New England Mission, under the direction of President Paul H. Dunn.

The question had been presented in the form of a challenge put forth by the keynote speaker:

"How do we make the ideal real?" The delegates were anxious to explore the issue on their own terms, so they divided into small groups. A group recorder kept notes, and a chairman directed the discussion.

The youthful delegates considered the ideal of Christian principles. They considered the realities of the world today. They worried their way through the possibilities of how Christian

principles can be applied to the lives young students lead today.

It seemed depressingly impossible at first. Did it really do any good to treat other people as you like to be treated, when "the other people" seem never to have known or have long ago forgotten this Christian teaching? They wondered if turning the other cheek is simply a quick way to leave this life altogether, in view of the un-Christian behavior of campus skeptics, dissidents, rioters, and drug addicts. Could a handful of Mormons make a difference in the world?

But as the talk progressed and the problems were pointed out, they began to count their blessings.

How marvelous to be under the influence of the Church! How great to be given help in living the best kind of life! As a wave of positive direction spread over them, they began suggesting ways to make the ideal real.

As we listened we were so impressed with their ideas that we decided to share them with you. These are their conclusions:

1. Set an example.
2. Keep active in the Church and associate with Mormons.
3. Keep the gospel fresh in your mind by reading and striving.
4. Find a hero; set high goals.
5. Persevere to overcome.
6. Use the priesthood; honor it.
7. Stay open-minded; listen to leaders.
8. Pray.
9. Live the gospel every day, not just on Sunday.
10. Be honest with yourself; be consistent.
11. Be your brother's keeper; love and serve one another in and out of the Church.
12. Radiate joy in living high standards.
13. Be idealistic.
14. Yield to the Spirit.

Do we need the "Shock" Troops?



Anyone with a larynx or a pencil has a free choice to express himself any way he chooses. Some choose to use "shock" words that ceased to shock people 300 years ago, though they may shock an occasional 12-year-old today. Those who continue to use words that were commonplace in the barracks of Gen. Hooker's troops, or appear in gents' rooms of fourth-rate establishments, can themselves be described in four-letter words:

boor,
boar,
bore.

If you want to parade four-letter words on your guitars, placards and pamphlets, try some of these: give, grow, love, live, work, warm, save, sing, make, earn, duty.

These are words society can grow on.

What single act of human progress have self-appointed shock troops ever accomplished?

Study the language of the great documents that have improved life.

See what effective use *their* authors have made of four-letter words.



The Past Is Behind
[Learn from it]

The Future Is Ahead
[Prepare for it]

The Present
Is Here.
Live It!

Illustrated by Don Young

The Pres

● Nearly three thousand years ago, a famous king of Israel, an ancestor of Jesus the Christ, even David of old, wrote this beautifully simple prayer:

"Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path."
(Ps. 27:11.)

Our world has changed since the time of David, but our prayer must be the same today. Though yesterday's paths have become today's super highways, they still lead to the same gate. To safely travel these roads of life, we require well-placed signs to direct us to our destination. May I suggest three important road signs?

The past is behind—learn from it.

The future is ahead—prepare for it.

The present is here—live in it.

Examine our first road sign: The past is behind—learn from it. At times, progressive, eager youth frown on the possibility of learning from the past. But when one fails to learn from the lessons of the past, he is doomed to repeat the same mistakes and suffer their attendant consequences. Long ago the psalmist wrote:

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." (Ps. 118:8-9.)

ent Is Here, Live It!

By Thomas Lee Monson, age 18

One who learned this lesson too late was Cardinal Thomas Woolsey, who, according to Shakespeare, spent a long life of faithful service to three sovereigns and enjoyed wealth and power. Finally he was cut down by an impatient ruler. From the anguish of his soul, he cried: "Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies."

One of the greatest of all lessons can be learned from the Savior. How often, when we witness the suffering of one of our fellowmen, we are prone to question the mercy of our Father in heaven. We most frequently seek to enter our Father's kingdom without walking the path of pain. The past teaches us that the Savior of the world entered heaven only after great pain and suffering. We, as servants, can expect no more than the Master. Before Easter there had to be a cross. The past is behind—learn from it.

As we travel life's highway, we must examine our rear-view mirror to learn what lies behind us. It is of equal importance to know what lies before us. The future is ahead—prepare for it.

Regardless of what others may say or think—those of too much timidity and too little faith—I venture to suggest that tomorrow will be a good time to be

living. I believe it will be one of the most precious and privileged periods of all human history, a period of change and challenge and infinite promise.

We must not restrict our thinking to today's problems. We must prepare for tomorrow's opportunities. We are taught that as man is, God once was, and as God is, man may become. Paraphrasing, wouldn't it also be true that "if man is to become as God is, he must now be what God was"? Let us prepare by living life as God would live it. Insurmountable problems await us only so long as we consider them insurmountable. The future is ahead—prepare for it.

We learn from past life. We prepare for future life. But let us not lose life, searching for it. The present is here—live in it. The apostle Paul wrote: "He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (2 Cor. 9:6.)

Today many are drifting on a sea of chance with waves of temptation threatening to engulf them. These men of little strength drift through the hours and coast through the years. Their more valiant brothers steer from this point to that.

To successfully live in the present is to cope with difficulty. Problems are a normal part of life, and the great challenge is to avoid being flattened by them.

One has to grapple with challenge. Too often we dive for the cyclone shelter when a strong wind blows. By meeting and conquering our challenges, we will build a reputation in the eyes of men. However, a favorable reputation alone is but a partial indicator of quality. Saul was a capable Israelite king until greed and lust for power became his downfall. Finally he was rejected by Israel, by Samuel, even by the Lord. Saul had reputation, but he lacked character. Reputation is only what one has done; character is what one is. The present is here—live in it.

The road we travel briskly leads out of dim antiquity, and we study the past chiefly because of its bearing on the living present and its promise for the future.

The heavy traffic on life's highway is detouring ever-increasingly from the strait and narrow way. The Lord's path may be frequently intersected by roads running away from the heavenly goal, but a wise traveler will follow the signs of safety. May we ever remember them:

The past is behind—learn from it.

The future is ahead—prepare for it.

The present is here—live in it. ○

You Can't Run Away From Law



By Owen S. Jacobs

• A speaking assignment at a state penitentiary afforded me an opportunity to listen to and talk with many of the inmates. The one underlying thought many of them seemed to have was: "The law and society have not been fair with us. We would have had no need for punishment had it not been for some small or insignificant factor of the law."

In the eighty-eighth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord explained why we cannot escape law:

"And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same.

"That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willetth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice,

nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still.

"All kingdoms have a law given;

"And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.

"And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.

"All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified." (D&C 88:34-39.)

We live in several kingdoms at the same time, such as the world, country, state, city, school, work, social, animal, mineral, and plant. There is no space without a kingdom, and no kingdom without space.

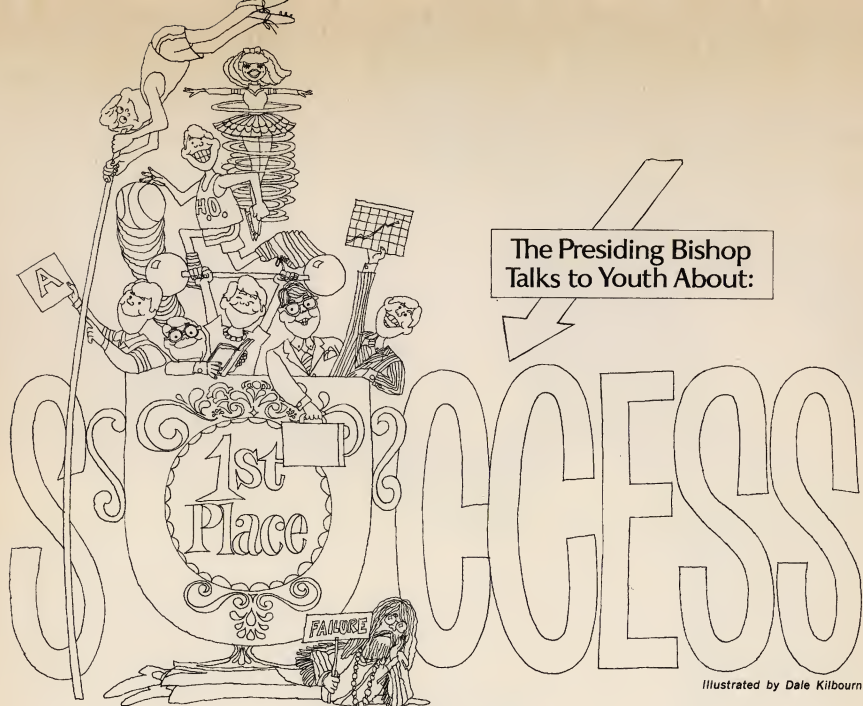
This is the age of great technical advancements,



space travel, communication, and all manner of physical, mental, and technical achievements. Some choose to call it an age of lawlessness. But law is eternally operative.

May we define law as the mandatory pattern of procedure, whether written, expressed, understood, or just operating, by which all existence is governed. Acceptance, growth, progress, and existence are determined by our relationship to law. Eternal law is truth in operation. It constantly adjusts with perfect precision the wheels of justice, which continually grind slowly and surely, progressively fitting us for the kingdom that our daily choices elect.

As we flout law, we unwittingly fling ourselves into more restrictive and self-containing laws—like the convicts! Truly as we learn the truth and live it, we are made free. ○



By Bishop John H. Vandenberg

● There are two words that carry most of us to the depth of despair or the peak of happiness. They are *failure* and *success*. People will do almost anything to keep from being branded failures in life. They will give all their time, talents, means. They will give their bodies and even their souls to succeed in a project or undertaking that they think is important. Therein, too often, lie the great tragedies of life.

Success is not always a matter of accomplishing what we would like to do, but rather in accomplishing what we ought to do. There are young people in our society who do not want to work, to put forth sustained, high-level effort. They withdraw from society and become irresponsible and non-productive. They drift, as does the tumbleweed in the wind. The more

they do this, the more successful they feel they are in living life to its fullest. But anyone who stops a moment to think knows this is not so. Two axioms, based on years of experience, tell us the opposite is true:

"The pursuit of easy things makes men weak."

"If you want to make life easy, make it hard."

An athlete who does not develop his muscles and condition them properly through training will never be a winner. He will only suffer defeat, shame, and pity. The work and effort it takes to prepare ourselves for our life's tasks are the basis for success and happiness. There is no easy way to make the most of life. The mature world, whether business, professional, or technical, has no use for young people who enter it glorify-

ing their laziness, their unwillingness to give their best in every activity that is a part of their growing years. The worst thing in life is not to fail; it is not to try to succeed; to live in the gray twilight that knows neither brightness nor shadow, neither victory nor defeat.

The difference between those who succeed in fulfilling the purpose for which we have come to earth and those who fail to fulfill life's mission lies in whether the defeats, hardships, and difficulties encountered in every life become millstones around their necks or milestones on the road of progress. We become strong by overcoming difficulties and turning them into character-building experiences that give strength and moral fiber to our souls.

The Prophet Joseph Smith went through hundreds of trying experi-

ences before he succeeded in establishing the Church so that it was strong enough that it could not be destroyed. After he and several companions had been in jail at Liberty, Missouri, for months, he reached what he felt was the breaking point, a point beyond which he and the Saints should not be asked to go. As a result, he went before the Lord and pleaded the case of the Saints and their leaders in the following words:

"O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?

"How long shall thy hand be stayed and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries?" (D&C 121:1-2.)

Joseph went on to make an eloquent plea for help for his people. Anyone who has read the history of that time will know that his pleadings were based on the need for relief from mob rule and mistreatment so brutal that it is difficult to believe it could have happened.

But the Lord knew that our trials in life are necessary to prepare us to be the kind of people who are capable of being happy in the eternities. Success often comes upon the heels of what looks like certain defeat, as the Lord points out:

"My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes." (D&C 121:7-8.)

The rocky path that we travel when we try to prepare ourselves for a life of usefulness, a life that blesses all who come into contact with its fruits, is much better than

the smooth, slippery path of indolence.

Sailing ships do not progress in a calm; their sails flap helplessly against unstrained masts when there is no wind to be harnessed.

The story is told of a fabulously rich gold mine in Africa. It received its name in the following manner:

"The man who originally opened the mine dug a shaft some 200 feet deep but failed to find any gold. He became discouraged, termed it 'bad luck' and quit. His more seasoned neighbors said he had shown the 'white feather,' and the mine became known by that name. He sold the diggings to another prospector for \$50.00. The new owner, in one day's work, went one foot deeper in the diggings and hit a vein of gold which brought him a great fortune."

One of Satan's favorite tools is discouragement—urging us to show the "white feather." Excuses for not working, for not "hanging-in there," for not giving your best in life, come ready-made. But those who would live on the peak of joy, the pinnacle of success, know there is no place for the "white feather." They know that true success is not succeeding in doing easy things; it is giving one's all in difficult tasks and projects where temporary failure may often be experienced.

The great inventor Thomas Edison was asked whether he was discouraged because so many attempts to solve a problem failed. His answer was, "No, I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is another step forward." Samuel Smiles said, "We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success; we often discover what will do, by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery." ○

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"If women would be kind to their husbands, support them, and not grumble, they would have happier lives and so would their husbands."

These words of Jessie Evans Smith describe her own marriage to President Joseph Fielding Smith, a marriage that is firmly based on love, respect, sharing of common interests, and supportive companionship. Early risers in Salt Lake City have reportedly thrilled at

seeing a demonstration of that love and mutual consideration: Each morning, as President Smith leaves their apartment home half a block from the Church Office Building and walks across busy State Street, Sister Smith stands on their balcony until he gets safely across the street and turns to wave to her.

"A kinder man never lived, nor one who was more considerate," she declares.

Life has become a bit more hectic and responsibilities weightier for President and Sister Smith since January 23, when he was set apart as the tenth President of the Church. But Sister Smith is determined that their basically simple way of life will not change. As he leaves his office in the evening, President Smith returns to a comfortable but unostentatious home that is filled with memorabilia from



Today's Family

Light Opera Coming

Jessie Evans Smith: the Wife of a Prophet

By Eleanor Knowles
Editorial Associate

Illustrated by Peggy Hawkins

their many travels throughout the world, photographs and paintings of family members, book-lined shelves, and samples of Sister Smith's deft ability in needlepoint—a home in which one immediately feels “at home.”

Jessie Evans and Joseph Fielding Smith have known each other, she recalls, “all my life. We were born in the same ward, and when I was a young girl, he was one of

the ‘block teachers’ assigned to us.”

Their friendship didn't blossom into love until much later, however—after she had had a successful career in music and he had traveled far as an apostle for the Church.

Young Jessie's first public appearance came when she was six years of age. She was invited to sing before a religion class (the forerunner of today's seminary program), and her selection was “I

Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old.”

“When I came to the words ‘I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,’ I was so moved that I began to cry,” she remembers. One of her brothers later refused to go hear her sing in a church meeting, because, he said, “she'll start bawling again.”

“Someday,” her father told him, “you'll pay to hear Jessie sing!”

A Converts Tribute to President David O. McKay

A new edition in a husky covered "paper back" is coming off the Deseret News Press. It will include as addenda some important incidents in President McKay's last few years. The author discusses the world-wide recognition of our former beloved leader and prophet which burst forth on the news of his passing. The magnificent tribute by all at the funeral is described in detail.

The author's original and revised book (all reprinted in this paper back) found great favor with members. It contained many heretofore unpublished anecdotes, with a brief but complete summary of the highlights of President McKay's career—things that all members should know. This book has also been used as a fine proselyting piece.

The author, a mature, retired businessman, says in effect "come on in; the water's fine," with proof in his own testimony on the benefits that came to him. How President McKay influenced his life and its relative values is obvious on every page. After reading you'll think it just the persuader to give that non-member friend.

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She didn't cry the next time, she says, but the emotion, warmth, and conviction with which she sings even to this day were evident. (Her brother *did* have to pay to hear her sing, she recalls now with a twinkle. When she was with the American Light Opera Company, he went to visit her on tour; she didn't have a ticket for him, so he had to buy his own for her performance!)

The Evans family enjoyed music, and each of the children sang and played an instrument. The five brothers (a sixth died in infancy) played, respectively, the violin, clarinet, cello, flute, and drums. Jessie, the youngest in the family, played the piano.

In 1918, Jessie, by then an attractive young stenographer, joined the Tabernacle Choir, beginning an association of over half a century. A talent scout heard her sing in the Tabernacle in 1923 at a program in honor of President Warren G. Harding, and a contract with the American Light Opera Company resulted.

During the four years that she toured with the opera company in the United States and Canada, with her mother as her traveling companion, she sang leading contralto roles in such operas as *Bohemian Girl*, *The Chocolate Soldier*, *The Mikado*, and *Robin Hood*.

But while she enjoyed performing before audiences coast to coast, she wasn't sure she wanted to make this her lifetime career. When a leading voice teacher in New York tried to persuade her to study seriously to prepare for an audition with the Metropolitan Opera, she prayed for guidance and turned to her patriarchal blessing, which told her that "every latent power within thee shall be brought into exercise in the service of your Master, and in helpfulness in the Church." Suddenly her decision was made: she would return home and devote

her talents to the Church.

This decision opened even more doors for Jessie; she returned to the Tabernacle Choir, joined the Salt Lake City Civic Opera Company, and sang at countless Church programs and funerals. ("I once thought I'd keep track of how many funerals I'd sung at," she recalls, "but after two months I decided the record was being kept in heaven, so I quit writing it down." The record has included as many as 28 in a single month.)

During the 1930s Jessie Evans became a name that was well-known not only for music—but also for politics. While working in the city recorder's office, she decided to run for the position of county recorder. In a close election, she was given the initial nod, but lost by ten votes in a recount. She returned to her city job, but in the next election she ran again—and was elected.

It was while she was serving as Salt Lake County recorder that Joseph Fielding Smith, whose wife had recently died, reentered her life and changed its direction once again.

"I had a document that needed to be signed by the Church Historian," she says, "so I called his office and asked if I could bring it up to him. He said no, that he'd come to my office."

Later that day, as she was going home from work, she stopped to chat with a friend on State Street.

"Did Joseph Fielding Smith go to see you today?" he asked.

"Yes, he did," she replied. "Why do you ask?"

"I saw him go down the street today, and as he passed I had the strongest feeling that he was going to see you to ask you to marry him!"

Just a few months later Joseph Fielding Smith did ask Jessie Evans to marry him, and the talented young career woman added a new

dimension to her life. President Smith had 11 children, and all were living at home at the time—as well as the two small children of his oldest daughter (her husband was away at school that year).

Sister Smith's mother had done most of the cooking and house-keeping for her daughter during the years Jessie was working, but it wasn't long before Jessie Evans Smith had organized her work in the spacious Smith home on Douglas Street. One of her favorite recipes, which she still makes when she can find the time, was for a bread that takes just 90 minutes from start to finished product. When the Smith children were living at home, she made as many as six loaves a day. Sister Smith has consented to share this prized recipe with *Era* readers:

Jessie Evans Smith's Ninety-Minute Bread

4 cups warm water
4 yeast cakes
4 teaspoons salt
8 tablespoons sugar
4 tablespoons melted shortening
7 to 8 cups flour

Dissolve yeast in one cup of the warm water. Mix in rest of ingredients. Mix into a soft but not sticky dough. Cut into four pieces and let stand 15 minutes. Using the handle of a butcher knife or other heavy mallet-like instrument, pound each piece of dough for 1 minute. Form into four loaves, and put each loaf into a greased bread pan; let stand 30 minutes. Bake at 400° F. for 30 minutes.

This homemade bread is a favorite food of President Smith. On Thursday evenings he traditionally has a supper of bread and milk with slices of nippy cheese.

"My husband doesn't eat meat," Sister Smith says. "We eat lots of fruits and vegetables. On occasions when he attends luncheons or dinners at the Hotel Utah, the waiters bring him a fruit salad with cottage cheese or sherbet. And he does like two kinds of pie—hot and cold!"

Sister Smith has traveled widely with President Smith, and often she is called upon to speak and sing. Many times President Smith has joined her in singing a duet, a treat that has thrilled the Saints in Australia, South America, Europe, New York, Toronto, Los Angeles—wherever branches and missions, wards and stakes of the Church are found.

A popular and gifted speaker, she has addressed many, many gatherings of young people, sharing her testimony and encouraging the youth to remain close to the Church and to prepare for marriage in the temple.

Sister Smith remembers how concerned her mother was about the young men she brought home. "If she didn't care for a particular fellow, she'd tell me she didn't want him ever to come back," she remembers.

"I'd say, 'But Mother, I'm not going to marry him!'"

"Mother would reply, 'Perhaps not, but if you don't tell him not to come back, I will!'"

Great blessings have come to Jessie Evans Smith because she followed her mother's advice and stayed true to her own desire to serve the Lord and do his will. She has traveled widely with her husband as a devoted companion and helpmate. She enjoys a rich and full life of service to her fellowman through the sharing of a great talent. She has found joy and happiness in her home and her family. She has been blessed with many honors and recognition.

"Happiness isn't exactly doing what you *want* to do; it's doing what you don't want to do—and being glad you did." This is Jessie Evans Smith's motto. Her life is a testimony to the joy and sense of accomplishment well done that can come to one who does follow the will of the Lord and is glad for having done it. ○

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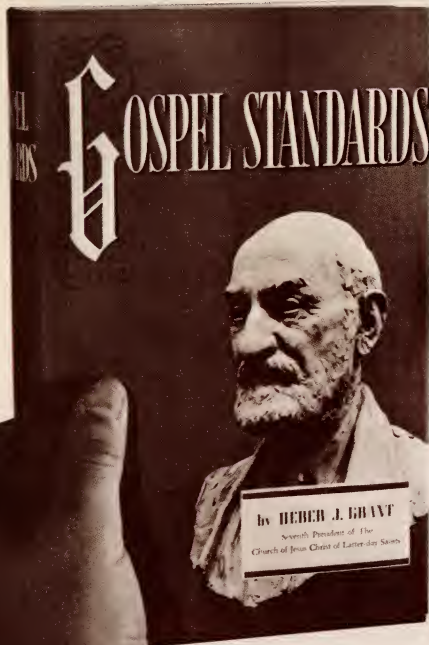
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Achievements of Latter-day Saint Women

By Dr. Leonard J. Arrington

Contributing Editor

● As with their sisters in most cultures throughout the world, Latter-day women are making important contributions to the economic, political, and cultural advancement of humanity. This is as it should be.

Women were among the earliest persons baptized into the Church after its restoration in April 1830. Mary Whitmer viewed and Emma Smith handled the golden plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. Three months after the Church was organized, Emma Smith was favored with a revelation through her husband (D&C 25). Other women participated in the 1833 march of Saints from Kirtland to relieve their brothers and sisters who were in difficulty in Missouri (Zion's Camp). Others served as cooks and laundresses for the Mormon Battalion as it marched from Winter Quarters to Leavenworth, Kansas, and on to San Diego, California, in 1846. Indeed, women have participated in all the moves and enterprises of the Church as it has sought to carry out the mandates of heaven.

Of particular interest in this centennial year of woman suffrage is the historic role of Latter-day Saint women in the political life of the United States. One hundred years ago, Latter-day Saint sisters in Utah Territory were the first women in America to vote in municipal and territorial (or state) elections. The story of this achievement deserves retelling.

From the time of the restoration, there was universal religious suffrage. "No person is to be ordained

... without the vote of [the] church." (D&C 20:65.) Women voted along with men on the acceptance of revelations and approval of church officers and policies. "All things shall be done by common consent in the church. . . ." (D&C 26:2.) This was the practice among the Saints in New York in 1830, in Kirtland, in Nauvoo, in Winter Quarters, and in the valleys of the mountains settled by the Saints beginning in 1847.

When the United States established Utah Territory in 1850, however, no provision was made for women to vote. Although American women had voted in certain school and other elections, they had been denied the ballot in the regular elections for local, state, and national office. Only in their religious convocations were Latter-day Saint women able to give expression to their agency in sustaining their leaders.

In 1867 President Brigham Young was impressed to establish a church-wide Relief Society organization. Prior to this time, the Relief Society, having been founded by the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo in 1842, had functioned primarily on a ward or settlement basis. Sister Eliza R. Snow, who was appointed to direct the groups, had firm beliefs in the desirability of women exercising the franchise on as wide a basis as possible. She and her associates began to train the sisters for the eventual exercise of this privilege.

In 1869, as a means of granting Negroes the right to vote, Congress proposed the Fifteenth Amendment to

the Constitution, forbidding any state from depriving a citizen of his vote because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Leaders of the Church, as with others in the United States, saw here an opportunity to extend the voting franchise to women.

According to a thesis titled *Woman Suffrage in Utah, as an Issue in the Mormon and Non-Mormon Press of the Territory, 1870-1887*, by Ralph L. Jack (completed for Brigham Young University), there was an added reason for the Church to press for woman suffrage at this time. Representatives George W. Julian of Indiana and Shelby M. Cullom of Illinois had introduced bills on the floor of the House of Representatives providing for woman suffrage in Utah. The Congressmen seemed to have had the idea that Mormons were uncivilized, and that the women were being held in a form of slavery. When Utah's delegate, W. H. Hooper, assured the House that Church leaders had no objection to a law granting suffrage to women, the Congress was astonished, and they failed to approve the Julian and Cullom bills. Anxious to attract women to its male-dominated territory, however, the legislature of the newly established Territory of Wyoming voted on December 10, 1869, to grant women the right to vote. "Some of the members [of the Wyoming legislature]," declared a contemporary judge, "urged [suffrage] from conviction, others voted for it thinking it would attract attention to the Territory, others as a joke, and others in the expectation that the Governor would veto the measure." (*The Woman's Journal* [Boston], January 29, 1876, p. 36.)

When the Utah Legislature met in January 1870, there was immediate interest in considering a similar bill to grant suffrage to the women of Utah. On January 27, 1870, Representative Abram Hatch of Wasatch County moved that the committee on elections be instructed to inquire into the propriety of such a bill. With John C. Wright of Box Elder County in the chair, the House considered the question the same afternoon. Representative Joseph F. Smith of Salt Lake County, the father of President Joseph Fielding Smith, moved that the committee be granted time to prepare a written report. The motion passed unanimously.

The statute, as approved February 12, 1870, provided that every woman of the age of 21 or older and who had resided in the territory six months preceding any general or special elections, who had been born or naturalized in the United States, or who was the wife, widow, or daughter of a native-born or naturalized citizen of the United States, might vote in any election in the territory. Since an election was held the very month of approval in Salt Lake City, and another for territorial officers in August of the same year, Utah women were able to vote well in advance

of the women of Wyoming, who cast their first ballots in September 1870. The first female citizen to vote in Utah—and therefore the first to vote in a regular election in the United States—was Seraph Young, a grand-niece of President Brigham Young.

The Woman's Exponent, founded in Salt Lake City in 1870 by Louisa Lula Greene and other female leaders of the Church, encouraged women in the exercise of these political rights. And although the statutes still did not permit women to hold elective office, the sisters of the Church participated actively in party precinct meetings and in political conventions. Utah women continued to vote until 1887, when the National Congress, at the peak of an anti-Mormon crusade, passed the Edmunds-Tucker Act, which, among other things, removed the right of Utah women to vote.

In the 1890s, in a more friendly mood, Congress passed an act permitting Utah Territory to become a state. In the constitutional convention that preceded statehood, Utah's lawmakers boldly inserted a provision granting women the right to vote. This was overwhelmingly approved, and Utah women (as with the women of Colorado, Idaho, and Wyoming) were able to vote many years before the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed, permitting all eligible women in the United States to vote beginning in 1920.

Latter-day Saint women have established other records in the American political scene. In 1896 Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon became the first woman elected to a state senate. Sister Cannon served two four-year terms in Utah's upper house and sponsored several bills that provided protection for the rights of women and children. Latter-day Saints were among the first American women to serve on boards of trustees of state colleges and universities. They were among the first to direct state eleemosynary and correctional institutions. Sister Mary Howard was one of the first women mayors in the United States when she and four other Latter-day Saint sisters were elected to an all-woman city council in Kanab, Utah, in 1912. Utah women were among the first to serve as jurors and in state and county positions.

This heritage of womanly accomplishment reminds us that Latter-day Saint women have served in recent years in important posts in Washington, D.C., London, the South Sea islands, and elsewhere in the world. Sister Belle S. Spafford, general president of the Relief Societies of the Church, this year serves as president of the National Council of Women, which is an outgrowth of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

May Latter-day Saint women be inspired to carry on this tradition of public service! ○

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*Some people possess a blessed gift
That must be heaven sent:
They can make a treasured occasion
Of even the simplest event.*

—Harry and Joan Mier*

• We are busy and oftentimes foolish people. We wrap ourselves in a galloping world from which life's best often flashes by like glimpses from a speeding train. We see too little and sometimes too late into the world close at hand—yet we are told this makes us quite normal.

But sometimes we get smart, and the message of the above verse rings in our ears. We may not have that heaven-sent gift, but our hap-

to release our irritations and growl over our inconveniences.

It was a Thursday. All morning I had gone through the routine—students, letters, files, meetings, lost papers. At 2:00 p.m., after no lunch, I called home and said, "Honey, let's put on a special dinner tonight, okay?"

"Wonderful idea," says she with a touch of disdain. "Shall I serve it on china or golden plates?"

I was courting disaster by heaping a request for something special on top of the present irritation. But she agreed—somehow—to come up with a special fried shrimp dinner.

"Thanks," I said. "I'm coming home early—before the kids get home—and we'll see if we can take

shaping up the rhythm of the poetic passages.

"What smells so good?" rang a voice from the front hall. Quietness erupted into normal confusion as one and then another of the children poured in.

"Surprise!" called my wife, with eyes aglow. "Hurry and get cleaned up. We have a special dinner!"

Tired confusions of the day were forgotten as the children prepared for an evening that had suddenly taken on new life.

We sat down at the table. "Surprise?" said my skeptical son as he eyed his plate and his surroundings. "All I've got is a piece of paper! Do I eat it or read it?"

"Let's read them first," said my wife. "They are part of the surprise."

Silence reigned for a few seconds, then a girlish squeal hit high C. "I know! I know! It's a treasure hunt!"

"Yes," said I, "and you can each explore your clues, but first we'll enjoy the lovely dinner." Even the skeptical son did a double take as a bowl of steaming rice made its appearance, followed by a heaping platter of luscious fried shrimp.

A joyous moment of life, a pleasant dinner, a fun evening was enjoyed by all—in fact, a memorable evening! How do we know? By the many times that one or more of the children have initiated a similar treasure hunt all by themselves, using their own money to buy the treats. Many times a child has confided to one of us, "We need a special dinner in this family."

A man in New Mexico caught the importance of making special moments. He and his wife were nearing their twenty-fifth anniversary. When the anniversary arrived, he said to his beloved, "Honey, let's ride up in the hills and look out over the city."

A short time later they sat look-

A Happier Marriage - Part 2

Enjoy Your Marriage Moments

By J. Joel and Audra Call Moss

piest moments come when we act as though we do.

The very nature of this article's message suggests that it can best be related through personal experiences. Let us tell one of our best experiences:

Some years ago we wisely caught a "moment to treasure." We had just moved west, and after a most pleasant trip across country, we entered our new abode—sans the arrival of our moving van! For two weeks we slept on the floor, eating from paper plates while the children settled into new schools and Dad wandered through the maze of a new office and a new job. Concern for our furniture and belongings mounted, and we began

time out to make it a fun evening."

She couldn't quite let that pass without one little side plug: "Early? Let's see—shall I expect you at six or seven?"

I surprised her—and myself—by arriving home at three o'clock with the shrimp, gum, candy, and assorted little inexpensive items gleaned from the variety store. Two hours later, the little items were hidden about the house. The borrowed card table was set, and by each plate (except mine) was a poetic offering, while from the kitchen tantalizing odors wafted through an empty house. It had been fun building clues for the great treasure hunt, but more fun sharing laughter and frustration in

ing down at the lighted scene below. We don't know just what happened, but we have been told that a certain woman returned home radiant with joy and happiness. We later met this happy woman—a woman still thriving on the treasure of that moment, a moment when her husband so sweetly proposed “continued” marriage to her as he slipped a new diamond ring on her finger.

These are moments that stand out—moments when someone has applied the heaven-sent gift so well that it forever lives in our memory. There are other moments, just as beautiful, operating around us all the time.

Notes can be helpful. Many men

evening as he came, he would leave the bedroom light off, tiptoe into bed, give her a good-night kiss, and go to sleep.

Deciding the moment needed a little “inspiration,” one night she got out of bed and tucked pillows where her body should be. On the pillow, where her head should be, she placed a bowling ball. Moving into another room, she crawled into bed and slept. Her husband, true to form, came home late, crawled into bed, kissed her good night, and went to sleep.

Next morning, the wife came in early and removed the bowling ball and the pillows so all looked normal. At breakfast time as they were talking, the husband suddenly

feed their children early on occasion and then reserve a quiet dinner hour for themselves. Benjamin Franklin, in his autobiography, indicates his father was so adept at introducing delightful conversation into the dinner hour that often he couldn't remember what he had eaten after the dinner was over. Good conversation has a tremendous captivating power for satisfying human desires.

Make a treasured moment of even the simple events. It isn't necessary that it be too often, but do it continuously. Have you caught the message? Do you see what is needed if marriages are to move forward rather than fall behind?

Marriages can be enriched if each



Illustrated by Don Young

are not very good at expressing tender feelings to their wives. Perhaps, though, we can use a little poetry or express our feelings in writing to her. Otherwise these feelings might pass by unnoticed and become a gray part of a gray routine of a gray living pattern.

It is possible also to inspire the “touchy” moments so they may be dealt with a little more honestly and, perhaps, with a little more humor. The story is told of the lady who was a bowling widow. Each weekend, friends of her husband came from other cities to bowl, and he would return very late from the sport. She never knew when to expect him. He was a very thoughtful husband, though. Each

said, “Honey, you must have really been mad at me last night, because when I crawled in and kissed you, you were sure *hard-headed!*”

We are sure the rest of the conversation must have been an “inspired moment.”

A Nebraska friend spoke of the treasured moments of dinner as one of his marital joys. “When I come home,” he said, “she doesn't trot out all the cares of the day and heap them upon my shoulders. She keeps them until later. At dinner she always has something to spark the conversation.”

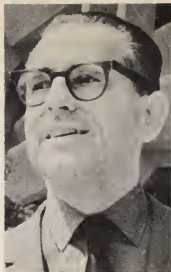
We feel we have very much neglected dinner-table conversation in our modern world. We heartily recommend that married couples

partner can learn to enjoy and capitalize on the happenings of the moment. What a challenge this offers to us in our busy worlds. If we would meet it, we must be alert to what is around us, yet not too sensitive. We must look at the beauty within our grasp. We must take time to inspire the moment and to express appreciation for that which someone else does to make it a treasured event. ○

*Affection spoken only in words
May like the real thing appear,
But love's silent language is told
In gestures only the soul can hear.*
—Harry and Joan Mier*

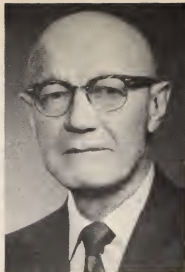
*Harry and Joan Mier, *Happiness Begins Before Breakfast*, Beverly Hills: Merit Publishers. Used by permission.

The LDS Scene



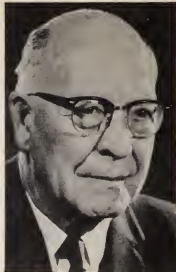
Regional Representative

Barry P. Knudsen, former president of the San Diego (California) Stake, has been called to serve as a Regional Representative of the Council of the Twelve. He has been assigned to the Pomona (California) Region, which includes the Covina, El Monte, Pomona, and West Covina stakes. Brother Knudsen was president of the San Diego Stake for 15 years.



Los Angeles Temple President Named

Myrthus W. Evans, patriarch of the Mt. Rubidoux Stake in Riverside, California, has been called to be president of the Los Angeles Temple. President Evans replaces President Benjamin L. Bowring, who has served since the temple was dedicated 15 years ago. President Evans has been superintendent for 22 years of an Indian school near Riverside.



Chairman of Church Indian Committee

Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve has been appointed by the First Presidency as chairman of the Church Indian Committee. Elder Richards replaces President Spencer W. Kimball, acting president of the Council of the Twelve, who has served as a member of the Indian Committee since shortly after his call to the Council of the Twelve in 1943.

Work Progresses on Church Administration Building

Work on the new 30-story Church Administration Building is progressing, as installation of the steel beams is well underway. The building, which will rise 430 feet above ground, will feature 28 floors, a penthouse, and a service tower. It will house all Church auxiliaries except the Relief Society; the Genealogical Society, Church Historian's office and library, Presiding Bishopric's office, and other departments of the Church.

Completion is expected in mid-1972. Offices of the First Presidency and other General Authorities will remain in the Church Office Building on the same block.

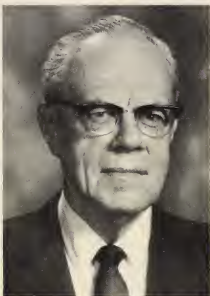




Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus Debut

The Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus recently presented in the Salt Lake Tabernacle its first public concert. Directed by Dr. Jay E. Welch, assistant director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the group consists of nearly 400 young

musicians and singers between 18 and 29 years of age. Music of the symphony and chorus is featured on Church missionary radio programs presently aired in 46 states, Canada, and other countries.

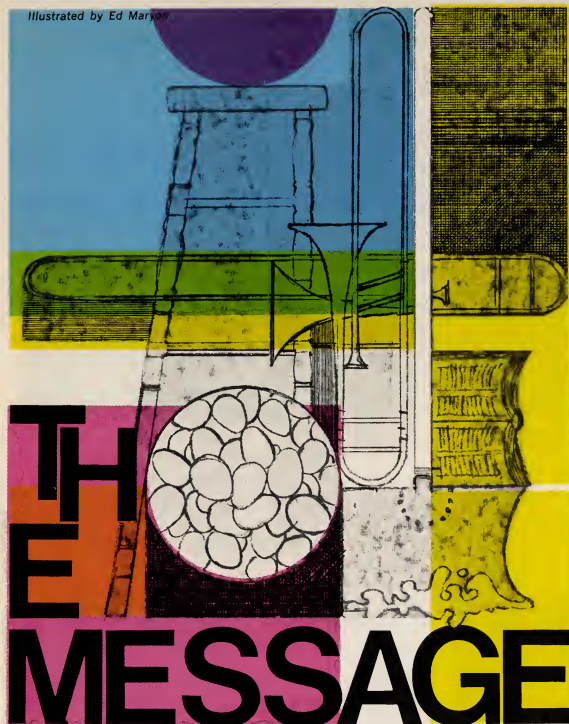


Advisers Announced for Auxiliaries

The First Presidency recently announced the appointments of four members of the Council of the Twelve as advisers to the auxiliary organizations of the Church. Elder Marion G. Romney, chairman of the Home Teaching and Family Home Evening committees, will be one of the advisers of the Relief Society. This assignment will correlate the work of the Relief Society with the priesthood in the home teaching and family home evening programs. Elder Richard L. Evans, chairman of the Youth Correlation

committee, will be adviser to the MIAs and Sunday School. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, chairman of the Children's Correlation Committee, will be adviser to the Primary and Sunday School. Elder Thomas S. Monson, chairman of the Adult Correlation Committee, will be adviser to the Sunday School and MIAs. Thus the chairmen of the various correlation committees are now advisers to the auxiliaries that serve members of corresponding age groups.

Illustrated by Ed Markey



By Dr. Dwane J. Sykes

● It was on a February evening several years ago in a small central Utah town that Brother Beck first picked me up in his blue Chevrolet coupe. I was 14 years old and had just been assigned as his junior companion for home teaching, or ward teaching, as we called it then.

I was surprised when our first stop was in front of Mr. Weeks's

brick home. For years I'd walked by there on my way to school, but I never knew that either old Mr. Weeks or his wife was a Mormon. I'd never seen them in church. We passed by the big front porch, walked around to the side of the house, and climbed the narrow cement steps to knock at the back door.

"Hello, Mrs. Weeks. Got a min-

ute for your ward teachers?"

We sat down in the kitchen, where they offered us the two kitchen chairs. On subsequent visits we always sat in the kitchen. Mr. Weeks would sit on a high wooden stool, and his wife would sit on a bench after first lifting a large wire basket of fresh eggs to the floor. There was always a basket of eggs on that bench.

Promptly that first evening Brother Beck inquired about the current price of eggs, and for perhaps 15 minutes we discussed various aspects of eggs and poultry before saying good-bye. We always discussed eggs with the Weeks. Sometimes it was the price, sometimes the way that brown eggs seemed to be cropping up with greater frequency. Sometimes we discussed the chickens, or repairing the chicken coops, or when the molt would start. And the Weeks seemed to enjoy our visits. Brother Beck never suggested that we have a word of prayer. In fact, we rarely mentioned the Church except perhaps for a fleeting reference to "your ward teachers" upon our arrival.

Once I said to Brother Beck, "We always talk about eggs there. You're a school principal, but you seem to know an awful lot about eggs. Are you especially interested in eggs yourself?"

"No, not especially," he replied, smiling, "but the Weeks are."

Our next stop on my first teaching trip was at the home of the Clarks. Brother Clark was on the high council. We had hardly been seated before Brother Beck launched into a two-minute summary of the message for the month, after which he and Brother Clark began quoting scriptures and doctrine back and forth to each other concerning the lesson. Almost like a duel, they ranged from the Sermon on the Mount to the Doctrine and Covenants to Church history to the

Dr. Dwane J. Sykes, who grew up in Pleasant Grove, Utah, is now head of the Land Resources Department at the University of Alaska and is in the Fairbanks Ward bishopric.

Book of Revelation to last Sunday's priesthood lesson, then back through the Sermon on the Mount. I sat with folded hands, watching them banter scriptures back and forth, turning my head from one to the other as if watching a tennis match. After half an hour Brother Beck left a note about next month's lesson, we had a prayer, and we took our leave. So it went, from month to month at the Clark home.

On that first round of visits we next pulled up in front of old Mrs. Davis's tiny place. The naked trees and tangled shrubbery crowded close, blending with the archaic unpainted frame house. Without saying a word, Brother Beck opened the trunk of his car and brought out a snow shovel. Curious, I followed along behind as he shoveled the snow from the walk toward the house, noisily scraping across the cement. Though the snow was days old, I noticed that only one or two foot tracks had trodden the snowy walk before us. From the corner of my eye I observed a movement behind the old-fashioned lace curtains in the window. A head peeked out, watching suspiciously.

Brother Beck knocked loudly at the door. No response. He knocked again. Slowly the door opened a few inches and the eyes of a little gray-haired lady peered out over a pair of wire-rimmed spectacles.

"Sister Davis, I want you to meet my new teaching companion, Brother Sykes. He's LaMar's son," said Brother Beck loudly and cheerfully through the screen door.

There was a slight grunt in reply. I pulled the screen door ajar to gingerly extend my hand for a brief, limp handshake.

Brother Beck had already turned and was halfway down the walk, banging the snow from his shovel, when he called back, "We'll see you again next month. And Sister Davis, don't let the snow pile up on your walk like this. You just give one

of us a call and we'll take care of it."

Driving away in the car, I asked, "Was that a ward teaching visit?"

"Sure was. That is the only contact Sister Davis has with the Church—or with the outside world, for that matter. The first few months I started calling there, she wouldn't even answer the door. Never have made it inside—yet. But if you looked carefully underneath those disgruntled wrinkles, you saw that our visit actually tickled her pink. She'd feel terribly disappointed if we didn't come by every month to greet her through that dark opening in the door."

We didn't disappoint her.

Our last visit on that first evening was with the young Johnson family. Though he always saw the family in Sunday School, Brother Beck now inquired how they were getting on, about the health of the two youngsters, and how things were going with Brother Johnson's job. Everyone cheerfully participated in a discussion of the monthly message, including the new junior companion. After the prayer, we all made a trek to the basement to see the children's new baby hamsters.

On a later visit, after learning that Brother Johnson had played a trombone in high school, Brother Beck, also a one-time trombone player in a local band, brought along his trombone as a surprise, and the two of them had a gay time puffing and tooting on their now little-used instruments.

During those years I was a fortunate companion to a teacher who had a message and knew how to deliver it. In a special way, appropriate to each individual's character, Brother Beck's message was, "We care. We care a lot—in any way that you will let us, as much as you will let us. Why? You're important to us. That's why we care." ○

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City Planning

As a former planning and urban affairs writer for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, I especially appreciated your articles [December] relating to Joseph Smith as a city planner and the influence of his planning on communities in the Mountain West. You may also wish to know that the influence of Joseph Smith and his blueprint for cities is known in Hawaii in the Latter-day Saint community of Laie. Although the community is more than 100 years old, it is still considered to be the best-planned and laid-out town in the entire Aloha State. This is also true of other predominantly Latter-day Saint communities throughout the Pacific region.

ALF PRATTE
SENATE MINORITY ADMINISTRATIVE
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January Issue

I am sure mine will be but one of many letters of thanks inspired by the powerfully moving issue you have produced for January. Superbly hardy describes it. I am especially grateful for the tremendously enlightening article by Brother Hugh Nibley. I hope it will be recognized by all for what it brings to our eternal memories. The conference talks in December's issue were, as always, a showerbath to the soul.

PFC TOM STOKER
FORT MYER, VIRGINIA

From Israel

I thought members of the Church might be interested to know that on September 12, 1969, a Latter-day Saint group was officially organized in Israel under the direction of Swiss Mission President M.

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Elmer Christensen. Sixteen members presently constitute the group, with Darrell L. Hicken presiding as group leader and David B. Galbraith assisting. A combined Sunday School and sacrament meeting is held every Saturday morning in Jerusalem in Brother and Sister Galbraith's home and is often attended by several investigators. We are currently engaged in organizing auxiliary meetings and in trying to contact other members in Israel.

BONNIE Y. WHITE
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

President McKay

I just received my first issue of the *Era*. Oh, what a wonderful magazine! It was really beyond my wildest hopes of an inspirational publication. Reading of the wonderful things in the life of President McKay really strengthened my testimony. I'm a new convert.

MICHAEL R. McMAHON
COTTAGE GROVE, MINNESOTA

Stone Letters

Referring to Mr. Carr's letter [February, "Buff"], I know that there are stone letters on the hills of four mining towns in Arizona: Globe, Miami, Superior, and Ajo. I lived in Globe 19 years and Ajo seven years. There are probably similar letters in Bisbee, Morenci, and Jerome. I doubt that any of these towns were founded by Mormons. However, I believe that Woodruff, a Mormon town, has one. I was intrigued by Mr. Carr's theory. Did miners in Arizona borrow a Mormon tradition or custom?

NORMAN D. SMITH
FREEMONT, CALIFORNIA

Thanks to the Parents

For many years I have felt obligated to the missionary force of the Church, and as a serviceman I have felt the arm of friendship around my shoulder in many, many parts of the world. I think it is about time that I said my thank yous to the folks who work so hard to raise these wonderful young people and then, in the really worthwhile years, as it were, give them up in order that they may serve the Lord in the foreign lands of the globe.

We of the mission areas are indeed thankful for the love and friendship that are offered so freely, and we owe so very much to the parents who have taught their children the gospel principles, put these into action in the home, and then so graciously shared their joys with us of other lands.

My home is ever open to the missionaries. My workshop is available for their broken gadgets and equipment, and yet I feel that we can never repay the parents who unselfishly bring us the blessings that come from working and playing with these choice people. May the folks at home know that we love and admire their sons and daughters. So many of us would not be members of the Church if it were not for the living testimony of the missionary program.

HADLEY A. R. MURTON
HOLYHEAD, ANGLESEY
NORTH WALES

Unanswered

By Jane Merchant

*"What errand took a single bird
Across the rainswept sky
Of evening dusk?" one watcher mused,
But no one made reply.*

*To one who does not deeply know,
The heart cannot explain
The reason for a leisurely
Lone flying in the rain.*

The Spoken Word

"The Spoken Word" from Temple Square, presented over KSL and the Columbia Broadcasting System February 8, 1970. © 1970.

"The character of our country"

By Richard L. Evans

Some historians say there have been some nineteen civilizations rise and fall in human history, and the principal cause for downfall was moral decay. Civilization and survival, are, besides all else, matters of morals. If we have no sound moral foundation, we have no safety, no assurance for the future. "Let us," said Charles Sumner, "turn our thoughts on the character of our country."¹ Let us instill in youth decency, honesty, cleanliness in conduct. Let homes, parents, teachers, textbooks, entertainment, and all else that is offered them—all that goes to make the man—be shaped and fashioned in truth and dignity and decency, so shaped that they can and will sincerely say, "On my honor, I will do my best—To do my duty to God and my Country. . . ."² — to "be prepared,"² — to keep the commandments. Except it be so, we shall find that what we are sowing will rot as it ripens. ". . . there is even now something of ill omen amongst us," said Abraham Lincoln. "I mean the increasing disregard for law . . . the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts. . . ."³ "The world no longer has a choice between force and law," said Dwight Eisenhower. "If civilization is to survive it must choose the rule of law." "At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected?" Lincoln continued. "I answer, If it ever reach us it must spring up amongst us. . . . If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time or die by suicide."³ What then shall we say for the future—what shall we say of what some would call this twentieth civilization? It comes down, finally, to a question of character—the character of each of us—the character of our country. "We—even we here—hold the power and bear the responsibility. . . . We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth."⁴

¹Charles Sumner, "Oration on the True Grandeur of Nations," delivered in Boston, July 4, 1845.

²The Scout Oath and Motto.

³Abraham Lincoln, Address before Young Men's Lyceum, Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1838.

⁴Abraham Lincoln, Annual Message to Congress, 1862.

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The Church Moves On

February 1970

1 The annual penny drive in behalf of the Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City is being conducted this month. In a door-to-door campaign, unique over the years in that not one cent is deducted for the expenses of the drive, people are being urged to be generously old as they contribute at least two cents for each of their years.

6 Although recent storms have caused slippage of earth near the Oakland Temple, President Thomas O. Call reports the temple itself is unharmed. "We have had no slippage, no sliding. The temple is as solid as the Rock of Gibraltar. The problem area is located a block or two away from the temple." Fourteen families living in homes along London Road, below the temple, have moved from their homes. There has been no damage to any Church buildings.

7 The appointments of Alice Rae Clark and Janet Kirtan of Salt Lake City to the general board of the Deseret Sunday School Union were announced.

8 New stake presidencies: Alton L. Wade and counselors Raymond W. Ritchie and Herewini Katene, Hamilton (New Zealand)

South Stake; Charles F. Cagle and counselors Travis T. Tynes and Mack Hayes, Jr., Shreveport (Louisiana) Stake; Leo G. Stewart and counselors LeRoy C. Carlson and Lloyd E. Hansen, North Tooele (Utah) Stake; Lee K. Udall and counselors Wilbur Coombs Woolf and Joseph N. Skousen, Mesa (Arizona) South Stake.

11 President Joseph Fielding Smith announced the appointment of Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve as the Church Historian and recorder. Elder Hunter will continue to serve as president of the Genealogical Society as well.

12 New stake presidency: Barry I. Rusden and counselors Hugh A. Daysh and Matthew T. Chote, Auckland (New Zealand) Stake.

14 With the announcement of the appointment of Barry P. Knudsen of San Diego, California, as a Regional Representative of the Twelve, it was also announced that 16 new regions have been organized and are functioning in the United States.

15 Anaheim (California) West Stake, the 502nd now functioning, was organized by Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of

Two Starkly Simple Verities

By Evalyn Sandberg

*A gentle
but persistent rain
can become
a raging torrent
that will carve
new canyons, forge
new stream beds, and change
the face of the land.*

*A gentle
but persistent habit
can become
a powerful catalyst
that will carve
new patterns, forge
new achievements, and transform
a personality.*

The Spoken Word

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the Twelve from portions of Anaheim Stake. Hugh J. Sorensen is president, with William L. Walker, Jr., and C. Robert Jensen as counselors.

21 The First Presidency announced new advisers to the auxiliaries. Each serves on the Correlation Executive Committee. Elder Marion G. Romney, chairman of the Home Teaching and Family Home Evening committees, will be an adviser to the Relief Society. Elder Richard L. Evans, chairman of the Youth Correlation Committee, will be an adviser to the Sunday School, YMMIA, and YWMA. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, chairman of the Children's Correlation Committee, will be an adviser to the Primary and Sunday School. Elder Thomas S. Monson, chairman of the Adult Correlation Committee, will be an adviser to the Sunday School, YMMIA, YWMA, and Relief Society.

The First Presidency announced the appointment of Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve as chairman of the Church Indian Committee.

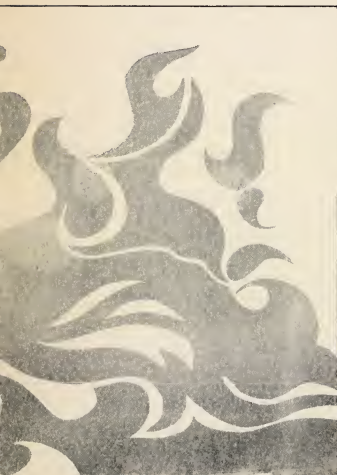
The First Presidency announced the appointment of Myrthus W. Evans, presently patriarch in Mt. Rubidoux (California) Stake, as president of the Los Angeles Temple. He is to be installed at a special temple meeting March 8.

If we are running deeply into debt

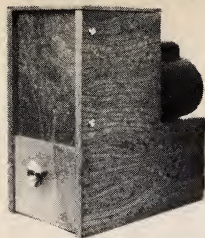
By Richard L. Evans

There is a somewhat mundane matter that calls for comment because it concerns conscience and character, and certainly self-respect. We are referring to the down-drag of an over-due debt, and the self-respect of solvency. This in turn concerns some basic relationships of life. Many marriages run into trouble because of matters of money. Many people run out on responsibilities because of matters of money. Many people avoid other people because of matters of money. Many are worried, unhappy, deeply concerned because of matters of money. And if we are running deeply into debt, unless we change direction we shall run more deeply into debt. Good management in money matters is always important, not forgetting thrift, working, saving; and remembering, before we commit ourselves to pay something, that we shall, by all the means we can, do our best to see it through, and not incur a needless debt without some reasonable assurance of being able to meet it when it comes due. There is this searching question from the Master of mankind: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish."¹ The money we owe represents someone else's work, someone else's effort, someone's saving, someone's giving up something he might have had. Whenever we don't pay a debt, we take something, somehow, from someone—and so we should always consider the ability to repay before borrowing. Sometimes situations appear impossible, and the law gives relief; but we shouldn't use it lightly to escape our commitments. We ought to keep our word, to keep our credit, to keep our trust, to keep the confidence of others in us, to the best of our ability. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"¹

¹Luke 14:28-30.



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The Spoken Word

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If we don't change direction

By Richard L. Evans

There is a simple axiom which says: "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points." There is another simple assertion, modified somewhat for our present purpose, which, in substance, says: If we don't change direction, we will arrive at where we are going. This applies to people personally, to companies, to communities, to countries. If we don't change direction, we shall arrive at where we are going. If, for example, we are running more deeply in debt, we shall continue to run deeper into debt—unless we change direction. If we are doing anything detrimental to health and happiness, if we don't change direction, we shall arrive at ill health and unhappiness. If our relationships with our loved ones are deteriorating, if we are moving toward less happiness in marriage, less happiness at home, sincerely we should search ourselves, and see what part we are playing in the downhill process, before we bring heartbreak to ourselves and to the lives of our loved ones. If we are falsifying, if we are engaging in small degrees of dishonesty, taking things that belong to others and not to us, breaking the law, not being quite truthful or forthright, not giving quite an honest day of effort—if persistently we are moving in such directions, we shall arrive at where they take us. If we are not taking the trouble to learn, to study, to apply ourselves, we shall arrive at wherever we're going, knowing less than we ought to know. Sometimes we live with the hope that something will happen to take us in a different direction. And it may be that something outside ourselves might do so. But even if someone else were to provide us with every opportunity, there would still have to be within us the will, the willingness to learn, to repent, to improve. The way to change is to change. The way to repent is to depart from former practices—to change direction, to turn to the right road. If we don't change direction, we will arrive at where we are going.



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Illustrated by Maurice Scanlon

By Dr. G. Homer Durham

Commissioner and Executive Officer, Utah System of Higher Education

• On Friday, January 23, 1970, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith was sustained as the tenth President of the Church at a meeting in the Salt Lake Temple. President Smith chose as his first counselor in the First Presidency Elder Harold B. Lee. President Lee was sustained as the new president of the Council of the Twelve, succeeding President Smith in that capacity. Elder Spencer W. Kimball was sustained as acting president of the Twelve in view of President Lee's service in the First Presidency. Elder Nathan Eldon Tanner was sustained as second counselor to President Smith.

Upon the death of President David O. McKay, Sunday, January 18, 1970, the former First Presidency was immediately dissolved and the Council of the Twelve became the governing council of the Church, with President Joseph Fielding Smith as the presiding

officer of that body. The smooth, orderly transition in reconstituting the First Presidency was a model for any organization. All systems generally encounter difficulties when the issue of succession occurs, whether families, corporations, schools, churches, or governments. Succession in the presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints follows a constitutional pattern set forth in the revelations contained in the book of Doctrine and Covenants and procedures that have carefully followed that pattern since the death of President Joseph Smith in 1844.

Contemporary organizations, church or otherwise, are confronted with many challenges and problems, simply as organizations. This is especially true when they acquire international character and embrace large-scale operations. The U.S. Department of

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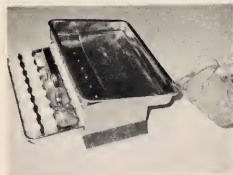
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State is one such. Many studies, official and unofficial, have been made of the complicated offices, bureaus, overseas establishments, committees, and policy groups that have been established to administer the foreign policies of the United States and to provide advice to the President. The organization had become so large and so complicated by the time of John F. Kennedy's presidency that he created his own "little State Department" in the White House.

Communication, to and from the field, is one of the persistent, perplexing problems in large-scale, international organizations. Thousands of cablegrams, radiograms, and other messages flow in and out of the Department of State hourly. In its simpler days, Alfred P. Sloan attempted to direct General Motors by means of finance, engineering and production, and marketing committees, with Mr. Sloan making weekly trips from the finance group in New York to the other groups in Detroit. Much earlier in this century, the papacy, headquartered in Rome, attempted central direction and communication with more than 2,000 dioceses throughout the world by all normal management methods, plus the device of an *ad limina* visit of each bishop, from each diocese, to Rome about every five years. Thus the Pope, as Bishop of Rome, attempted to keep in understanding touch with the two thousand or more other bishops throughout the world. Jet planes, electronic communications, and data processing do not seem to make the organization problems of the contemporary world any simpler or easier.

When the Church was organized 140 years ago, the First and Second Elders, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, could enjoy face-to-face communication with the other four members present on

April 6, 1830. Sections 20 and 21 of the Doctrine and Covenants, however, outlined a constitutional-organization plan of unusual breadth. Section 21, given to guide the new church, set forth the importance of records and record keeping. Additional revelations in the next few years, especially Sections 107 and 124, provided the constitutional basis that has successfully guided the Church from six members onward.

Had President Joseph Fielding Smith come to an office of leadership in a large and powerful nation, with his background of experience, he could have been well-described by such a nation's commentators as "its leading constitutional historian." Certainly, no one has the detailed understanding of the law and doctrines underlying the government of the Church, together with such an extensive experience with its jurisprudence and organization, whether in its national or international setting, as has President Smith.

As President Smith assumed office, the organized stakes of the Church passed the 500 mark. Semiannual general, quarterly stake, annual ward, and other conferences are but one means of communication in the Church. Since 1830, the conference system, however, has been one of the remarkable organizational instruments of an expanding Church. Our accountants, business and other administrators could quickly calculate that in 1970, more than 500 stakes will hold more than 2,000 quarterly conferences; that if a member of the Twelve went to a different stake every week, 40 weeks of the year, and toured one of the 88 missions in some of the remaining weeks, he might get around to each stake and mission about once every dozen years; that the Twelve, their assistants,

the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric (about 36 men), if assigned to 46 conferences per year, could attend only some 1,650 of the more than 2,000 quarterly conferences held by the stakes, and so on.

But as President Brigham Young was fond of saying, "The Lord is at the helm." The growth to a thousand, or two, or ten thousand stakes will not overwhelm and suffocate the organization. And from purely secular considerations, it is clear that activity in the Church produces large numbers of what current administrative literature could call "experienced organization specialists." From home training, through the auxiliaries and quorums, both young men and young women learn to work with the niceties of organization and relationships of people within and among organizations.

President Joseph Smith, from 1830 to 1844, directed printing, mercantile, educational, land-development, city planning, hotel, steamship, coal-mining, and timber operations and other enterprises while establishing stakes in Ohio, Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois, and missions throughout the then United States, Canada, England, and the South Seas.

Assuming the presidency in 1970, President Joseph Fielding Smith enjoys the heritage and knowledge of this extensive organization experience, plus his intimate knowledge of what is much more important: the importance of living in harmony with the commandments of God. The machinery of organization, after all, is only a means. And however fascinating to students of management and administration the Church has been, now is, and will increasingly become, its greater marvels exist in its mission, not organization, in these times. ○

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The Sacrifice of Sarah

By Dr. Hugh Nibley

A Fateful Journey: The history of Palestine has been to a remarkable degree a story of "boom and bust," from prehistoric times down to the present; and that happy and unhappy land has never had a greater boom or a more spectacular bust than occurred in the days of Abraham. Hebron was a brand new city, bustling with activity, when Abraham and his family settled there.⁹⁷ Just to the east were the even more thriving Cities of the Valley, to which Lot migrated to improve his fortune. Preliminary rumblings and prophetic warnings of things to come went unheeded by a populace enjoying unprecedented prosperity (today this is called "nuclear incredulity"), but nonetheless, the area was hit hard by a famine that forced Abraham to move out of Hebron after he had lived there only two years. Everybody was moving to Egypt and settling in the area nearest to Canaan and most closely resembling the geography and economy of the Jordan depression, namely, "the land of Egypt, as thou comest to Zoar," in the eastern Delta, where there had always been camps and villages of Canaanites sojourning in the land. Abraham settled in Zoan, the local capital, a city of Asiatic immigrants that was even newer, by seven years, than Hebron—practically a tent city. There the family lived for five years before they attracted the dangerous interest of Pharaoh.⁹⁸

The story of how Sarah ended up in the royal palace is now available in the recently discovered Genesis Apocryphon, and the account is a thoroughly plausible one. Pharaoh's regular title in this document, "Pharaoh-Zoan, King of Egypt," shows him to be one of those many Asiatics who ruled in the Delta from time to time while claiming, and sometimes holding, the legitimate crown of all Egypt. The short journey from Canaan into his Egyptian domain is described in significant terms: ". . . now we passed through our land and entered into the land of the sons of Ham, the land of Egypt," as if the family was definitely moving from one spiritual and cultural domain to another.⁹⁸ This is interesting because the Book of Abraham lays peculiar emphasis on the Hamitic blood of this particular Pharaoh as well as his anxious concern to establish his authority—always a touchy point with the Delta-Pharaohs, whose right to rule was often challenged by the priests and the people of Upper Egypt. In his new home, Abraham, an international figure in the caravan business, entertained local officials both as a matter of policy and from his own celebrated love of hospitality and of people.

One day he was entertaining "three men," courtiers of "Pharaoh-Zoan," at dinner (G.A. XIX, 24, 27). Abraham would host such special delegations again, in Canaan: there would be the three heavenly visitors whom he would feast "in the plains of Mamre" (Gen. 18:1ff), and the "three Amorite brothers" whom he would have as guests (G.A. XXI, 19-22; Gen. 14:13). The names of these last three were Mamre, 'irmn, and Eshkol. Mamre and Eshkol are well-known place-names, and if we look for 'irmn it is a place-name too, for in the Ugaritic ritual-epic tale of Aqhat, it is "the man of Hrmym" who hosts "the Lords of Hkpt" who come from afar.⁹⁹ If this seems to put Abraham's party in a ritual setting, its historicity is vindicated by the name of the leader of the palace delegation, who is called HRQNWSh. B. Z. Whacholder explains this as "an early transliteration of *archones*," designating its bearer as "the archon, the head of the household," and obviously indicating Hellenistic influence.¹⁰⁰ But *Archones* is neither a name nor a title, and the "early transliteration" leaves much to be desired. On the other

hand, we find in Pharaonic times, in the employ of *Sshmt.t*, the divine lady of the Eastern Delta, the very district where our little drama is taking place, a busy official and agent bearing the title of Hr-hknw, "the Lord of Protection," whose business was to police the area and keep an eye on foreigners, with whom he was Pharaoh's contact man; he is, in fact, according to H. Kees, none other than our old friend Nefertem, the immemorial frontier guard of the northeastern boundary, the official host, border inspector, and watchdog (or rather watch-lion) of the foreigners coming to Egypt—especially from Canaan.¹⁰¹ Nothing could be more natural than to have this conscientious border official checking up on Abraham from time to time and enjoying his hospitality. And since it was his duty to report to Pharaoh whatever he considered of interest or significance on his beat, it is not surprising that a report of HRQNWSh and his aides to the king contained a glowing account of Abraham's dazzling wife. Her beauty had already caused a sensation at the customs house, according to a famous legend.¹⁰² If nothing else, her blondness would have attracted attention among the dark Egyptians: the Midrash reports, in fact, that Abraham had warned her against this very thing: "We are now about to enter a country whose inhabitants are dark-complexioned—say that you are my sister wherever we go!"¹⁰³ This admonition was given as the family passed from Abraham's homeland in northern Mesopotamia (Aram Naharaim and Aram Nahor) into Canaan—clearly indicating that the people of Abraham's own country were light-complexioned.¹⁰³

In reporting to Pharaoh, his three agents, while singing the praises of Sarah's beauty in the set terms of the most sensuous Oriental love-poetry (G.A. XX, 2-8), make a special point

of mentioning that "with all her beauty there is much wisdom in her" (XX, 7), lauding her "goodness, wisdom, and truth" even above her other qualities (XIX, 25). They went all out in their description not only because the subject was worthy of their best efforts, but because they hoped to put themselves in good with the king by both whetting and satisfying his desire.¹⁰⁴ The royal reaction was immediate. Asiatic Pharaohs were polygamous and aggressive: "Sarah was

taken from me by force . . ." (XII, 14; XX, 11); without further ado the king "took her to him to wife and sought to slay me" (XX, 9). Josephus says that this Pharaoh deserved the punishment he got "because of his high-handed manner towards the wife of a stranger" (Ant. I, 8, 1). But as we all know, Abraham was saved when Pharaoh was assured by Sarah herself that he was her brother and would thus not stand in the way of their marriage; instead of being liquidated,

he was therefore, as the brother of the favorite wife, "entreated . . . well for her sake." (Gen. 12:16.)

Sarah on the Lion-couch: Abraham was saved and Pharaoh was pleased and everything was all right except for poor Sarah. It was now her turn to face the test of the lion-couch! As we have seen, not only the royal altar but also the royal bed was a lion-couch. And this was to be more than a test of Sarah's virtue, for should she refuse, the king would be mortally offended—with predictable results for the lady. His unhesitating move to put Abraham out of the way had made it clear enough that His Majesty was playing for keeps. After all, three princesses of the royal line had already been put to death on the lion-altar for refusing to compromise their virtue (Abr. 1:11), and there was no indication that Sarah would be an exception.

The story of Sarah's delivery from her plight follows the same order as the stories of Abraham and Isaac. First of all, being brought to the royal bed "by force," she weeps and calls upon the Lord to save her, at which time Abraham also "prayed and entreated and begged . . . as my tears fell" (XX, 12.) As he had prayed for himself, so the Patriarch "prayed the Lord to save her from the hands of Pharaoh."¹⁰⁵

And though experience may have rendered him perfectly confident in the results, it was the less experienced Sarah who was being tested.¹⁰⁶ The prayer for deliverance closely matches that on the first lion-couch: "Blessed art thou, Most High God, Lord of all the worlds, because Thou art Lord and Master of all and ruler of all the kings of the earth, and of whom thou judgest. Behold now I cry before Thee, my Lord, against Pharaoh-Zoan, King of Egypt, because my wife has been taken from me by force. Judge him for me and let me behold Thy mighty hand descend upon him. . . ." (XX, 12-15.) Even so Abraham had prayed for deliverance from the altar of "Nimrod": "O God, Thou seest what this wicked man is doing to me . . ." with the whole emphasis on the king's blasphemous claims to possess the ultimate power in the world: in both cases Abraham is helpless against the authority and might of Pharaoh, but still he will recognize only one king, and he calls for a showdown: ". . . that night I prayed and begged and said in sorrow . . . let thy mighty hand descend upon him . . . and men shall know, my Lord, that Thou art the Lord of all the kings of the earth!" (XX, 14f.) This is exactly the point of Abraham's prayer in the *Maase Abraham* and Abraham 1:17, where God says, "I have come

The Spoken Word

"The Spoken Word" from Temple Square, presented over KSL and the Columbia Broadcasting System January 18, 1970. © 1970.

"When your heart tells you things your mind does not know"

By Richard L. Evans

There is this phrase, cited by a thoughtful friend: "... when your heart tells you things your mind does not know."! All of us have impressions, promptings, a sense of warning sometimes; an intuition, an awareness, the source of which we do not always know; and we often have to trust our hearts, along with the facts we face. Life isn't merely a mechanical calculator or a slide rule situation. There is the spirit; the feelings; conscience, convictions; things we know are there; things we know are real; things we can't put in a test tube. Love is one of them. Faith is another; a sense of right and wrong; sometimes a sense of urgency; sometimes a sense of assurance. There is so much that can't be physically touched, so much that can't be mechanically calculated. Parents often have impressions pertaining to their children. And children often tease parents to let them do things that had better not be done: "Why can't I do this? Why can't I go there? Why? Why?"—questions that parents often cannot answer with full satisfaction, except that they feel it, they know it, with an inner sense of certainty. As we live for it, wisdom comes from many sources, both within and outside ourselves. And children often have to trust parents, and know that their hearts tell them things their minds do not know. Parents are not perfect, not infallible, but overall, the inspiration, the guidance that comes with prayerful pleading, brings warnings, promptings, impressions from beyond our sight and sound, which no one should stubbornly ignore. Beyond books, beyond all that we can weigh and measure, beyond all the tangibles that we can touch, there are influences and forces within and outside ourselves that we well would pay attention to. As Shakespeare said it: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."² And so, beloved young people, be patient with parents when they counsel, when they are concerned—when the heart tells them things the mind does not know.

¹Harold B. Lee.

²Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I.

down . . . to destroy him who hath lifted up his hand against thee, Abraham, my son. . . ."

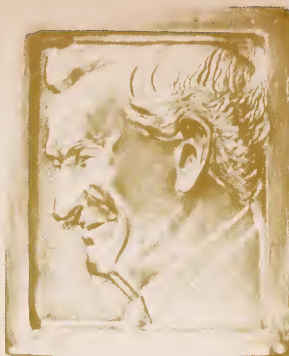
So while "all that night Sarah lay upon her face calling upon God, Abraham "without the prison" also prayed¹⁰⁶ "that he may not this night defile my wife." (G.A. XX, 11-14.) It was, as one might by now expect, just at the moment that Pharaoh assayed to seize Sarah that an angel came to the rescue, whip in hand: "As Pharaoh was about to possess Sarah, she turned to the angel who stood at her side (visible only to her) and immediately Pharaoh fell to the ground; all his house was then smitten with plague, with leprosy on the walls, the pillars, and furniture. . . ."⁷¹⁰⁷ Whenever Pharaoh would make a move toward Sarah, the invisible angel would strike him down.¹⁰⁸ To justify such rough treatment of the poor unsuspecting Pharaoh, the Midrash explains that he was not unsuspecting at all: ". . . an angel stood by with a whip to defend her, because she told Pharaoh that she was a married woman, and he still would not leave her alone." (Gen. Rab. 41:2.) According to all other accounts, however, that is exactly what she did not tell him, having her husband's safety in mind. The almost comical humiliation of the mighty king in the very moment of his triumph is an exact counterpart of the crushing overthrow of "Nimrod" at the instant of his supreme triumph over Abraham. "His illicit lust was checked," says Josephus, "by disease and *stasis*—revolution" (Ant. I, 8, 1), suggesting that his kingly authority was overthrown along with his royal dignity and prowess.

What saved Sarah, according to the Genesis Apocryphon (XX, 16), was the sending by El Elyon, the Most High God, of a *ruach mkdsh* or *ruach bisha*, which Avigad and Yadin render "a pestilential wind" and "a wind that was evil," respectively. Other scholars, however, prefer "spirit" to "wind,"⁷¹⁰⁹ and while *mkdsh* is not found in the dictionary, *miqdash*, which sounds exactly the same, is a very common word indicating the dwelling place of God, so that *ruach mkdash* suggests to the ear "the angel of the presence," such as came to rescue both Abraham and Isaac on the altar. *Ruach b-isha* in turn suggests to the ear "the spirit in the fire," reminding us of a number of accounts of a mysterious being who stood with Abraham in the flames when he rescued him from the altar. The confusion of the rescuing angel with the wind is readily explained if our Aramaic text was written from dictation, as many ancient documents were.

The smiting of all of Pharaoh's

house simultaneously with his own affliction is insisted on by all sources and recalls the "great mourning in Chaldea, and also at the court of Pharaoh" in Abraham 1:20. And just as the king in the Abraham story, when he is faced with the undeniable evidence of a power greater than his own, admits the superiority of Abraham's God and even offers to worship him, so he tells the woman Hagar when Sarah is saved, "It is better to be a maid in Sarah's house than to be Queen in my house!"⁷¹¹⁰ The showdown between the two religions is staged in both stories by the king himself when he pits his own priests and diviners against the wisdom of the stranger and his God, the test being which of the two is able to cure him and his house. An early writer quoted by Eusebius says, "Abraham went to Egypt with all his household and lived there, his wife being married to the king of Egypt who, however, could not approach her. And when it came about that his people and his house were being destroyed he called for the diviners (*manteis*), who told him that Sarah was not a widow, and so he knew that she was Abraham's wife and gave her back to him."¹¹¹ The first part of the statement is supported by the Gen. Apocr. XX, 17-18, which says that Sarah lived two years in Pharaoh's house, during which time he was unable to approach her. During that time she was in no danger of his wrath, however, since as far as Pharaoh was concerned it was not her reluctance but only his illness that kept them apart.

Though Pharaoh's doctors and soothsayers gave him useful advice, as they do "Nimrod" in his dealings with Abraham, it is the healing that is the real test: "And he sent and called of all the wise men of Egypt and all the wizards and all the physicians of Egypt, if perchance they might heal him from that pestilence, him and his house. And all the physicians and wizards and wise men could not heal him, for the wind [spirit, angel] smote them all and they fled." (G.A. XX, 18-20.) Just so the host of wise men summoned by Nimrod to advise him on how to get rid of Abraham were forced to flee ignominiously in all directions by the miraculous fire which left Abraham unscathed. All the wisdom and divinity of Egypt having failed, Pharaoh's agent HRONWSH went straight to Abraham "and besought me to come and to pray for the king and to lay my hands upon him that he might live." (XX, 20f.) To this request Abraham magnanimously complied: ". . . I laid my hand upon his head and the plague departed from



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him and the evil [wind-spirit] was gone and he lived." (XX, 29.) When the healing power of Abraham's God, in contrast to the weakness of his own, became apparent, Pharaoh forthwith recognized Abraham by the bestowal of royal honors—even as "Nimrod" had done when Abraham stepped before him unscathed.¹¹²

That these stories are more than belated inventions of the rabbinic imagination is apparent from the significant parallels with which Egyptian literature fairly swarms. A veritable library of familiar motifs is contained in the late Ptolemaic Tales of Khamuas. They begin with "Ahure's Story," telling how an aging Pharaoh, in order to assure the royal succession, forces the princess Ahure to renounce marriage with her beloved brother Neneferkaptah and wed the son of a general, contrary to "the law of Egypt" but consistent with the practice of the Asiatic Pharaohs.¹¹³ The damsel goes weeping to her wedding (III, 3), but at the last moment the old king changes his mind, the princess marries her true love, and the couple is showered with royal gifts and honors (III, 5-6). They have a child, but Neneferkaptah in his zeal for knowledge steals a heavenly book from Thoth and, as a result, first the child, then the mother, and finally the father pay for the guilt of Neneferkaptah by falling into the Nile, all duly ending up "in the necropolis-hill of Coptos."¹¹⁴ Years later the scribe Setne-Khamuas comes to the tomb of the lady Ahure to get the book for himself, but Neneferkaptah, rising from his couch, says he shall not have it unless he wins it in a game of "Fifty-two."¹¹⁵ Setne wins the book but is undone by another Lady of the Underworld and can only save himself by finally returning the book to Neneferkaptah.¹¹⁶ This Setne has a young son, Si-Osiris, whom he told of his marvelous visit to the other world—an adventure astonishingly like that of Abraham in the Apocalypse of Abraham.¹¹⁷ When an Ethiopian ambassador arrived in Memphis and challenged Pharaoh to read a letter he brought with him, without opening the seal, all the wise men of Pharaoh were abashed and Setne immediately went to fetch his 12-year-old son Si-Osiris to the palace, even as the wonder-child Abraham was taken by his father to the palace of "Nimrod." The boy read the letter with ease: It told of a time long ago when three lords of Ethiopia by magic brought three years of blight on the land of Egypt, for which Pharaoh was punished nightly by being beaten with 500 lashes. The king's wise men were at a loss to help him, and the beating

was administered by Hor, the Son of the Lady of Ethiopia. At Pharaoh's court, however, was another Hor, the son of the librarian Pa-neshe. He turned the tables and forced the Viceroy of Ethiopia to receive the 500 blows each night instead of Pharaoh.¹¹⁸ In desperation the false Hor, "the son of the Sow" (the pig being the Seth animal), undertook a mission to Egypt, being warned by his mother beforehand that he would never be able to match the magic of the Egyptians, though she promised to come personally to his aid if it was necessary to save his life. So the two Horuses confronted each other in a duel of magic at the court of Pharaoh, opening with the cry of the Egyptian Hor: "Ho thou impious Ethiopian, art thou not Hor . . . whom I saved . . . when ye were drowning in the water, being cast down from upon the hill east of On?"—recalling an earlier ritual contest at a "Potiphar's Hill" in Heliopolis.¹¹⁹ The contest begins when Pharaoh in great distress calls upon the good Horus to save him (63)—a reminder that Horus is always a hawk and that the rivalry of the two hawks goes back to very early dramatic texts. (Coffin Text, Spell 312.) Finally the Lady of Ethiopia has to come and rescue her son, who in return for his life swears an oath to Pharaoh that he will not return to Egypt for 1500 years.¹²⁰ Such was the contest of the sealed letter, and having read it Si-Osiris announced that the 1500 years was now up and that he himself was the good Horus, son of Pa-neshes, while the ambassador who brought the letter was none other than the evil Ethiopian Horus returning for vengeance: "I prayed before Osiris in Amenti (the underworld) to let me come forth to the world again, to prevent his taking the humiliation of Egypt to the land of Nehes (Ethiopia)"; his mission accomplished, he returns to the other world.¹²¹

In these episodes one can hardly fail to recognize the legends of Abraham in Egypt: the true lovers separated by Pharaoh only to be reunited; father, mother, and son as sacrificial victims; the king paying for the blight on the land until a foreign substitute can be found; the humiliation of Pharaoh, whipped all night by an unseen hand; the rival kings and the final overthrow of the impostor; the two Horuses; the super-boy putting the king's diviners to shame, etc. Most significant, perhaps, is that these are consciously recurring motifs, with the same characters turning up in a succession of episodes centuries apart. And the fictitious situations are not without historical parallels. Thus when the luxurious and much-married

Amenophis III took to wife the beautiful Nefertiti, a princess of one of the tribes bordering on Abraham's homeland, she brought with her to Egypt the image of her patron goddess Ishtar of Nineveh to heal the old king of an ailment that had baffled the best Egyptian doctors. When the king's health actually improved (albeit for a very short time), the report of the miraculous healing powers of the foreign lady's goddess quickly spread throughout Egypt, opening the way for the successful propagation of her religion throughout the whole land.¹²² Here we have a well-attested historical account of a Pharaoh who married a fabulously beautiful princess from the north who thought of herself as a missionary, and to whose religion the king was converted by a miraculous healing, showing us at the very least the sort of thing that *could* have happened in Sarah's time. The healing of Pharaoh by the laying on of hands described in the Genesis Apocryphon is a thing which appears absolutely nowhere else in any of the known records dealing with Abraham and should be studied with great care. Without the evidence of the New Testament, we should never suspect that there was any ancient and established tradition behind it: "The healing of the sick by expelling with the laying on of hand the evil spirits," writes Vernes, ". . . is unknown in the Old Testament, but a familiar rite in the Gospels. . . . the nearest Old Testament parallel is 2 Kings VI, 11."¹²³

That we are dealing here with ritually conditioned events rather than unique historical occurrences is apparent from the complete repetition of Sarah's Egyptian experience with *another* king many years later. Abimelech, the king of Gerar, a small state lying between Canaan and Egypt, also took Sarah to wife and would have put Abraham to death had she not again announced that he was her brother.¹²⁴ Again Sarah prayed and again an angel appeared, this time with a sword, to save her.¹²⁵ At the same time, according to one tradition, "the voice of a great crying was heard in the whole land of the Philistines, for they saw the figure of a man walking about, with a sword in his hand, slaying all that came in his way. . . ."¹²⁶ This was "on the fatal night of the Paschal feast," i.e., at the time of the drama of the Suffering Servant, and the king became so ill that the doctors despaired of his life.¹²⁷ Just as Pharaoh had done, the king summoned all his wise counselors and again they were helpless and abashed (Gen. 20:8); again Abraham's wife was restored to him (14), and again "Abraham prayed

unto God: and God healed Abimelech." (Gen. 20:17.)

What is behind all this is indicated in the nature of the illness that afflicted the houses of both Abimelech and Pharaoh. As to the first, "the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife." (Gen. 20:18.) The legends elaborate on this: "... in men and beast alike all the apertures of the body closed up, and the land was seized with indescribable excitement."¹²⁸ In short, every creature was rendered sterile until Abraham administered to Abimelech, whereupon "all his house were healed, and the women could bear children with no pain, and they could have male children"; at the same moment, Sarah, barren until then, became fruitful, "the blind, deaf, lame, etc., were healed, and the sun shone out 48 times brighter than usual, even as on the first day of creation."¹²⁹ To celebrate the birth of Isaac, all the kings of the earth were invited to Abraham's house, and during the festivities Sarah gave milk to all the Gentile babies whose mothers had none, and "all the proselytes and pious heathen are the descendants of these infants."¹³⁰ As for Pharaoh, the common tradition is that the plague which smote his house, whether leprosy or some other disease, rendered all the people impotent and sterile.¹³¹

That this was the nature of the complaint is implied in the tradition that Abraham's powers of healing the sick by prayer were especially devoted to the healing of barren women. (Midr. Rab. 39:11.) By emerging victorious from the contests with Pharaoh and Abimelech, both Sarah and Abraham by their mutual faithfulness reversed the blows of death, so that they became new again and had children in their old age.¹³² As the Zohar puts it, Abraham received a new grade of knowledge and henceforth "begat children on a higher plane."¹³³

Here Sarah appears as the central figure in that ritual complex that marks the New Year all over the ancient world, and has been noticed in these studies in its form of the Egyptian Sed-festival. The theme of Sarah's royal marriages is not lust but the desire of Pharaoh and Abimelech to establish a kingly line. Sarah was at least 61 when she left the house of Pharaoh and 89 when she visited Abimelech. Pharaoh's only interest in Sarah, Josephus insists, was to establish a royal line; or, as B. Beer puts it, "his object was rather to become related to Abraham by marriage," i.e., he wanted Abraham's glory, and that was the only way he could get it.¹³⁴ Abimelech's interest is completely dominated by the fertility motif, for he

contests with Abraham over "a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away" (Gen. 21:25), even as Sarah had been violently taken away; and just as Abimelech surrendered and pleaded his innocence in the case of Sarah (20:9), so he pleads ignorance also in the case of the well and even chides Abraham again for not enlightening him: "I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day." (Gen. 21:26.) To complete the scene, Abraham concludes the episode by planting one of his groves in the land of the Philistines. (Gen. 21:33.) If Sarah is the bounteous and child-giving mother, Abraham no less presides over the life-giving waters.

That this is the ritual setting of the Abimelech episode is confirmed by documents probably as old as Abraham that describe the goings-on among the Canaanites on the coast to the north of Gerar. These are the famous Ugaritic texts from Ras Shamra, and the best-known of them is the story of Krt. The latest critical study of the Krt drama maintains that it is both a ritual and a historical document, "the subject of the first tablet" being "the rehabilitation of the royal house after disaster, with the wooing of Krt," while the second tablet describes the royal wedding and in the third we have "the illness and threatened eclipse of Krt (the ritual king), when his eldest son Ysb seeks to supplant him."¹³⁵ The drama has a definite moral and social object, according to Gray, "such as the securing of a legitimate queen and the establishment of a royal line."¹³⁶ In the Krt story the powers of the old king are failing, and he is told by his youthful would-be successor: "In the sepulchral thou wilt abide. . . . Sickness is as thy bedfellow, Disease as thy concubine. . . ." "Just so Abimelech is told that if he takes Sarah to wife, "thou art a dead man!" (Gen. 20:3-4.) After three months of sickness (Abraham spent three months in the palace of Pharaoh, according to R. Eliezer), "Krt is passing away, yea . . . in the sepulchral chamber, like a treasure with a gate"—it is so much like the lion-couch scene in the Sed-festival that we are not surprised to learn that Krt is first frantically mourned and then revived by two ladies.¹³⁸ The cure is effected by the lady Qudshu, whom we have already learned to know as the common hierodule of Egypt and Canaan.¹³⁹ First she arrives weeping at the house of Krt, "shrieking she enters the inmost chambers"; but then she starts to revive the king, who is not completely dead yet,¹⁴⁰ and finally "she returns, she washes him. She has given him a new appetite for meat,

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a desire for food."¹⁴¹ The king rises from his bier, victorious: "As for Death, he is confounded; as for Sh'tqt, she has prevailed!" So of course there is a great feast as the king "returns to sitting upon his throne, even on the dais, the seat of government."¹⁴² It is the lion-couch drama all over again, but the Abimelech elements are prominent too, as when the king's wise men and counselors all are summoned and asked, "Who among the gods will abolish the disease, driving out all the sickness?" Seven times the challenge is put, but "there is none among the gods who answers him"—the doctors are abashed; they must yield to the true god, El the Merciful, who says, "I myself will do it"—and he does.¹⁴³ Of course, it rains and everything grows at last (Mot, the name of the adversary, means both death and drought); Krt on his bier is even called "Sprouts"—a vivid reminder of the Egyptian "Osiris beds."¹⁴³

The Ugartite Krt Text gives strong indication that the adventures of Sarah with Egyptian and Palestinian kings follow the common ritual pattern of Palestine and Egypt; indeed, the point of both stories is that Sarah and Abraham resist and overcome powerful and insidious attempts to involve them in the very practices of the idolatrous nations which Abraham had been denouncing since his youth. It would be impossible to avoid coming face to face with such practices in any comprehensive account of either Abraham or Sarah, and one of the best and most vivid descriptions of the rites is contained in the Book of Abraham. We are dealing here with a worldwide ritual complex of whose existence no one dreamed in 1912 and which is still largely ignored by Egyptologists.^{143a} It is not only the idea of romantic love that is one of the special marks of the Patriarchal narratives, as Gordon points out; even more conspicuous is the repeated recurrence of a ritual love triangle in which a third party threatens to break up a devoted couple. Such is the story of Hagar, who sought to supplant Sarah in Abraham's household and was turned out into the desert to perish of thirst—always the water motif! Being in imminent danger of death, Hagar prays, "Look upon my misery"—which happens to be the opening line of Abraham's prayer on the altar—¹⁴⁴ whereupon an angel appears and tells her, "... God has heard your prayer," promising her a son. (Gen. 16:6-11.) So here, to cut it short, we have Hagar praying for deliverance from a heat death, visited by an angel, and promised the same blessing in her hour of crisis as was given to Sarah and Abraham in theirs. There

is a difference, of course: by "despising" and taunting her afflicted mistress and then by deserting her, Hagar had *not* been true and faithful, and the angel sternly ordered her back to the path of duty, while the promises given to her offspring are heavy with qualifications and limitations. The issue is as ever one of authority, for as Josephus puts it, Hagar sought precedence over Sarah, and the angel told her to return to her "rulers" (*despotas*) or else she would perish, but if she obeyed she would bear a son who would rule in that desert land.¹⁴⁵ She too founded a royal line.

In maintaining that "Abraham's marriage with Keturah (Gen. 25:1-6) can have no historical foundation,"¹⁴⁶ scholars have overlooked the ritual foundation of the story, clearly indicated by the name of Keturah, which enjoys a prominent place in the Adonis ritual cycles of Phoenicia and Syria.¹⁴⁷ As Gray points out in his study of Krt, these ritual events could very well become history as well when the sacrifices and marriages were repeated "at the accession of each new king" and "at royal weddings."¹⁴⁸ The ritual content of the thing, far from discrediting it as history, is the best possible evidence for some sort of historical reality behind it. The ritual triangle is repeated when Bethuel the King of Haran tries to take the beautiful Rebecca (who, we are told, was the exact image of Sarah) away from Isaac's agent, Eliezer (who, we are told, was the exact image of Abraham); the wicked king was slain by his own treachery and the noble couple departed laden with royal gifts.¹⁴⁹

The Humiliation of the King: In this last story the real hero is Eliezer, while the bridegroom-to-be, Isaac, lurks ignominiously in the background. Abraham likewise in the affairs with Pharaoh and Abimelech not only takes a back seat but appears in a rather uncomplimentary if not actually degrading position. This is an indispensable element of the year-drama everywhere: the temporary humiliation of the true king while a rival and substitute displaces him on the throne and in the queen's favor. We have seen both Abraham and Isaac in the roles of substitute kings or "Suffering Servants," and now we must make room for Sarah on the stage, for the play cannot take place without her. The "Suffering Servant" is the true king during the period of his ritual humiliation, representing his death; at that time his place is taken by a pretender, an interrex, tantist, Lord of Misrule, etc., who turns out to be the *real* substitute when the time for his death arrives. Both are substitutes but in different capacities:

the one king sits on a real throne but suffers a make-believe burial; the other sits on a make-believe throne but suffers a real burial. As we saw in the Sed-festival, the main purpose of all this shuffling is to spare the real king the discomfort of a premature demise: the true king is always vindicated in the end. If Abraham was rudely thrust aside by his royal rivals in Egypt and Palestine, and if Sarah was made the unwilling victim of their kingly arrogance, it was only to show who the real king was—they, as it turned out, were for all their pride and power the pretenders, claiming the divine honors that really belonged to Abraham. Abraham is the rival of Pharaoh and Abimelech, both of whom are ready to put him to death in order to raise up a royal line by Sarah.¹⁵⁰ That he is the real king, restored to his rightful queen in the end, is made perfectly clear in the almost comical complaints of the two kings that they, who had contemptuously thrust the helpless Abraham aside, were actually the victims of his power: "And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is that that thou hast done unto me?" (Gen. 12:18; italics added), while Abimelech echoes his words: "Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? . . . thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done." (Gen. 20:9.) The roles of victim and victor are almost ludicrously reversed. And just as Pharaoh-Nimrod complained that Abraham had escaped the altar by a trick, so does Pharaoh-Zoan complain that Sarah has escaped his couch by a ruse: "... why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? . . . now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way." (Gen. 12:18-19.)

The Sarah story starts out with Abraham and Sarah alike at the mercy of the triumphant and irresistible king, and it ends up with the king humiliated by pain and impotence, humbly suing Abraham for succor and then acknowledging that superior power and priesthood of his rival. There is no injustice here: Abraham does not invade their kingdoms or seek their thrones, but the other way around—they coveted his rightful domain and were properly rebuked.

While the humiliation of the rightful king before his return to the throne is a central episode of the great Year-Rites throughout the Ancient East,¹⁵¹ the queen plays quite a different role: she is ageless and immortal, the Mother Earth itself, taking a new spouse at each cycle of renewal and disposing of the old one.¹⁵² This makes her the dominant figure of the rites, which have a distinctly matriarchal back-

ground—as is clearly indicated in the Book of Abraham, where, moreover, the tension between the old matriarchal and rival patriarchal orders is vividly set forth: While Abraham is completely devoted to the authority of “the fathers . . . even the right of the first-born . . .” (Abr. 1:3), Pharaoh was put on the throne by his mother (1:23-25), so that though he “would fain claim” patriarchal authority (1:27), “seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers” (1:26), the importance of the female line still outweighed that of the fathers, as it always did in Egypt. The conflict between Pharaoh’s would-be patriarchal rule and the claims of the matriarchy is further reflected in the putting to death of three princesses of royal blood who refused to play the game Pharaoh’s way and compromise their virtue. (Abr. 1:11-12.) Abraham opposed the royal claims that his father ardently supported, in secure possession of “the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood,” which records “God preserved in mine own hands. . . .” (Abr. 1:31.) And in return Terah volunteered his own son as a victim in the sacrificial rites. (Abr. 1:30.) This should be enough to explain how Sarah and Abraham get involved in all these very pagan goings-on.

Recently Cyrus Gordon has demonstrated the singularly close parallelism between the stories of Sarah and Helen of Troy, the main theme of both being the winning back of the captive queen by her rightful husband: In turn each of the rival husbands is made to look rather ridiculous as the lady leaves first one and then the other.¹⁵³ In the earliest Babylonian depictions of the year-motif we see the bridegroom hiding ingloriously in the mountain from which the bride must rescue and revive him,¹⁵⁴ even as Isis rescues and revives her husband and brother Osiris in the Egyptian versions. And so we have Abraham in an oddly unheroic role, gratefully accepting the presents and favors that Pharaoh bestows upon him as the brother of Sarah, the king’s favorite wife!¹⁵⁵

Brother and Sister: Still less heroic is the supposed subterfuge by which Abraham got himself into that undignified position. The best biblical scholars in Joseph Smith’s day as well as our own have found nothing to condone in what is generally considered an unedifying maneuver on the part of Abraham to save his skin at the expense of both Sarah and Pharaoh. “Abram appears to have labored under a temporary suspension of faith,” wrote the most learned commentator of Joseph Smith’s time, “and to have



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had not the Lord miraculously inter-
posed . . . Abram must have sunk under
his timidity, and forfeited his title to
the covenant.¹⁵⁰ How they all missed
the point! Far from denoting a suspen-
sion of faith, the turning over of his
wife to another required the greatest
faith yet, and that is where the Book
of Abraham puts the whole story on a
meaningful and edifying footing. For
it was God who commanded Abra-
ham: ". . . see that ye do on this wise:
Let her say unto the Egyptians, she is
thy sister, and thy soul shall live."
(Abr. 2:23-24). As to the "lie" about
the family relationship of Abraham
and Sarah, a number of factors must
be considered. Technically, the Bible
explains, Sarah was indeed Abraham's
half-sister on his father's side. (Gen.
20:12.) To this physical relationship,
the Zohar adds a spiritual, reporting
that "Abraham always called her sister"
because he was attached to her in-
separably. . . . For the marital bond
can be dissolved, but not that between
brother and sister"—so by an eternal
marriage that the world did not under-
stand they were brother and sister.¹⁵⁷
More to the point, in Syria, Canaan,
and Egypt at the time it was the com-
mon custom to refer to one's wife as
one's "sister," and "Abraham's life re-
flects both the Semitic and the Hur-
rian cultural and legal patterns," so
that "Sarah was . . . a 'sister-wife,' an
official Hurrian term signifying the
highest social rating."¹⁵⁸ On the other
hand, everyone knows that it was the
custom for Pharaohs of Egypt to marry
their sisters, and in the Egyptian love
songs the non-royal lovers regularly
address each other as "my sister" and
"my brother." The same custom ap-
pears in Canaan and even in the
Genesis Apocryphon, the opening frag-
ments of which show us the mother
of Noah berating her husband Lamech
for suspecting her virtue, but address-
ing him throughout the scene as "my
Brother and my Lord." Indeed, in
Abraham's day "both in Egypt and
Canaan," according to Albright, "the
notion of incest scarcely existed. In
fact, Phoenicia and Egypt shared a
general tendency to use 'sister' and
'wife' simultaneously."¹⁵⁹

But whatever the *reservation mentale*
behind the statement that Abraham
and Sarah were brother and sister,
the point of the story is that it was
meant to convey to the kings that the
two were *not* married—the sophistry
of the thing would only render it more
unsavory did we not have the real
explanation in the Pearl of Great
Price.

Sarah on Her Own: By telling

Pharaoh and Abimelech that Abraham
really was her brother, Sarah put the
two kings in the clear. From then on
they, at least, were acting in good faith.
The Bible makes this very clear: the
moment Pharaoh learns the truth, he
lets Sarah go, saying to Abraham,
". . . why didst thou not tell me that
she was thy wife? Why saidst thou,
She is my sister? so I might have taken
her to me to wife. . . ." (Gen. 12:18-19).
"I did what I did," says Abimelech,
"with perfect heart and pure hand,"
to which the Lord replies in a dream,
"I knew that, and I forgave thee."
(See Gen. 20:5-6.) So it is made per-
fectly explicit that it is not the kings
who are being tested—God honors and
rewards them both for their behavior,
which is strictly correct according to
the customs of the times.

It must be Abraham and Sarah who
are being tested then. But Abraham
too is out of it, for, as we have seen,
the Lord *commands* him to ask Sarah
to say he is her brother, and he obeys.
But no one commands Sarah—the
whole thing is left up to her as a
matter of free choice. It is she and
she alone who is being tested on the
lion-couch this time. It is incorrect to
say with Graves that "Abraham gave
Sarah to Pharaoh,"¹⁶⁰ for he was in
no position to do so: he was completely
in Pharaoh's power—he had already
taken Sarah by force—and Pharaoh
was listening only to Sarah! The Rabbis
who knew the ancient law say that
only unmarried women were taken into
the harem of Pharaoh, and that these
could not be approached by the king
without their own consent.¹⁶¹ It might
mean death to her if she refused, but
still to refuse was within her power,
while Abraham was helpless to save
her and Pharaoh was acting in good
faith—throughout the story every cru-
cial decision rests with Sarah and
Sarah alone.

Why do we say that no one com-
mands Sarah? God commanded Abra-
ham to propose a course of action to
Sarah, but Abraham did not command
Sarah—he asked her humbly for a
personal favor: "Therefore say unto
them, I *pray thee*, thou art my sister,
that it may be well with *me* for *thy*
sake, and my soul shall live because of
thee." (Abr. 2:25; Gen. 12:13. Italics
added.) He explained the situation to
her—"I, Abraham, told Sarai, my wife,
all that the Lord had said unto me"—
but the decision was entirely up to her.
According to the Midrash, on this oc-
casion "Abraham made himself of
secondary importance . . . he really
became subordinate to Sarah." (Midr.
Rab. 40:4.) Everything was done for
her sake: ". . . the Lord plagued
Pharaoh and his house with great

plagues because of [Sarah]" (Gen. 12:17; Gen. Apoc. XX, 24f); Abraham was given both life and property "for Sarah's sake," and the king "entreated Abraham well for her sake" (Gen. 12:16). Sarah was legally and lawfully married to both kings and was thus the legitimate recipient of their bounty. Pharaoh, according to Rabbi Eliezer, "wrote for Sarah a marriage deed, giving her all his wealth including the land of Goshen. . . ."¹⁶² He "took her to him to wife and sought to slay me," says Abraham in the Genesis Apocryphon (XX, 9), "... and I, Abraham, was saved because of her and not slain" (10). From this Vermes concludes that "Abraham is indebted to Sarah for his life but not for his prosperity," having received riches in return for healing Pharaoh.¹⁶³ But the verses on which he bases this view may be more easily interpreted as meaning that it was to Sarah rather than Abraham that the Pharaoh gave the treasures, the badly damaged lines reading:

31. . . . And the King gave him a large . . . the gift (?) much and much raiment of fine linen and purple [several words missing]

32. before her, and also Hagar [several words obscured] . . . and appointed men for me who would escort out [several words missing].

Now the Jewish traditions are quite explicit that it was to Sarah that Pharaoh gave the royal raiment and the maid Hagar. Since Abraham is writing in the first person, it is not absolutely certain who the "him" is in line 31, but the "her" in the next line is certainly Sarah, and there is no indication that the gifts and Hagar were not for her. The Bible clearly states that Abraham came into possession of Hagar only later when Sarah "gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife" (Gen. 16:3), i.e., Sarah gave more than permission to marry—she actually handed over her property to him, for Hagar was her personal maid (Gen. 16:1). And when Hagar behaved badly, Abraham, to keep peace, gave her back to Sarah again: "Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee." (Gen. 16:6.) When Sarah sent Isaac forth to school (as she thought) or to the rites on Mt. Moriah, "she dressed him in the royal garments and crown that Abimelech had given her."¹⁶⁴ Everything indicates that she was a princess in her own right—the gifts of her royal husbands did not so much bestow as recognize her royalty, for which they eagerly sought her hand in the first place, hoping to raise up kingly lines by her. Before her name was changed to Sarah, "Princess of all people," it



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had already been Sarai, "Princess of her own people," according to the Midrash; and before she ever married Abraham she was well-known by the name of Jiska, "the Seeress," either because she had the gift of prophecy or because of her shining beauty, or both.¹⁶³

The Rabbis have resented the superior rating of Sarah with its matriarchal implications, and attempted to cover it up. Granted that everything that Pharaoh gave to Abraham was for Sarah's sake (Gen. Rab. 45:1), the doctors must conclude that Pharaoh acted unwisely, and they hold up as a proper example the case of Abimelech, who, according to them, gave his gifts to Abraham rather than Sarah. Yet these same authorities report that this same Abimelech "gave to Sarah a costly robe that covered her whole person . . . a reproach to Abraham that he had not fitted Sarah out with the splendor due his wife"—it would seem that Sarah has her royal claims after all.^{166*}

Actually the idea of rivalry between Abraham and Sarah is as baseless as that between Abraham and Isaac when we understand the true situation, in which neither party can fulfill his or her proper function without the other. Having been commanded of the Lord, Abraham explained the situation to his wife and asked her whether she would be willing to go along. (Abr. 2:25.) According to the Genesis Apocryphon, he did not like the idea at all—it was a terrible sacrifice for him: "And I wept, I Abram, with grievous weeping." (G.A. XX, 9-10.)

Would he have wept so for his own life, which he had so often been willing to risk? Why, then, did he ask Sarah to risk her person to save him: "... say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister . . . and my soul shall live because of thee"? Plainly because nothing else would move Sarah to take such a step. There was nothing in the world to keep her from exchanging her hard life with Abraham for a life of unlimited ease and influence as Pharaoh's favorite except her loyalty to her husband. By a special order from heaven Abraham had stepped out of the picture and Pharaoh had been placed in a legally and ethically flawless position, and Sarah knew it: "I Abraham, told Sarai, my wife, all that the Lord had said to me." Why is the brilliant prospect of being Queen of Egypt never mentioned as an inducement or even a lightening of Sarah's burden? Sarah apparently never thinks of that, for she was as upset as Abraham: "Sarai wept at my words that night." (G.A. XIX, 21.) Still, the proposition was never put to her as a command, but only as a personal request from Abraham: "Please say you

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are my sister for the sake of my well-being, so that through your ministration I shall be saved, and owe my life to you!" (see Gen. 12:13); and so with Abimelech: "This will be a special favor which I am asking of you in my behalf. . . ." (See Gen. 20:13). Abraham is abiding by the law of God; the whole question now is, *Will Sarah abide by the law of her husband?* And she proved that she would, even if necessary at the risk of her life. It was as great a sacrifice as Abraham's and Isaac's, and of the same type.

The Cedar and the Palm, a Romantic Interlude: Some famous episodes are associated with the crossing of the border into Egypt, such as Abraham's beholding Sarah's beauty for the first time as they waded the stream—"a beauty in comparison with which all other beauties are like apples. . . ." ¹⁶⁹ It was under like circumstances that King Solomon is said to have first beheld the beauty of the Queen of Sheba. ¹⁷⁰ Again, Abraham concealed his wife's beauty by trying to smuggle her across the border in a trunk, on which he was willing to pay any amount of duty provided the officials would not open it; of course, they could not resist the temptation and were quite overpowered by this Pandora's box in reverse. ¹⁷¹

But the story of the cedar and the palm has the most interesting parallels of all: "And I Abram dreamed a dream in the night of our going up into the land of Egypt, and what I beheld in my dream was a cedar tree and a palm-tree. . . [words missing] and men came and tried to cut down and uproot the cedar while leaving the palm standing alone. And the palm tree called out and said, 'Do not cut the cedar! Cursed and shamed whoever [words missing]. So the cedar was spared in the shelter of the palm.'" (G.A. XIX, 14-16.) We have seen that Abraham was often compared with a cedar, and that the palm could be either Sarah or the hospitable Pharaoh. ¹⁷² But when we read in the Genesis Apocryphon that "for the sake of the palm the cedar was saved" (XIX, 16), we recall the unforgettable image of the mighty Odysseus, clad only in evergreen branches, facing the lovely princess Nausicaa, as in an exquisitely diplomatic speech he compares her with the tall sacred palm standing in the courtyard of the temple at Delos. In return for the compliment, the princess dresses the hero in royal garments and conducts him to the palace. Later, when the two meet for the last time, the damsel makes good-natured fun of the way she had saved the mightiest man alive, but in return Odysseus solemnly tells her that it was no joke: "For you really did save

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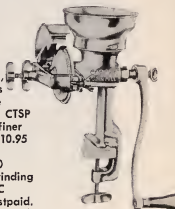
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my life, lady, and I shall never forget it!"¹⁷³ Here, then, the palm again saved the cedar. If scholars are now inclined to compare Sarah with Helen of Troy, it is pleasanter and even more appropriate to compare her with the chaste and clever Nausicaa, the most delightful of ancient heroines.

The humiliation of Odysseus, who appears first supplicating the princess while covered with dirt and leaves and then trails after her wagon publicly dressed in women's clothes, is a moment of matriarchal victory, as is the humiliation of Abraham. The meeting ground of the two stories is appropriately Egypt, for in the Tale of the Two Brothers, in which scholars have discerned the background of a wealth of biblical motifs, especially those of the Patriarchal stories, we meet the same strange combination of elements: the hero as a cedar tree threatened with destruction, the royal laundry ladies by the river, the trip to the palace, the humiliation of the king and his ultimate restoration, and all the rest.¹⁷⁴ The felling of the cedar is also the fall of Adonis in the Attis-Adonis cult, related in turn to the Osiris mysteries and the cult of Sirius, according to C. Autran.¹⁷⁵ Already in the Pyramid Texts Osiris is the king "who takes men's wives from them"—why should not Pharaoh be an Osiris in this as in other dramatic situations?¹⁷⁶ What might be called "the palace scandal" occurs repeatedly in the Patriarchal traditions. Rebecca, like Sarah, was rescued from the clutches of a king, leaving the palace laden with treasure while her true spouse lurks ingloriously in the background.¹⁷⁷ Abimelech, who tried to take Sarah for wife, later attempted to take Rebecca in the same way.¹⁷⁸ When Sarah died "hospitality ceased; but when Rebecca came the gates were again opened."¹⁷⁹ In all these operations Rebecca, we are assured, "was the counterpart of Sarah in person and spirit," the living image of Sarah.¹⁸⁰ Sarah is thus the ageless mother and perennial bride: the whole point of the birth of Isaac is that she becomes young again—"Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. 18:11-15). Firmicus Materus informs us that the early Christians saw in the Egyptian cult of Serapis, the last stage of the Osiris mysteries, the celebration of the Sarra-pais, "the son of Sarah," with Sarah as the mother of the new king.¹⁸¹ Which may not be so farfetched, since that was exactly Pharaoh's intention in taking her to wife, according to Josephus. The story of the testing of the bride's moral fiber and the humiliation of the arrogant bridegroom is carried on down through the line of Abraham's female descendants: There

was Tamar and her strange affair with her two half-brothers, ending with the death of both and her marriage with her father Judah;¹⁸² and then another Tamar, daughter of David, who carried on with her half-brother (2 Sam. 13:13)—a reminder that Abraham and Sarah were half-brother and -sister.

Here it is in order to note that the legends of Abraham's birth and childhood are dominated by the conflict between matriarchy and patriarchy, with Abraham's mortal foe and rival, Nimrod, as the arch-defender of the matriarchy. To forestall the birth of Abraham, foretold by the stars, he first attempts to bar all contact between men and women; then he orders all expectant mothers shut up in a great castle: when a girl baby is born, she and her mother are sent far from the castle showered with gifts and crowned like queens, while all boy babies are immediately put to death.¹⁸³ And while Abraham's father supports Nimrod and tries to destroy the infant, his mother saves him by hiding him in a cave: her name, Emtelai, is a reminder that this is the age-old Amalthea motif.

Breaking the Mold: Facsimile No. 1 and the explanation thereof admonish the student not to be too surprised to find Father Abraham deeply involved in the abominable rites of the heathen. This, admittedly, is not a healthy situation, but then the point of the whole thing is that Abraham is fighting the system, and his is a life-long struggle. In the process of meeting the foe on his own ground he finds himself in one unpleasant situation after another—unpleasant and strangely familiar. The familiarity of the setting, as we have insisted all along, vouches for the authenticity of the tradition. The Abraham stories are poured into an ancient mold—but Abraham cracks the mold. One of the most striking examples of the shattered mold is the famous romance of Joseph and Asenath, a reediting of the story of Abraham and Sarah in an authentic Egyptian setting.

Everything in this romantic tale reverses the order of the conventional Near-Eastern Romance. True, it begins with the maiden locked up in her tower, the proud heiress of the matriarchy disdaining all men and rejecting all lovers, according to the standard fairy-tale formula going back as far as the Egyptian romances of the Doomed Prince and the Two Brothers. But presently she falls desperately in love with Joseph, of whose love she feels abjectly unworthy. G. von Rad insists that the Joseph stories are the purest fiction, "durch und durch novellistisch," and have no place in the Patriarchal histories.¹⁸⁴ But he overlooks the all-important ritual element

that places Joseph and Asenath in the long line of holy couples: Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel, Moses and Zippora, Aaron and Elisheba, etc.¹⁸⁵

The undeniable link between the Abraham and the Joseph romances is the key name of Potiphar; for just as the testing of Abraham takes place at Potiphar's Hill, so the triumph of Joseph over the practices of the heathen and the wicked Prince of Egypt takes place at Potiphar's castle, Potiphar being none other than the father of Asenath. While the Prince of Egypt attempts to seize and marry Asenath against her will (the Sarah motif), Joseph is so moved by her tears that he refuses even to kiss her and instead puts his hand on her head and gives her a blessing, telling her that in spite of her Egyptian parentage she is of the true blood of Abraham, "for whom she was chosen before the world was." (Joseph & Asenath 8:8-9.) So here then is the basic issue of the rival dynasties.

Weeping all night on her royal couch in the depths of humiliation amid sackcloth and ashes, the damsel prays for death, since she feels utterly unworthy of marrying Joseph. Just as she is at the point of death an angel appears and greets her as he had once greeted Abraham and Sarah in a like situation (14:11)—it is the old delivery-by-an-angel motif. Instead of defending the lady's honor with sword or whip, the angel orders her to remove the veil from her head, because, he tells her, "thy name is written in the Book of Life; from this time on thou art created anew, formed anew, given a new life; thou shalt eat the bread of life and drink of immortality, and be anointed with the oil of incorruptibility, and then become the bride of Joseph for all eternity." (15:4-6.) As the lady prayed on the bed that was to be her funeral couch, "the Morning star rose in the East . . . a sign that God had heard her prayer" (14:1); it was the precursor of the sunrise and the resurrection, as well as the ruling luminary (the Shagreen) of the rites of the sacred marriage (the hieros gamos) throughout the ancient world. The angel instructed Asenath to change her black garment of death to a pure white wedding dress, "the most ancient, primal Wedding-garment," whereupon she kisses the feet of the heavenly visitor (who, incidentally, is in the exact image of Joseph!), who takes her by the hand and leads her "out of the darkness into the light." (15:10-11.) The two then sit upon her undefiled bed to partake of bread and wine supplied by the bride while the angel miraculously produces a honeycomb for a true love-feast in the manner of

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the primitive Christians. (15:14, 16:1.)

If one compares this with the "Setne" romance or the Tales of the Two Brothers of Foredoomed Prince, or with the stories of Aqhat or Krt, or numerous Greek myths, one will recognize at every turn the same elements in the same combination—but what a difference! The heathen versions are full of violence and bestiality, with one brother murdering another and the lady deceiving and destroying her lovers; there is no better example of both the ritual and historical situation than the account in the eighth chapter of Ether where the throne is transmitted after the manner of "them of old" by a series of ritual murders supervised by the queen. In the Sed-festival, Moret points out, the king's wife represented the unending fecundity of the earth, while the Pharaoh was one whose failing powers were arrested by a sacrificial death, effected since the middle of the 4th Millennium B.C., by the use of a substitute.¹⁸⁶ This is the sort of thing in which Abraham and Sarah become unwillingly involved—a desperate perversion of the true order of things. The first Pharaoh, being a good man who "judged his people wisely and justly all his days," had tried hard to do things right, would "fain claim" the right of the priesthood, and was always "seeking to imitate that order established by the fathers." (Abr. 1:26-27.) But the best he could come up with was an *imitation*, being "cursed . . . as pertaining to the Priesthood." Abraham, possessed of the authentic records (1:28), knew Pharaoh's secret—that his authority was stolen and his glory simulated—and refused to cooperate, turning to God instead for the knowledge and the permission necessary to restore the ancient order (Abr. 1:2). For this he was rewarded and received the desire of his heart, but only after being put to the severest possible tests. Forced against his will to participate in the false ordinances, he resisted them at every step, even to the point of death. What breaks the mold is the sudden, unexpected, and violent intervention of a destroying angel, which puts an end to sacrificial rites and in their place restores an ordinance of token sacrifice only, looking forward to the great atonement. Neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Sarah had to pay the supreme price, though each confidently expected to, and was accordingly given full credit and forgiveness of sins through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord. In them the proper order and purpose of sacrifice was restored after the world had departed as far from the ancient plan as it was possible to get.

In their three sacrifices the classic

rivalry and tension between father and son, patriarchy and matriarchy are resolved in a perfect equality. On Mt. Moriah, Isaac showed that he was willing to suffer on the altar as Abraham had been; in Egypt it was made perfectly clear that Sarah was Abraham's equal, and that he was as dependent on her for his eternal progress as she was on him. The two kings knew that without Sarah they could not attain to the glory of Abraham, but she knew that without Abraham her glory would be nothing, and she refused all substitutes. "Do this," says Abraham to his wife at the beginning of the story, "for the sake of benefitting me, [and] for your own advantage"—[le-ma'an yi-ta'vli ba'avurekh]. (See Gen. 12:13.) "Abraham and Sarah," says the Midrash, "kept the whole law from Alef to Tav, not by compulsion but with delight."¹⁸⁷ They kept the law fully and they kept it together. Why is it, asks the archaeologist A. Parrot, that we never read of the God of Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachael, but only of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? The answer is given in Abraham 2:22-25, where Abraham obeys a direct command from God, though he is free to reject it if he will, while Sarah receives it as the law of her husband, being likewise under no compulsion. It is indeed the God of Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachel to whom they pray directly, but they covenant with him through their husbands. "If he guards the holy imprint," says the Zohar, speaking of the ordinances of Abraham, "then the Shekhinah does not depart from him"—but how can he be sure he has guarded it? "He cannot be sure of it until he is married. . . . When the man and wife are joined together and are called by one name, then the celestial favor rests upon them . . . which is embraced in the male, so that the female is also firmly established." (Lech lecha, 94a.) It was by their mutual faithfulness, according to rabbinic teaching, that Abraham and Sarah reversed the blows of death, so that they became new again and had children in their old age.¹⁸⁸ Just so, when Asenath was anointed with the oil of incorruptibility, and then became the bride of Joseph," she was told, "from this time on art thou created anew, formed anew, given a new life. . . ." (Jos. & Asen. 15:4-6.) When Sarah had passed through the valley of the shadow in order to save her husband's life, Abraham received "a new grade of knowledge," after which he "begat children on a higher plane." (Zohar, Vayerah, 103b.) This is that measure of exaltation promised in Abraham 2:10-11: ". . . for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and

shall be accounted thy seed . . . and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel . . . even of life eternal." It was this doctrine that led to the discussions among the Jewish doctors on whether Abraham and Sarah were actually given the power to create souls.¹⁵⁸ "Abraham obtained the possession of both worlds," says an ancient formula, "for his sake this world and the world to come were created."¹⁵⁹ Abraham's covenant, as J. Morgenstern observes with wonder, "appears to be outside of time and space."¹⁶¹ Or as the Prophet Joseph Smith put it, "Let us seek the glory of Abraham, Noah, Adam, the Apostles," naming Abraham first of all.¹⁶²

And Abraham earned his glory: "The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life, he must sacrifice all things."¹⁶³ But Isaac was in on it too—the stories of Isaac and Sarah teach us that salvation is a family affair, in which, however, each member acts as an individual and makes his own choice, for each must decide for himself when it is a matter of giving up "all things," including life itself, if necessary. But "when the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards," only then "the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him," as they were to Abraham, "and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God."¹⁶⁴ If Abraham knew that "God would provide a sacrifice," Isaac did not; if he was perfectly sure of his wife, she was not and prayed desperately for help—husband, wife, and son, each had to undergo the terrible test alone.

But every test is only a sampling: as a few drops of blood are enough for a blood test, so, as Morgenstern points out, the rite of circumcision demanded of Abraham expressed the idea that a token shedding of blood "redeems the remainder."¹⁶⁵ Circumcision, then, is an arrested sacrifice. When one reaches a critical point in an act of obedience at which it becomes apparent that one is willing to go all the way, it is not necessary to go any farther and make the costly sacrifice. Abraham called the spot where he sacrificed Isaac "Jehovahjireh," signifying that God was perfectly aware all the time of what was going on and knew exactly where Abraham stood: "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son. . . ."¹⁶⁶

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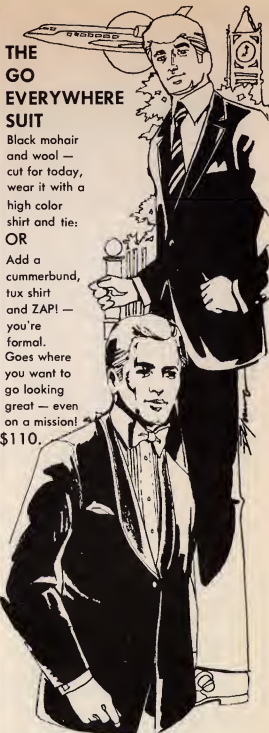
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He knew that Abraham would certainly carry out the sacrifice, and he let him go as far as possible for the sake of his instruction, and then he had him complete the ordinance with a token sacrifice, which was to be repeated by his progeny in the temple.¹⁹⁷ For since it is an individual as well as a family thing, each of the descendants of Abraham is required to make the same token sacrifice as Isaac.¹⁹⁷ Cyril, the last "primitive" Christian bishop of Jerusalem, has left us a report on how the early Christians thought of this token sacrifice. The first step in becoming a Christian, he says, is to renounce all the idols (as Abraham did); next, one must escape the power of Satan, described as a ravishing lion; then come baptism, anointing, and the receiving of a garment;¹⁹⁸ the candidate is then buried again three times in water, to signify Christ's three days in the tomb. "We do not really die," Cyril explains, "nor are we really buried, nor do we actually rise again after being crucified. It is a token following instructions (*en eiponi he mimesis*), though the salvation is real. Christ was really crucified and buried and literally rose again. And all these things are for our benefit, and we can share in his sufferings by imitating them while enjoying the rewards in reality. O how overflowing is God's love for man! Christ received the nails in blameless hands and feet, while I may share in the suffering and reward of salvation without the pain or suffering!"¹⁹⁹ He goes on to note that one then becomes "a Christ," an adopted but nonetheless a real son of God, "receiving the very form of the Christ of God."²⁰⁰

He describes the priesthood standing a circle around the altar ("leave the altar if thy brother hath aught against thee!"), the mutual embracing "which signifies a complete fusion of spirits," and then "that thrilling hour when one must enter spiritually into the presence of God."²⁰¹ Throughout this ancient and forgotten discourse the emphasis is on the token or mimetic nature of the ordinances along with the quite real and necessary part they play in achieving salvation. Julius Maternus, describing the same rites, says that they match the Osirian mysteries very closely and he accuses the Egyptians of stealing their ordinances from Israel back in the days of Moses.²⁰²

The important thing in the early Christian rites is that every individual must imitate the suffering and burial of Christ; this is the great essential of the ordinances, as it is the fundamental principle of all Jewish sacrifice as well. This we learn

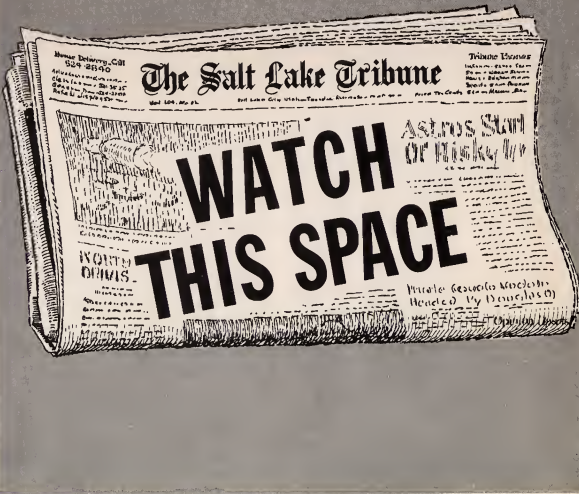
from the sacrifices of Abraham, Isaac, and Sarah; each was interrupted and by the providing of a substitute became a token sacrifice, acceptable to God because of the demonstrated intention of each of the three to offer his or her life if necessary. The perfect consistency of the three sacrifices is a powerful confirmation of the authenticity of the Book of Abraham.

(To be concluded)

FOOTNOTES

- ⁹⁷ Jubilees, 13:10; Genesis Apocryphon 19:23.
- ⁹⁸ Gen. Apoc., 19:13.
- ⁹⁹ C. Gordon, *Common Background*, etc., pp. 159f.
- ¹⁰⁰ B. Z. Wacholder, in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 34, pp. 110f.
- ¹⁰¹ H. Kees, cited in *Orientalische Literaturzeitung*, Vol. 53 (1958), p. 311, and in *Aeg. Ztschr.*, Vol. 57, pp. 117-19.
- ¹⁰² The story of Sarah in the trunk, *Midrash Rabb.*, 40:5.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 40:4.
- ¹⁰⁴ They held an auction, each trying to buy her in order to make a gift of her to Pharaoh, *ibid.*, 40:5.
- ¹⁰⁵ S. ha-Yashar, 51-52; in Vermes, p. 113.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Mid. Rab.*, 41:2.
- ¹⁰⁷ Beer, p. 25, discussing sources on p. 128.
- ¹⁰⁸ P. R. Eliezer, Ch. 26; S. ha-Yashar, p. 51f.
- ¹⁰⁹ So E. Oswald, in *Ztschr. f. A. T. Wiss.*, Vol. 71 (1959), p. 15, 19.
- ¹¹⁰ Bin Gorion, II, 158.
- ¹¹¹ Eusebius, *Evangelium evang.*, IX, 17.
- ¹¹² Gen. Apoc. XX, 30-34, cf. Ginzberg, Vol. I, p. 203; bin Gorion, II, 97; Masse Abraham in Beth ha-Midrash, I, 95, 41; The Sabi, Qissas, p. 35; S. ha-Yashar, in Vermes, p. 73; Beer, pp. 18, 113.
- ¹¹³ F. L. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis* (Oxford, 1900), p. 16-19.
- ¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31. The theme is the same as that of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. On the antiquity and importance of the Fifty-two game, H. Nibley, in *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 2 (1949), p. 337.
- ¹¹⁶ Griffith, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-40.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-50; the moral tone of the Egyptian account is even higher than that of the Jewish version.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 60f.
- ¹¹⁹ *Era*, March 1969, pp. 80, 82.
- ¹²⁰ Griffith, pp. 64f.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 65f.
- ¹²² H. Ranke, in *Studies for F. L. Griffith* (Oxford, 1932), p. 412f.
- ¹²³ Vermes, p. 115, n. 2.
- ¹²⁴ N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1956), p. 26, note that the Genesis Apocryphon version of the affliction and healing of Pharaoh "is actually much closer to Genesis xx, dealing with Sarah and Abimelech."
- ¹²⁵ Bin Gorion, II, 250.
- ¹²⁶ Ginzberg, Vol. I, p. 258.
- ¹²⁷ Beer, p. 45.
- ¹²⁸ Ginzberg, *loc. cit.*
- ¹²⁹ Beer, pp. 46-47.
- ¹³⁰ Ginzberg, Vol. I, p. 262-63.
- ¹³¹ Beer, p. 128; Ginzberg, Vol. I, p. 224.
- ¹³² F. Weber, *System der altsynagog. Theologie*, II, 256.
- ¹³³ Zohar, I, Vayerah, 103b.
- ¹³⁴ Josephus, *Jew. Ant.*, I, 165. Sarah was ten years younger than Abraham. Cf. Beer, p. 25.
- ¹³⁵ J. Gray, *The Krt Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), p. 2.
- ¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 45.
- ¹³⁷ Tab. 4, Col. 5, lines 25, 33.
- ¹³⁸ Tab. 4, Col. 3, lines 83, 87.
- ¹³⁹ *Era*, March 1969, p. 92. See J. Gray, *The Legacy of Canaan* (Leiden: Brill, 1965), p. 25, n. 5.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Exod. Text*, Tab. 4, Col. 5, lines 1-8, 10-13.
- ¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, line 19.
- ¹⁴² *Ibid.*, line 21a. The word for "do" is here *chrtsh*, meaning to perform an ordinance.

- 143 *Ibid.*, Col. 4, lines 4ff.
 143a See C. J. Bleeker, *Egyptian Festivals* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 37-43.
 144 Ginzberg, *L.J.*, Vol. 5, note 308; *Mase Abraham*,
 145 Josephus, *Ant.*, I, 188-90.
 146 So F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *Biblical History of the Hebrews*, p. 25, noting at the same time that Isaac "is not more than a tribe-name."
 147 W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (University of London, 1968), p. 128.
 148 J. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
 149 Bin Gorion, II, 330, 332.
 150 Josephus, *Ant.*, I, 165; bin Gorion, II, 250.
 151 J. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
 152 J. G. Frazer, *The New Golden Bough*, T. M. Gaster, ed., (New York: Anchor, 1961), pp. 172f; C. J. Bleeker, in *The Sacred Kingship* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), pp. 261-69.
 153 H. Haag, in *Ex Oriente Lux*, Vol. 19, p. 517; C. H. Gordon, *Ugarit and Minom Crete* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1958).
 154 E. D. Van Buren, in *Orientalia*, Vol. 13 (1944), p. 15.
 155 Beer, p. 25.
 156 William Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology*, etc. (London: 1830), II, 111.
 157 Zohar I, *Yevurah*, 112a.
 158 E. Speiser, in A. Altmann, *Biblical Studies*, pp. 14-18; J. L. Kelso, in *Christianity Today*, Vol. 12, p. 918.
 159 W. F. Albright, *Yahweh & the Gods of Canaan*, pp. 111-12.
 160 R. Graves, *King Jesus* (London: Cassell, 1930), p. 50.
 161 Discussed by B. Beer, *L. A.*, pp. 128-27.
 162 P. R. Eliezer, *Ch. 26*, p. 190.
 163 Vermes, p. 114.
 164 Beer, p. 61.
 165 Beer, p. 18; Barhebraeus, *Scholion* on Gen. 11:27. "Indeed, in prophetic power she ranked higher than her husband," Ginzberg, Vol. 1, p. 203.
 166 Ginzberg, *L. J.*, Vol. 1, p. 260.
 *Footnotes 167-168 omitted.
 169 Ginzberg, Vol. 1, pp. 221f.
 170 Thalhah, *Qissat al-Anbiyah* (Cairo, A. H. 1340), p. 223.
 171 Beer, pp. 24, 127.
 172 *Era*, Vol. 72 (September 1969), p. 94, n. 162. In a number of cases the hospitable harp is associated with the royal palm, suggesting the palm-branch as a symbol of honorable reception.
 173 *Odyssey*, 8:461-68.
 174 The story has recently been made available in paperback by W. K. Simpson (ed.), *Ad. Erman, The Ancient Egyptians* (Harper Torchbooks, 1966), pp. 150-61.
 175 C. Autran, in *Melanges Maspero*, I, ii, 531-52.
 176 A. Moret, *La Mise a Mort du Roi*, p. 13.
 177 Bin Gorion, II, 330, 332.
 178 Ginzberg, Vol. 1, p. 297.
 179 Bin Gorion, II, 330.
 180 Ginzberg, *loc. cit.*
 181 F. Maternus, *De errore profan. relig.* 131-2; in Hopfner, *Fontes hist. relig. Aegypt.*, p. 520.
 182 Discussed by M. Astour, in *Jnl. of Bibl. Lit.*, Vol. 85 (1966), p. 195, n. 58.
 183 Beer, p. 3, n. 18.
 184 G. von Rad, in *Vetus Testamentum*, Supplementband, Vol. 1 (1955), p. 120.
 185 L. Nemo, *Karate Anthology* (Yale University Press, 1952), p. 300.
 186 Moret, *Mise a Mort*, pp. 51-52.
 187 M. Braude, *Midr. Ps.*, 112:1.
 188 F. Weber, *System der altnachg. Theol.*, p. 256.
 189 C. G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah* (New York: Schocken, 1965), pp. 170 ff, with source.
 190 J. F. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 538.
 191 Cit. A. Caquot, in *Semiotica*, Vol. 12 (1962), p. 62.
 192 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 162.
 193 *Ibid.*, p. 322.
 194 *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.
 195 J. Morgenstern, in *Heb. Un. Col. An.*, Vol. 34 (1963), p. 39.
 196 Gen. 22:14, 12; Beer, p. 71, on the meaning of the name.
 197 Vermes, p. 195; bin Gorion, II, 307-8.
 198 Cyril of Jerus., in *Migne Patrologiae Graecae*, Vol. 35, cols. 1068-1074.
 199 *Ibid.*, col. 1081.
 200 Col. 1088.
 201 Julius Maternus, in *Migne, Patrol. Lat.*, 12: 1091.



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I had rather men should ask why no statue has been erected in my honor, than why one has. —Marcus Porcius Cato

Important as knowing is, there is a more important field, and that is the field of doing. Life is always bigger than learning. It is a wonderful thing to know, but it is better to do. —Elder Adam S. Bennion

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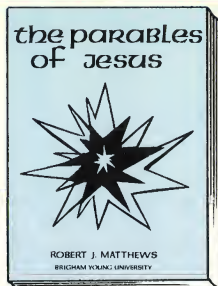


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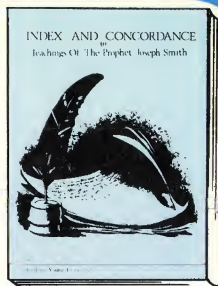
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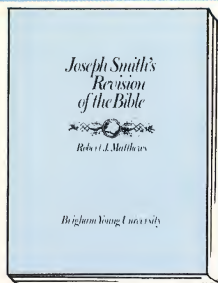
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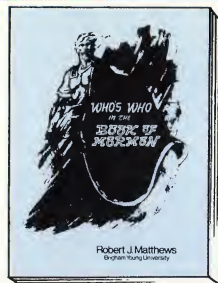
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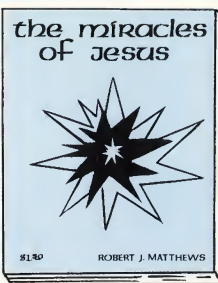
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