



[H.I.S.] He is Savior, acts 4:12

September 1, 2020

## His Ministries September 2020 Newsletter, covering July-August 2020

We hope that you have had a good summer. The last two months have been way too hot for me to really enjoy summer. It has been *record-hot* (100 - 105 degrees in our area, and even up to 115 in Southern Utah).



**Now we have some great news:** Our daughter Minna's oldest son Stratton and his wife Laura had a beautiful baby daughter, *Norah Evelyn* Haslam, born on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, weighing 5 lbs. 15 oz. She is our first great grandchild. "*Happy days are here again!*" ☺

Because of Corona-virus restrictions, we have only seen her from about 6 to 10 feet distance, but Stratton has taken pictures every day and he sends them to us by his cellphone.

Dennis built Norah a beautiful *antique-Finnish-style* cradle. Laura is now teaching their *golden doodle dog, Greta*, to rock the cradle! ☺ Greta is watching Norah closely as if

claiming the baby to be hers alone. ☺

We have not gone camping, not even once this summer, because of my back problems and Covid-19 limitations to travel. Staying away from people as is demanded because of Covid-19 has been strange, but in a way even good for our ministry. We have been able to spend more time in answering *inquiring Mormons'* questions and explaining to them why *Mormonism is unbiblical and thus not true, but that the Bible is true and the Lord God loves them and wants them to know Him and come to Him for salvation.*



**Dennis baptized Bruce Maynes into Christ Jesus** on August 20<sup>th</sup> in the Provo river – at the same spot where he has baptized many other former Mormons we have helped out of Mormonism in years past, including Emily, LDS president Spencer W. Kimball's great granddaughter (he baptized her husband later also) and on that same day he also baptized Sam and Becky White, whose life-story is amazing, being born into a polygamous LDS groups, then joining the mainstream Mormon Church and finally finding the Truth of the Bible, receiving Jesus and **leaving "all types of Mormonism"** behind. We have written in our newsletters in the past about them and others that

Dennis has taken to this same river for **baptism into Christ Jesus**. According to teaching in Romans 6:3-4, **baptism into Jesus is our identification with Jesus** who saved us by **His death, burial and resurrection**. That is what baptism represents and the Gospel declares. (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) [Baptism is not for salvation or *joining a church* as Mormons teach.]

**Bruce is a professional wild-life photographer and a Realtor.** He has been our dear friend since the mid-1990's when we assisted him in his departure from the Mormon Church. Soon after that Bruce started his Bible-studies with Dr. Chuck Missler. He went through studying the entire Bible with Missler's very detailed recorded studies. Bruce later enrolled in Missler's **Koinonia House** Studies for even more intense learning. Bruce's parents were devout Mormons, his father had worked for the Mormon Church at BYU till his retirement and his mother had been one of the top leaders and authors with **Mormon Pioneer History and**

**Research.** They did not take Bruce's departure from "the Church" well, to put it mildly. It became even more difficult for Bruce when he took care of his aging parents until they eventually passed away. Bruce talked to us often about wanting to be **baptized into Christ Jesus** to "*complete his journey out of this cult*" and now it is finally done! Bruce wrote beautifully about his thoughts about baptism, and how much this means to him, in a prayer that he said with us just before his baptism. There were just Dennis, Bruce and I – but **the Lord's presence was with us powerfully, and we knew we were not alone there!**

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I have written before about a Finnish pastor, Mika Ebeling, who has become our very good friend and partner in our mission to help Mormons to see the truth, and bring them to Christ. It was in September 2019, as I reported many months ago, when he wrote: "***I am a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. I have been a believing Christian since my childhood and Mormonism has never been a personal matter for me. Somehow I feel that God wanted me to study Mormonism maybe in order to help those who have been deceived with Mormonism. I have read through the Book of Mormon and studied the history of Mormonism a little bit. I have also read your excellent booklet 'The Truth about Mormonism', and I am asking if you'd answer some of my questions about this religion.***" From that time on our *back-and-forth emailing* has been going on, now nearly a full year. We have also mailed him many important Mormon books to broaden his knowledge and understanding of what Mormonism really is. We have also sent him our monthly newsletters from October 2019 and continuing. He is evidently **a God-chosen man** to help Mormons in Finland and we are hoping that through his work biblical truth will prevail in Finland and Mormonism's growth will be altogether stopped. Mika understands this very complicated and frequently changing religion exceptionally well. Mika wrote that at the end of February 2020 he "*just happened*" to meet two Mormon missionaries at the mall in Helsinki and was able to arrange meeting with them a week later. He has continued to have these weekly meetings with various missionaries as one or the other missionary is sent to some other city there. He has been able to challenge them and gently point out to them how the Bible is contrasting their beliefs. We pray that these young men will remember what Mika has shared with them when they go back home and are free to study and find the truth about God and His Word. Mika as well as us too are praying that these young men whom Mika has faithfully been sharing the biblical truth, will eventually become missionaries for **the Living and True Jesus of the Bible** rather than *Mormon-Jesus*, who they now think is a spirit brother of Lucifer and all mankind, and thus just a created being, rather than God that He is. (Matt. 1:23; John1:1-3,14.)

Mika has written three lengthy lectures on Mormon teachings he asked me to preview and add or correct when necessary before he presents them to the Finnish audience by radio. This 3-part teaching could be aired there very soon. He had titled them #1. "**Mormon Doctrine**", consisting of the *Mormon doctrine of God, Christ, Holy Spirit, mankind, priesthood, creation and Mormon-belief of the necessity of the fall of Adam* they say, makes it possible to have posterity. He talks also about Mormon temple-rituals they believe has "*importance for both living and the dead*". #2. The **Scriptures of the Mormon Church** include *the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price*. Mika is noting that teachings in these scriptures have varying and in some cases totally opposing teachings. #3. **History of the Mormon Church** and what Mormonism is today, not just in America but in Finland, and around the world.

I was glad to help him in this and I hope that through this radio program he can contact Finnish Mormons and help them to come to know the biblical Jesus Christ, who loves them and would want them to come to Him and receive eternal salvation.

I have begun to see that perhaps Mika was included in God's plan for me from the beginning, and that I had to spend 20 years in Mormonism and learn all there was to learn about it and be able to, through Mika, bring light to the lost souls trapped in Mormonism in my home country. Many of them before they joined the Mormon Church may have been like I too was then, for when I met Mormon missionaries **I was seeking God**, but I was without direction and without knowing the Bible, thus *I joined in ignorance*. (See Paul's story in 1 Timothy 1:12-17.) After I came to know the Lord God and His Truth, I claim as God's promise to me what Paul

said, ***“And we know that all things work for good to those who love God (seek Him) and are the called according to His purpose.”*** (Romans 8:28.) **God knows the end from beginning.** (Ps. 139:16; Rom. 4:17b). **Though I didn’t know God, He knew me** and what I had to do and learn in order to fulfill what **“God’s purpose”** for me was and still is. It took me 20 years of preparation; 14 years of it I spent in the Mormon Church’s headquarters as translator and interpreter for LDS books and teachings to be sent to Finland. Dennis and I were married in the Salt Lake City Mormon Temple. He was very devout and faithful LDS man and returned Finnish missionary, and we see that it too was part of God’s plan for him and us. Words of an old Christian song remind me that though I didn’t know the Lord during those 20 long years, ***“He was there all the time, waiting patiently in line...”*** When we both found the Lord, we experienced amazing transformation that the Lord performed in us. But as hard as this transformation for us was, **I know now that He was there, directing my life as He was with Dennis too, and He prepares lives of each one who will become His child through Jesus, (John 1:12) according to His foreknowledge and plan.** God’s rewards for Dennis and I have been and are when we see others come to Jesus as we share with them what the Lord God has done in our lives and how He uses our lives to bring them joy that comes from learning God’s forever Word and surety of their salvation in Jesus.

When we were actively living as Mormons, the best we could say if asked about our salvation was that ***we believe we are saved by our works***, saying that ***“we hope that we will be saved in the end”***. Apostle John wrote, ***“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may KNOW that you have eternal life.”*** (1 John 5:13.) **We do not just hope, we know it.** Jesus said, ***“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.”*** (John 10:28.) It would not be “eternal life” if we could somehow perish and lose it.

We ask that you’d pray with us for Mika, for he has a big job before him that just might bring opposition even from his own fellow Lutheran pastors and congregations. This is often the case here - many are of the opinion that we *must not judge* but rather *“tolerate”* what others believe without challenging them. How can we teach the truth unless we correct (judge) those who follow false teachings and beliefs? God’s Word tells us that we must *correct and instruct those who have erred*. (See 2 Tim. 3:16; 2:15; Acts 17:4-11; 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 John 4:1; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2:15; Hebr. 4 etc.)

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**From our mailbox:** An LDS man, with whom I had many discussions years ago, wrote:

*Hello Rauni, It has been a long time since I have written to you. However, the other day as I was reading the Bible, it dawned on me that the LDS Church is the only Christian Church that teaches the doctrine of a Pre-existence of mankind. I was wondering why this is so or if others do teach it also...? Jeremiah 1:5 says that God called Jeremiah to be a prophet before he was born. He had to have lived in preexistence, how else could he be known to God before he was born? I have read that early Christian Church Fathers believed in pre-existence. I can quote some of them to you if you have not read that. Thanks Robert*

**Reply:** Thank you Robert. It has indeed been a long time since I have heard from you.

Let me tell you what the Bible teaches: **Mankind is the posterity of Adam and Eve and creation of God, but we are not His children until we are born from above.** (See John 1:12-13; Rom. 9:8b.) Christianity does not teach preexistence of mankind for **it is not a teaching of the Bible** or even your Book of Mormon. I presume that you know what the LDS Church NOW teaches about God. It is not what they taught from the beginning. **It was 14 years after Joseph Smith had started his religion, before he revealed that he had been wrong about God, and that he had just “imagined that God was God from all eternity”, but now (1844) he is saying that God was once a man like him (Joseph Smith) and that following what he (Joseph) is now teaching about Him, all Mormon men can “learn how to be Gods themselves, same as all Gods have done before...”** He *“advanced”* his teaching to polygamy and the *preexistence of all mankind* of children (he said) were born to God and his many wives there. Thus he could not have included this new doctrine of God or preexistence into his Book of Mormon, for he had not *invented* all that as of yet (in 1830).

I have gone through the Bible verse by verse, book by book many times since my conversion to the Biblical God and *receiving salvation as God's gift through His grace*, and leaving Mormonism. That was about 38 years ago. I have not found Joseph Smith's doctrine of God in the Bible. The Bible teaches about ***Eternal Triune God who is Spirit***. (John 4:24; Luke 24:39.) It teaches that ***there were no Gods before Him nor will there be any other Gods after Him***. (Isa. 43:10-11.) Without knowing the Bible in its entirety but just picking verses out of context can cause misunderstanding about the nature of God. God knows the end from beginning.(Rom. 4:17.) God speaks of things even before they exist. If one takes verses out of context, it can and will also cause misunderstanding about what the Bible says about Jesus and ***salvation in and through Him***. **We have to read the Bible with understanding the words in context where they were given and taking into consideration God's foreknowledge.** For example you mentioned, Jeremiah 1:5, where it says that God knew Jeremiah before he was born. **Of course God knew Jeremiah, but Jeremiah didn't know God.** "...***God calls those things which do not exist as if they did.***" (Rom. 4:17b.) He said, "***For I AM God, and there is no other...I AM God, and there is none like Me...Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you...***" (Isa. 46:9-10; 48:5.) Just so you'd know, I am basing my faith in God of the Bible alone, not on teachings of various "Church Fathers or Bishops" etc. No need to quote to me what they might have said or believed. Let me know if this answered you question. - With best wishes, Rauni.

P.S. Robert, when your email came to me the other day, I was just reading from your cousin, D. Michael Quinn's book, ***Mormon Hierarchy, Origin of Power*** to find more detailed answers about Joseph Smith's death I had been asked about. Coincidence, maybe? What do you think?

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We praise the Lord that we have been doing quite well even during this Pandemic and isolation. God has blessed us, and through you, provided all that we need – and as we are getting old(er) our needs are not that big. ☺ My back is a lot better now, but I still have to lie down flat every few hours and I have to be careful otherwise too – not lifting anything over a few pounds, etc. *My eyes have given me more trouble now.* It seems like Bibles and all other books are printed with smaller and smaller fonts than they were before... ☺ I have had two sets of prescription classes this spring, each stronger than before, but I still have use a magnifying glass to read smaller texts. I have found out that I have cataracts. I went last week to *Hoops Vision Center* for examination. Sure enough - cataracts are the reason for my poor vision. My right eye will be operated on next Thursday (3<sup>rd</sup> of Sept.) and my left eye on 17<sup>th</sup>. I am a bit apprehensive about eye-surgery, but our ministry work requires it, so I must go through it and trust in the Lord's care of it all. I would appreciate your prayers for me on this. **God is good and we thank Him for all that he does and is going to do.** (Phil 4: 6-7, 19.) We are glad that Dennis has been able to work just about as much as before this pandemic – doing mostly outside repairs for his clients or inside work when people are not at home. **We are blessed.** We have been able to keep all expenses paid on time, which is a miracle from God during these hard times. **Your help has been heaven-sent, prompted by the Lord and we thank Him and you for your help.** **We pray for you and know that the Lord will bless you abundantly for your prayers and assistance you give to us.**

Please pray for many LDS people we are working with that they would open their minds and hearts for the Lord who loves them so. We believe that the Lord is coming soon, and that means that our time to share His truth is getting shorter, and we sorrow if they reject the Lord and be lost for eternity. We ask that you'd pray for them. We cannot give their names out now for many of them fear that their relationship with their families could be lost and that they might even lose their jobs if it becomes known that they are leaving their Church.

We praise the Lord and thank you very much for praying for Al when he had his kidney and bladder failure couple of months ago. He had another medical procedure (without anesthesia) done on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July and it went well – he will have one more in a few days. Considering Al's age (89) this has been a miracle. Both Al and Sandy are thankful for your prayers for him and the Lord's help in this. Please continue keeping them in your prayers as well as Judy and her daughter Liz and her serious eye problem, and Marlene, Aira, Mary, Tom,

Sharon, Yandel, Heber, Rich, Dave and Dwayne. We still ask prayer for Helen Radkey. We do not know where she is or how she is. No one seems to know for sure – some think that she may be in some care-center for serious illness, but no visitors are allowed in any of them. This isolation is hard for sick people, and for all of us in many ways.

Please also *pray for the peace of Jerusalem* as the Lord commands in Ps. 122:6. We also need to be in serious prayer for peace and safety in our country. **We must repent and ask God's forgiveness, for in many ways we all are guilty of disobedience to God.** Daniel, God's prophet and His faithful servant, identified himself *with sin of his nation* confessing and asking God's forgiveness, saying, "***O Lord, great and awesome God... we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments... O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but us shame of face, as it is this day...***" (Dan.9: 4-5, 7.) **We likewise must identify ourselves with wickedness that is practiced in our nation, as abortion that we all are part of in that most of us have been silent without standing up for our Lord and His statues. We must continue to pray for protection of the unborn and the end of *abortion on demand* and not excusing it by saying that it is *a choice of a woman*. "***Woman's choice ends when life in her womb begins.***" If we repent, and ask forgiveness, God will forgive. Please read Daniel's prayer in Daniel 9:3-5, 8-10, 19 and consider what we also must do. It is very applicable for our nation and this time. We also pray that this Covid-19 could be eliminated and that people would be able to go back to work and school.**

**We all need to pray earnestly for our President and his Administration *that they would make righteous decisions that would benefit us all.***

***God's message to all His people still is, "If My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*** (2 Chronicles 7:14.)

A Frenchman in 1800's wrote, "***America is great because she is good, but if America ceases to be good, America ceases to be great.***"

We thank you all and pray that you'll have restful and happy Labor-day weekend.

We are sending this with the Love of Jesus,

Rauni & Dennis

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***Thought for this time:*** From Acts 1: 9-11, when Jesus was taken up to heaven "***... a cloud received Him out of their sight... two men stood by in white apparel who also said, 'This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will also come in like manner as you saw Him go to heaven'.***"

Paul wrote about the Lord's coming for His own *in a cloud* before His official "Second Coming". He said, (1 Thess. 4:16-18), "***For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.***"

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