

Christmas letter, 2006

(November 28, 2006)

H.I.S. Ministries Newsletter, covering November 2006

We wish you the blessed Christmas and the New Year filled with love, joy and peace, coming from the Prince of Peace.

“And it came to pass in those days, that there was a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed...And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Luke 2:1, 4-7.)

This time of the year many people ask, *“When was Jesus Christ born, really?”*

Let us reason a bit. Caesar Augustus, wanting to make himself a god, ordered the world to pay taxes to him, and he commanded his subjects to go to their birthplaces for census numbering.

No ruler with any sense would have ordered his subjects to travel to their birthplaces during the time when the weather generally would be wet and cold and roads nearly impossible for travel, as it would be in the Jewish month of Chislev, which is our November-December. That time of the year the shepherds would not have been out at night watching their sheep either, as the record in the gospel of Luke says they were during the time of birth of Jesus. When we stop and think about this question, we can reason that this census of people would have not have happened in December, but perhaps rather during the first month of the Jewish calendar, the month of Tishri, our September-October time, when weather is mostly dry and nights are not very cold. The scriptures do not tell us when He was born, but the important thing is that they do tell that He was born.

As we read from Luke’s gospel, this Caesar Augustus’ command included a couple from Nazareth to travel to Bethlehem to enroll. The young woman, Mary, traveling with her husband Joseph, was carrying in her womb the Son of God. Caesar Augustus had tried to make himself God, but that little baby in Mary’s womb was God and, after we have come to know Him personally, He will be to us our Savior and Lord, our God.

The angel of the Lord had come to Mary and said, *“Fear not Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord shall give unto Him the throne of David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” (Luke 1:30-33.)*

So the Son of God was born into humanity. He was God manifested in the flesh. He came to this world as a baby, in the weakest way possible, needing His mother’s care. He had laid down His glory, but not His Deity - He was 100% God and 100% a man, who took our

place as the payment of our sin on the cross of Calvary.

He was born in the city of David, Bethlehem, where David, the greatest King Israel had ever had, had lived. He was promised to be a King like David, not only for a short time, but forever.

When we read the gospels, we see that they each have a different view point. Matthew emphasizes, through his presentation of Jesus' genealogy, that He was born the Messiah, and rightful heir of the throne of David. Mark emphasizes that Jesus was the Servant of Jehovah, and for that reason he presents no genealogy, for servant's genealogy is not important. Luke stresses the fact that Jesus was the perfect Man, and presents His genealogy back to the first man, Adam.

John introduces Jesus as God Himself who became a man, and thus John's genealogy goes all the way back to "the beginning", before there was anything but God.

Through all of the gospels, however, we see Jesus as both a man and God, God the Son, who came to take away the sin of the world.

He was born in Bethlehem, which name means the *House of David*, and also the *House of Bread*. He was born the King of Kings in the City of David, but He is also our *Bread of Life* that sustains us now and forever. (John 6:33; 35, 48, 51.) Wise men still seek Him, and if we seek Him with all our hearts, we will find Him and through Him we have eternal life and salvation.

As John wrote, "*These things I have written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*" (1 John 5:13.)

Let us thank Him for His gift to us, and worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

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About Anne:

We have received letters and calls from many of you concerning the death of Anne, in Belfast, Northern Ireland, that I reported about in last month's newsletter. Many of you are asking if we know yet what really happened to her.

What we do know for sure is that the Lord wanted her saved before that fateful day, October 16th. We know that she confessed her faith in Jesus Christ of the Bible, according to Romans 10:9-10, just days before her death, and that she had repented and denounced all of Mormonism. (See our November Newsletter. If you do not have it, you can read it from our website, www.hismin.com.)

After I learned about her death, I understood why we must, without delay, listen to the Holy Spirit and act on His promptings. I have never experienced such an urgency and strong promptings of the Holy Spirit as I did while receiving and answering Anne's 26 letters in 10 days in October!!

What we know is that the investigation of her death is still on-going. Jim, our friend in Belfast, who had visited Anne two times and talked to her on the phone several times during this same 10-day period, has kept us informed about the police investigation of her death. We received a letter from Jim on Saturday, 25th of November, saying that there is another police investigator assigned to this case, additional to the one Jim had spoken with before. He is saying that the coroner is not satisfied, and is obviously suspicious about the circumstances leading to Anne's fall from the 3rd floor balcony. The police continue to interview people to find out who were in touch with her during her last days, and who

might have visited her that fateful night. Jim will be giving his statement to the police on December 1st. Jim will be also giving copies of all Anne's letters to me and my answers to her, and all other information he has collected. We do pray, and are asking your prayers also, that the truth will become known, and that guilty one(s) will be found out and brought to justice. Anne was such a sweet lady, who had just learned the truth and wanted to leave Mormonism, and had "put her faith in Jesus Christ of the Bible", as she wrote in her last letter to me. I am sure that she is with the Lord, but the way her life ended is frightening, to say the least.

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From our mailbox:

A Mormon woman wrote:

"Dear Rauni... I was born and raised LDS. I have had doubts and problems, but I just could not even think of looking or finding another church...I found your story yesterday...I just read and read and read everything I could on your site. Then something incredible happened. The questions and uncertainty started to melt away. I felt something that I have never felt before. A freedom. A tremendous weight was lifting from my heart. And then I just kept crying and crying as I started to get it. I was so excited! I wanted to call everyone I know and tell them that I am going to be saved. I know that I still have so much learning to do, but I can't wait to do it. My husband and I can finally find a church for our family. A real, true church to experience the REAL Christian fellowship that our family needs...

I am so worried for my relatives... they are so deeply entrenched in the Church...I called my sister yesterday just to beg her to read your site, asking her to pray to God to show her the truth. I so desperately want her to be saved (that expression sounds so weird coming from me - I used to make fun of it). But I know that she, as well as everyone, has to find her own way... Please pray for her that she can one day accept the truth and that she too can be saved by our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Thank you, thank you, thank you. You've really made a difference for me and my family.
Sincerely, _____"*

[We sent her, by postal mail, a package of materials that she could use for her own growth in the Lord and as well to inform others, be they her family or friends, who may also be seeking. We pray that she will continue studying and finding her way totally out of this "maze of Mormonism", into the arms of true Jesus of the Bible.]

An LDS lady wrote:

*"Dear Rauni, Thank you so very much for your courage, your determination and effort for putting your intellect to work and writing a most comprehensive and succinct piece on all the very real problems with Mormonism. I find myself on very much the same path as you have walked. I too was a young convert in _____ and then served a full time mission to France before coming to the Unites States...The reason I want to converse with you is, because like you, I have come to see all those lies and can no longer support the LDS church as being divinely led. Rauni, I can tell that you also had a most profound "testimony" of the truths we both **then** espoused. The question I have for you is: **What do YOU make of all those spiritual experiences?** I have had spiritual experiences to make anyone's hair stand up on end or reduce one to overwhelming deep emotion. I have been trying to make some mental notes as to their connection with church doctrine and in fact some do not, but then many do! **How have you resolved that quandary?** I cannot imagine that you have not gone through your very rich life without connecting at some time or another with that very real other world or dimension that we name "spiritual". Surely some of those experiences had some connections with the unique teachings that the LDS church abound. Rauni, please write to me and tell me how you have resolved those questions. Thank you so much for caring.*

_____.”

My reply:

I am glad that you wrote and had the courage to ask. I could write a sizable book about my "spiritual experiences" that kept me in the church while my intellect and reason said it was all false. Experiences can seem very real, and convincing. Many of them, or so I thought, were answers to my prayers. But think about it, even in the holiest place in Mormondom, in a temple, it is the devil who answers Adam's prayer... **The Bible tells that we must not put our experiences and feelings above the Bible, the Word God has given to us to teach us. If we receive answers that contradict the Word of God and what it teaches, they simply are not answers from God.** Peter says that the Word of God is "more sure" than our own experiences. (He writes that what they witnessed with their own eyes - 2 Pet. 1:16-18, **was not as sure as the Word of God**, v. 19.)

When I finally had the courage to admit to myself that I had been gullible and I had been fooled, it still did not make it easy to walk away. I came to see Mormonism as a masterpiece of the devil, the master-deceiver. That is why it looks so good and "feels so good" to a human heart mind, to a person who is not literate on what the Bible really says about God, Jesus and salvation. The **devil can and he will** give to us "spiritual experiences". He did that to me too - and for years I thought that they proved that the church was true. Even when I saw lies and deceptions in it promoted by its highest leaders, I accepted what I was told by them: "*Do not worry, the church is perfect, but people are not*". I finally received my "*last straw*" that broke me, and I quit. I did not know where to turn, but somehow I determined to check the Bible (I believe it was God who showed me where to turn). **I started to study, truly study**, putting away any and all preconceived ideas that had been fed to me while a Mormon. I started to read it book by book - not from Genesis, but starting from the Gospel of John, and from there to the rest of the 66 books it contains. I studied feverishly, like my life depended on it, **which it did!** I learned that the Bible was given to us for the purpose that **we'd know what doctrine is**, and after learning it, that we could correct even others who had gone astray. (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16.) It instructs that we must not be gullible, but we must **test ALL THINGS** by the Word of God (1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11), **comparing** all "*new revelations or teachings*" to the Bible, to "**the scriptures**", which Jesus had authenticated. It tells us that **we must test the spirits** that give us "testimonies" and feelings, trying to convince us that something that we do not know much about is "true" regardless. (1 John 4:1; 1 Tim. 4:1.) **The Bible never commands us to pray about whether something is true - be it a book, prophet or a church** (organization) etc., but it does say, "**STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**" (2 Tim. 2:15.) That, of course, means that if we do not study, **we will end up ashamed**, because we did not know what the truth is.

Jesus is the Truth, and He is the Way and He alone gives eternal life. (John 14:6.) One of His titles is the *Word*, the other, the *Truth*. (John 1:1; 14; John 14:6.) **His Word is Truth** (John 17:17.)

When I started comparing what I had believed as a Mormon to the biblical teachings, I was ashamed that I, in my ignorance, had so many years believed and followed Joseph Smith and his church.

In a nut-shell: *the Bible, not any church, is the place where we find the answers to ALL THINGS.*

Jesus is the answer, but we must KNOW HIM, who He really is, and what He did for you and me. (John 17:3; Matt. 7:22-23; John 8:24.) Mormonism has "*another Jesus*" along with "*another gospel*" and "*another spirit*", warned of in 2 Cor. 11:4 and in Gal. 1:8-9. We must reject what is not true, then repent from that and ask **Jesus of the Bible** (not "Jesus", a brother of Lucifer in Mormonism) to forgive our false-god-worship and all our sins and be born again and receive the Spirit of God. He comes into our hearts to clean us and recreate us to do "*good works*" for His glory. (Eph. 2:8-10.) (Romans 10:9-10.)

I do not want to "preach" to you, but since you asked how I have resolved these issues, I am answering what happened to me and to us. I'd be glad to talk more and answer your questions, if you want that.

If you are in Salt Lake City, I welcome you to come and meet me and my husband.

Our website has even our pictures so you can know who you are meeting.

(www.hismin.com/AboutUs.htm) :-) Blessings, Rauni

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Edward in Uganda continues to delight us. He is "my brother and son in Christ", and his ministry there has become sort of an extension of our ministry. We enjoy hearing from him, which I do at least weekly.

Here are some excerpts from some of his letters during this last month:

“Hello Rauni,

Warm Christian greetings of Love from Jinja, Uganda, and from my former Mormon colleagues, who are now also Christian...

A good active Mormon, a friend of mine, has been threatened with loss of his job (he works with C.E.S., Church Education System) if he doesn't stop associating with me...

Its funny how Mormonism looks at people like us, the so-called apostates...

Thanks for the sending the November newsletter and that Biblical verse, it helped me...Many thanks for your help towards our efforts here...

I got the money you sent from the Western Union and will put it in the radio project... It will last for a month, maybe more. We are excited about working on the radio (talk-show-program) because it seems to yield much fruit..

Reading your last dialogue with the late sister Anne of Northern Ireland showed me more how God can use us to save souls and the importance of responding to the promptings of the Spirit...

(From Edward's last letter a few days ago):

***Uganda's Ministry of Health** is holding nationwide immunization campaign. With the negative press the Mormon Church has been subjected to recently (by me), the Mormon Church has seen that as a good opportunity to exploit a genuine cause and clean its name.*

*Unaware of its underlying motives, **the Health Ministry has agreed to add the Mormon Church as one of its partners in the immunization program.***

The Mormon Church has also given the Health Ministry unspecified colossal amount of money, and am told, it will also provide volunteers at the immunization clinics.

When I learnt about it, I immediately wrote an article to the Redpepper editors (main Uganda's newspaper) about it.

*The editors seem not to be in a hurry to run it but I hope they do so, so that people can know that **the Mormons are not sincerely interested in helping Ugandans but are using their humanitarian aid as a tool to clean their name and buy political support and hoodwink unsuspecting Ugandans into believing their false doctrines.***

*I have written a letter that I will personally deliver to the **Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health** and will also send copies of it to **the Minister of Health, the Directors of District Health Services** of those districts where Mormonism has a presence and from where they will most likely send volunteers.*

Please have a look at that letter below and edit it as you may deem necessary and send it back to me. I want to personally deliver it to the Permanent Secretary's office in Kampala as soon as possible. Love, Edward”

[Dennis read and edited Edward's letter and we pray that he will be able to open their eyes to see the purpose behind all the “good works” that Mormons do for Public Relations and for gaining political influence there.]

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During the first week of January we will be sending, with heart-felt “thank you”, receipts for income tax purposes to everyone who has contributed to our ministry, as partners with us in this work and made this ministry possible.

You have been so good to us and you have proven your love for the lost and assisted in God's plans for them. We cannot thank you enough, but we do pray that God will meet all your needs, as He has met our needs. **You have helped us in our ministry-needs** and we thank our Lord that Dennis has had enough work to support us personally. I have not worked much in my Real Estate profession this year, because the demand for ministry work has been huge, and I have had to choose - our benefit or the Lord's! (No brainer! :-). The Lord has helped and we have been able to keep our heads above water, and our bills paid.

Please pray that we will be continually directed by the Lord to do what He wants us to do in all matters, large or small, just as He has done in the past.

In addition to answering hundreds and hundreds of Mormon questions, meeting with them, teaching and taking care of speaking engagements, our weekly classes on Mormonism at Calvary Chapel have also kept us busy. This is our third year of teaching there - and to our surprise, we have had a full class each time. We pray that God will use all these efforts for His glory to bring many to His Fold.

We indeed have seen many saved during this year and we thank Him and praise Him for allowing us to serve and witness that! What a joy it has been.

We are writing this newsletter a few days early for we will be leaving on 29th to Las Vegas, Nevada, to speak there. Please remember us during that time.

Have a Merry and Joyful Christmas and Blessed New Year .

Serving our Lord till He comes (Titus 2:11-15; 1 Thess 4:13-18).

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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