

January 2012



Armenia Yerevan Mission

President's Message

Dear Elders and Sisters,

It is a New Year and that always causes us to stop and reflect on doing and being better. The movie "It's A Wonderful Life" reminds us how important each life is... including yours!!! Each one of you can and will make a difference in many lives. While you are here on your mission you have the opportunity to focus on blessing other people's lives by sharing "The Gospel of Jesus Christ" with them. What a difference that can make in their lives here and in the eternities!

A friend sent me this sad but thought provoking story. "James Crichton was born and raised in Scotland in the 1400's, and was known as the smartest man who ever lived. He graduated from High School at age eight, earned a Bachelor's Degree at age ten and a Master's Degree at age twelve. He could answer any question you asked in any of ten different languages. His photographic memory stored volumes of books--verbatim. He could paint, dance, sing, and play fourteen different instruments. He earned a living by teaching royalty different languages and music (in the luxury of their castles).

James was quite a man--but he was not committed. He was not committed to any

goals or committed to improving mankind in any way. He was a wasted talent. He ate, drank, and was merry--and he died. He was killed by being run-through by a sword at the age of 35 by a drunken prince.

Nothing in the world displays this genius' mark. Nothing Innovative bears his name. The only reason he is remembered is because of his unused God-given talent. Unless we have goals and are committed, our talents will remain hidden forever. The song we should have sung will remain within us."

I hope that each one of us will take some time to really think and pray about ways we can become better and be a blessing to others. This will help us to be even better instruments in Heavenly Father's hands and better representatives of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. President Carter and I love each one of you very very much. We pray that 2012 will be a learning, growing, sharing, and memorable year for each of you. -Sister Carter

PARTING TESTIMONIES

As we prepare to leave this beautiful country, I am thankful for the privilege of serving here. Sister Rich and I wanted to thank the Lord for putting us together at this time in our life. We knew that he would have the perfect place for us to serve and he did. We have loved this country, the people and all parts of our Mission. The

time has gone by extremely fast and I have to say that it has been not only the best 18 months of my life, but also the easiest. Sister Rich and I have learned how to work as one in harmony with the Lord. We have not only been able to help a lot of people, but we have also learned a great deal about ourselves. We now believe that we are ready for whatever the Lord would have us do next. We have felt his hand in our lives on a daily basis. We have enjoyed living in the warmth of his love as we served him and his children. We are sorry to leave this land and if it were His desire, we would stay as long as He wanted us to. It has been a privilege to work with these fine young Missionaries. We love our Mission President and his wife. We thank the other Senior Missionaries for their fine example and friendships. We love all of you and we can say with all certainty that the Church is true and that the Lord knows each of us and he loves each of us. By means of the Atonement, as long as we do our part, he will do the rest. We will never forget this wonderful experience. - Elder John Rich

Time has come for us to prepare to leave the mission field. How wonderful it has been to share with my companion and each of you the tender mercies and blessings that come to those who serve the Lord. I have jokingly said that it seems like every other day is Sunday and now looking back I cherish all those Sundays and days in between. I am, and will be forever, grateful to Heavenly Father for giving me the great opportunity to come to this far away land and be an emissary for His Beloved Son. I have enjoyed the rich blessings of being close to my Heavenly Father throughout my life and of being witness to many miracles performed for others on this earth. I testify at this time, to each of you dear missionaries, that the Gospel is true, that our Savior lives and directs His church on this earth today. I testify that we are witnesses to a living prophet and apostles who give us council from our Father daily. I testify that there are no coincidences and that you are where the Lord wants you to be at this moment in time. I testify to you that the Book of Mormon is true and no matter what language you read it in, it is a true witness of our Savior and His majesty and power. I testify to you that as we embrace our callings and do all that we can do, that the Lord will complete anything that we may lack. I testify to you that all of your prayers are heard and answered and that as we become obedient to our Father's will, we will benefit from those answers, even though we may not understand them at that particular time. I leave with you this testimony that our Father lives and loves us and is pleased with His missionaries around the world. I believe that all of you Hayerin Missionaries are the finest in the world. I will love you and remember you always. -Sister Gloria Rich

Well before i came out on my mission i had an idea of what to do in l i f e and who i wanted to be but was not sure. my mission has changed every aspect of my l i f e

and who i am. i have trul y found out what it means when it is said when you l o s e yoursel f in the work and serving god you find yoursel f. i have had experiences on my mission that i wil l never forget. i have seen the hand of the l o r d in my l i f e and of those who i have served. i know that god is our heavenl y father i know he cares about me and al l of his chil dren because i have had 2 years of first hand experiences with this. i know with al l the assurity of my heart that Joseph smith restored the one and onl y church of Jesus Christ and al l the keys and blessing that go al ong with it. i trul y feel bl essed to have had the oppor tunity to serve the l o r d and i know god has bl essed me a hundred times fol d. my testimony of the pl an of sal vation has been strengthened through these 2 years. we al l know of the pl an growing up in the church but i think i have come to know more of the real ity and truth of it. i have al so l earned that serving the l o r d and doing his wil l is where true happiness is and a person can be most happy when doing the wil l of the father. i wil l cherish these 2 years the rest of my l i f e and i know the rest of my l i f e wil l be buil t on the foundation of it and what i have come to know and understand. serving the l o r d does not stop at 2 years and i am excited to get home and continue the work i started here in buil ding the kingdom of god on earth. i al so feel bl essed and privil eged to have served in this mission and served with amazing el ders. i l ove you al l and wish you success and happiness in serving the l o r d.
-el der nel son

MISSIONARY MIRACLES!



Our miracle this month happened on Christmas morning... A few months back, we had a member who was really badly offended by one of the members. So we began to work with his family. He was quite bitter at someone in the branch, but he just recently started to come back to church. So he came Christmas morning. It was going to be wonderful and then all of a sudden, the member he was offended at walked in. I thought, there goes our happy ending... and we were preparing to start the meeting. The member was one of the speakers and called him up to the stand after he had gone and blessed the sacrament, he complied, but reluctantly. Then at the end of sacrament, the member gave a talk that really touched his heart. About Christ. About repentance. About forgiveness. Then after the meeting, they embraced and cried for a few minutes. It was a really special experience to see two men have their hearts softened. It's a good entrance into the next stage for that member now - receiving the MELCHEZEDEK PRIESTHOOD AND GOING TO THE TEMPLE!!!! Truly a miracle indeed. -Elder T. Peterson

this sunday was christmas day, a day which i had been l o o k i n g forward too. i knew there was going to be festivities and al l kinds of activities happening in the church. As a l i t t l e boy, i l o v e d acting out the nativity scene and i was anticipating rel i v i n g that experience by watching the l i t t l e primary chil dren act out those same scenes, recorded in l u k e 2. The day went on, i e n j o y e d the festivities and fel t the spirit of the l o r d come upon me. Christmas is a time when we feel the spirit of the l o r d within our l i v e s in greater abundance- maybe because we simpl y ponder about him more. I was thinking about what i coul d give to cheer up the festivities, what i coul d do to give a gift as Christ did. At that moment, a new member asked for a bl essing of comfort. I had never given a bl essing in the Georgian l a n g u a g e and had l a c k e d the dil i g e n c e to memorize the words that needed to be

said when giving a blessing of comfort. The time of preparation had passed. The time to act had come, and somebody was asking me to act there and then. My priesthood had been called upon, I was worthy, I had always hoped to be able to administer to the aching hearts of the people...and I needed to do it in Georgian.

I'd never even heard a blessing in Georgian before!

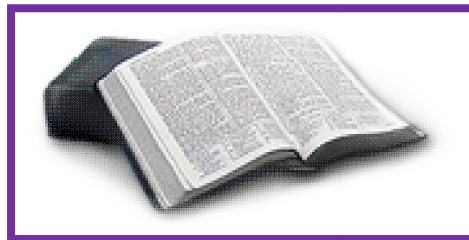
As I put my hands on the head of that faithful, longing new sister the words flowed from my mouth. I was able to translate directly from the English template of a blessing into the Georgian without hindrance! The blessing was then given, I felt the spirit flood the room and the love that The Lord had for this sister was expressed in her native tongue, the senior elders afterwards confirmed all grammar and wording was correct. Without any previous study of how to state the authority in which I was asking or how to give a blessing, those hands which hung down were lifted up and her heart was comforted.

At Christmastime the festivities, excitement and friendship have a place in our hearts, gifts are given. After all, the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh were offered at His Holy Birth.

But this year, I gave myself and the gift of A Loving Savior was unwrapped in someone else's life...through the means of what I believe was a miracle. - Elder Redpath

I just wanted to say a little bit about how much the Lord works with us here in this mission. There are thousands of times through this last year that the Lord worked a miracle in my life. Thousands more that I never knew about. From a nudge to go talk to the next investigator, to the prompting to walk a little faster so you catch the metro after a long day; from giving the right word to me at the right moment, to comforting us after a friend decides to stop taking lessons. The Lord's hand really is in this work. I have come to realize that if I hadn't seen a miracle before I knelt down to pray I was blind.

After returning from Armenia my companion and I decided to go to a cafe to eat. After we went up the escalator someone said, "Mormons? Are you Mormon?" (In English) We turned and saw an older Armenian woman speaking broken English to us. We told her "Yes we are Mormons." she exclaimed "Oh, I know. I saw your name tag. I love missionaries." We sat down and ate with her and talked. It was frustrating but possible to communicate (she doesn't know Georgian, and we don't know Armenian.) She was a member living in Yerevan who was visiting Georgia for the holidays. She couldn't find a place to stay that had a stove to cook with (she loves to cook). So I called some members that rent out rooms trying to find one for her, all were full. The last person I called didn't answer the phone, but I decided to try again, and as I put the phone up to my ear I looked up and I saw the very same person I was calling ordering food! She had come for a concert that her daughter was singing in nearby. Nazela, the Armenian lady went with them and found a room to sleep in, and Nana the Georgian was able to get some money. It was a blessing for all of us. God really does care about all of his children.
Elder Offutt



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Elder Smith on January 8th

President Carter January 21st

Elder Larson on January 25th

Elder Watterson on January 31st

New Members in December:

Ruzanna (Malatia); Ani (Ajapnyak)

Karen (Ajapnyak); Arakel (Ajapnyak)

Mission Completed in January:

Elder & Sister Rich; Elder Nelson

Arriving January:

Elder & Sister Reading (CES & MLS), Elder & Sister Stone (Humanitarian), Elder Connor, Sister Beal, Elder Rackham, Elder Davis, Elder Fullmer, Elder May, Elder Brantley, Elder Orme.

CHRISTMAS THROUGHOUT THE MISSION:



