



**\*[H.I.S.] He Is Savior, Acts 4:12**

**March 1, 2019**

## **HIS MINISTRIES MARCH 2019 NEWSLETTER, COVERING FEBRUARY 2019**

The beginning of March this year is perhaps the snowiest start of March I have experienced in Utah. I like it – that is how March and even April were in my home country, snowy and cold. ☺  
Snow in Utah gives promises of water for our otherwise very dry desert climate.

February has been very busy for our ministry. We are currently working with several LDS persons who are now earnestly studying their religion's history and its changing doctrines that in themselves prove that they didn't come from *God who does not change*. Thus reason tells us that what God has said about Himself in His Holy Word, the Bible, is as unchangeable as He is. When we begin our discussions with questioning Mormons, explaining why Mormonism cannot be true (for it is not biblical), we begin with comparing what the LDS Church teaches about God to what the Bible says.

Most of them do not seem to be aware of what is now taught by the Mormon Church about God has been drastically changed from the beginning of Mormonism (1830) when the God of Mormonism was taught to be *an unchanging eternal Spirit*. That is what the Book of Mormon still teaches, but in April of 1844 Joseph Smith openly changed his doctrine of God. As the Bible says, he "*became a fool and changed the glory of incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*". (Rom. 1:22-23.)

The true God, God of the Bible, had early on warned what will happen to a "*prophet*" who starts "*leading people after other gods...*" God had said, "*that prophet...shall be put to death*". (Deut. 13:1-5.)

Joseph Smith was killed just 2.5 months after he had announced that God he now teaches about is *not eternal God as they have believed*, but a former mortal man, like they are now. He said, "*I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea...*" He continued and said, "*...you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves...same as all Gods have done before you.*" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp.345-346.)

Could it be that Joseph Smith's early death was a result of his leading people after other gods? What do you think?

Jesus warned about deception and false Christs. (Matt. 24:4-5). Shouldn't we do what Paul urged all to do, *to reason from the scriptures* (Acts 17:2), and compare presented new teachings to God's Word before believing and accepting as truth what may not be so? (Acts 17:11.) In 1 Thess. 5:21 Paul again counsels us to *test, prove all things before believing*. Thus we compare "*doctrine by doctrine*" what Mormonism teaches to what the Bible says about that teaching. If we can encourage LDS believers *to think and reason* (Isa. 1:18), they will eventually come to believe and embrace *the unchangeable truth of God's Word, the Bible*. We praise the Lord for allowing us to help these dear people in bondage to lies, as we once were too.

During the last 1.5 months we have spent hours and hours discussing and comparing LDS teachings to the Bible with a lovely LDS couple, Tracey and Britney. They have already said that they want to ask their names to be removed from the records of the Mormon Church. We are committed to continue helping them, meeting with them on Saturdays or Sundays. It is and has been our joy.

As we have reported in our newsletters since January 2018, in addition to local Mormons, we have been working via the internet and being in contact with several LDS people in Perth, Australia. They have become incredible people of faith in Jesus of the Bible. Many of them have already separated from their comfortable lives as respected Mormons in their community, and are willingly leaving all that behind to praise and serve the Triune God of the Bible. It is not any easier there than it is here. Their experience of rejection by their LDS family and friends is as heart-breaking there as it was for us here in Utah, USA.

On 2/18/19 was a Christian baptism/celebration day for two of them, Leon and Elmien Wilkinson.



They wrote: *“Thank you, Dennis and Rauni. We are so very excited. I love what you sent me/us on the meaning of Baptism into Christ. (Rom. 6:3-4.) So lovely! Leon has had a huge transformation during the past few weeks. He has been gracefully broken and trials have brought him to his knees. It has been hard for me to see him go through these trials and I cried tears with him, but then God just poured out His love on him in the most beautiful way and blessed him. He is so in love with God, he loves reading the Word and he can’t stop talking about how amazing God is! Sometimes I look at him and think “who are you!” for God has changed him so much. God hears and answers our prayers so faithfully! I am so grateful for what the Lord has done for us. We would not change anything! Love, Leon and Elmien.”*

[They have also written how just less than a year ago Leon was going to be the Bishop of their ward, and now he is a *cross-wearing-born again-Christian, baptized into Christ, into His death, burial and resurrection to walk in newness of life*. We thank Jesus for changing lives and allowing us to walk in newness of life.

In this picture to the right presents **Elmien, Alex and Zibby** – ☺ They are *“the three leading ladies of the exodus from Mormonism”* in Perth.

As you may recall, it was Zibby who first contacted Dennis in 1/15/18. At that time Alex (lady in the middle) was a Relief Society President in her ward... Now all of them (and there are more in this group) are *born-again-Bible-studying-Christians*, and more of them soon are to *“be*



*baptized into Christ”* also. Some in this Bible-study-group are waiting for their spouses to *“catch up”* in their spiritual growth, but they all are on their way. In addition to this great news, Zibby’s Mormon brother in South Africa is listening and they all (and we too) are praying for him and many more there to find God and His truth. (John17:17.)

This reminds us of what took place in Vernal, Utah in early 1980’s when we left Mormonism, and with a permission of our new Baptist Pastor, Herb Stoneman, we started to teach in that church *“How to witness*

to Mormons". Our ex-Mormon group grew and grew, till it became known among Southern Baptists across the nation as **"a revival in Vernal, Utah, miracle exodus from Mormonism"**.

**When people listen, reason and study, God becomes real to them, and miracles will take place. Then, within less than 2 years there were over 250 new Christians in the small town of Vernal Utah! God hears and answers prayer. We are at this time seeing the Lord working in the lives of Tracey, Britney, Amy, Lisa, MaryAnn and many others that we cannot call by name yet. Please keep them all, and us, in your prayers.**

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**Questions for us:** This time I am taking one of the many questions that our new "seeker-students" have set to us after discussions we have had here at our home. Tracey wrote: *"Rauni, when you have the time to answer this, I am wondering about the verses that the Mormon Church uses to say that both a falling away and a restoration will happen before the second coming of Christ. I'm curious what these verses 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and Acts 3:21 actually mean. Thanks! Tracey and Britney"*

**My reply:** Dear friends, I appreciate your questions and I am glad you are thinking and wondering. I am (we both are) more than happy to answer all your questions. I don't think that there is anything you can ask that we also didn't wonder and question when we began our Bible studies in the early 1980's, being confused by what we had been told and believed in Mormonism. We found out what they actually mean when we studied the Bible and verses in question in context, without the *"twist of Mormonism"* added to the clear biblical text. Most Mormon teachings are based on **Joseph Smith's preconceived ideas of what he wanted Mormonism to be and teach**. He invented Mormonism step by step, as he did with his doctrine of God.

**To make his teachings acceptable to his followers, he searched verses from the Bible that he could use to make his doctrines believable.** One example of this is **baptism for the dead**. **He had started to teach that without baptism no one can be saved.** His brother Alvin had died a few years before he started his church, so he came up with **the idea of baptism for the dead**. [It is not taught in the Book of Mormon that actually teaches strongly against it. (See Alma 34:32-35.) Then he found a verse in the Bible, in the middle of a chapter that teaches about resurrection, that mentions "baptism for the dead" and he had a "Eureka"- experience: **This is it** he declared! (See 1 Cor. 15:29.) **The problem is that nowhere in the entire Bible is baptism for the dead taught, not even in this verse!** **Paul is not teaching it but just asking why some who didn't even believe in resurrection were doing things like that.** **The Bible it does not teach that practice!**

[Note: **Anything that has doctrinal importance is repeated many times in the Word of God and by more than just one writer. The main thing to remember is that we must always read the entire passage in context where the verse is found to understand what it says.**]

You asked about Acts 3:21. **What does "restoration" mean? To restore means to put something back into its original form. Any change to the original would mean substitution, not restoration.** The LDS church claims to have the **"restored gospel"**. **To see if it is exactly that (the gospel taught in the Bible), you have to look at what the original gospel was. Paul declares what the gospel of Christ was and is in 1 Cor. 15:1-4. Any "gospel" that has a different message or is different in any part of it, is a substitution not restoration.** **What the Mormon "gospel" is, is declared in their 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of faith, and says that gospel is obedience to the laws and ordinances [of the Mormon Church] . There are no laws and ordinances in the Gospel of God – it is a declaration of what God has done to save us. He died, was buried and resurrected for us. That is the gospel that saves.** (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) **Laws or ordinances have never saved anyone.** [Read Gal.2:16-21 and Gal. Chapter 3 – all of it and you will see!]

**Acts 3:20-21 is talking about Jesus' Second Coming, and that has not happened yet nor will it take place until Jews repent and are ready to receive Him back - at the end of the Tribulation- at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. That is when He, Jesus, will restore all things during the Thousand- year reign of Jesus Christ.** In all cases, **we must read the context** and not just one verse that we may have been told about something that is not so. **Context determines what the meaning is.**

Note, that in 2 Thess. 2:3 Paul's is warning about deception, *"let no one deceive you by any means"*. [Paul is referring back to verses 1-2, where he is saying that *someone had fooled them by saying that the Lord has already come*. Paul says that it is not true.] *"... that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition who exalts himself above all that is called God..."* "Falling away" is total abandonment of Christianity – *"then the man of sin is revealed"*. Who is this *"man of sin"*? He is *the coming world leader, the anti-Christ* – and he has not been revealed yet, *nor has a total "falling away" taken place yet either, though this now may be very close. The Lord's final judgement Day is after the Thousand Year Reign of Christ.*

1 Tim. 4:1 talks also about *falling away from faith* and says that there are *"some"* that fall away, but not all. He wrote, *"...in latter times SOME will depart from the faith giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons."* I think we all as Mormons were part of those *"some" who had "fallen away"* from biblical faith when we accepted Mormonism and by so doing *we gave heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons* (the devil). That is why we all must repent, ask God's forgiveness and start our lives over, heeding to the Spirit of God instead. The Word of God was given to us so that we can know the truth. (2 Tim. 3:16.)

Please, always read all verses in context, at least the chapter that a verse is connected to. It is the context that determines what the meaning is. You are welcome to come Sunday afternoon to talk more about this and other questions you may have. With love and blessings, Rauni & Dennis

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We have very sad news. Last Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of February, early in the morning, we got a call from our dear friend, Merridy, in Vernal, saying that they had taken her sister-in-law, Kathy, to the Hospital Emergency. [Kathy has been a friend of ours from even before we all left Mormonism – i.e. from late 1970's. Kathy and her husband Preston Stewart are also our Ministry's Board members.] There are so many wonderful things to tell about Kathy, but right now we are just asking that you all pray for her and for her family. MRI taken at Vernal Hospital showed that she has a large growth in her brain and Vernal Hospital called U of U Hospital in SLC to take her immediately there for further testing. Preston drove her to the U of U and what the doctors discovered was not good. They suggested emergency surgery and chemo therapy after that, but they also told her that this was a terminal cancer and transferred her to the Huntsman Cancer Center. Preston and Kathy presented this situation to the Lord and after that they told the doctors that she will not want surgery or chemo... doctors asked *why not, for that would prolong your life*, but Kathy, supported by Preston, refused surgical treatment and chemo. They asked the doctors how much time she will have without surgery and chemo therapy. They said *"from 2 weeks to 2 months, or maybe six months."* On Monday, 25<sup>th</sup>, when they were to go back home, Kathy called us and said that she was fine with this. She even sounded happy and said that she trusted the Lord and was glad to go to be with Him and with her little 3-year old granddaughter, Cece who had suddenly passed away 3 years ago, and with her mother-in-law, Pat, who went to be with the Lord 2 years ago (we wrote about her too then). We are planning on going to see Kathy in a few days and also her father-in-law Max who is going to be 90 years old on 3/8/19. He is in a poor health and also longing to be with the Lord and with his lovely wife, Pat and their great granddaughter, Cece. This meeting will be sad for us, but also happy for Kathy's soon coming meeting with the Lord and her loved ones there. For indeed, *"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."* (Ps. 116:15.) Please pray for Kathy and Preston and their two daughters, Kalli and Megan and their little families, and for the entire Stewart family, whom we love very much. Our concern is especially for Kathy's 10-year old grandson, Mattix, who was so heartbroken when his little sister passed away and then his great

grandmother, Pat – all that has taken place in just the last 3 years. Letting his loving grandmother, Kathy, go to heaven is going to be especially hard for Mattix, though we all will miss Kathy tremendously!- (Kathy just retired from her teaching job at the Vernal Christian School and her daughter, Kalli, took her place in that school. Kathy has been taking care of Kalli's 2.5 month old baby-girl, Grace, that Mattix says is a direct answer to his prayers for a sister after his little sister, Cece went to be with the Lord.)

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We continue to ask prayers for Judy, Dale, Sharon, Aira, Heber, Tom, Mary, Al, Sandy, Scott, Cynthia, Don and Dave – their needs are known to the Lord and we just ask that He will look after them and give them desires of their hearts.

We also want to ask prayer for all these many people we are working with to bring them to freedom in the Lord, and many former LDS friends that have not yet been willing to hear God's call for them.

We want to thank all of you who pray for our ministry and are helping in our needs in this work. We have to say that there are many who used to help us pretty regularly but for some reason are not doing it any more. We are fine with that, for our requests have always been presented only to the Lord and He has provided what we have needed. We trust that He will continue to do that! He directs His faithful to help us. Our finances are not good, but we know that our Lord knows it, and in His Word He has promised that He will supply all our needs. (Phil 4:6-7, 19.)

Our God is good, all the time!

*“Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* (Phil. 1:6.) God has not promised that we will always have smooth sailing, but He has promised us a safe landing. He has a purpose for every circumstance in our lives. We can be sure of that: He will see us through it all.

Serving the Lord with gladness,

Rauni & Dennis

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