



April 1, 2010

H.I.S. Ministries April 2010 Newsletter, covering March 2010

Last Sunday, March 28th, was what we call *Palm Sunday*.

During this week, the days between March 28th and April 3rd we commemorate Jesus' Passion Week which begun when He, on that day, on Palm Sunday, rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to fulfill what Zechariah had written over 500 years before: "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*" (Zech. 9:9.) Multitudes that had gone before Him, and some that followed, hailed Jesus as their King, "*and cried saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest*" (Matt. 21:9; Ps. 118:26), and others wondered "*Who is this?*" He indeed came to Zion, which is Jerusalem, as her King, just days before He became as *the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world*, and thus He brought salvation to all who come to Him. (It is interesting that in Hebrew "*thy king cometh unto thee*" carries a meaning that the *king comes to save, to rescue his people*.)

He came as their Savior and King, but most Jews rejected Him then, and are still, as a nation, rejecting Him. When Zechariah said He is "*just*" means much more than doing "*just works*." He came to carry out His Father's will *with righteousness and justice*. He is a Perfect and a Just King. Zechariah wrote that He is "*lowly*", meaning "*poor, afflicted, distressed or tortured*". (Isaiah 53 describes in detail the suffering and death of the Messiah.)

Right after descending from the Mount of Olives, Jesus cleansed the temple of money changers saying "*you have made it a den of thieves*." There He healed the blind and the lame, and heard children praising Him and saying "*Hosanna to the Son of David*", but the religious leaders "*were sore displeased*." (Matt. 21:7-17.) Jesus taught in the temple and after leaving from there, He prayed for his disciples (John 17) as well as for all of us, who, because of their testimony in the Word of God, believe in Him. Then He, with His disciples went to Cedron, where there is a Garden called *Gethsemane* (which means "*olive press*"). He took Peter, James and John with Him closer to where He started to pray and to be "*exceeding sorrowful*". He asked "*O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt*." (Matt. 26:38-39.)

After hours of praying in agony, He said to His disciples, "*the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners... behold, he is at hand who doth*

betray Me.” (Matt. 26:45-47.) It was Judas who came “and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.”

He betrayed Jesus for *thirty pieces of silver*, which he later acknowledged as “*blood money*” by which *he had betrayed “innocent blood”*. The Prophet Zechariah had predicted this 500 years before, when he said, “*So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver...a goodly price that I was priced at of them.*” According to both prophecy and its fulfillment, this blood money was cast down in the temple, and after Judas’ suicide, used to buy a “*potter’s field*” where Jews *buried strangers*. (Zechariah 11:12-13; Matt. 27:5-8.)

Acts 1:19 tells us that this field was called in Aramaic “*Aceldama*”, meaning “*the field of blood*”, for it had been bought with “*the price of blood*”. The thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave or servant in ancient Israel (Ex. 21:32), but this “*Servant*” was none other than God incarnate. The price set by the religious leaders of Israel was the price for the sale of God!!! However there is more that this typifies. The Word of God reveals that the “*field is the world that has hidden treasure*”, and Christ Himself is the man who “*selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*” (Matt. 13:44.) He did just that. He gave the very blood of His life, shed it willingly so that we who were dead in our sins and trespasses, *hidden in the world*, might be “*purchased with His own blood.*” (Acts 20:28.)

There are over 300 fulfilled prophecies about the life of Jesus in the Old Testament. Here we have just touched two or three of these prophecies.

He came. He saves! He lives! Praise His Holy Name!

This is the message of the Gospel of God, it is the Good News! (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) The Gospel is free to you – the price was high, but it was paid in full by Jesus Christ, our Lord. When He hung on the cross for you and me, He said (John 19:30), “*It is finished*” [in Greek “*tetelestai*”, which literally means: **PAID IN FULL**].

He came to save – to give His life for all who receive Him and believe that He died, was buried and resurrected so that we too can live with Him forever and ever.

The celebration of His Passion Week is the most important celebration in Christianity, even more important than Christmas, when we celebrate the fact that He was born for us, but it is His death and resurrection that saves us!

“CHRISTMAS IS THE PROMISE, BUT EASTER IS THE PROOF.”

“*This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.*” (John 6:29.)

Have a blessed Resurrection Sunday – April 3rd.

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From our mailbox:

We continue with questions 5-10 from an LDS man (last month we handled his questions 1-4) and my answers to him (his questions in italics – no spelling or other corrections made to his letter - my answers below his in regular text):

He wrote:

“5. Is Christ God, or the Son of God, or Just a man?”

- *The bible as we have it today, portrays Christ as both God, and the Son of God*
- *However the Gospels excluded from the bible compilation portray Christ as a man*
- *There were NUMEROUS christians shortly after the time of Christ who did not believe Christ to be God, (i.e. the Gnostics, the Nestorians) But rather more of a man. These*

Sects were brutally persecuted, and destroyed

- If God wanted these books to be excluded, why was it decided in council what the canon should be? By voting? Then enforced with an Iron fist? (i.e. council of trent, Nicea, etc.)

- The Koran Claims that Christ was just another great prophet, and Mohammad was the last and great prophet (does their religious writings and accounts for history not hold as much sway as Christian writings do? Why?- But since God cannot be unquestionably proven, and that Jesus is the Christ cannot be proven, who are you to tell me what is right or wrong with my beliefs?... ”

5. Secular writers, as Josephus of the time of Jesus, among others, also acknowledged that Jesus lived and was crucified. He and others reported that Jesus was raised from the dead, even if they themselves did not believe in Him. Jesus is a real historical Person! Jesus Christ is God who became a Man. He is 100% God and 100% man. Only God can forgive sins (John 8:24; Mark 2:7), but God cannot die, only a man, as God became (John 1:1, 14), can die in our place as our “kinsman redeemer”.

What numerous so-called “Christians” or cultists have erroneously believed, or still believe, is a sad story of ignorance, but the Truth of God has been available to all seeking to have it. People can claim to believe whatever they so desire but “claiming” that does not make it true. Only what the Bible says counts as truth. (John 17:17.) Jesus authenticated the Old Testament that has over 300 exact prophecies that were in black and white 400 years before His birth into humanity. All of them came true. It would have been impossible if it was not the Word of God, received from God who knows the end from beginning. (Isa. 46:10; 48:5; Rom. 4:17; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.). There are no other books that can say and prove that – all the rest are either imaginations of men, or “revelations” from an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13-15), as those given to Mohammed (Koran) and to Joseph Smith (the Book of Mormon, etc.).

“6. Are the Gospels in the bible even true accounts?”

- When comparing the gospels, it is clear that some stories are mentioned in some accounts, while vacant from others. If they were true, and so miraculous, wouldn't they be included in all first hand accounts?

- if they are first hand accounts, why is it that the oldest accounts of them in existence are from 100 years after Christ, and written in Greek? (shouldn't they be in Aramaic? The language the apostles would have spoken?)

- History proves that stories over time are embellished and modified for the benefit of a few. Why would this also not apply to the bible?”

6. Gospel accounts vary, based on to whom they were particularly written. 1. Matthew wrote to legalistic Jews who were waiting for their King to relieve them from oppression of Rome. Thus many issues in his gospel deal with what they were looking for as a proof of their coming Messiah-King. For example, Jesus’ genealogy that Matthew presents begins with Abraham – the father of the Jews – and goes through the kingly line of Judah, and thus shows that Jesus was the legal heir to the Throne of David. Matthew writes about the issues that were important to legalistic

Jews. 2. Mark's Gospel was written with the Romans in mind. (Many scholars think that it was written by Mark for Peter - Mark was Peter's young companion in the ministry.) Mark presented Jesus as a servant of men – thus no genealogy is presented. He wrote about what would be helpful to pagan Romans to see Jesus as the Savior of mankind. 3. Luke, a Greek physician, wrote his gospel to the Greeks – presenting Jesus' genealogy from Adam, the first man, and showing that Jesus, though He was God, was fully a man, and that He will one day come back and sit on the Throne of David, as was promised to Mary. (Luke 1:31-38.) 4. John's Gospel is written to all people, both Jew and Gentile. John presents Jesus as fully God, starting from eternity past – “*In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” (John 1:1,12,14; 8:23-24.) The rest of the New Testament is written to born-again believers – and thus presenting God as their Father, for God is not the Father of those who are still “*in the flesh*”, and not yet born from above. Romans 9:8 says that “*children of the flesh are not children of God.*” We must “*become sons of God by receiving Jesus*”, who is our only way to heaven – (John 1:12; 3:7;14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8-9). Paul's, Peter's, James', Jude's and John's epistles and letters were written for believers in Christ as further instructions. Hebr. 1:1-3 says that “*God, in times past*” (meaning not any more) *spoke to people through prophets* – now He gives future predictions through Jesus in the Book of Revelation. *The end time scenario* starts in Revelation, chapters 1-3, revealing the “*church age*”, and then (Rev. 4:1) “*after these things*”, the rest of the Book teaches what will take place after the Rapture of the Church. John wrote it down for all believers, but this Book is *the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, who is the Almighty God. (Rev. 1:1, 8.) The Book of Revelation takes mankind from this *church age* to the Great Tribulation, and through it to *the Millennial Kingdom* and after that to *the Great White Throne Judgment* (Rev. 20:11-15) which ends in the lake of fire for those whose names are not in the Lamb's Book of Life. Believers are listed in the Book of Life and they will reside in a *New Heaven and a New Earth – in the new Jerusalem that comes down from God*. (Rev. 21:1-2.) God's own will live with Him forever. (Rev. 21-22.) In this book Jesus takes us through the entire human future and history. No more books or new revelations needed. The problem is that people have not studied what God has already revealed.

7. *If the Old Testament bible was compiled in 400 B.C.* How can bible scholars account for CORN being mentioned numerous times in the bible, when it is strictly and American grain? “

7. It seems to be a problem only in English translations of the Bible. For example my Finnish Bible uses correct words for the grain, and not corn. “*Corn*” talked about in our English Bibles is actually wheat. Various Hebrew words (translated into English as “corn”) are: 1. “*dagan*”, meaning grain, 2. “*bar*” which means grain of any kind, or 3. “*gamah*”, which means a stalk of grain. They also have a word “*sheber*” used of broken grain kernels. In the New Testament the Greek word “*sitos*” (translated as corn) means actually wheat or grain of any kind; “*sporimos*” is used of planted fields of grain, and “*stachus*”, means “head of grain, as standing out from the stalk”. It is true that Israelites did not know corn as we know corn in

America. This is one of the problems or difficulties of translation work. We simply need to realize that, and not get bent out of shape over things like this, they have nothing at all to do with doctrine or faith and belief in God. (I was a professional translator for many years. There are many problems involved when translating from one language to another while trying to make people and customs of different cultures understandable to the readers.)

“8. Is Christianity God's one true belief?

-if so, why has Christianity been the cause of so much conflict and blood shed since its inception? (i.e. Crusades, reformations, etc)

-if so, why does God allow so much disunity, misinterpretation, and different beliefs?

-if so, why are there so many other faiths? who also have their own stories, accounts of how the earth came to be, why we're here, etc. etc.”

8. Belief in the Bible is the only true belief - for it alone came from God and teaches of one True God and Jesus, whom the Father sent. (John 17:3.) Christianity that relies only on the Bible is true belief, but we must understand that not all who say they are Christians actually are. We as true Christians must be like “the Bereans”, mentioned in Acts 17:11, where Luke calls them “more noble than those in Thessalonica” in that they only believed what was written and confirmed in the Word of God, the scriptures!! If a teaching was not found in the Word, it was rejected! - It is sinful men that cause wars and conflicts of all kinds. Sinful men, getting a hold of earthly powers, want more – and thus they, with the help of our adversary the Devil, cause all the evil we see around, and it is just getting worse. God created Adam as a perfect human being, but with a free will to obey or disobey. Adam sinned, he chose to disobey God. What we see is development from that time on, going from bad to worse. God already once (4000 years ago) destroyed all but one family in the universal flood – and He will do it again, even though not by flood, this time it will be by fire. Chapter 4:1 in Revelation starts with words *Meta Tauta* – meaning: AFTER THESE THINGS – there will be seven years of horrendous chaos and destruction, by fire even – and it may start very, very soon. Signs are everywhere. (Read Matt. 24.) God will not forever put up with evil. He commanded destruction of many heathen nations in the OT times, but not until their “*iniquity was full*” (Gen. 15:16) – when they had gone past a possibility of change and repentance. Our “iniquity” too is getting full! Time to repent is now. There would be only one faith if all men would know the Word of God and seek His face, but they do not want to. They want their own way. They love the lie which the devil taught: that they can become gods! (Gen. 3:5; 1 Tim. 4:1.) So they think! You ask why there are so many stories? That should not be so hard for you to figure out. As you are now, so were Dennis and I too. We were part of LDS religion that *one imaginative story-teller* (Joseph Smith) created, and not that long ago, relatively speaking. He found gullible followers with his stories...[sigh]

“9. Should the bible be interpreted?

-is so, why does the Bible itself state that it shouldn't be?

-if not, why is it? and who is right?”

9. As how to interpret the Bible? – Simple: “*STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*” (2 Tim. 2:15.) Words have a meaning. God says what He means and means what He says! Studying, truly studying, makes one a “*workman*”, that *rightly* (correctly) *divides* (understands) the *Word of Truth*. It is the work of study that eliminates later shame. I was ashamed for I followed Mormonism 20+ years because I had not studied the Bible and I did not know the truth that God’s Word had – I carried it with me, but only used LDS approved verses, and those out of context! *I found myself ashamed* because I had accepted the lies of Joseph Smith because I did not know what the Bible IN CONTEXT taught!!! The Bible is right, true and correct – and if we put our hearts and minds into learning it, we can figure it out. To better understand more difficult verses, I use Hebrew text for the OT and Greek text for the NT when necessary – and dictionaries and commentaries that explain common meaning of the words during those days. We have to study it keeping in mind the culture and customs of the day – just like we do when we study the history of any other nation and people – we understand it better if we know something about their culture and customs, and also their more commonly used idioms.

“10. Is God really omnipresent, omnipotent, and did He create all things and can He do all things? -can God create a boulder so big that even He can't move it? to say He can- implies he can't move the boulder afterward, and is therefore not all powerful. To say He Can't create such a thing also implies he is not all powerful. (This is a sound logical question. so what is the answer?)”

10. Paul wrote to Timothy asking him “*in humility correct those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, that they may come to their senses, and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*” (2 Tim. 2:25-26.) My desire is to give an answer to all sincere questions, but these comments of yours in this #10 do not deserve an answer.

His concluding comments:

“These questions could continue...it does not matter what is said, or what is proven –I doubt you will ever change your position, and neither will I...But since God cannot be unquestionably proven, and that Jesus is the Christ cannot be proven, who are you to tell me what is right or wrong with my beliefs?... It comes to tolerance of other people’s beliefs and faith. Live and let live. I hope this clarifies the point I was trying to make...”

My reply: I am writing to you because you first wrote to me and asked that I would reply. The Mormon Church “*claims*” to believe in the Bible, but adds, “*as far as translated correctly*”, and since you are a Mormon, I assume that you agree with that. Let’s look at a few biblical doctrines: The Bible teaches that God is eternal, “from everlasting to everlasting” (Ps. 90:2). It teaches that there are no Gods before God – nor will there be after Him. (Isa. 43:10; 44:6, 8.) It teaches that God is one, but three Persons. (1 John 5:7.) It teaches that God is not a man. (Numb. 23:19; Hosea

11:9.) It teaches that Jesus is God who became a man. (John 1:1, 14, Matt. 1:23 etc.) It teaches that salvation is from Jesus alone, (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) and that salvation is the gift of God, not of works. (Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 2:16-21.) It teaches that only God can forgive sins. (John 8:24; Mark 2:7.) It teaches that only Jesus came from heaven (mankind did not) and that those who do not believe that He is I AM (God) will die in their sins. (John 8:23-24.) Not even one of these teachings can be refuted based on “erroneous translation”. That means that Mormons must believe everything that is correctly translated.

As to “tolerance”, it was never taught by Jesus nor by His disciples. To *tolerate* all faiths is implying that truth is relative and not absolute, and is not worth standing on. *Tolerance* is based on ambiguity and uncertainty about reliable truth. It opposes the absolute standard which is the Bible. *Tolerance* stems from person’s desire to be *tolerated*, regardless. Demand of “tolerance” and acceptance of all religions puts all faiths on equal level, but Christian faith, taught in the Bible, says that *Jesus is the only way* (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). I am sorry that you cling to a religion (Mormonism), but yet you are unsure of even the existence of God and Jesus. I do pray that you will look at all the scriptures I have included for you in all of these answers – from 1-10 – and that you’d seriously consider the Bible and Jesus Christ who is the Word Personified. He is ready to forgive and receive you if you’d just ask. (Romans 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9.) ---I am praying for your salvation in Jesus. - Rauni

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“... God, who had reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ ... hath given us the ministry of reconciliation...God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He had made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”(2 Cor. 5:18-21.) *Ministry* is translated from a Greek word that means *service* – God has given us ministry to serve Him and bring God’s reconciliation to Mormons who have unknowingly been serving false gods and “another Jesus”. *God in His grace has chosen to use us in this work*, and we thank Him and praise Him for it is the *gift of God to be able to work in His vineyard*. There is no greater joy than what we have experienced over the years as we have seen so many come to accept and receive Jesus. We have a great joy with them here in this life, but even greater joy is to know that this rejoicing will continue for ever and ever in the heavenly Kingdom of God. We are thankful to those of you who help and partner with us in this work. Times are getting harder and harder and without your help we could not continue. You are a blessing to us. We are confident that the Lord will reward you for your faithfulness to Him in helping us to reach the lost.

March has been a good and busy month for us in many ways. We finished our *Understanding Mormonism* classes on the 21st of March at Midvalley Bible Church. (We started there on January 10th.) We enjoyed getting to know so many of our

brothers and sisters in the Lord. We want again to thank them and pastor Ken Hornok for inviting us to come and teach. They sacrificially gave up their Sunday evenings in order to learn how to better understand what their Mormon neighbors and friends actually believe and how to help them to come to the knowledge of the truth about God, Jesus and salvation. We will be praying for all of them and that they will faithfully plant seeds of the true Gospel of Christ. We also ask you all to pray with us for several LDS people we have been talking with over the phone and in person and sent information that could help them to see the light of truth. We cannot give their names, as they are still uncertain how they will proceed and some are afraid. It is hard for many to accept what they are learning from the Word of God, when they have been taught a very different doctrine. It takes a lot of courage to turn from what they had thought was truth, but was not, and commit their lives to the Lord, and let Him direct. The cost of that step can be huge – most will loose their families, friends and many even their livelihoods and their jobs if their employer happens to be LDS. However, when one truly becomes a child of God, and is born from above, there is no hesitation any more, for one cannot worship the true God in the confines of a false religion. Faith in Jesus and witness of the Holy Spirit takes away the fear, and then it is even easy to “*come out from among them and be separate.*” (2 Cor. 6:14-17.)

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We want to ask your prayers for Heber (ringing in his ears has not stopped and he desperately needs the Lord’s help in that). Dick Baer and Jim Valentine are doing better, but we ask you to continue praying for them and also for Dale’s therapy. Please pray for Bruce, Grace and Judy that the Lord will make His will known to them and give them peace in the midst of their struggles. God, in Nahum 1:7, promises: “*The LORD is good, a strong hold in the days of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him.*”

We wish you a blessed Resurrection Sunday, and together with you we thank the Lord for the great salvation He has provided.

In His Love, Rauni & Dennis Higley

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“You cannot turn your back on Christ if you keep your eyes on Him.”

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