



Armenia Yerevan Mission

All Your Might

December 2011

President's Message

Sisters and Elders,

We all enjoyed a Thanksgiving Day filled with gratitude and Sister Carter and I want to write here, how grateful we are to each of you. It's getting cold. Yet you all keep working with diligence. We're in awe at our missionaries!

This week we drove down the street at night and saw two of our Elders. I called out to them but they didn't hear me so I pulled into the closest place I could park and waited for them to reach us. They had no idea we were even there and so before they got to us, Sister Carter and I had a chance to just observe from a distance. Cold winter night, almost 9 PM. They were rushing to quickly grab some food before going home but then they saw an opportunity to open their mouths and that's just what they did. As we watched them stop and share the Gospel, we felt like proud parents - and how we wished their own parents could have been with us to share the thrill of seeing them at work. This week, we took a brand new senior couple to their city, to get them introduced to their new home. We found the next day that the heat wasn't working well and it was a pretty cold night's sleep for them. So we went to buy them a blanket and heater. We saw a brand new couple winning friends in the store as they just smiled and spoke what Armenian they could and did the rest with sign language. Everyone was smiles including us! They did some street contacting with the Elders that afternoon and went to visit members and less actives with the Elders that night. Bold and loving and wonderful hearts. We just love all of you!! Your parents love you!! And there is no doubt that Heavenly Parents are aware of you and adore you. Christmas is soon here. Though it comes every year it never grows old. No matter the condition of the world or the troubles at hand, the season of remembering Christ brings joy and peace to hearts and lives all over the earth. Our efforts to proclaim His name and to lift the hands that hang down can be our simple gift as we figuratively come to Bethlehem and offer to Him what we can.

We pray for each of you, a Christmas filled with a joy that will be long remembered as a most special Christmas in the mission field.

President and Sister Carter

PARTING TESTIMONIES

What a pleasure it has been to have shared a portion of my life with you my fellow missionaries. It is so great to be able to put on my name badge everyday and be a missionary representing my Savior. I have learned that there is a whole new part in my heart that has learned to love a new people, a new culture, and a new country.

I have learned that even during difficult trials, I can "Choose Happy." I love the Gospel of Jesus Christ and find such joy in living at this time of the world. I will be forever grateful to Pioneer ancestors who joined the church early on and served faithfully.

THE CHURCH IS TRUE!

Til we meet again in the eternities or before.

Love, Sister Jones

Missionaries, President and Sister Carter, Our Armenian friends, you are all amazing. You prove daily that the Gospel is true. There are no words to express my happiness at being called to this Mission. The Lord knows our abilities and places us where we can magnify these abilities, and I am very grateful to Him for being called to serve here in Yerevan. I know the Church is true. I know it is extremely important we follow our Savior's teachings so we can return to Him. We are led by a Prophet who is in constant communication with our Father. My service to the Lord has taught me the importance of prayer. We need to remember to always keep a prayer in our hearts.

I testify this to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Jones

This scripture has been fundamental in setting the course of my entire mission. It is John 6:48-51, 68-69; "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

We are here to offer the Bread of Life, which is only available from the Savior. I also remember that in this same chapter there are 12 baskets of bread left from feeding the 5,000 - likewise there is always 'enough'. And not just enough, but

there is much to spare! The Savior has given all. He has given it for our investigators to become clean, and he has given it for us when we need nourishment as well. I think that the Lord is aware of us and more merciful than we sometimes are prone to believe or receive. I have found that if I but remember all that he offers to me and to those I teach, the very reason why I'm here becomes more meaningful.

I love the Lord. I love, love, love Armenians. I know that the atonement does bring relief and power. I know that the gospel is for each of us individually. I know that this is a serious work we are all undertaking, and that it IS moving forward. I know that the work is hard – but yet the outcome is ALWAYS greater than the cost. I know the Savior lives and this is His work.

Sister Brower

It's hard to believe it is time for me to write my "departing testimony". The offers I've received to stay and be a hars in Armenia are starting to look pretty good...

I do not believe words can express the way I feel about my mission here in Armenia. It has meant so much to me. In many different ways my mission has changed and influenced me and I believe will continue to do so. There have been many people here that have touched my life, including fellow missionaries, members, investigators and others. I will forever be grateful and filled with love for these people. I know the Lord loves and cares about each and every one of His children. He desires to lead and guide us in our steps through life. It is up to us to take His outstretched hand that we might be lifted to higher ground, even the ground where He walks.

My mission has not been easy, I don't believe missions are ever meant to be easy, but I can tell you that I embraced and loved every minute of it. How can you say that? you may ask. I will tell you how. I can say that because, although I made mistakes and wasn't perfect and although my heart felt so heavy sometimes I couldn't do anything but fall to my knees, I can look back on every not-so-beautiful moment with gratitude for the lessons I learned and the person I have become because of it. My mission was my mission. I couldn't ask for anything to make it more complete. Each of your missions will be your missions, your experiences will be your own. You will touch lives while you are here and will continue to touch lives when you return home. I know God lives and loves His children. I know that the Lord has an individual plan for every one of them. I love my Savior and my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I know His gospel has been restored today in it's fulness. We truly are a part of *the great and marvelous work* that has been prophesied from the beginning. I am filled with gratitude for the many blessings the Lord has granted me in my life. I love you all. Keep the work moving forward strong here in the blessed land of Armenia. I don't know how much of a mark I have made on Armenia, maybe it was small, maybe it was large. But Armenia and the people here have definitely made their mark on me and I will forever love and treasure this land and it's people. Remember I love you and will always be praying for you.

Love, Sis Crawford

It's a tough thing to testify of something so great in so small a space, but I guess this is why we practiced 'hankos' for so long. In the time and amount that I have, I will testify of a few of the many things that I have gained a sure knowledge of during my mission in very special ways. I want to testify to all and everyone that God is very, very close. He has not forgotten or

abandoned us, even when we may think so. Our Heavenly Father loves us all individually and more, I believe, than we can know in this life. I have seen and felt that love and closeness more times than I can count during my mission, and I know that God expects us all to pass that love on to everyone we see. I testify of the presence and divine assistance of angels, I know that they are here helping us, and in many instances, standing right beside us. That is the truth. I want to testify of the matchless and limitless power of faith, and the miracles that can be accomplished if we ask in faith and then get outside and do the best we can. I testify of the great power of prayer that is closely connected with faith. God has answered every one of my prayers that I've offered in sincerity and faith, when I've forgotten my pride. Every single one. I think too often we forget our faith, and forget that God is waiting to help us. One of the most priceless gifts and blessings that I've received during my mission is a knowledge of the Savior. As it says in Mosiah, "For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?" I now feel like I'm beginning to know the Savior, and He now plays a greater role in my life than I ever noticed or allowed before. Trust in the Lord, and have faith that He will guide you. I know that all of this is true. I've felt the truth, and seen it in action. I love you all very much, and I hope that you continue to do what God asks in this wonderful country, even when it seems like you can't, or that there's no point. There always is. I know that God needs you here, at this specific time. There are great things ahead. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. **Elder Zebley**

Well this is quite awkward writing the departing testimony if I do say so myself... I am sure the other missionaries doing it as well would agree just because of how fast the time passes by as you are serving the people with your fellow missionaries. I have loved my mission and will forever remember the times and experiences I have been blessed to have and the friendships I have been privileged to attain throughout these past months. I love this work and know that it is the only way that anyone can return to live with our Loving Heavenly Father in the Celestial Kingdom of God. I know that this work will not go forward if we do not love the people, and more importantly, the Lord our Savior and Redeemer. I know through the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, I know by that same power that through Joseph Smith the keys of the priesthood have been restored to the earth and that we have a great message to share with the people of Armenia. This is a message which brings great joy and peace to the lives of those who accept it and work to keep the commandments of God. I just want to say that I love you all and know that you as well have a strong testimony that will become even stronger as you read your scriptures and especially the Book of Mormon with a prayer in your heart. Keep being good boys and good girls as Elder Bednar would say and love the time you have to serve, it is short, but well worth it. The joy that will come into your hearts as you see others partake of the fruit of the tree of life is priceless and can be had in no other way. When we are in the service of our fellow beings, we really are in the service of our God and that is when we will have true happiness. I am going to miss every minute of it.

Love Elder Andersen

As I am coming to the end of my mission i look back and realize how much i truly have learned and grown on my mission. The most important thing that has grown on my mission is my testimony about the atonement of Jesus Christ. As i have been here i have come to realize more and more with every testimony that i bear that Jesus Christ is our

Savior. the power of the atonement can heal any wound that we have. and the thing that most people don't realize is that Jesus Christ did not just suffer for every sin of ours, but he suffered all of the pain, all of the sicknesses, sadness, hardship, and any trials that we have ever, do, and will ever face. He knows how to comfort us when we need comforting. he knows what we are going through. All we need to do is come unto him. i have a great testimony of that. time and time again i have experienced the love that he has to offer and i know that for each and every person on this earth he is holding out his hand of help. of these things i testify in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. **Elder Zuniga**

I want to bare my testimony

I know that this church is true and that its been restored through the living prophet Joseph Smith, he truly was seeking for an answer and the Gods word the bible has directed him on the right path of how to find it, and the bible taught him were and how he needs to do it to get an specific answer. Because he was interested he continue on looking and pondering more. Then at the end he went to the forest and kneeled down and offered a prayer. And I know that at that moment he saw the Father and the Son and they did in reality spoke to him. And for me it means a lot because he asked God and God answered him, and if we ask we can receive some guidance from him too.

I know that we can be happy and find more piece on our missions. It does not matter where we are, the Lords work is the same for every one. We can be more blessed IF we do what is right and don't think about Satan, because its he that tempts us to be scared or feel shame, always think about God and that he is lot more powerful then Satan, we can overcome those barriers by being obedient and nice to your COMPANIONS. I've learned a lot on my mission, for example I've become more patient.

O well, I can go on and on forever, I know that Jesus is the Christ and that He is our Savior and redeemer and that he suffered for us on the cross so that we can someday live with our God for eternity.

da amas vambob ieso kristes saxelit amin. **Elder Steele**

MISSIONARY MIRACLES!

2011 Priesthood blessing to Leila and others

We traveled three hours from Tbilisi to a small town in eastern Georgia called Zestaponi to visit Leila a member of the Branch to give her and her mother a Priesthood blessing. Leila's mother was bed stricken and very elderly. After I gave her mother a blessing I then gave Leila one. Her mother-in-law who was living there also wanted one as well so I gave her one next. Then there was a mother of four boys who was there visiting, who was the granddaughter of the mother-in-law and she asked if she could get one also. I had explained to her mother-in-law who is not a member what a blessing was. So when this mother came out from the other room I explained what it was as well and a little about the restored gospel and Priesthood. Then I gave her a blessing. Afterward she said that during the blessing she felt a very warm feeling that ran from her head to her feet. I took some time to explain about the Holy Ghost and that was what she was feeling. I told her how to get answers to prayers and that if she prayed to know if something was true that if it was true she would feel the very same feeling. I told her to remember how it felt. We are not teaching the Gospel outside of Tbilisi and I don't know if this person will ever have a chance in this life to hear the gospel

other than through her friend Leila. Hopefully someday either in this life or in the life to come she will have the chance and hopefully when she is asked to pray to know it is true this memory will come back to her. Later when we were leaving and Leila was walking us out to where we could catch a marshrutka I told her to tell her friend about the Church. She said she didn't know how to teach her. I told her to just read the Book of Mormon with her (She has it in Russian) and have her pray to know if it is true it will convert her.

Elder and Sister Reese

We were on exchanges and on our way home from district meeting. While waiting for the metro I saw two guys standing there just kind of looking around. I felt a prompting to go and talk to them. (I hadn't planned to talk to anyone because my mouth was full of a khachapuri.) I thought, what can it hurt, swallowed my meal, and walked up to them. After we started talking for a while I found out that they had been looking for a church to join. On the second meeting, one of them, Jeff, was sure the Book of Mormon is true and that he wants to get baptized. His friend is still reading and searching for an answer. Jeff was so excited that he gave us his families' address and phone number, which we sent to the missionaries in his home country. I know that the Lord knows who is ready and will lead us to them if we are worthy. I know the truth of these things.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. **Elder Offutt**

So I lost my planner. It's one of those "wooooooow" moments when you wonder how you could let something so important and chalk-full of information slip out of your hands. As we were walking back from our search, we were cutting behind a building so that we could more quickly reach the main road. Before we got to the main road we passed a young man who we had talked to a few weeks earlier. Vardan did not hesitate to ask us when we could meet. In that moment a thought came to my mind, " This is probably why you lost your planner".

We answered and said, Let's meet today at 6:00, in our building" He said, " That works for me"

We traded our numbers. I realized how much the Lord works with people, even after they deny our invitations. The Lord had been preparing him to cross paths with us again.

Elder Larson and Elder Cook

Once upon a time we were walking down a main street of our area during a snow storm, when we felt like we should go down a street leading to a bunch of houses. Despite us feeling like this would not be super productive, we followed the Spirit with all of the humility in our hearts. We only talked to two people but one of those people called us telling us that he was coming to church. He did! He was drunk! but he was there and he said that we could meet again, so we were happy, until he got offended that we wouldn't give him marshutni money to get out to his village. We tried calling back his number a couple days

later and were surprised to find that he was happy and willing to meet again, so we took a taxi up to his village and a guy came up to the taxi and took us to his house. It turns out that Sako (the drunk guy) walked all the way back to the village where he met Avo (the guy who's house we were in currently) and Avo let him use his phone to call us. We called back Avo thinking that he was actually Sako, and set up an appointment with Avo instead. Now Avo is one of our most promising investigators, and I feel like one of the great Book of Mormon missionaries like Ammon, or Elder Gerber, where this big huge chain of things leads them to those people who are prepared to accept the Gospel.

With love from Elder Maughan and Elder Bott

Well, I have two

The first one happened when we were out one night. We decided that we were going to stay out the additional 30 minutes (we had finished our meetings early that day) and Tract. We started with a prayer, then felt good about going to the little market place. When we got there we found a girl who stopped us to ask us a few questions about our faith. She told us that she had overheard us when we were talking with some young guys who didn't want it, and wanted to know if you could *really* talk to God. We sat down with her there and taught her about prayer and invited her to church the next week. She then told us that she wanted to always come to church and that she was way pumped, but she was going out of the city soon. It was really neat to see that doing the little extra at night, especially when you are tired, pays off.

Second experience. We were out walking and kept walking and walking. We started in a village outside of Ashtarak called Mughni, then kept walking and just started to talk to people that were on the street. No one would even talk to us. We probably looked pretty scary, because I was wrapped up like a mummy and tall as a tree, and my companion is as thick as a train, he played football. But eventually we just started talking to a woman, who didn't really want to talk to us, then all of a sudden her mother in law came out and invited us in. We had a first, and walked out with 4 new investigators. We left that house, and going back to the city, walked into a store looking for a bus stop. The people there invited us for tea, which we gladly accepted, then we spent the time answering their questions, and set a time for our next appointment. It was a wonderful day. The Lord moves in mysterious ways...

Elder T. Peterson



New Members in Armenia & Georgia!

Edita, Kristina, Haykush, Susanna, and Berch

Happy Birthday!

6th Sister Rich
9th Elder Fairclough
25th Elder Zuniga
28th Elder Hammer
29th Sister Smith

MISSION COMPLETED IN DEC:

**Elder & Sister Jones,
Sisters Brower & Crawford,
Elders Andersen, Steele, Zebley, Zuniga**

Arriving December 21

Elder & Sister Loveridge



Center & South Zone Conference

Georgia & North Zone Conference

