

Love Ye Me, and Love All People

2 Nephi 13:29

Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a **love of God and of all men**.

John 3

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish; but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

The experience of Jesus the day he was crucified - Passion of the Christ

Matthew 27:49-50, 54

49 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 50 And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? (That is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?)

54 Jesus when he had cried again with a loud voice, saying, Father, it is finished, thy will is done, yielded up the ghost.

Love Ye Me

Matthew 22:36

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all thy heart**, and with **all thy soul**, and with **all thy mind**. This is the first and great commandment....

Alma 3

57 Behold, he **sendeth an invitation unto all men**; for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith, Repent, and I will receive you;

58 Yea, he saith, **Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life**; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely;

He calls us all the day long to come into fellowship with Him, into companionship, into closeness, into communion. Our love for God **always begins** with **His love** for us and **His call** to come.

Love - With all thy Heart

Matthew 22:36

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all thy heart**,

1 Kings 3:3,

3 And **because the Lord blessed Solomon...** he began to **love the Lord...**

and he **called** on the name of the Lord. 5 And the **Lord God hearkened unto Solomon**, and appeared unto him in a dream by night, and said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David, my father, great things according to thy mercy **when he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee**; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne this day.

7 And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant - king, instead of David, my father, over thy people. 8 And I know not how to lead them... and I, thy servant, am as a little child, in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen....

9 Give therefore thy servant an **understanding heart** to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy people....

10 And the speech **pleased the Lord**, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but **hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment**;

12 Behold, I have done according to thy word; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart.... 13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor....

We may hear His voice in many different ways, but if we listen and love Him, we will then respond. God grieves **“when we harden our hearts because our hardened hearts cannot perceive His closeness. He wants to reveal His closeness.”** (Understanding with the Heart, Lashaon Brooks)

Understanding with the heart goes beyond the intellect. It's the heart's ability to respond to God's invitation and to get to know Him personally.

Love - With all thy Soul

Matthew 22:36

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with **all thy soul**...

D&C 85:4a ...And the spirit and the body is the soul of man.

1 Corinthians 6:19

What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

We're called to glorify God in body and spirit

we need to feed both the body and the spirit nutritious food

exercise both the body and the spirit

clean both the body and the spirit

find rest for the body and the spirit



Angie Crowell -
nurtured relationship
45 knelt - U of
Wisconsin
Ancient Hebrew
language - rest of
her life
Opened the mystery
of the language of
the Bk of M for all
Bk of M believers
Alzheimers took her
memory but not her
spirit who still
recognized God's
spirit

We need to invite the Holy spirit into our temple and nurture that spirit through obedience, holiness, prayer and praise

We read in Section 3 of the Lectures of Faith that we cannot have faith in a God we do not know. I would like to add that we also cannot love a God with **all our heart and soul** if we do not know Him.

Our faith and trust in God, our love for Him and our willingness to submit our lives to Him, **depend** on our understanding of who He is.

Throughout time He has revealed His character and attributes through His relationship with His creation. And We read about these interactions with God in the scriptures. But as we read in Job 11:7 we cannot know God through our own efforts.

Job 11:7 Canst thou by searching find out God?

in I Corinthians 2:9-10

9) But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10) But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Prayers of praise are not the same as prayers of thanksgiving. When we pray prayers of thanksgiving we are thanking God for what **He has done for us** or for those we love. **Prayers of praise are acknowledging God for who He is and that He is the only One deserving of our praise.**

Love - With all thy Mind

Matthew 22:36

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with **all thy mind**...

Romans 12:1-2

beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2) And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.

DC 9:3a-d

3a Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought, save it was to ask me;

3b but, behold, I say unto you, that **you must study it out in your mind**;

3c then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right; 3d but if it be not right, you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought, that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong;

DC 85:36a ...seek **learning** even by **study**, and also by **faith**.

Hosea 4:6 My people are **destroyed for lack of knowledge**;

Matthew 24:39 And whoso treasureth up my words, shall **not be deceived**.

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show thyself **approved unto God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.**

2 Timothy 3:12-17 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 For evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14 But **continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;** 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are **able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.** 16 And all scripture given by inspiration of God, **is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;** 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works

When God asks us to love Him with all our mind, He is telling us that loving Him goes beyond our emotions.

The Center for Bible Engagement spent 8 years studying the spiritual lives of more than 100,000 people from around the world. Some of their findings include:

Engaging the Bible four or more days a week

1) is the most powerful predictor of spiritual growth, decreasing people's likelihood to feel spiritually stagnant by 60%.

In an article, *Six Steps to Spiritual Power*, Ray Treat said "Desire is where we begin....However, most of us simply do not have the kind of desire necessary to study, fast and pray consistently."

This is often a result of failed efforts and we begin to think it's just too hard to understand or we're just not interested in battles or genealogy of people we don't know that lived thousands of years ago.

In answer to this, Ray "divides scripture study into three levels of interest: 1) castor oil, 2) dry cereal and 3) peaches and cream. Castor oil people study only when forced to. Dry cereal people study once in while and they do recognize that study is not all that bad, but peaches and cream people cannot get enough of study. They have experienced a breakthrough. There are many testimonies of people who have reached this level of study. Therefore, we must conclude that the peaches and cream level does exist. This knowledge (vision) should help us as we work our way through the castor oil and dry cereal levels. If you are on the castor oil level, pray for the desire to study and then as Alma says in 16:151, let that desire work in you."

Our spiritual growth depends on the time we spend in God's word.

2) People's feeling of loneliness and difficulty in their life decreased by 30%.

3) Increasing their likelihood to share their faith with others by 228%.

As you seek to love God with all that you are, may the truths you discover transform you from your heart to your mind, and to the very core of your soul.

Levi Dade - *Loving God with your Mind: How God wants your Brain Too*

Love All People

Matthew 22:38

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment

38 And the second is like unto it; **Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.**

39 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Luke 10:37-38

37 Who now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him who fell among the thieves?

38 And he said, He who showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do likewise.

1 John 4:10-11

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

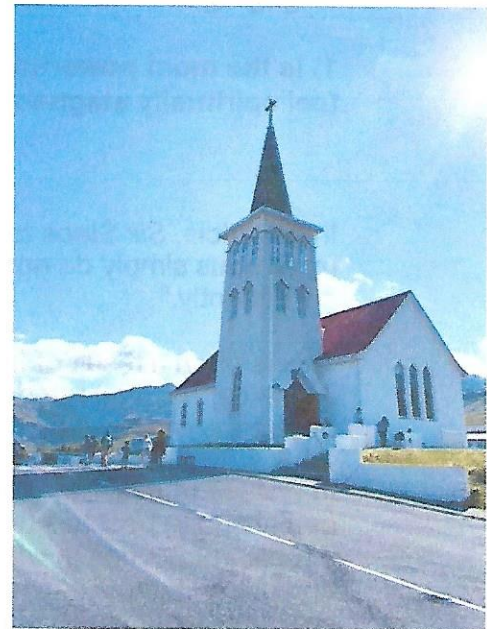
John 17:11, 20-23 III N 9:20-30

... Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, **that they also may be one in us;** that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

We're called to be one for a purpose - to glorify God and his Son, Jesus. And that the world would be persuaded by our witness that Jesus was sent by His Father to redeem them for all eternity.



Jacob 2:22-24

22 Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you. 23 But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

24 And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ, ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and **ye will seek them, for the intent to do good; to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick, and the afflicted.**

Mosiah 2:36-37, 40-41

36 And now, if God, who has created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives, and for all that ye have and are, doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask that is right, in faith, believing that ye shall receive, O then, how had ye ought to impart of the substance that ye have, one to another?

40 And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, that ye remain from day to day; I mean all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts, that I give not because I have not; but if I had, I would give.

Ether 5

34 And now I know that this love which thou hast had for the children of men, is charity; wherefore, except men shall have charity, they can not inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father.

John 13

34 A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.



May 2002, our first trip to Xian, China



May 2002, Outside Beijing, China

Chinese, Africans, Europeans and Americans didn't speak the same language but embraced the language of music, dance, happiness and fellowship.



Mosiah 12:5-8

5 Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; 6 Yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment, did cause them to quake and tremble.

7 And thus did the Spirit of the Lord work upon them, for they were the very vilest of sinners. 8 And the Lord saw fit in his infinite mercy to spare them....

This is Dr Hormuz Shariat. He and his wife were in the streets of Tehran in 1979, shouting death to Israel and death to America as the US Embassy staff were taken hostage. Came to US for graduate studies and converted to Christianity. They now have a 24hr 7 day a week satellite TV ministry in Iran.

Alma 4:5-6 Now I would that ye should understand that the word of God was liberal unto all; that none were deprived of the privilege of assembling themselves together to hear the word of God; 6 Nevertheless the children of God were commanded that they should gather themselves together oft, and join in fasting and mighty prayer, in behalf of the welfare of the souls of those who knew not God.

73-year-old Taysir "Tass" Abu Saada, a former member of the Fatah terrorist group, and a sniper for Yassar Arafat, turned to faith in Jesus in the 1990's right here in Kansas City. He was born in Gaza but spent time in Jordon, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. He was not a nice guy. He hated the Jews. But a man named Charlie befriended him and after 19 years told him he'd have to love a Jew if he wanted peace. ***Once an Arafat Man***

**Love ye me and love all people
Love as I have loved you
This your calling, this my purpose
Thus be my disciples true.**

**Then in this exalted station,
Your companion I will be
Every promise of my scriptures
Will be verified in thee**

II Nephi 13:29

Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a **love of God and of all men.**

Feast Upon the Words of Christ

A testimony by Thelona D. Stevens

My parents, Father from Scotland and Mother from Canada, were both members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints before they were married. Father's work in the offices of a railroad company took them to Texas where they established their home, unfortunately where there was no congregation of the church. Our parents sent my sister and me to the nearest Protestant Sunday School in our childhood and sought to teach us differences in belief when these occurred, but we actually received very little religious instruction.

My childhood was plagued with serious illnesses. When I was ten years old, Mother brought my sister and me to visit in Independence. I became very ill on the train, and grew worse during the night after our arrival. High fever caused delirium for a number of hours. In the morning the elders were called to administer to me. I recall how I felt as they prayed, and of my desire to know more about Jesus. I was instantly healed and never had that particular ailment again. At the close of the prayer of confirmation of the anointing, I asked for baptism. My sister and I were baptized at the Stone Church here in Independence.

My religious instruction continued to be most fragmentary. As a young adult I went to Florida to spend the winter, I thought. There I met Frederick Stevens who attracted me very much, but I repeatedly refused his marriage proposals because I wanted to marry someone in the church. I prayed about the matter, however, and eventually had a spiritual experience in which I was made to know that I should marry this man. Because I had been refusing him on account of the church, I thought this meant that after we were married he would accept the gospel, and we would live happily ever afterwards. It did not work out quite that way.

After we were married, Fred asked questions about the church and its teachings which I was not able to answer because of my lack of knowledge. My answers were vague and he did not accept them. When he would press me for more information, backing me into a corner, as it were, I would grow angry and say cross things, resulting in arguments. After this had gone on for a while, I decided it was terrible to be quarreling about religion, of all things! I think Fred decided the same thing about the same time, as we never had a fuss again over religion. He just stopped asking questions.

Living in a big city with no association with my own

church members, I was just drifting along with the world. I had known for a long time that I should study but I found many excuses to the repeated urgings, such as, "I don't have anyone to study with me," or "I don't have a teacher," or "I don't feel like it. If I had better health I would study," but in spite of my excuses I continued to feel the promptings and urgings. Then one day I came to a full realization that I either had to settle down and study about the church and its teachings or just give it up. I would never give up the church! So in deep contrition, I told the Lord that I would study one hour a day at that time.



THELONA D. STEVENS

But where would I start? I thought I should begin with the Bible, recognizing the Bible as the foundation of all Scripture. I wrote to the Department of Religious Education in Independence for a Bible course by our own church. They replied that they did not have anything available! So I turned to the Bible itself. I searched through the concordance and reference sections and chose some Bible stories I thought I should

know so as to be able to tell them to our young daughter as she grew up, and I made a list also of a number of passages which I thought I should memorize. Faithfully I tried, but I dreaded that hour each day. I found it most difficult and trying. Actually, I learned precious little during the next several months. Then one day I realized that I had never once asked God's help! It was then that I started each study session with a prayer that God would help me to understand what I read and sought to learn. After that I got along much better, and I really became interested in the things I was finding. In fact, there were times that I became so thrilled over something I read that later I would want to read it again, only to discover that I could not find it. After this continued for sometime, I suddenly realized one day that I had not once asked God to help me to remember what I learned and where I found it. To my daily prayer, then, was added a petition for help to remember. It was then that I really began to grow! Soon I had to start watching the clock again, as I wanted to stay with my books to the neglect of other duties. Having grown in understanding, I wanted to share these wonderful things with others, but no one wanted to listen. I had spoiled things so that my husband wouldn't listen to anything I had to say about religion, and all my neighbors and friends brushed me off when I tried to speak of these things to them. Then, one day I started praying that God would somehow permit me to share these things with

others. That prayer continued for a long time.

Several years passed, in fact, about nine of them, and then something wonderful happened. My husband wanted to visit Independence. We came here on a visit, and while here he saw some property he wanted to buy as an investment. He had no intention at all of living here. Yet, within the year we were living in Independence. He was still not a member, though he did accept the gospel three years after we moved here, and was ordained to the priesthood sometime later. We had our happiest years together after his baptism, until his death in 1964.

Within the year after our moving to Independence, I was asked to help out in the Department of Religious Education (as it was called then), during a time of emergency. I thought it would be a temporary thing, but actually I was there for about twenty-five years—more than twelve years doing Leadership Training work, and then at the request of the First Presidency I developed the program of Services to the Blind and worked in this area for nearly thirteen years.

Sometime after I joined the Department of Religious Education, I was sent on an assignment to another state for a District Church School Institute. As I was talking to the assembled group one morning, I urged upon them the necessity for studying and becoming familiar with the Word of God. I recalled mentally my own difficulties in

studying, so I said to them that in the beginning I had found it very hard to study, but I asked God to help me to comprehend and understand what I sought to learn, **and he did**. Then I asked him to help me to remember what I read and studied, **and he did**.

As my understanding and love of it all grew, I began praying that God would permit me somehow to share these things with others (always thinking particularly of the church members). As I looked out over that large group that morning, I realized how he had done just that, and I said, "And he did." Just then God spoke to my mind. He said, "Do you remember all those years that you prayed to serve me and my people? I could not answer those prayers until you had studied and learned what you must know before I could use you where I chose to." I hung my head with shame, remembering how slow I had been to respond to God's urgings and how long it had taken me to learn the things which I had felt prompted to study.

I am still seeking to learn the things of God which he has placed in our hands. I am still rejoicing over the discoveries which I often make when engaged in prayerful study, and I still recognize the necessity of including in my prayer the three phases of my prayer developed long ago—the prayer to understand, to remember, and to share with others these wonderful truths.●

Why I Wrote Peoples, Places and Prophecies

by Verneil W. Simmons

I had the good fortune to be born into a family who had been identified with the Restored Church of Jesus Christ since the day of Joseph Smith, Jr. I was brought up on family stories of how my great, great grandmother carried food to Brother Joseph and the brethren confined with him in the Liberty Jail, and how her husband, Charles Allen, was tarred and feathered by the mob in Independence.

In the exodus from Nauvoo the Allen and Galland families followed Brigham Young to the winter quarters in Nebraska. However, they did not agree with the action taken there which placed Brigham Young in the position of presiding over the church. At that point, a number of church families sought homesites in western Iowa.

Maria Allen and Benjamin Galland were married at Galland's Grove. There my grandfather, Abram Galland, was born. Later the family moved a few miles north to Deloit, Iowa, which had originally been settled by other church families under the name of Mason's Grove. This was my mother's home.

My father's family (the Newcoms) moved to the area following the Civil War and eventually many members were converted to the church by J. J. Cornish during one of his missionary tours of Northwestern Iowa. I was born near Deloit and was both blessed and baptized as a member of the Deloit congregation. There I began to learn about the church and there I taught my first Sunday school class—a tiny group of 3-5 year olds.

My father was an avid reader and I inherited his love of books. My brothers and I were encouraged to read the scriptures for ourselves and church publications were held in high regard in our home. The history of the church had always fascinated me perhaps because I felt my family had been intimately involved with it. At the time of my baptism at age 13, I became extremely interested in the Book of Mormon. This led to a growing interest in the archaeology and history of the Western world.

As a teen-ager, my deepest desire was to be an archaeologist—a desire which the great depression of the thirties made only a dream. College for me, was out of the question. My family moved to Cameron, Missouri in 1936. There I met and married a young church member who held the office of priest. Wayne's family also had a church heritage going back five generations, to the building of Kirtland Temple. He was born at old Far West and his father had built and pastored the small church which still stands today. We shared a mutual interest in the Book of Mormon as he was teaching that subject to the adult class in the Cameron branch.

The years following our marriage saw the birth of two sons, five war years spent in the Caribbean on the island of Aruba, a year in Costa Rica, and nearly two years in Caracas, Venezuela. Wayne worked for Standard Oil, the Interamerican School Service, and was director of a

Cultural Center for the U.S. State Department. These varied assignments gave us an opportunity to study Spanish and to delve into the culture and pre-history of much of Latin America. During these years I continued to spend hours studying various aspects of the Book of Mormon. This led me into studies of the cultural backgrounds of the three colonies which left the Old World. I not only explored the biblical accounts but collected all the evidence I could on the exciting archaeological discoveries dealing with that period.

In 1950 Wayne was asked by the church to become a full-time appointee, the first assigned to Latin America. We assumed this meant that we would soon be sent to live somewhere south of the border; actually it was many years before we were moved to Mexico City. In the interim we spent several years in South Texas, on the Mexican border. This did permit us to take short vacation trips into Mexico and we used these opportunities to visit many ancient ruins. And it was here on the border that I was, very reluctantly, pushed into teaching my first Book of Mormon class. I enjoyed the study and research, but the idea of teaching it to someone was frightening.

My years of research had convinced me that the lands of the Book of Mormon could not include parts of South America and the United States, as commonly accepted in the church, but must be confined to Mesoamerica—the area from central Mexico south to Costa Rica in Central America. It therefore followed that Mormon's Hill Cumorah was somewhere in southern Mexico and not the hill we call Cumorah in the state of New York.

Such unorthodox ideas did result in a high level of interest in my Book of Mormon classes and I found myself more and more in demand as a teacher on the subject.

During these years my husband and our three sons (the youngest born in 1950) had joined me in a family quest. We set out to find Mormon's hill, which we call Cumorah South. We believe that Moroni, who took to New York only the small plates of the abridgment, called the hill there Cumorah, in memory of the place where his father had hidden the original records. My in-depth study of the lands as mentioned in the Book of Mormon had indicated that we would have to search southern Mexico to find the real Cumorah.

We read archaeological site reports, we studied topography maps, we read many books, and we walked miles in personal exploration. In 1964 we had been assigned to Mexico City where I then had the opportunity to attend archaeological lectures at the Museum, as well as visit sites with the professionals. (It was there our youngest son entered college, graduating with an anthropological degree in the field of Mesoamerican archaeology. A vicarious fulfillment of my youthful dreams!)

Eventually I came across studies of the ancient trade routes which proved very helpful, resulting in our exploration of an area which fitted all the necessary criteria, and which we felt had to be right. Finding the hill was a tremendous experience for the family; and though we rejoiced over the success of our quest, we shared our information and our feelings with only close friends.

While I was completely satisfied in my own mind concerning our location of Cumorah South, I was most reluctant to include it in classwork or in discussion with the many church members who came as visitors to Mexico City. Wayne was not so inhibited. Frequently I found him pointing out the location of Hill Cumorah on a map and explaining why we placed it there as he guided such visitors through the museum. I knew I had been directed by the Spirit of the Lord in my study and research. I had had many confirmations of the Spirit as I had struggled to make sense out of data which had been very confusing. I knew I had been led from my youth to work on this particular problem concerning the Book of Mormon, but now that I felt I had some answers, I still hesitated to use them publicly. I felt so deeply about this that I went to the Lord in most earnest prayer. I would have to have some confirmation of the truth of our position before I could talk freely about it.

Very shortly after this an appointee family came to Mexico. Again we served as guides while touring the museum. Again Wayne talked about Mormon's hill and why it had to be in that particular place. And again I worried. The next day Wayne served as their guide to a site outside Mexico City and upon their return the family said their good-bye's.

They were leaving the city the next morning. Early in the morning the phone rang and our brother appointee asked if they could return for a short visit before leaving for home. When they arrived, he explained that his daughter-in-law (part of their family group) had had an experience while in the museum which he felt was to be shared with us. She then told us that while we were discussing these things at the museum, a voice had spoken to her and said: "Listen, you are hearing truth". She had been quite moved by the experience but had not told the rest of her family until the evening after they had left our home. Her father-in-law felt the experience was for us too, not knowing that I had asked for this confirmation from the Lord. How thankful I was that they had come back to the house to share it with us.

From this point on we both felt free to talk and to teach the evidence which points to the story of the Nephites, Lamanites and the Jaredites as being confined to a narrow land area in Central America, which contains the action described in the record. The oft-mentioned "narrow neck" would be the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Mexico, the great final battles of both the Jaredite and Nephite nation would have been fought a little to the northwest of that area, and the cave where Mormon secreted the many original records and other sacred objects would be found in the vicinity. The scriptural, geographical and archaeological evidence all became a part of the classes I taught on the Book of Mormon.

In 1970 we were returned from Mexico. In our succeeding assignment in the States, I taught many Book

of Mormon classes in districts, at reunions, branch classes, workshops etc. I had come to enjoy the teaching, especially as people were so responsive to the new and exciting information presented. More and more often I was asked the question, "Why don't you put it all in a book?" If the idea of teaching a class had been frightening, the idea of writing a book was positively terrifying. I had finally learned some of the rules of being a good teacher, but I knew nothing about writing a book. The suggestion was ignored for a long time.

Probably what changed my mind was the growing conviction that the prophecies of the Book of Mormon, particularly those dealing with the testimony of the original records, were of vital importance at this time, not only to the church but to the world. It is prophecy yet to be fulfilled. The discovery of the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls and the more recent find of the tremendous library at Ebla will pale in the light of the records which Mormon so carefully hid away for that time when the world should have them. If the Lord had truly directed my studies and inspired my research, then I had some responsibility to share my information beyond the limitations of my classwork.

When I finally decided I would try to put my material into a book, I informed the family they would all have to help—a decision I frequently regretted! They took me seriously and criticized every line I wrote. The oldest son claimed I wrote all my sentences backwards. My husband, the English major, wanted it all very literary and formal. The one with the Anthro' degree challenged all archaeological statements! However, every time I threatened to burn the manuscript, vowing I would never write another word, they all united against me, saying "it's great—keep writing!" Certainly, without their support, suggestions, criticism and help it could never have been written.

So—"Peoples, Places and Prophecies" came into being. In reality, it is my testimony and my belief in the truth of the Book of Mormon and the story it tells. I hope to live to see the day when the records hidden in Cumorah South are given to the world. I am very grateful to my Lord that he led me into an awareness of the importance of the Book of Mormon to my generation and that he let me have a part in presenting that witness to the church.☉



Wayne and Vernell Simmons

Praising the Attributes of God

Sunday - Praise God for His Holiness

Isaiah 6:3, 57:15; Psalms 22:3; I John 1:5; James 1:17; Revelation 4:8, 15:4

Holy, Holy, Holy are You, Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of your glory. You are the high and exalted One who lives forever and whose name is Holy. You are enthroned upon the praises of your people. Your testimonies are fully confirmed and holiness befits your house, O Lord, forever more. You are light and in you is no darkness nor variation.

Holy, Holy, Holy are You, Lord God almighty, who was and who is and who is to come. Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are Holy.

Monday - Praise God for His Sovereignty

Isaiah 46:9-10; Psalms 135:6, 89:5-8; Ephesians 1:11; Ecclesiastes 3:14

You are God and there is no other. You are God and there is no one like you, declaring the end from the beginning. Your purpose will be established and you will accomplish all your good pleasure. Whatever you please, Lord, you do in heaven and in earth and in the seas and all the deep.

The heavens will praise your wonders, O Lord; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies is comparable to you, Lord? You are a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around you. O Lord God of host, who is like you, O mighty Lord? You worked all things after the counsel of your will. Everything you do will remain forever: there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it.

Tuesday - Praise God for His Wisdom and Knowledge

Romans 11:33-34; Proverbs 3:19; Isaiah 40:26,28

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and unfathomable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

O gracious Lord, by wisdom you founded the earth, by understanding you established the heavens. We will lift up our eyes on high and see who has created the stars, the one who leads forth their host by number and calls them all by name. Because of the greatness of your might and the strength of your power, not one of them is missing. You are the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth who does not become weary or tired. Your understanding is inscrutable.

Wednesday - Praise God for His Loving-Kindness

Psalms 52:1, 51:1, 33:5, 136:1, 86:5, 103:11,17, 145:8, 36:5-9

Your loving-kindness endures all day long, O God. You love righteousness and justice, and the earth is full of your loving-kindness. I will give thanks to you, you are good and ready to forgive and abundant in loving-kindness to all who call upon you.

As high as the heavens are above the earth, O Lord, so great is your loving-kindness toward those who fear you. Your loving-kindness is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear you, for you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and great in loving-kindness.

Thy loving-kindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Thy faithfulness reaches to the skies. Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God; Thy judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast. How precious is Thy loving-kindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of thy wings. They drink their fill of abundance of Thy house; and thou dost give them to drink of the river of thy delights. For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light we see light.

Thursday - Praise God for His Power

I Chronicles 29:11-13; Job 38:4; Psalm 33:6, 50:1; Hebrews 1; Exodus 15:11; Nahum 1:3

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and thy majesty, indeed, everything that is the heavens and the earth. Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and you exalt yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all, and in your hand is power and might: and it lies in your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name.

You ask, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding." By your word, O Lord, the heavens were made and by the breath of your mouth all their host. You uphold all things by the word of your power. You are the Mighty One, O God; You have spoken, and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?

The Lord is slow to anger and great is his power.

Friday - Praise God for His Righteousness

Psalms 45:6, 96:13, 111:3, 119:142,144,172; 71;19, 89:14; 85:11; 145:7

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom. You will judge the world in righteousness and the people in your faithfulness. Your righteousness endureth forever. It is everlasting. Your law is truth. Let my tongue sing of your word, for all your testimonies and commandments are righteous forever.

You are the holy God who shows himself holy in righteousness. Only in you, Lord are righteousness and strength. Your righteousness is near and shall not want. O God, who is like you? Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne and loving kindness and truth go before all nations. Men shall eagerly utter memory of your abundant goodness, and shall shout joyfully of your righteousness.

Saturday - Praise God for His Truth

Psalms 89:14, 31:5; Exodus 34:6, Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 31:5, 57:3, 86:15; Isaiah 25:1; Ether 1:75; D&C 90:6a

O Lord, you are the God of Truth and you will send forth your truth for you are full of truth. Thou art my God; I will praise thy name, thy counsels are faithfulness and truth. I will praise ye God for I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie. I will praise thee God for your glory which is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.