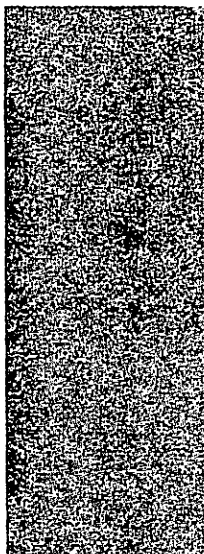


" . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

The
DISCERNER

Gordon
Fraser



CONTENTS

VOLUME II NUMBER 1

- 2 Saints and Gentiles**
- 7 Polygamy**
- 9 Jerusalem to Palmyra, New York, Via Arabia**
- 12 The Kingdom of God**
- 14 A Word to the Gentiles**
- 16 Puzzling Questions and Discerning Answers**

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1955

The DISCERNER

Price \$1.50 for 12 issues; 15 cents a copy
Copyright 1955 by Religion Analysis Service, Inc.
902 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis 3, Minnesota
Printed in the United States

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

LeRoy Gager, Chairman
Emma Belle Yourdon
R. F. McIlroy
Robert C. Nelson
Terry C. Hulbert
Herbert V. Caneday

SAINTS AND GENTILES

By Gordon Fraser

The rather incongruous terminology used above is that which is used in the Mormon west to differentiate between the followers of the "prophet" Joseph Smith, who are the "saints"; and those who are either "unenlightend" or are totally unwilling to accept the pseudo-history and religious fantasies which constitute the body of Mormon belief. These latter are the "gentiles."

A rather amusing incident is reported from the last war when a Jewish soldier who was stationed in Utah, is reported to have said, "I had to come all the way to Salt Lake City to find out I was a gentile."

We are amused, in fact, evangelical Christianity generally has taken a rather amused and indifferent attitude toward this religious group which they dismiss from their world as a rather odd, but probably quite interesting, Christian cult, but the Mormons are not Christian. Their religion is totally non-Christian (indeed it is not even monotheistic) in spite of the fact that it employs a great deal of seemingly orthodox phraseology and quotes copiously from the Bible.

We would not be guilty of giving extended publicity to this group if it were just odd or relatively harmless, but it is a fact that this religious body, while still in the infiltration stages in the eastern states, has assumed the proportions of a deluge in the west. It has already practically

destroyed evangelical Christianity in large areas of several states, and threatens to become dominant in the entire west, not alone as a religion, but also as a most formidable political and economic force against which no "gentile" can hope to survive.

It is the purpose of this paper to alert God's people throughout the entire country, to the menace of this false, and sometimes hard to recognize, religion, since it is quite evident that the Mormons have no intention of confining their efforts to the west. They have now under way an intensive, long range campaign to captivate large segments of our population.

The danger of captivation is the greater since the Mormons use such ingratiating manners and tactful ways of gaining the confidence of their prospects. The writer recently inspected one of their textbooks for missionaries and felt that it would serve admirably as a textbook for any enterprising sales organization.

Typical of the inroads of the group are the following facts which are readily available:

Churches

The state of Utah at one time had fifty-five churches affiliated with the American Baptist Convention, whereas today it has not more than eight. It has no Conservative Baptist church and only one under the General Association of Regular Bap-

tist Churches. Salt Lake City has one Independent Baptist church affiliated with the Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America. Recently several small Southern Baptist churches have been organized within the state, most of them by workmen who have followed the oil and steel operations from the south.

Utah at one time was a strong Presbyterian state. Today only seven churches have telephone listings throughout the state.

Of all groups which might be classified as aggressively evangelical, the total is thirty-three. These would include Holiness, Armenian, and Calvinistic groups. Of these the largest congregation numbers not many more than 200 members.

Sixteen cults are listed. Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox churches and Jewish Synagogues number twenty-six. Other Protestant churches number forty-eight.

The Mormons, on the other hand, have over 400 listings in the current telephone directories.

The above figures are, obviously, subject to some adjustment either more or less. We have attempted to estimate conservatively, however.

What is true of the state of Utah is true to a lesser degree in the surrounding states of Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. Tremendous inroads have already been made in the religious life of both Oregon and Washington. California is experiencing quite a rash of Mormonism.

As this article was being prepared, the writer was holding meetings in a Utah community with a total of 70,000 residents, 80% of whom are Mormons. On the church page in the local newspaper there are listed forty-eight Mormon churches, whereas all others total sixteen and

of these five are cults. Only six of the sixteen are known to have a gospel emphasis, and three of these are without pastors.

Many cities and towns in the state of Idaho, and other of the mountain states, have concentrations as high as 98% of Mormon residents. Boise, the capital of Idaho, with a metropolitan population of over 50,000 has a concentration of 51% of Mormons.

Building

It is of national significance that the Mormons had under construction, to be completed during 1954, 400 church buildings. During 1953, the Mormons completed two church buildings per day, or a total of over 700, bringing the two year total to over 1,100 new structures. Quick computation will indicate an average of twenty-three churches for each state in the union.

The average structure will probably cost over \$100,000.00 which would bring the two year total to approximately \$110,000,000.00.

The problem of finances is a minor one since all Mormons are required to tithe and a conservative estimate of annual tithes coming to the church would be \$150,000,000. Only part of this total, however, is used for church buildings since members are assessed for a major part of construction costs in addition to their tithe. They may pay this assessment either in labor or in cash. Pay it they must.

These structures are never started until a sizable congregation has been established. While the new congregation is being formed, the Mormons usually meet in rented halls or public auditoriums. The newer buildings are architectural triumphs and are designed for future requirements, including social halls

and dance floors. Incidentally, the Mormons always open and close their dances with prayer!

Politics and Education

The Mormons are very aggressive in the political world at all levels—local, state, and national. They are careful to have trained men available for any post in the government as long as that post offers opportunity for the advancement of the Mormon influence.

It is generally accepted in the west that they dominate at least five state legislatures, and Mormon sponsored measures are almost certain to be enacted.

Typical of this activity is a measure sponsored in 1954 by Governor J. Bracken Lee of Utah, which would have turned the entire junior college system of Utah over to the Mormon church for operation under the regimen of the Brigham Young University. This measure came before the voters of the state of Utah, but was defeated by a small margin.

Most of the teaching staff of all of Utah's public schools is Mormon, and it is almost unavoidable that teaching credentials are gained only through attendance at Brigham Young University, where it is necessary to take at least one religion course.

Economics and Industry

In the field of economics, the Mormons are overwhelmingly successful and in some industries in the area, nearly monopolistic. These operations are closely allied with the church and certain operations are subsidized by church tithes.

The economic gains, especially in highly concentrated Mormon areas, are very attractive since Mormons are clever business people and are completely loyal in their business relations with each other. There is

a commonly used phrase in the Mormon west which states that "it pays to be a Mormon."

Among their varied industrial activities are railroading, copper mining, banking, chain super-marketing, fertilizer manufacturing, and wholesale and retail merchandizing.

It is a well known fact that the beet sugar industry of the United States is largely dominated by the Mormons.

A prominent building in many an Idaho and Utah town is the Bishop's Storehouse, which acts as a clearing house for many business exchanges. The tithe is deducted at this point.

In the newer irrigation projects, Mormons take first advantage and overwhelm them with ready capital and loyal families. Notable of these is a large area in the Columbia Basin in Central Washington under the Grand Coulee Dam, in which our government has invested untold millions of our tax money. While the Council of Churches was still debating as to which denominations should take the initiative in establishing new churches in the area, the Mormons had already arrived and taken possession. Their first gesture was to erect a multi-million dollar beet sugar factory which will automatically control major parts of the new acreage. It is notable that the subsidiary activities, such as seed stores, implement distribution, real estate and insurance, are largely in the hands of Mormons.

We are not condemning the aggressiveness of these newcomers to the state of Washington; but we do blame evangelical Christians for allowing the Salt Lake "saints" to get in the first assault, and for failing to employ those principles which are the heritage of the church in the matter of aggressive evangelism.

Religious Beliefs

Considerable attention has been drawn to the Mormon religion by the appointment of Mr. Ezra Benson as Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture.

He has been hailed as a Christian gentleman who opens his business sessions with prayer.

There is no debating the fact that Mr. Benson is a perfect gentleman, a good businessman, and a determined civil servant. His stature as a wise politician depends on the political viewpoint of the spectator. The gesture of opening his business sessions with prayer, however, is no more significant than those of the Moslem who starts his day with a prayer towards Mecca, or the Romanist who lights a candle for the Virgin Mary.

Mr. Benson is first and last a Mormon. Indeed he is a Mormon Priest and is a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He bids well to be eligible for the Mantle of the late Brigham Young and his successors.

Uninformed Christians assume that Mormonism is just another Christian cult, peculiar perhaps, but not particularly harmful.

The Mormons, themselves, for strategic reasons, have tried to persuade the public that they are the only real Christians, and have tried, repeatedly, to gain recognition as a Christian body, but a brief analysis of their beliefs will easily show the fallacy of such an attempt.

True, they use the name of "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" which sounds quite pious, and they use many orthodox phrases, but with a totally unorthodox meaning.

The whole system of Mormonism is that of a modern, streamlined, polytheistic religion of attainment.

Had Satan, rather than the "Angel Moroni," been dictating directly to Joseph Smith, he would, no doubt, have prefaced his remarks by using as a text his original statement made to Eve, "ye shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5).

This false promise of Satan becomes a basic tenet of Mormon doctrine and was expressed by Brigham Young in one of his revelations as follows:

"What God was once, we are now. What God is now, we shall be."

A later president of the Church and one of the prominent theologians of the Mormon system, Lorenzo Snow, states the point thus:

"As man is, God was. As God is, man may be."

The destiny of all true Mormons is to become gods, equal indeed to the Father and the Son. The degrees of attainment in the life to come depend completely upon the progress of the individual while in this life. At this point, we will let the various exponents of their doctrines speak for themselves.

Orson Pratt in *The Seer*, page 121 says:

"The saints are to have equal knowledge with the Father and the Son. The fullness of all truth in us will make us Gods, equal in all things with the personages of the Father and the Son."

Regarding the process of attainment and the destiny of the faithful, we find written in the Manual, 1901-1902, part 1, page 52:

"They who have obeyed the laws of the Gospel, received the Holy Spirit, obtained and honored the Priesthood, and lived lives of righteousness shall be admitted to the celestial glory. Here they shall have thrones, dominion, and endless increase. They shall be Gods, creating and governing worlds, and peopling them with their offspring."

That life in the world to come will be on a completely physical basis, only on a more expansive scale than the present life, is expressed by Brigham Young. In his *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. IV, page 56, he states:

"It is the duty of every righteous man and woman to prepare tabernacles for as many spirits as they can."

Again in his *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. III, page 266, he says:

"If I be made the king and lawgiver to my family and I have many sons, I shall become the Father of many fathers, for they will have sons and so on from generation to generation; and in this way I may become Father of many fathers and King of many kings. In this way we may become King of kings and Lord of lords, or Father of fathers or Prince of princes. And this is the only course, for another man is not going to raise up a kingdom for you."

Missionary Program

The young men who come to your door with the Latter Day "gospel" are representatives of the missionary force of the Mormons, or Latter Day Saints as they prefer to be called. These young men are required to undertake a two year term of missionary service wherever the church may send them. There are, probably, 5,000 of these missionaries on duty at all times.

These young men are well trained to present the Mormon teachings with all of the persistence of a Fuller Brush man and the suavity of a Dale Carnegie. Their success in winning followers is largely due to the ignorance of the general public as to spiritual matters.

Materially minded professing Christians become an easy prey to their persuasions since no particular moral change is required in the

lives of their converts. They will require the discontinuance of the use of tea, coffee, liquor, and tobacco. We have learned that a former ban on "cokes" has been modified and the faithful may exercise their consciences in this item. We wonder if this relaxation may be linked with the fact that Mormon interests now control the bottling of this popular beverage in Salt Lake City.

The activities of church life, which are almost continuous, are patterned after the plan of the average worldly modernistic church, and a detailed knowledge of Mormon doctrine is not essential.

A recent convert to Mormonism was asked as to the reason for her conversion. She replied that it was purely because of the attractive welfare program of the church. She was totally unaware of even the most prominent Mormon doctrines, and had only to submit to Mormon baptism to enter into these social benefits.

The present paper is written for the purpose of alerting God's people, particularly in areas where the Mormons have only recently gone into action. The invasion is on, and Christians should become informed so as to prepare to warn the unwary and unstable.

Those who are approached by these aggressive young missionaries of "another gospel," would do well to put into positive action the admonition of the apostle John to "the elect lady" in his second epistle, verses 10 and 11:

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine (of Christ) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

POLYGAMY IN THE MORMON CHURCH

By Gordon Fraser

The question most frequently asked regarding Mormonism is concerning the practice of polygamy. It is a matter of record that polygamy was outlawed by Federal authority in 1890 and the Mormon president, Wilford Woodruff, issued a manifesto to the Church forbidding the practice among the "saints" at that time.

That the practice of plural marriage ceased entirely is highly doubtful, however, judging both from its importance in Mormon doctrine, and from the fact that its existence, in communities like Short Creek, Arizona, comes periodically to the attention of the public.

The Mormon authorities will hasten to repudiate these so-called 'fundamentalist' communities, but as we examine the testimony of these more devout groups, we fail to see any variation between their religious beliefs and those of their Salt Lake "brethren."

A few weeks after the Arizona State authorities raided the Short Creek community, *Collier's magazine ran a feature story, written in collaboration with one of the leaders of the community, Mr. Edson Jessup, who in 1953 had five wives, and was the father of twenty children under thirteen years of age.

We can do no better than to let Mr. Jessup and the Mormons use their own words to answer the question concerning polygamy. The following excerpts from the Collier's article are in sequence. Material having no particular bearing on our discussion has been deleted. Mr. Jessup reports:

*Collier's. Nov. 13, 1953—"Why I Have Five Wives". Edson Jessup as told to Maurine Whipple.

"I'm merely living celestial marriage, which is the law of God.

Like hundreds of other Mormons, my grandparents on both sides never gave in. Plural marriage runs strong in my family. My great-grandfather was one of those early polygamists who served time in the Utah State Penitentiary. I am next to the oldest of thirty-three children. My mother had twenty-six brothers and sisters, although she was the only one to accept the fullness of the gospel.

I married an Idaho girl with the same kind of a Mormon background as my own.

Like any other young Mormon couple in love, we were married and sealed to each other for 'Time and Eternity.' We were very happy.

We came to realize that something was lacking in our existence. We longed for a way to shut out the hate and evil in the world, to draw closer somehow to our heavenly Father—to live the gospel more fully. After much prayer and study of the Scriptures we came to see that the only way to live the gospel spiritually was to live it physically, which the church had not done since 1890, when Mormon President Wilford Woodruff issued the manifesto outlawing polygamy.

No mortal can set aside the decrees of God; the manifesto was not a revelation but merely a political agreement between the heads of the church and Congress. If plural marriage was once commanded of God, it is still commanded of God. The church had apostasized and gone against the commandment, but there was no excuse for us to do so. Therefore in the spring of 1943 Margaret and I moved to Short Creek to join the community of fundamentalist Mormons."

There can be but little question that Mr. Jessup was acting in full accordance with the Salt Lake Mormon authorities since all marriages

"sealed for time and eternity," must be performed in one of the Mormon temples where only the accepted and devout Mormons may enter. We are told that the priest officiating in such cases, does so with his face veiled so that he can not be identified later.

It will be observed that they use the Bible only as they borrow phrases and incidents which are calculated to confirm their practices. Quoting again from the Collier's article:

"The revelation which motivates the people of Short Creek is clearly set forth in Sec. 132 of our *Doctrine and Covenants; 'If any man espouse a virgin and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then he is justified—For behold! I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if you abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory—All covenants that are not made—and sealed by the Holy Spirit—are of no efficacy.'

To us the foundation of Mormonism is its priesthood organization, representing God's authority on earth—the authority He restored in the spring of 1829 when Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph Smith, the Prophet.

Most churches dream of going back to the bosom of Abraham—and Abraham and other prophets of the Bible such as Moses, Jacob, David and Solomon were polygamists. How can you enter into the glory of Abraham except by living the laws of Abraham? All Latter-Day Saints

believe that as we are now God once was, and as God is now we may become. That is, perhaps thousands of years from now each of us may become a god, and, under the direction of our Saviour, each may create and populate his own world. To enter into godhead, we must live all the laws of the gospel—and to us the laws of the gospel include plural marriage — — —.

After my brother died, I was obligated, according to the laws of Israel under Moses, to assume the responsibilities and take to wife his widows and 'raise unto him a posterity.' So Rayola and Patty were sealed to me—still just one month before my own first child was born. Four years later I took my fifth wife. She was a Northern Utah girl with the same interests as the others."

The fact that plural marriage is not as obvious in the Mormon areas as it was in the early days is due, no doubt, to the fact that the ratio of men to women, in the Mormon population, is about the same as in other groups, which would not allow much latitude for the practice, whereas in the beginnings of the cult, there seems to have been an overbalance of women in the westward migrations.

Be it said to the credit of the Mormons that they do stay married, and, when "sealed" in the temple, consider the bond to be fixed for eternity. Mormon women, so sealed, would not dare to sever the bond, since it is the husband's prerogative, and his alone, to "call out" the wife in the resurrection. Thus fear, if not love, would prevent the severance of the marriage bond.

Morticians, preparing the Mormon wife's remains for burial, are required to use symbolic garments, one of which is a triangular veil which is placed over the face. This veil is to be raised by the husband in the resurrection, if he desires this wife for the resurrection world.

*The Doctrines and Covenants of the Mormon Church are the collection of "revelations" given to Joseph Smith and his successors subsequent to the completion of the "Book of Mormon." They are considered of equal authority to the Bible and "Book of Mormon."

*JERUSALEM TO PALMYRA, NEW YORK, VIA ARABIA

By Gordon Fraser

A writer may use one of several devices to clothe his material in garb that will relieve him of criticism later.

He may present it as fiction and begin his story somewhat as the writers of fairy stories begin their tales, by some such formula as "Once upon a time, in a land beyond the sea lived a prince and princess."

Or he may present his story in parable form, using obviously synthetic names and places, in manufactured situations, and thus present his moral in legitimate form.

Then again he may adopt the laborious method of the historian, which requires the checking of time, place, personalities, situations, and sequences, with documentation if possible. Having done this we allow him any latitude he may require in his choice of style and language, and some latitude in the philosophy of his interpretations and conclusions.

Joseph Smith heeded, or recognized, no danger signals and used all three of the above methods promiscuously. He plunged headlong, and apparently without research, into a pseudo-historical tale which includes parable, philosophy of a sort, oratory, prophecy, and natural history.

His story starts with a party of Jews who leave Jerusalem in 600 B. C. bound, by way of the Red Sea, the Arabian Peninsula, the Indian Ocean, and the South Pacific, to the West Coast of South America.

His story closes in 421 A. D. after a thousand year record of bloody wars, apostasies, and wanderings. He has his heroes engaged in last

man battles of extermination which remind us of the classical duel between Abdul Abulbul Ameer and Ivan Petrovsky Skivar who smote final, fatal blows at the same instant thus terminating the story.

Moroni, however, does have the forethought to bury his golden plates on the Smith farm near Palmyra, New York, so that Joseph could locate them easily fourteen hundred years later.

The story explains that one branch of the family, the Lamanites, became the ancestors of the American Indians found on this continent by the European explorers.

These Lamanite Indians got their dark complexions because of their wickedness. Nephi doesn't tell us how the Indians lost their whiskers.

Smith exposes himself to examination by establishing focal points of time, place, personalities, and situations.

He establishes the route of march of his pilgrims with sufficient detail to enable one to trace the migration geographically.

He describes the natural history of specified geographical locations with such extravagance as to enable the reader to compare these with records and findings already well established for these locations.

The present chapter will be devoted to an examination of the historical and geographical fabric of the "Book of Mormon."

We will quote from the "Book of Mormon" as much as possible so as

*Jerusalem to Palmyra, New York, via Arabia is one chapter from Gordon Fraser's manuscript entitled *Joseph Smith and the Golden Plates*.

not to be guilty of distorting the record.

Our pilgrims leave Jerusalem at the time of Zedekiah, king of Judah, or 600 B. C., which date the Mormons accept as the date of their exodus. I Nephi 1:4 tells us:

“For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed.”

At this point we can do no better than to let Nephi describe the route of march.

“And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness. And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother, Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam. And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in the valley by the side of a river of water. And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord our God. And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof. And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all right-

eousness! And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord” (I Nephi 2:4-10).

We presume that the three days' march was taken after they reached the borders of the Red Sea, as it would be impossible for such a party to negotiate the 175 miles from Jerusalem to the tip of the Gulf of Aquaba in three days.

Three days journey along the gulf would bring them to a point in the Northern Hejaz and not yet to the mouth of the Gulf of Aquaba.

Problem: There are no rivers running into the Red Sea. There are no rivers, worthy of the name, in Arabia.

There are a few wadys which run only after the very infrequent rains. There are a number of oases, with springs and underground water and there are four groups of ponds hardly worthy of the designation of lakes. There are about four days of rainfall each year.

Any location in that part of the world possessing water has always been occupied to the limit of its capacity, and had there been a river such as the one described by Nephi, there would have been a notable people dwelling on its banks and a contemporary record of the river and its people would have been available to us.

Nephi could scarcely have chosen a more unlikely beginning for his march.

After tarrying for awhile in this delightful spot, Lehi, the patriarch, receives instructions by night to move on into the wilderness and on arising in the morning, discovers on the ground a compass to direct the travelers on their way.

But let Nephi tell us about this amazing discovery.

"And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning and went forth to the tent doors, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one, pointed the whither we should go into the wilderness" (I Nephi 16:10).

To our great astonishment we discover that this was not a mere mechanical or magnetic instrument but was possessed of all of the qualities of a first rate crystal ball. Nephi tells us:

"And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, and they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. And there was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it" (I Nephi 16:28-29).

We find later that this compass served Nephi to pilot the craft which bore the pilgrims across the seas to the promised land. We also see that it worked only when Nephi had possession of it, which was indeed a splendid arrangement for the leader of the expedition.

On leaving the valley "called Lemuel" the party traveled across the River Laman south-southeast for a period of four days, then for a "space of many days" still keeping to the "more fertile parts of the wilderness which were in the borders of the Red Sea" (I Nephi 16:15).

After periodic rests and fresh starts and more periods of "many days," they apparently turned eastward and traveled in that direction across the Arabian Peninsula.

How far they traveled along the

Red Sea is difficult to determine unless one reasons that "many years" means eight years in I Nephi 17:21.

Three or four "manys" and four days would equal a month more or less and would still leave them no farther south than the Southern Hejaz.

If my reader has access to a good map of the Arabian Peninsula, it would be a valuable aid in tracing the supposed route of the travelers at this point.

If the party had traveled as far south in the Hejaz as present day Yenbo, which is on the coast directly west of Media, and then turned east, they would have found it necessary to negotiate nearly 1000 miles of desert before reaching the "Land Bountiful" by the "great waters" which of course in this case, would be the Persian gulf. This route would have provided them with more oases than any other but also with a hostile population of blood-thirsty nomadic tribes. Certainly Nephi makes no note of such encounters.

Whatever the route, it was beset, according to the story, by many tribulations, dissensions, and mishaps such as that of Nephi when he broke his fine spring steel bow and had to substitute one made of wood.

The desert wanderings occupied a period of eight years and terminated at a spot described by Nephi as follows:

"And we did come to the land which we called Bountiful, because of its much fruit and also wild honey; and all these things were prepared of the Lord that we might not perish. And we beheld the sea, which we called Irreantum, which, *being interpreted, is many waters.

(Continued on page 15)

*Being interpreted from what? Certainly not Hebrew, Egyptian or Aramaic.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

By Terry C. Hulbert

The kingdom of God is one of the major themes of Divine revelation. Its significance is personal and practical for every believer. Perhaps it is this very importance which has caused Satan to camouflage its true meaning and to confuse men's minds as they study its character. Few revealed facts have been so misunderstood and so distorted, either innocently or maliciously, as those concerning the kingdom of God.

It should be noted immediately that the kingdom of God is quite distinct from the kingdom of heaven. With reference to the latter, which, generally, is the same as the millennial kingdom, Dr. Chafer remarks with much discernment:

*"Truth concerning the Messianic expectation, as that is set forth in the Old Testament, does not imply that the kingdom is the Church, nor does the New Testament, with its objectives centered in heaven, teach that the Church is the kingdom. . . . Broadly speaking, the Kingdom of Heaven is fittingly applied to God's rule in the earth—it is heaven's rule on the earth."

The kingdom of God is just what the name implies. It is a body of conscious believers over which God is sovereign. While fallen angels and the Old Testament saints are included, the kingdom during this dispensation of grace embraces primarily all those who have been baptized into the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13), that is, Christ's body, the Church invisible.

The kingdom of God, in its character, is NOT POLITICAL. When Pilate asked Christ if He were the

king of the Jews, He answered, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). From the lips of the Lord Jesus we learn that the kingdom of God *does not originate* with force; *does not depend* upon human or church government; and *does not promise* worldly advancement.

The kingdom of God, in its character, is NOT PHYSICAL. Concerning this aspect, the Lord Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:5, 6). From this it is seen that the kingdom of God *does not originate* in physical causes; *does not depend* upon physical forces or bodies; and *does not promise* primarily physical benefits.

The kingdom of God, in its character, IS SPIRITUAL. Every subject of this kingdom becomes such by the new birth, which is accomplished for the repentant sinner by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God *does originate* in the sovereign act of God in giving spiritual birth to those who were dead in trespasses and sins, thereby making them citizens of this realm. The kingdom of God *does depend* upon the gifts and work of the Holy Spirit. Upon entrance into the kingdom, every subject is given certain gifts (Ephesians 4:7-13). In addition, the Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence within the new

*Dr. Chafer, "Systematic Theology," Vol. V, pp. 315, 316.

citizen (John 14:17; I Cor. 3:16, 6:19). Thus the impelling force is not external, but internal. The kingdom of God *does promise* spiritual benefits. Since the origin and sustaining force of the kingdom is not political nor physical, this is reasonable. Among those spiritual advantages to the subjects are the fruit of the Spirit (John 15:16; Galatians 5:22, 23); crowns (II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12); and above all, the assurance of eternal life lived with joy in the personal presence of the Sovereign.

In gaining a clear conception of the kingdom of God, we must beware of the great fallacy of believing that only that which is visible really exists. Satan's master weapon is to limit our experience and attention to that which is perceived through the five senses. If this archfiend can keep us so busy seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, and tasting, that we have no time, nor sense of need, for extra-sensory communion with God, then he has won his victory.

An understanding of the relationship between the physical world and the spiritual world is extremely important in relating our daily lives to the kingdom of God. Two unscriptural extremes are to be avoided. For lack of better terms, they might be called: 1 *Stoicism*, in which the ruling idea is pessimism. Life is cruel; life is harsh; our days must be labored through with a patient enduring of hardship and pain; and 2 *Sensualism*, in which the dominant force is desperation. Nothing is real but the satisfaction of the physical desires. This life is all there is. Therefore eat, drink, and be merry to the point of satiety.

Neither of these extremes is in accord with the facts. In the kingdom of God, the subject must un-

derstand the truth about this life, because the truth makes him free (John 8:32). A man must be released from the slavery of sin before he can be a citizen of the kingdom of God, and free to obey the King. In very practical terms, Christ describes a subject of the kingdom of God as being one who is **IN THE WORLD** but not **OF THE WORLD**.

IN THE WORLD—A subject of the kingdom is limited in the following ways, to name but a few:

Physically. His body is subject to disease, fatigue, pain, death, and hunger.

Economically. He must work for a living, pay his debts, etc.

Socially. He must not be conformed to the world system, and certainly must not love it.

Spiritually. He has adversaries and enemies, both seen and unseen. As was his King, so is he to be rejected and suffer tribulation.

NOT OF THE WORLD—In contrast with the citizens of this world, the subject of the kingdom is different:

In his purpose. He is by profession an ambassador, a servant, and a soldier, and is to walk worthy of these vocations.

In his power. He has power to be called a son of God, to be a witness, and to do all things.

In his personality. He is made a partaker of the divine nature and has the mind of Christ.

In his perspective. He seeks first the things of the kingdom of God, other things take their turn, and all things work together for good.

In his prospect. He looks for the blessed hope of Christ's appearing, which he loves.

Is there any higher type of kingdom than this? Paul has written

(Continued on page 16)

A WORD TO "GENTILES"

By Gordon Fraser

We have no hesitancy in stating that Mormonism is a device of Satan. It would almost seem that the arch enemy had devised this cult as a masterpiece with which to taunt the Lord and His followers, by borrowing the methods which are the rightful equipment of the Christian, and using them in the construction of an overwhelmingly successful imitation of the true Church.

In Mormonism, Satan has used as his text book a most incredible accumulation of pseudo-history, imitation Scripture, Biblical phraseology, and distorted doctrine. He has tintured this with portions of misapplied, and sometimes altered, passages of Scripture and has attributed this whole volume to a personage named Mormon, who was supposedly an historical character but is now a "fully accredited angel." This text is the "Book of Mormon," and to this, he has supplemented later writings which are the supposed revelations of Joseph Smith and his successors.

With this basic material, Satan has built a fanatically devoted body of religionists now approaching two million in number, and doubling every fifteen years.

Any Christian, instructed in the Word, will recognize the basic methods used by the Mormons, as those which were used in the first century of the Church with such tremendous success.

First: The Mormons apply the principle of "every man a missionary." We read in Acts 8:4 that the Church "went everywhere preaching the Word." In Mormonism, at age eight, each boy is baptized; at age twelve, he becomes a deacon;

and on coming of age, he must account for two years of missionary service.

Second: The Bible teaches the "priesthood of believers," which indicates that a definite personal responsibility devolves on each believer to function as the representative of the Lord Jesus in His Church here on earth. With the Mormons, there are no clergy as such, but each man aspires to either the "Aaronic" or the "Melchizedek" priesthood. These are the supreme ecclesiastical orders of the cult, and each aspirant is expected to become a member of one of them. Any member of these orders may function at any time, and for life, as a fully accredited official in whatever matters may be assigned to him.

Third: The nucleus of a local New Testament Church was stated in principle by the Lord Jesus Himself when He said "where two or three are gathered." With the Mormons, it is an active principle that where three married male members of the cult are in residence, a church organization is actually in existence, each man assuming his responsibility in the order of his seniority.

So we have these and other principles which are a definite part of the Mormon religion, and we deplore the fact that it is, too often, the cultists and false religionists who are willing to put these principles into active practice.

What a condemnation is due to the true Church of Jesus Christ for ignoring the possibilities available to her in the application of these basic principles of action which would certainly have even greater potential if utilized by *believers* in the power of the Holy Spirit.

JERUSALEM TO PALMYRA, NEW YORK, VIA ARABIA

(Continued from page 11)

And it came to pass that we did pitch our tents by the seashore; and notwithstanding we had suffered many afflictions and much difficulty, yea, even so much that we cannot write them all, we were exceeding rejoiced when we came to the seashore; and we called the place 'Bountiful,' because of its much fruit" (I Nephi 17:5-6).

Problem: We do not doubt the power of God to bring a people miraculously through such experiences, but we ask the question "Would God do so?" Surely an omniscient God would have directed

a pilgrimage toward its destination rather than away from it.

If the God of the Bible had been directing such a migration, He would not have needed a brass compass to guide the travelers.

Problem: Where on all of the eastern coast line of the Arabian peninsula would the pilgrims have discovered the land described as "Bountiful" without it already being occupied completely by the tribes and nations we know to have been living there at the time period in question?

BELOVED

*Only Thou dost know if Thou dost desire
to bend my pen into a scythe.*

Thou knowest how I long to reap the harvest white;

Thou alone canst barb it as a hook

And well Thou knowest my desire to fish for men.

Thou whom my soul lovest, changing ink

into good food for lambs would be a miracle indeed,

But not a greater one than breaking bread;

And Thou dost know the longing in my heart

to feed Thy sheep

For Thou dost know I love Thee.

So make my pen a scythe

A fishing hook,

And make the words I write most proper food for lambs

If this would please Thee.

This poem is taken from "So Panteth my Soul,"
by Elisabeth Wilder.

PUZZLING QUESTIONS AND DISCERNING ANSWERS

By Pastor "Mac"

QUESTION—*How can you intelligently and rationally tell a non-believer what it means to have the Spirit in your heart?*

ANSWER—You can't. Not according to I Corinthians 2:9-12. The non-believer needs to hear the Gospel message according to the Word of God, believe it, and receive Christ as his personal Saviour. The Holy Spirit brings about the new birth and makes him a partaker of the Divine nature the moment he so does. THEN for the first time, he has spiritual eyesight, and it is now that he has the capacity to "see" into the things of God.

QUESTION—*Can you explain to me in a simple way what it means to be a Fundamentalist?*

ANSWER—I think so. Do you know what it means to be a fundamentalist in the realm of cooking? Would you like to have a doctor operate upon you who was not a fundamentalist in the medical world? Do you want a preacher to teach you the Word of God who is not a fundamentalist in His Word and in the realm of the spiritual? Do you follow me? I would not give you a nickel for a man who was not a fundamentalist in his field . . . the doctor . . . the business man . . . the lawyer . . . the nurse . . . AND the preacher!

A Fundamentalist maintains that Jesus Christ was divinely conceived by the Holy Ghost, virgin born, and is THE SON of God in a sense that no other is.

A Fundamentalist maintains that the Bible IS the Word of God, inspired of God, inerrant in the original writings, and is the only rule of faith and life.

A Fundamentalist maintains that man sinned and thereby incurred both physical and spiritual death and that apart from God's redeeming grace, he is hopelessly and helplessly lost.

A Fundamentalist maintains that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is expiatory, that His death was a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.

A Fundamentalist has never been accused of pussy-footing, side-stepping, or straddling; he is a contender for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

THE KINGDOM OF GOD *(Continued from page 13)*

"We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:18). In view of this, could any kingdom of mere physical origin, depending upon physical force and bodies, and enjoying only physical promises, be substituted for what the Scriptures describe as the

kingdom of God? Surely with Paul the true subjects of this realm cry out, "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:20, 21).