



**\*He Is Savior, Acts 4:12**

March 1, 2016

## **H.I.S. Ministries March 2016 Newsletter, covering February 2016**

**“Christmas is the promise; Easter is the proof”.**

The Gospel of John, chapter 12 begins with **Jesus’ final week of ministry** on planet Earth.

He came to Bethany on **Friday**, six days before Passover (*eighth of Nisan*), to spend the **Saturday Sabbath** with Lazarus, Martha and Mary at their home near Jerusalem. His ***Triumphal Entry*** was on **Sunday**, the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Nisan*, when He entered Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-44) riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9) as the rightful *King of Israel*. This was at the same time all the sacrificial lambs were being presented (according to Exodus 12:3-6) for approval and inspection by the priests during the **4 days before they would be killed on Passover, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan**. When the chief priests and Pharisees saw the multitudes coming to meet Jesus, singing *Hosanna*, [which means “*save now, we pray*”], they began to take counsel together to figure out how they might get not only Jesus killed, but also Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Because of Lazarus, many of the Jews believed in Jesus. (John 12:9-19.) [Many of the chief priests were Sadducees, who denied resurrection, they, perhaps for that reason, wanted to get rid of Lazarus also]. These Jewish leaders were angry and beside themselves as they plotted their murderous plans to get to Jesus. *Satan entered Judas*, and he agreed to cooperate with the religious leaders and betray Jesus for money and lead them to Him when He was away from the multitudes. (Luke 22:1-6.)

**On Wednesday**, Jesus sent Peter and John to go and prepare the Passover meal for that evening. (Matt. 26:17-30.) John chapter 13 explains how, during the meal Jesus began to prepare His disciples for His coming trial and crucifixion. Reading this chapter carefully, we see that Jesus was concerned for His disciples, and not for His coming sufferings and death. Jesus taught by His example that His followers are to be humble servants of God. The lowest task of a servant in this culture was washing the feet of others. Peter severely objected to Jesus washing his feet, but then asked Jesus to wash him all over. When Jesus answered that they were already *clean* (saved), “*but not all of you*”, He was referring to Judas, who had never been saved. [Jesus was teaching that after we have been cleansed (*saved from our sins*), we only need daily cleansing from the pollution of sin, and *that washing* must take place daily *through the Word of God*. (Eph. 5:26.)] John wrote that when Judas left the room, “*it was night*” (13:30). [It was not just literally night, but it is always “*night*” when we willingly sin and turn away from our Lord.] After the Lord had instituted the Communion (the Lord’s Supper) by both the *breaking of unleavened bread*, which represents *His sinless body*, and drinking of wine, which represents *His blood shed for many*, they sang a hymn together and went to the Mount of Olives. (Mark 14:22-26.) Judas knew that place well (The Garden of Gethsemane), for Jesus often went there to pray and meet with His disciples (John 18:1-3). Judas led the priests and Pharisees, and Roman troops, who came there with *weapons, lanterns and torches* to arrest

Jesus. **They came seeking the Light of the world with lanterns!** Jesus asked them, “Whom are you seeking? They answered Him, *Jesus of Nazareth.*” (John 18:4-6) When Jesus answered, “**I AM** [He]- they drew back and fell to the ground.” [“**I AM**” is one of the names of Jehovah in the OT. “He” is not found in the original text, but was a necessary addition in English. They understood what He meant [that He is God], and fear fell on them.] They arrested Jesus and took Him to an *all-night trial* [which was illegal], to be first tried in a “religious trial” before Annas, the High Priest (18:12-14, 19-23) and then (18:24) to Roman-appointed High Priest, Caiaphas (son-in-law of the real High Priest, Annas), in order to *prove* Jesus guilty of blasphemy and heresy. Since the Jews were under Roman rule, they had to work through Roman courts to secure the guilty verdict necessary for *the death penalty they wanted*. Jesus was then taken to a “civil trial” - to be tried before Roman authorities (first to Pilate, then to Herod, and again to Pilate) to *prove* that He was an enemy of Caesar, and thus deserved death by crucifixion. Pilate, after a long, all-night questioning, said to the Jews that he *found no fault in Jesus*, but they insisted that He was guilty. Pilate told the Jews, “**You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.**” Pilate had tried to get Jesus to say that He was the King; but when He did not answer, Pilate angrily said, “*Are you not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?*” Jesus answered, “*You could have no power at all against Me unless it was given to you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.*” [Who, then, had the greater sin in this matter? Was it *Caiaphas the high priest*, or *Judas the betrayer*, or *the Jews* and their leaders in general, **for they had the Scriptures that predicted the coming of Messiah?**] They should have known better! Jesus had wept at His *Triumphal Entry* into Jerusalem, saying “**If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make your peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes.**”(Luke 19:41-42; Dan. 9:24-25.) From that point on, Pilate sought to release Jesus; but the Jews said to him, “*If you let this man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whosoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.*” (John 18:28-38, 19:1-24.) Actually, Pilate made six attempts to release Jesus during this trial. He said to the Jews, “**You judge Him**” (18:31). He also had said, “**He is innocent**” (18:38), **release Him** (18:39). He tried to satisfy the Jews by scourging Jesus instead (19:1). Pilate even appealed to their pity on Jesus (19:5), and said, “**Behold your King**” (19:14). However, he likely said this because he was angry at the Jews for **making him condemn Jesus whom he had pronounced innocent.**

They led Him to be crucified (John 19:16; Isa. 53:7) and it was the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.(Thursday)

Pilate, when Jesus was hung on the Cross, ordered that the title - JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS (19:19) be written in the three languages - spoken in the area - Hebrew, Greek and Latin - and placed above His head in the center of the cross. The Jews objected and wanted Pilate to change the words to read, “**He said, I am the King of the Jews.**” But Pilate refused by saying, “*What I have written, I have written.*” Before Jesus gave up His life, He commended His mother’s care to John, the beloved apostle, indicating that from that moment on John would be her son. (19:25-27.) At the foot of the Cross stood only John and four women: 1. Mary, the mother of Jesus; 2. Marys’ sister Salome, the mother of John; 3. Mary, the wife of Jesus’ disciple, Cleopas (mentioned in Luke 24:18); and 4. Mary Magdalene. During the three hours of darkness, from noon till 3:00 PM, Jesus’ suffering for our sins was so tremendous that He cried out with a loud voice, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” (Matt. 27:45-46.) Then, as a final fulfillment of Scriptures, He said, “*I thirst.*”(Ps. 69:21.) And after receiving the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished**” (in Greek: *Tetelestai* – “**paid in full**”), and He gave up His spirit. (John 19:30.) The moment of His death was the moment making our salvation possible. There is nothing we can do, only to receive Him and believe. (John 1:12; 6:28-29; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10.) We have no capacity to understand why the Creator of the universe - King of Kings and the Lord of Lords - loved the world so much that He became a man, one like us, and by His death paid the penalty of all our sin. (John 3:16.) That is amazing - He did all that for you and me.

Gospel of John from chapter 13 onward, Jesus started to prepare His disciples for what was to come. John 14 begins (verses 1-4) by Jesus telling His disciples that *He would be going away, but only to prepare a place for His own so that where He is, we can be also*. It is in this chapter that He first time tells us to pray in His name (v. 13) and He promises to send us the Holy Spirit to teach us and to remind of us what He had said. As we celebrate Easter this year, March 20<sup>th</sup> through 27<sup>th</sup>, let us spend time carefully studying at least **chapters 12 through 17 of John's Gospel**, the most loved of all Scriptures, and praising the Lord for the fulfillment of the promises of God found also in the Old Testament. *“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved...For I delivered to you first : that Christ died for our sins according to Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) Thus the only true Gospel is the message that *Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day*. Paul warned that even if an angel comes and preaches a different gospel, receiving it and believing it will bring God's curse, not salvation. (Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Cor. 11:4, 13-15.)*

However, it was an angel, *an angel of light*, who brought the Book of Mormon and “gospel” to Joseph Smith. The LDS Church's 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of Faith says that *“all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel”*. Paul also taught that there are no laws or ordinances in the Gospel; and if you believe that *“righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”* (Gal. 2:21.) We are saved *by grace through faith*, no works included or needed. (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10; John 6:28-29.) Let us share this “good news” with our friends and relatives and all whom we meet in our daily lives.

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From our mailbox: *“I read your letter from exmormon.org where you stated that Joseph Smith was practicing polygamy 10 years before he said he had the revelation about polygamy. You also said that he was having an affair on Emma with a young woman by the name of Fanny Alger, and that he had numerous wives from men who were still living. Where are the sources of this information from? You never did say in your letter, and honestly I would like to know the source. If this is an accurate source my interest would obviously be perked. You also made a comment that Joseph Smith was a liar and deceiver, and a crook. Can you explain to me why a man would hold to his beliefs that, you say, he had just made up, and go through persecution as he did, but he never had any financial gain from this so-called lie. So my question to you is: Explain to me why would he go through all this if it was not true? I also have a few other questions aroused from your letter. After you answer these two, I will send you more. Thank you. Sarah J.”*

My answer: Thank you, Sarah, for your questions (and also other questions you said you will be sending). Maybe I need to start with a little background on Fanny Alger. She was a 14-year old foster-child Joseph and Emma Smith had taken into their home in 1831 as a “servant girl”. According to the records, Joseph had an affair with her, and married her in 1833, when she was 16. “Revelation” on polygamy, Doctrine and Covenants (D&C, 1890 ed., p.493) said that this revelation was “**given in July 12, 1843**”, but in the current D&C, Section 132, it is stating that it was “*recorded July 12, 1843*”, implying that Joseph Smith might have received it at earlier date. The Church evidently made this change because it had become evident from their own recorded history, that Joseph Smith was a polygamist at least 10 years before claiming revelation from God, commanding polygamy. You can verify this information from the History of the Church, vol. 5, pp. 500-501, where it says, under the date, Wednesday, 12 July, 1843, “I received the following revelation in the presence of my brother Hyrum and elder William Clayton: - Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including the Plurality of wives. Given through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1843.” Bigamy was against the law in Illinois, and they knew it. That is why Joseph Smith denied it, and added a Section 101, to 1835 D&C, that confirms that he understood that polygamy was against the law, and that people were accusing him and the Church of practicing it. In it he proclaimed

that the Church or him were not practicing polygamy. (This accusation had to have been presented prior to 1835.) In 1835 D&C, 101:4 he called polygamy a "crime of fornication". It said, *"...In as much as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again."* There is a plenty of evidence from the Church's own records that Joseph Smith had plural wives at least from 1833 on, as did many other leaders of his church also. See *"In Sacred Loneliness"* (first ed. 1998) by an LDS professor Todd Compton, who is an active Mormon and also a contributor to *"The Encyclopedia of Mormonism"*, published by the Mormon Church. There are many other LDS writings and records that report of Joseph Smith's many wives – some list 33 wives, in addition to his legal wife, Emma, who opposed polygamy violently, and some others add *"possibly 15 more"*. Twelve of these 33 additional wives had living husbands (most of the husbands were also Mormons). Joseph Smith and his fellow Mormons knew that polygamy was illegal in Illinois as well as in other states of the Union, and that it was also immoral by any Christian standards. Todd Compton records that nine of Joseph's wives were young teens, two of them only 14 years old at the time of marriage (when Joseph himself was in his late 30's). Already in the 1870's, a historian of the LDS Church, Andrew Jensen, compiled a report of 24 Joseph Smith's plural wives to prove to the RLDS Church that polygamy originated with Joseph Smith, not with Brigham Young as the RLDS Church had insisted. There are so many records in the Church's own archives about Joseph Smith's and also other leaders' polygamy that I find it strange that you do not know about it. Of course as long as the Main LDS Church was still in Nauvoo, they denied it. Joseph Smith is, on record, denying his polygamy even in his last month of life, June 1844. After Brigham Young took the majority of Mormons to Utah in 1847, they started practicing polygamy openly for now they were outside of official United States area. Brigham had proudly proclaimed, *"If I had forty wives in the United States, they did not know it, and they could not substantiate it... I LIVE ABOVE THE LAW, AND SO DO THIS PEOPLE."* (Journal of Discourses, vol. 1, p. 361.) You also wanted me to explain that if Joseph Smith was a liar, deceiver and a crook, and that he knew that it was all a lie, why would he go through persecution when he didn't have any financial gain from it? From my answer to your first question, above, you can see that he was a liar, deceiver and crook. For he married dozens of women, and lied about it, denied it clear to the end. But there is more. He had been practicing the occult (with his father) and claiming that *he could see from his "peep-stone"* (a rock he placed in his hat), where buried treasures of gold and silver were, and if they paid him, he would tell them where these treasures were. Fooling people like this was another illegal/criminal activity in US, and he was arrested, jailed and fined for it. That was in 1826, 4 years before he started his church. Court records for that have been discovered and verified. Also when Isaac Hale, refused to allow his daughter, Emma, marry a man with *ill repute*, Joseph Smith secretly eloped with Emma and married her. (1827) When they came back, they needed Emma's parents to take them in to live with them. He then promised to his father-in-law, Isaac Hale, that he would stop that kind of *"work"* and profession, and start making an honest living instead. After their first child died shortly after birth (in June of 1828), Joseph tried to join a Methodist Church where his wife, Emma, was a member, but his membership was rejected because he was not willing to make a public confession and repent from his occult practices. Two years later (1830) he came up with the Book of Mormon that he said he had translated by same method, looking into his hat where he had placed his "seer-stone", same one he had used when telling people, for a fee, where buried treasures were to be found. *The Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1. pp. 128-132 reports about his *"rock in the hat" translation.* The Book of Mormon is obviously a clever fictional story, for civilizations told about in the BoM would not just disappear, but nothing about them has ever been found. You say that Joseph Smith had no financial gain from his religion. Opposite it true: Joseph Smith became quite wealthy very soon, and that without doing any other work except acting as the leader of his followers. They moved first to Kirtland, Ohio, then to Missouri and from there to Nauvoo, where he made himself the mayor of the City. He had even his own army, and declared

himself to be "*General Smith*". You may have seen Church published pictures of his parades in Nauvoo, Joseph riding on a white horse in a white uniform, etc. His followers built him his "*Nauvoo Mansion*" that had a bar with liquor license, Orrin Porter Rockwell acting as the bartender. Joseph finally had to close the Bar in his mansion, for Emma demanded that it be closed, or she will leave with their children. Information about his life and actions is available. [Former BYU History professor, D. Michael Quinn, has written several large volumes, all documented from the Church's own archives. "*Mormon Hierarchy, Origin of Power*" (vol. 1), and "*Mormon Hierarchy, Extension of Power*" (vol. 2) verify these matters, and much more, that I am just briefly answering for you.] Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were killed. The LDS Church claims that they died as martyrs, which is not true. Martyrs do not shoot back. They died in a *gunfight, Joseph killing 2 men and wounding a third*, which is reported in *the History of the Church*, vol. 6, by John Taylor, the third president of the Church, who was an eyewitness to this. I hope this helps. Rauni

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We finished yesterday, 28<sup>th</sup> of February, our 10-week *Understanding Mormonism* classes. We are thankful for everyone who faithfully attended them. They all demonstrated their love and care for the LDS people, and their willingness to study and learn about Mormonism in order to help them to "come out from among them" to true Christianity taught in the Bible. About half of our class members were former LDS, but they too needed to learn more about historical and doctrinal facts that are not taught in LDS wards and stakes. The other half of our class members were Christians who wanted to learn what the Mormonism teaches about God, Jesus and Salvation in order to be able to understand the differences between Mormonism and biblical Christianity, and be able to have a fruitful conversation about eternal life and salvation with them. During these classes we handed them more than two hundred pages we have written, topic by topic, and also documentation to LDS history and doctrine we went over with them during these 10 weeks. We have been teaching these classes since 1984, and collected many hundreds of LDS books and documents to prove "*where does it say that*", as is a question asked by LDS. We thank the Lord for giving us this awesome work to do to bring people to clarity of what does the Bible have to say about who God is, who Jesus really is, and how we can be saved and have eternal life with Him. It is all about Jesus, who is God with us.

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We thank the Lord for you, our friends, who have prayed for us during these many years, and some of you have assisted us even financially and in many other ways so that we have been able to do in this work. Through you God has blessed us, and we have been able to distribute Bibles, LDS books, DVDs, CDs, MP3s and all that has been necessary without cost to the recipients. The Gospel is free to all. Jesus paid the price. We learned that early on when we started to study the Bible in earnest and asked "*Firefighters for Christ*", a ministry in California, to send us Chuck Missler's taped study on *the Gospel of John* and asked them how much they cost. In 2-3 days we received a package consisting of 22 ninety minute cassette-tapes with a note: "*No charge - Gospel is Free. Ask and you shall receive.*" That has been our ministry's motto from the beginning of our ministry. The Lord has indeed made sure that we too have been able to *give to all who ask. We freely received God's truth and therefore we freely give.*

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We want to again ask your prayers for several friends needing blessings of health and freedom from pain. Please ask the Lord to bless Max and Pat, Merridy, Marlene, Dale, Sharon, Dick, Patty, Caryl, David, Tom, Dave, Judy, Sandy and Al. We must also pray daily for the persecuted Christians around the world. Many thousands of them are tortured, put in prisons, raped and killed, and it seems that nothing is done to ease their sufferings. We need to talk to the Lord more about their plight. The Lord will hear our prayers and answer them as He has promised. (1 John 5:14-15.)

Please pray also for the LDS people we are counseling. There is so much sadness when they realize that they had been lied to by their Church, and when their own families rejects them for their new found faith

in the Lord Jesus of the Bible. Many of them have even fear of losing their jobs and everything they have worked for. We experienced all that when we separated from Mormonism, and can fully understand their trials and testing times spoken of by Jesus. (Matthew 10:32-39.) He loves them as He loved us, and He will take care of them.

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As we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus and our salvation through our faith in His finished work, let us not forget that He is coming back soon. As His first coming was foretold of in the scriptures, so is His second coming. We must not be ignorant and be taken by surprise, but we must be ready, expecting Him to come at any time. He comes first for *His Bride, the Church*, saved by His grace (Eph. 2:8-9), and *meets us in the air*, (1 Thess. 4:13-18), and seven years after that He will come as the Judge of the unbelieving world. Our prayer is that many more will come to know Him now while we still have time and opportunity to escape God's wrath (Rev. 6:15-17) that will be poured on this wicked world. (Isa. 26:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Luke 21:36). God has not appointed believers in Jesus to His wrath. (1 Thess. 5:9.) We need to examine our faith (2 Cor. 13:5) **and then be ready tell others about Jesus and His love.** (Rev. 22:20-21.) ***“Christmas gives a promise of coming Messiah, but Easter gives us the proof that He came and that He is our Messiah.”***

**We wish you wonderful Easter celebration and peace that passes all understanding as we thank Him for His love and care.**

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**Thought for this month:** *“Hebrew scholars tell us that there is an intensive plural in Isaiah 53 that speaks of the death of Christ. They say that it literally means that He ‘died a thousand deaths’. What does that mean? It means that Jesus, being infinite, suffered for a finite amount of time what you, being finite, would suffer for an infinite amount of time. A great exchange took place. He suffered upon that cross an eternity of hell for every one of us.”* (Quote from Pastor Adrian Rogers.)

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