

Ask God for help

A strong, shared conviction that there is something eternally precious about a marriage relationship builds faith to resist evil. Marriage should be beautiful and fulfilling, with joy beyond our fondest dreams, for "neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:11).

Latter-day Saints need not divorce—there are solutions to marriage problems. If, as husband and wife, you are having serious misunderstandings or if you feel some strain or tension building up in your marriage, you should humbly get on your knees together and ask God our Father, with a sincere heart and real intent, to lift the darkness that is over your relationship,

that you may receive the needed light, see your errors, repent of your wrongs, forgive each other, and receive each unto yourselves as you did in the beginning. I solemnly assure you that God lives and will answer your humble pleas, for he has said, "Ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done" (D&C 50:29). In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

We have just listened to Elder David B. Haight of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder G. Homer Durham of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy will be our next speaker.

Elder G. Homer Durham

Meaning of *Jesus*

Recently, while I was driving on the highway, a car passed. This was not unusual. The bumper sticker was a little different, saying, "Save the Humans." One sees many bumper stickers these days. This one turned my thoughts to something fundamental, the word *save*. I thought of the plan of salvation. I thought of the world of scholarship, and of Professor Arnold Toynbee's analysis of the many so-called "saviours" found in history (*A Study of History*, abridgement, vols. 7-10, D. C. Somervell, chap. 20 [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957], np). We know that one Savior truly saves—the Lord Jesus Christ. This is His church. We have taken upon ourselves His name.

What does the average person mean when he testifies that Jesus is the Christ? Of course, it is the witness of the Spirit that counts. But what do the words *Jesus* and *Christ* mean?

A brief excursion into the meaning of these two words may be useful, especially to young people, in these times.

The *Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933) tells us that the word *Jesus* came into the English language from Middle English, adapted from the Latin *Jesus*, which in turn was adapted from the Greek *Iesous*. This in turn was adapted from the Hebrew or Aramaic word *Yeshua* or *Yehoshua*. The earlier root was *Joshua*. This dictionary goes on to explain that the word *Joshua* derived from the *Jah* of *Jahveh*, meaning that "Jehovah is salvation." Thus, the word *Jesus* has parallel meaning with *Savior*. Dr. David Flusser of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem puts it simply: "Jesus is the common Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua" (*Encyclopedia Judaica* [Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1971], 10:10).

Webster's New 20th Century Dictionary of the English Language (Cleveland: World Publishing Co.,

1968), unabridged, sets forth a comparable definition, noting that the Latin-Greek derivation from the Hebrew *Joshua* means literally, "help of Jehovah." But in addition, this source states that the word derives from the Hebrew word for *Lord God*, he who is available to help, to save. In this sense, then, the word *Jesus* means simply, "God is help." How "Save the Humans," as the bumper sticker read? The dictionaries and the gospel give the answer.

Meaning of Christ

What of the word *Christ*? It also comes to the English-speaking world from Middle English, derived from the Latin *Christus*, in turn from the Greek *Christos*, which meant "the Anointed"—a noun made from the past participle of the Greek verb "to anoint."

Webster also states that the word *Christ* was originally Jesus' title. Thus, proper usage of the two words in English would be as Elder James E. Talmage titled his book, *Jesus the Christ*. Usage and revelation have joined the two as part of a sacred, revered name.

Savior and Messiah

Elder Talmage defined the two words as follows:

"*Jesus* is the individual name of the Savior, and as thus spelled is of Greek derivation. . . . In the original the name was well understood as meaning 'Help of Jehovah,' or, 'Savior.'"

Elder Talmage emphasized that the word *Christ* is a sacred title, not "an ordinary . . . common name; it is of Greek derivation, and . . . is identical with its Hebrew equivalent *Messiah* . . . , signifying the *Anointed One*" (*Jesus the Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973], pp. 35-36).

Father and the Son

What was the earliest documented mention of the sacred name *Jesus Christ* now available to us? Dr. Joseph Armitage Robinson, one-time Norris Professor of Cambridge University, held that it is probably found in the opening verse of First Thessalonians (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 15, sv "Jesus"). Imagine the impact of those words then, as we read them today in English, as received by the Thessalonians possibly two decades after the Crucifixion:

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

Note that the phrase *God the Father* is separated by the conjunction *and* from the phrase *the Lord Jesus Christ*. This demonstrates first-century belief in the separate individuality of the Father and the Son, as restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

"Behold the Lamb of God"

The opening verse of the Gospel according to St. Mark also comes with great force as a historical document fraught with meaning:

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1).

The gospel of John the Beloved is even more eloquent. He records the witness of the Savior's forerunner, John the Baptist, as follows:

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

"Save the Humans"? Think of the Baptist's testimony: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

Scriptures confirm dictionary meaning

How did the Savior of mankind acquire his name in mortality? By revelation. To Joseph of Nazareth, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream, saying:

"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21).

Here is confirmation of the dictionary meaning of the name, as recorded by Matthew: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Mary also had angelic confirmation of the name, as recorded by Luke:

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1:30-31).

The formal naming of the child when eight days old is recorded by Luke:

"His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb" (Luke 2:21).

The name which means "God is help," "the Anointed One," "the Promised Messiah," has thus come to us.

Mankind's quest for a Savior

Some three decades ago, Professor Arnold Toynbee concluded one of the most extensive studies of history ever undertaken. He recorded mankind's quest for "saviours," for "the way out." He identified four categories: (1) the "Creative Genius"; (2) the "Saviour with a Sword"; (3) the "Saviour with a Time Machine," one dreaming of a utopia or an archaic past which never existed; (4) the saviour as

a "Philosopher, Masked as a King." All these history rejects. Finally, Toynbee pointed to "the God Incarnate in a Man," the Lord Jesus Christ. And then he wrote:

"This is in truth the final result of our survey of saviours. When we set out on this quest we found ourselves moving in the midst of a mighty host, but, as we have pressed forward, the marchers, company by company, have fallen out of the race. The first to fail were the swordsmen, the next the archaists and the futurists, the next the philosophers, until only gods were left in the running. . . . And now, as we stand and gaze with our eyes fixed upon the farther shore, a single figure rises from the flood and straightway fills the whole horizon. There is the Saviour" (*A Study of History*, abridgment, vols. 1-6, D. C. Somervell [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957], p. 547).

We know that Savior to be the Lord Jesus Christ. From many, many experiences over my lifetime, I can truly testify to you that He truly is our Savior; and if the Father is approached in prayer, as His Son has commanded us, doors will open to help us move forward without fear in life. That all men everywhere may come to realize and know the significance of *Jesus the Christ*, the One chosen before the foundation of the world, is my faith and witness. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth" without announcement.

President Hinckley

Elder G. Homer Durham of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy has just spoken to us, following which the Choir sang "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth."

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.