

The Gospel News

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brings
Joy*



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Give Thanks

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5: 18). This is the time of year when we pause to give thanks for all that we have and enjoy. There is certainly good reason to do so, for we live in an age when most of us are enjoying more of what life has to offer than we or those before us have ever had. "Having it all," however, engenders neither happiness nor thankfulness in our hearts. Once the Lord has blessed us with them, things that we once considered luxuries are often looked upon as necessities that we could not live without. Meanwhile, some people who have endured relatively deprived lives-naturally or spiritually-are more grateful for what little they have (Luke 7:47).

While the nation sets aside only one day for the purpose of giving thanks, we hope that no one who has experienced God's goodness only thinks about it once a year. If we take a moment to reflect, we are overwhelmed by the blessings God has bestowed upon us. To "name them one by one" would certainly take up more than one day out of 365.

The Lord is pleased when we give thanks. Like all good things, however, thankfulness runs contrary to human nature. Unless he is taught to say "thank you," a child will never think to say it himself. Likewise, as children of God, we sometimes need to be reminded to thank Him for everything in our lives. If we can learn to do this with full purpose of heart, our lives will be more fully aligned with the plan that the Lord has for each of us.

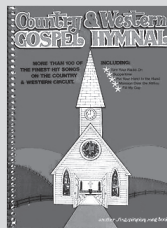
It is important for us to recognize that the Lord is the source of all that is good in our lives. Every sunny day, everything we own, every breath we take, is given to us by the Lord; we must choose to recognize that fact and reject the worldly notion that we are somehow responsible for or entitled to the good in our lives. Secondly, we must verbally acknowledge God to be the source of all this good. We should acknowledge it to Him in our prayers, and to our fellow man, that they too might know where all good comes from.

As we put these things into practice in our lives, we will come to fully appreciate all that the Lord has done for us, the most important thing being the redemption of our unworthy souls by the shed blood of His Son Jesus Christ. Once we come to fully understand what this means, our awareness of God's goodness will reach a higher plateau than ever before. Our gratitude to God will no longer be subject to how well "things" are going in our lives. We will finally be free to be thankful regardless of life's circumstances. This attitude of unconditional thanksgiving has the power to bring deep, lasting happiness and contentment to our souls and to our lives. When we can be so inwardly and outwardly joyful that the world covets our happiness, they will eagerly accept from us that precious gift-Jesus Christ-that we are commissioned to share.

Written By: Brother Anthony Scolaro
Editor in Chief of the Gospel News 1984-1994
Originally printed in the November 1993 issue

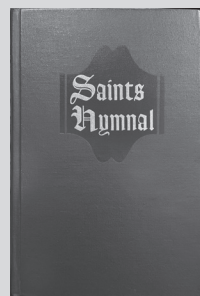


How ___/___/___ THANKS
___/___/___
you have done ___/___/?
___/___/___
undeserved, ___/___
___/___ prove
___/___/___/___/?

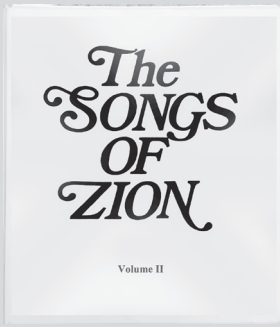
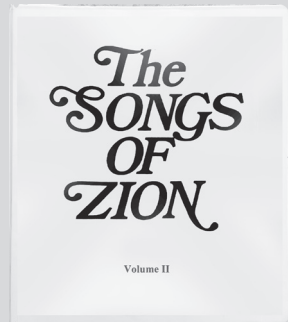


THANK ___/___/___/
___/___/___ soul.
THANK ___/___/___/
___/___/___ whole.

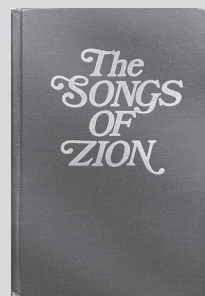
___/___ your
___/___
them one ___ one;
and it will
___/___
what the Lord
has ___/___.



___/___/___/___
___/___ sing ___/___!/
___ God has ___/___
___/___ things.



No matter where
my pathway leads,
___/___/___/
___/___
For all the love
He's given me, ___/___/___/
___/___/___



___/___/___ praise ___/___
for ___ adore ___/___/___/
___ sing ___/___/___!
___/___/___!
sing ___/___/___!
___ found the ___/___/___
Praise God, ___/___/?
___/___/___!

How ___/___/___ ever
___/___/___
praise ___/___
___/___ great things ___/___
___/___ for ___ soul?



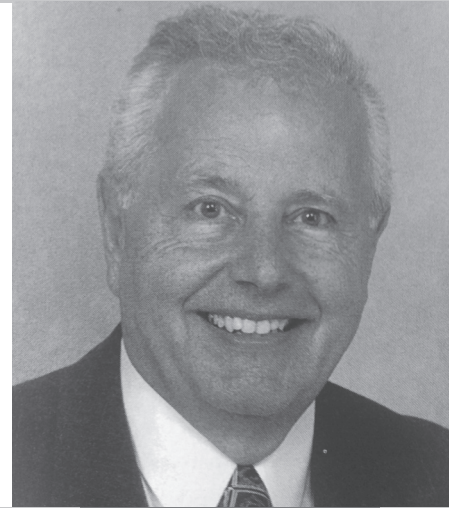
Jesus, ___ just ___/___/
___/___/___
THANK ___/___/___/
___/___ so good.



BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck

Sixty-five years ago this month Brother Paul Benyola gave his heart to the Lord when he was at army basic training camp in November 1956, at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. That same weekend there was a GMBA Conference in New Jersey. Paul was looking forward to going home for Conference, but he failed to pass inspection because of a speck of dust on his shoe and found himself sitting in the deserted bunkhouse by himself that Sunday. He took his Bible from his footlocker and opened to the verse, "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire," (Matt 3:10). "When I read that verse, I was immediately converted," Brother Paul recalls. "I began to shed tears, which was the first and only time I have ever shed tears when reading scripture. I knew that I was going the wrong way, and I changed my life from that point on. I also became fearful and prayed to the Lord that He would spare my life until I could return home and be baptized. After all the opportunities to be baptized I had let pass me by, I now had to wait to be baptized." There were baptisms at home that Sunday but he was baptized six weeks later by his father in December. It was the coldest day of the year and ice formed on his hair as he came out of the water, but he didn't feel the cold at all..





Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America

Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



"She Went Grocery Shopping"

By Brother Doug Obradovich

"This is your hour" (Luke 22:53)

One day I was talking to a dear friend and asked how his mother-in-law was feeling. He answered, "She's had a great couple of days. She went grocery shopping this week." When was the last time you celebrated running the vacuum, brushing your teeth, commuting to work, or grocery shopping? Your attitude affects your perspective and your approach. This sweet woman, who has been very ill, was blessed just to get out to go grocery shopping.

Consider the time spent awake during your average day (normally 16-18 hours). Which hour, half hour, or even 5 minutes are so invaluable, that you could simply discard them? While you may not do this consciously, how often do we squander precious, irretrievable time? How would you view those 5 minutes if you were extremely ill? Must a grave prognosis be given in order to value time? Jesus taught us to appreciate the moment, "This is your hour" (Luke 22:53).

Imagine listing your most mundane daily activities, like clocking in at work, washing dishes, changing the baby, bathing, driving to school, etc. Then imagine reevaluating these as opportunities to identify purpose and/or utilizing them as gratitude moments. Examples: "I thank you, Lord, for the chance to sit idle in traffic on the way to work; 2 years ago I was desperately searching for this job." "I praise you, Lord, that I can mow my lawn; I finally have my own home." "Dear God, I'm so thankful to go to the factory; help me find a co-worker to share my testimony with." "Heavenly Father, thank you for helping me feel well enough to go grocery shopping"

Exodus 4:2 says, "The Lord said unto Moses, 'What is that in thine hand?' And Moses answered, 'A rod.'" Moses' common tool (staff) was soon transformed into an asp, and became the miraculous impetus to liberating Israel from captivity. What's in your hand? Car keys? School books? Office fob? God can take your common and/or mundane and make

it magnificent! If you believe that, then you know nothing is actually mundane; nothing is common. Nothing can be wasted.

Brush your teeth? Thank God you have teeth. Put on your shoes? Appreciate you're able to walk. Go to school? Glorify God for the opportunity to learn. Go grocery shopping? Consider that this simple task defined a great week for our sister. God wants this from you, as 1 Thessalonians 5:18 clearly states that **EVERY SINGLE THING in your life provides a valid reason to thank your God.** EVERY. SINGLE. THING. The spelling in this verse is deliberate, and creates a more specified, individual focus. The usual compound word, "everything," is replaced by EVERY THING. "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

I pray you do a little grocery shopping this week.

Fast & Pray He Loves You
 GOD'S PEACE AND JOY *God is Merciful*
Pause Bring your cares PRAY WITHOUT CEASING
 to the Lord **POWERFUL** He listens
 Pray Changes things Pray for
Talk to the Lord **for** your fields
 PRAY FOR THE CHURCH Pray for the sick
Sacrifice *Pray for your Branch*
 PRAY FOR THE YOUTH **Prayer.** Pray for your family
 Pray for forgiveness He will hear you
 MOVE THE HAND OF GOD *Power to change*
 In all things give thanks
 Pray for the mission fields

Pause for Prayer

By Brother Larry Henderson

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
 uttered or unexpressed,
 The motion of a hidden fire that
 trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear,
 The upward glancing of an eye,
 when none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of
 speech that infant lips can try;
 Prayer the sublimest strains that reach the
 Majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
 returning from their way,
 While angels in their songs rejoice and cry,
 "Behold, he prays!"

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
 the Christian's native air;
 Their watchword at the gates of death;
 they enter heaven with prayer.

O Thou, by Whom we come to God,
 the Life, the Truth, the Way:
 The path of prayer Thyself hast trod;
 Lord, teach us how to pray!

The words above are from hymn number 380
 in the Saints Hymnal. I believe we have the best
 version and arrangement of this song in our
 hymnal. When sung in an almost meditative

manner, it puts me in a place where I revere God
 and realize my need to be with Him.

Consistently making a practice of talking to the
 Lord with a thankful heart gives me such peace
 in my soul. That peace finds a way into my day. It
 affects my thoughts, my actions, and my words.

There are moments in our life when that peace
 can be threatened. There are moments when
 our life may be in danger. In these situations,
 Brother Alex Gentile would cry out, "O
 Signore!" We may shout, "O Lord," or "God help
 me." It is so important to realize that if we don't
 hesitate to call upon our Lord for help, we are
 in a wonderful position. A simple prayer—or
 plea—is pleasing to God. It shows our trust in
 the power and protection of God our Father
 and Jesus our Redeemer.

As a child of God, I should depend upon our
 Father in all things, as written in Alma 34.

18. Yea, cry unto him for mercy; for he is mighty
 to save.

19. Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in
 prayer unto him.

20. Cry unto him when ye are in your fields, yea,
 over all your flocks.

21. Cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your
 household, both morning, mid-day, and evening.

22. Yea, cry unto him against the power of your
 enemies.

23. Yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is
 an enemy to all righteousness.

24. Cry unto him over the crops of your fields,
 that ye may prosper in them.

25. Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they
 may increase.

26. But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls
 in your closet, and your secret places, and in your
 wilderness.

27. Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord,
 let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto
 him continually for your welfare and also for the
 welfare of those who are around you.

28. And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say
 unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after
 ye have done all these things, if ye turn away
 the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick
 and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye
 have, to those who stand in need—I say unto
 you, if ye do not any of these things, behold,
 your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing,
 and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith.

The last verse of "Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere
 Desire" ends with: Lord, teach us how to pray!
 May God teach us how, when, and what state
 of mind and spirit we should be in when we
 approach His throne in prayer. May your humble
 prayers reach God's throne every day.

Awake!

By Brother Mark S. Kovacic

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First, let's take a look at sleeping. At the celebration of the Passover, Jesus dined with His disciples and then they went to the Garden of Gethsemane. They slept while Jesus prayed. After three occasions, He came back to His disciples and said to them: "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." (Matthew 26:45-46)

In another gospel, Jesus told His disciples, "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!" (Mark 13:35-36)

Prior to His transfiguration, Jesus took three of His disciples into the mount. Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awakened, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with him. (Luke 9:32)

Nephi wrote "Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul" (1 Nephi 4:28). Alma said, "And now my beloved brethren, I have said these things unto you that I might awaken you to a sense of your duty to God, that ye may walk blameless before him, that ye may walk after the holy order of God, after which ye have been received" (Alma 7:22).

So what's my point? Should we sleep on? Or should we awake, shake off the spirit of sleepiness, and do the work of the Lord? Here are the steps I recommend:

First, we need to make sure we are awake! Regardless of the time, whether we have just eaten or had a long day at work. All things point to us being awake. Second, we need to waken those who are near us, such as family members, neighbors, or acquaintances. Third, we need to awaken the receptive stranger by asking God to direct our footsteps and to tell us who to present the Gospel to. (Acts 8:26-28; Alma 32:2-4; and Acts 13:42-46)

"And now my beloved brethren, I have said these things unto you that I might awaken you to a sense of your duty to God, that ye may walk blameless before him, that ye may walk after the holy order of God, after which ye have been received" (Alma 7:22). There is no doubt that we have authority from Jesus Christ, and we are His Church. What we bind on earth is bound in Heaven (Matthew 18:18). "It's not the time to be sleeping, or wile the hours away!" (If You Would Labor in Zion). "Let's all be up and doing—every moment we should haste—to further His great kingdom here on earth" (While Time Remains), no matter how great or small the effort may appear.

A couple of years ago, Kelly and I were dining out and I noticed a young father with two teenage sons. It appeared that they had just come from a baseball game, as the boys were still in their uniforms. I watched as they took off their caps and bowed their heads and prayed. I was touched by this act. I couldn't help myself, I got up and went to their table. First, I apologized for intruding on their meal. Then I explained that I saw them praying and I wanted them to be encouraged to continue, pointing out that if more people did that, this nation would be better for it. As I spoke, I felt the Spirit of the Lord on me, and I could tell they were touched. After they acknowledged my words, I turned around and headed out.

At a gathering a few years back, a brother opened the service speaking on the Seventh Day of Rest. Another brother followed by noting that for the Sabbath Day, while in the wilderness, Israel was not to gather manna, but that they were to gather enough on the sixth day to be used for it and the Sabbath (doubling the amount gathered). This action is a type and a shadow, for us to double our efforts today (the sixth day) so we can enter the Seventh Day of Rest!

So, the final words are: Awake from our slumber, get busy, and double our efforts, everywhere!

Thankful, Grateful, Blessed

By Sister Carolynn O'Connor

There is a sign in my kitchen that reads, "Thankful, Grateful, Blessed." It reminds me to acknowledge these truths every time I look at it. Do I really measure up to this proclamation? Honestly, I don't always feel "Thankful, Grateful, and Blessed," hence the reason for the sign—to redirect my thoughts when it catches my eye. It reminds me to PRACTICE GRATITUDE.

The scriptures clearly tell us to have a thankful, grateful heart, regardless of our circumstances. "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Achieving this state of gratitude takes practice, just like anything else in life that is important.

The good news is that not only are we fulfilling God's command, but we are also making good life and health decisions. There are many studies on gratitude that share the benefits of being thankful, such as better sleep, lower blood pressure, better overall health, the ability to make new friends, have stronger relationships, offer more empathy, and it fosters resilience for future trials. There is also much advice on how to go about achieving success with gratitude, some of which we have shared with you in past issues. This month we are focusing on creating a daily habit.

Let's think of this in 2 parts. The first part is our overwhelming gratitude for God, His Son, the hope of salvation and this Church. I am guessing that most of us feel gratitude for all of this daily. Each day let's pause and reflect on this: **I am thankful that Jesus died for me that I may have eternal life. I am thankful for the Restored Gospel and the opportunity to serve Him. I am thankful for this Church and the love of the brothers and sisters. I am thankful that I can go to God in prayer, and He hears me and loves me.**

Part two is where we focus on small changes.

To achieve a THANKFUL HEART, we need to recognize the smaller day-to-day things that we are thankful for and pull our energy from focusing on the things that we don't have, to being grateful for the things that we do. Part of this involves acceptance. It is being in the present and being thankful for where you are right at this moment, regardless of your circumstances. Achieving this will give you More JOY, More Contentment, and More Peace. None of this will change your current circumstances, but living in those circumstances with a better perspective will benefit you in many ways.

To give you a head start, we created our own version of a 21-day gratitude challenge on page 7. We have given you a prompt that will encourage you to think of things that you are thankful for. Give it a try and see if you can make some small changes that lead to big results.

It is not a one-and-done deal, where we accept Jesus Christ are thankful and then move on. It is important to acknowledge the many things we are thankful for each day. Because ALL GOOD THINGS COME FROM GOD (James 1:17) and MEN ARE, THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE JOY (2 Nephi 2:25).

What is something that you are thankful for that came out of a trial?

Continued from back cover

"Trials have taught me NOT to question, doubt or distance myself from Jesus. Trust that He has 'my back,' as my covenant partner and that only good things happen when I draw myself closer to Him... I've learned (the hard way) that the opposite is also true!" – Brother Frank Natoli, Detroit, MI Branch #1

"Zoom meetings at Church on my computer while stuck in the house during a pandemic." – Sister Toni Rancour, Farmington Hills, MI Branch

"I'm thankful for more patience and a better prayer life." – Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"I was not the best student in college. But when my application to nursing school was denied (due to a low grade point average) I was crushed. I retook some of my classes and was able to get a lot of prerequisites done (with better grades) so my application was accepted the next year. It took me five years to get my nursing degree, but I didn't struggle as much as some others because they were trying to do prerequisites that I had already done, along with all the nursing classes and clinicals. The Lord took care of me so I could concentrate on my nursing studies and still work the weekend shift to pay for it. God is good." – Sister Anita Znoj, Creekside, MI Branch

"After several miscarriages, my doctor told me the baby I was then carrying had stopped growing at three months. Since my baby had gone past the first trimester, the State needed verification of death. For two months I was tested; there was no movement, heartbeat, or growth. Sunday, the day before they were going to terminate the pregnancy, Brother Peter Scolaro anointed me at church. I felt as if the warm blessed oil was being poured from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet. The next day they found a heartbeat, and I delivered Robert James Stigleman Jr. on June 27, 1980. God resurrected my son!" – Sister Diana Houlihan, Inner City, MI Branch

When I was in high school, my dad was really sick and my family was struggling. During this time I could have strayed from the Church, but instead the Lord brought me close to Him. I relied on my faith to carry me through. I ultimately asked for my baptism during this hard time. While there were still challenges, I know it would have been harder to go through without being baptized. – Sister Sophia O'Connor, Farmington Hills, MI Branch

"My trial was the death of my husband, 14½ years ago. I was rattled to the depth of my soul. I did and said things that were just not me. I felt forsaken

and abandoned by friends, family, and God. I was on a ton of medications and desperately felt that I couldn't function without them. Like the Israelites, I wandered in the wilderness for 12½ years. But God never left my side. He waited patiently for me to realize that He had not abandoned me. I will forever be grateful for God's patience and that He never gave up on me." – Sister Brenda Capone, Columbus, OH Branch

"My trials have made my faith stronger, helped me get closer to the Lord." – Brother Michael Zaino, Edison, NJ Branch

Several years ago my husband and I decided to build a house to be near our daughters. The location was about an hour away from where we live now and from my parents. My husband lost his job as the foundation was being dug, and we lost our house. Soon after, my dad was diagnosed with cancer and needed my help. It was important for me to be close. Now my mom needs me nearby. Had we built our dream home I would not have been able to be there for them. An added blessing is that our house now has a pool, so through the COVID pandemic we've been able to provide an activity for all the family to enjoy. – Sister LuAnn Carson, Monogehela, PA Branch.

21
DAY

Gratitude Challenge:

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"
— 1 Thessalonians 5:18

I am thankful for...

1. SOMETHING IN NATURE	12. SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE SEASON
2. SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL/JOB/RETIREMENT	13. SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR BRANCH
3. A SKILL OR TALENT YOU HAVE	14. SOMETHING ELECTRONIC OR TECHNOLOGY
4. A HOBBY/TALENT OR ENTERTAINMENT YOU ENJOY	15. SOMEONE FROM YOUR BRANCH
5. A FAMILY MEMBER	16. A FAMILY TRADITION
6. A MENTOR	17. A VACATION SPOT
7. AN ANSWERED PRAYER	18. A PET OR A FAVORITE ANIMAL.
8. SOMETHING THAT YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR PHYSICAL BEING	19. A HYMN YOU LIKE THAT GIVES YOU JOY
9. A MOMENT YOU SHARED WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY THAT WAS SPECIAL	20. A FOOD YOU ENJOY
10. SOMETHING YOU LIKE IN OR ABOUT YOUR HOUSE	21. A PLACE THAT BRINGS YOU PEACE
11. ONE THING FOR EACH OF YOUR 5 SENSES: HEAR ___ SMELL ___ TASTE ___ SEE ___ TOUCH ___	YOU DID IT! YOU ARE ON THE PATH TO A THANKFUL, GRATEFUL, BLESSED HEART EVERY DAY!

New Gospel News Series: Young People Writing Young People

Dear Young People,

As we start to wind down the year of 2021 and get further into our schooling or work life, I want everyone to remember that God always goes before you and creates a path while walking with you on your journey.

Lots of things have been happening in the world that we cannot control, and we may think that we need to worry about or fear them. Deuteronomy 31:8 states "and the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed." As humans it is in our nature to worry and to fear the unknown. But have we forgotten that we have the ultimate advantage over the world? How can we worry when we have Christ on our side? How can fear what is to come when God has already seen it?

I pray for the people in the Church, but my heart goes out to the ones that do not know

the truth, do not know of a life with God and Christ. When everything around us seems like it is falling apart, I pray that you remember that you are never truly alone and take some time to pray. Many people think that to offer a prayer you must get on your knees and have a full conversation with God. I'm here to remind you that a prayer may only need to be a stop in your day to say,

"Lord, I know You are there, I know You know how this is going to work, please guide me and my works to do Your will."

I love song #104 in the Songs of Zion. For those not familiar with this song, the chorus says: "Go on world, keep rushing by. But as for me, for God and I, there has to be some time today, I have to take some time to pray." I don't want to think of the number of times that I have missed the opportunity to talk to



the Lord, or just to even say a simple thank you. But it is my constant prayer that I am able to hear His guidance and understand what He is wanting of me. I just need to put in the work.

He is always there, but do we always stick to the same pace that He is leading, or do we fall behind? I hope that you take some inspiration from the verse and the song, and take some time for yourself to reconnect in a deeper grasp with God. I pray that no matter what you face in life, you will always remember that He is there with you and is fighting those battles with you. You have Christ with you. With Him, how can you not win?

Love,
Sister Kayla Smith

LUC Ladies' Uplift Circle News

Trials to Blessings

By Sister Luann Carson

Every Thanksgiving our family (and I'm sure many other families) sit around the table and tell what we are grateful for. I've never heard anyone say they were thankful for car trouble, unjust imprisonment, physical affliction, or being chased by an enemy, but often trials bring blessings too.

When I was very young my family lived in South Dakota and traveled hours across a deserted prairie to attend church. One Sunday our station wagon lurched slowly toward home only to die as we reached our garage. A mechanic friend said to my dad that there was no way he could have driven that car home. But sitting facing rearward in our station wagon, I watched a man dressed in white push our car home only to disappear as we pulled in. What an experience to hold in my heart!

Fast forward over twenty years. Driving my daughter to kindergarten one frigid day (before cell

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All Manner of Sickness and Disease

By Brother Jerry Valenti

"A"nd Jesus went about all Galilee...healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." (Matthew 4:23). In order to demonstrate that He had the power to forgive sins, Jesus performed many miraculous healings of a wide range of sicknesses and diseases during His time on earth. Here are 5 amazing facts that describe some of the sicknesses and diseases that Jesus healed.

1 Leprosy – Also known as Hansen’s Disease (HD), leprosy is a long-term infection that can lead to damage of the nerves, respiratory tract, skin and eyes. It is very contagious so people who had the disease at the time of the scriptures were required to quarantine in leper’s colonies until such time as they could demonstrate that they were healed. Ignoring standard protocols, Jesus touched people with leprosy and the disease immediately departed (Matthew 8:2-3).

2 High Fever – A high fever is typically indicative of some type of serious illness. A nobleman’s son lay dying with a high fever but Jesus said that he would live and the fever immediately departed (John 4:49-54). Peter’s mother-in-law was sick with a high fever when Jesus came to visit – Jesus touched her hand and the fever left her (Mark 1:29-31).

3 Palsy – Palsy refers to various types of paralysis, often accompanied by weakness, loss of feeling and uncontrolled body movements, such as shaking. A man who was paralyzed with a palsy was brought to Jesus by having his bed lowered into the house through a hole in the ceiling. When the people accused Jesus of blasphemy for forgiving the man’s sins, Jesus said “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house”. And that’s exactly what happened! (Luke 5:24-25).

4 Lame – Various conditions can cause a person to be unable to walk. One man in Jerusalem had such an infirmity for 38 years. Each day, he laid by the Pool of Bethesda, hoping that someone would carry him into

the water that many believed would bring healing. Instead, “Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked” (John 5:8-9).

5 Deaf, Dumb and Blind – Even with care from talented specialists who know to take care of the eyes, ears or mouth, these conditions are typically untreatable. Yet, Jesus routinely cured people of these conditions, both in Jerusalem (Mark 7:32-37, John 9:1-25) and also in America (3 Nephi 17:7-9).

In addition to healing sicknesses and diseases Himself, Jesus also gave power to His disciples to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease (Matthew 10:1). Thus, we are thankful that we continue to have access to this power today through the prayers of the ministry of Jesus Christ.



- Do you believe that “Every Prayer Counts”?
- Would you pray more if you were aware of more needs?
- Are you willing to “mourn with those who mourn”?
- Do you like knowing what’s happening in the lives of your brothers and sisters and throughout the Church?
- Do you want to know who’s being baptized, ordained, blessed, etc.?
- Are you blessed by seeing how God is working around the Church?

If you answered “YES” to any or all of the above questions, Flocknote is for you!

Flocknote is a web-based communication tool that is being used by a growing segment of The Church of Jesus Christ (over 1,000 participants as of today!). Flocknote allows you to be connected to all of these church members and exchange prayer requests and other church news, delivered right to your email inbox or cell phone.

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- Click on the link that comes to your phone
- Fill in your name and email address
- Select the regions or other groups you want to receive news from

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A Grateful Heart

Lord to help you have a changed heart and He will take the hate away.

In the book of Genesis Chapters 37-50, in the Bible, Joseph had ten older brothers in his family. The brothers had different mothers. But the dad loved young Joseph and his mother the most. Everyone in the tribe knew it. The other brothers really hated him for it. It did not help when the dad, Israel, gave a really gorgeous, probably expensive coat, with many colors woven into it to Joseph and nothing to his other sons.

Then Joseph had two dreams he told the family where everyone, including the parents, were bowing down to him. Now his brothers felt like killing him! So when their father sent

Joseph out to bring them supplies they saw him coming and talked about hurting him. Finally they grabbed him and threw him down into an empty pit he could not climb out of. When a group of men going to Egypt came by, they dragged him out and sold him as a slave to be taken far from his family.

So far, how could Joseph feel gratitude? Maybe gratitude that he wasn't killed. He was sold in Egypt to a busy, rich man named Potifar. But God was watching and blessed all the work that Joseph did. Now Joseph was learning how to make big decisions. But then, Potifar's bad wife wanted Joseph to be with her. When he said "No! You are my Master's wife!" She grabbed at his clothes, ripped them off and

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Dear Friends,

Sometimes it is hard to have a grateful heart. Maybe we are mad that something did not go the way we wanted. Or maybe someone we love is being mean to us. Or maybe they are sick or have even shocked us by dying. Sometimes we feel so hurt or mad at God and our lives that we barely can figure out which way to go, what to say, or what to do (if there is anything to do). There are times when things in life hurt our hearts, and worry our minds. But don't give up.

We do have a great, wise helper who was born centuries ago and who loves us. He knows everything too. He is the son of the great Creator God; He is Jesus Christ, Who came down to earth and lived as a man. He understands. We can talk to Him and tell Him our fears and problems. He even hears us if we are not speaking out loud but thinking in our minds. He knows our hearts, too. And He can help us bear pain and heartache as we figure out the problems of life.

And when we realize we have made a huge mistake or are wrong, we can tell Jesus we are sorry and He will forgive us and take away that terrible feeling of guilt, blame, or anger at ourselves. There have even been times when I did not want to say I was sorry even though I knew I was wrong. That is when I pray and ask Jesus to help me change and be sorry. That is called repenting.

Think about how you feel when you are really, really angry with someone. Maybe they barely know how mad you are. They go happily on with their life and you feel hate and anger towards them. Who do you think suffers more? All you have to do is beg the

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phones), my car kept stalling. I'd restart and drive a short distance only to have it stall again. After stalling at a traffic signal and failing to get the engine going, I just paused. I heard my three-year-old son whispering in the back seat. Without a turn of the key, the car started. I knew my son understood it was divine intervention because he said, "The car started without you trying because I said a prayer." When we made it home, the car died and had to be towed to get fixed. Without the car trouble, we wouldn't have witnessed the immediate answer to a child's whispered prayer.

When Herod had Peter imprisoned, "...prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). After being delivered by an angel, Peter said, "Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod" (Acts 12:11). What an amazing testimony, not only for Peter, but also for those Church members praying for him!

I once had a shoulder injury that needed surgical intervention. Although in pain, I attended the Wednesday evening service and was anointed. As I rose from the chair, I felt the pain completely disappear!

As the Israelites fled Egypt, they were chased by Pharaoh's army (Exodus 14). Although the people were "sore afraid," Moses said to

them, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." We know the story of how God moved His Hand to save His people and destroy their enemies. The parting of the Red Sea is an epic unforgettable moment in history that is repeated by many and even shown in movies today.

The following song says it all:

"We pray for blessings
We pray for peace
Comfort for family, protection while we sleep
We pray for healing, for prosperity
We pray for Your mighty hand to ease our suffering
All the while, You hear each spoken need.

'Cause what if your blessings come through raindrops
What if Your healing comes through tears
What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You're near
What if trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise"

(Blessings
By Laura Story)

A Grateful Heart

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began screaming that he had attacked her! Potifar believed her lies and sent Joseph to prison! Did he feel grateful then? I doubt it.

But again God blessed him. God made the prison house warden (boss) see how good Joseph was. Very soon, Joseph was protected there and was running the entire prison. He was learning about huge systems and how to get things done right. Then two of the Pharaoh's (King's) servants were sent to the prison. They each had a dream they did not understand. They told Joseph. He asked God what they meant.

He was told one would be put to death but the other would be forgiven and go back to work. Joseph told that man to please remember him. But did he? Not for two years! Did Joseph get

mad, depressed or give up? It sounds like he just kept on being a good working man!

Then the Pharaoh had two scary dreams that he knew were important. No one knew what they meant. Then the servant who'd been in prison remembered how Joseph had explained his dream. He told Pharaoh who called for Joseph. Joseph told him only God knew the meaning of the dreams and God would tell them. The dreams showed there would be seven good years of crops followed by seven years of no crops.

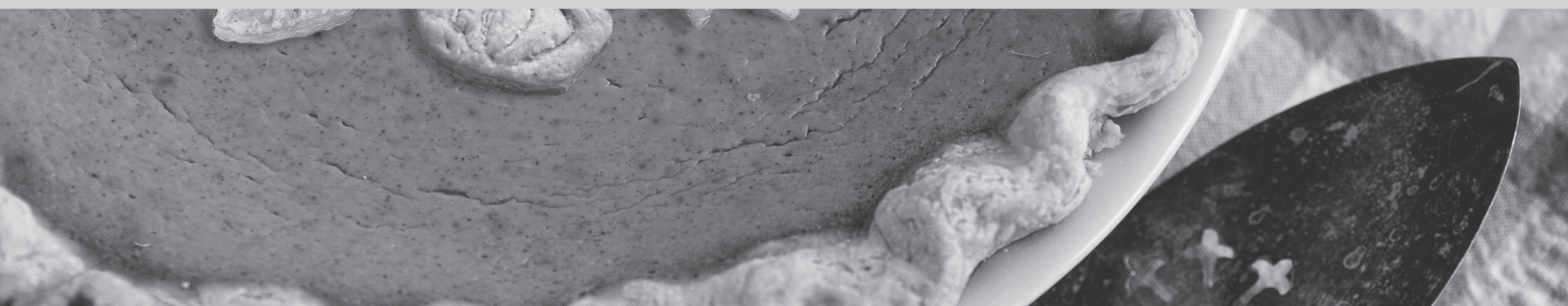
Joseph told the ruler that God was warning him and he should set a good man up to start building storage places for the grain. Pharaoh selected Joseph for the job! Now he was second in the country to make decisions and run things! God even gave him a lovely wife

and they had two little boys! Eventually even his family came to Egypt to buy grain. They did not recognize their brother they'd sold as a slave. They even bowed down before this ruler of Egypt. But Joseph forgave them and protected them. His dreams came true. He never forgot God and God did not forget him! Do you think Joseph felt thankful now?

Do you realize that in all the years he was running Potifar's house or the huge prison, he was learning how to do such a big job? In all of his suffering, God protected him. God was training him. God was helping him. God loves each of us, too. Don't give up when things are so, so hard that your heart hurts. Pray and trust.

God has a special plan for your life also.

With love, Your friend, *Sister Jan*



...I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy. Alma 36:21

Blessing Bits

BB A Father's Blessing

I would like to share a blessing that I was able to experience through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord, Jesus Christ: I was ordained into the ministry on March 4, 1984 in the Bell Branch in California. Later that very day, the first ordinance I performed as a newly-ordained elder, was to bless my son, Ryan, who had been born the month prior. It was a wonderful and memorable blessing for me and my family. God honored that prayer of blessing and His hand has been upon Ryan from that day forward. Fast forward 37 years and God granted me another great blessing. On July 18, 2021, I was privileged and blessed to ordain Ryan into the ministry of The Church of Jesus Christ in the same branch that he was blessed in as a child. – *Brother Bob McDonnell, Bell, CA Branch*

BB God Is in The Details

The members of the Lake Worth Branch recently voted to replace our 20 pews with chairs. The pews were posted on a few online sale sites but to our dismay, we quickly realized

we weren't the only church in south Florida selling pews. Soon we received an inquiry. "We are interested in buying two of your pews." We met the buyer at the church, made the sale for more than we thought we would, and happily moved on to selling the remaining pews. Soon we received a call about the remaining pews. The buyer walked into the church, looked at the pews, and said that he felt that God brought us together because his church was looking for 18, 10-foot pews. We agreed on a price that once again was more than other pews on the market. They want to take the pews in September, our carpet will be installed in October, and our chairs arrive in November! – *Sister Dianne Maddox, Lake Worth, FL Branch*

BB Alabaré a Mi Dios Por Siempre

Estoy muy agradecida con mi Dios porque, cuando tenía cinco semanas de embarazada casi pierdo a mi bebe y tuve un embarazo muy difícil, pero ahora la honra y la gloria sea para nuestro señor jesucristo. Ahora mi bebe tiene 1 año y tiene buena salud. Dios los bendiga. – *Hermana Ana Avila Martinez, San Diego, CA Branch*

English translation: I'll Praise God Forever

I'm very thankful to God because when I was five weeks pregnant, I almost lost the baby and had a very difficult pregnancy. But all of the honor and glory goes to our Lord, Jesus Christ. My son just turned one year old and is very healthy. God bless you. – *Sister Ana Avila Martinez, San Diego, CA Branch*

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at eksanchor@gmail.com. [in approximately 150 words].
Answers to Question of the Month to gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org.



Question for this month: Food is always a big part of the Christmas Celebration, especially desserts. Share your favorite Christmas dessert or a favorite Christmas tradition or memory about food. Share a picture or a recipe if you would like to as well.



Answer from last month: What is something that you are thankful for that came out of a trial? "Leaving a position at work as a Charge Nurse that was very stressful to a position now where I absolutely love going into work. God is good!" -*Sister Kim Morle, Atlanta, GA Branch*

Turn back to page 6 for more answers to this question.



...I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy. Alma 36:21