

## The Second Comforter

“What Have We Learned? What Ought We to Have Learned” General Conference

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I want to talk briefly about a subject that I wrote *The Second Comforter: Conversing With the Lord Through the Veil* to address, and deal with a couple of issues to reassert, reaffirm, and reclaim that the search to enter into the Lord’s presence as part of the gospel IS the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ that is in the Book of Mormon and in the Covenant of Christ that contains story after story of individual after individual who, searching for, finally recover and reclaim the presence of the Lord in their life. Well, one thing that has been presented as a barricade to the idea that a Gentile can enter into the presence of the Lord is a statement that’s made in Third Nephi. Now, I’m gonna read the statement as it appears in the traditional Book of Mormon language when Christ is talking about the other sheep that He has that are not of this flock. He says:

*Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the gentiles; for they understood not that the gentiles should be converted through their preaching. And they understood me not, that I said, They shall hear my voice, and they understood me not that the gentiles should not...*

And at the time that the Scriptures were being prepared, the Lord required four changes to the text of the Book of Mormon. This is one of those four changes that was made and appears in the Book of Mormon form that is in all of our Scriptures as part of The New Covenants.

*...should not at that time hear my voice, that I should not manifest myself unto them save it were by the holy ghost. But behold, ye both heard my voice and seen me, and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me. (3 Nephi 7:3 RE)*

And then he goes on to say that He has yet other sheep. In the incident in the Covenant of Christ, that same thing reads this way:

*Now I tell you truthfully that you are the ones I spoke of when I said: I have other sheep that aren’t part of this fold; I will visit them, and they will also hear My voice; then I will make all my sheep into one fold, following one Shepherd. And they didn’t understand Me, since they thought I was talking about the Gentiles. They didn’t understand that the Gentiles were to be converted through their preaching. And they didn’t understand Me when I said that they would hear My voice. And they didn’t understand Me that the Gentiles wouldn’t hear My voice at this time, and that I wouldn’t reveal Myself to them except by the Holy Ghost. But you’ve both heard My voice and seen Me, and you are My sheep, and you are included with those the Father has given to Me. (3 Nephi 7:3 CE)*

So what the Lord is doing is He's explaining to a specific group of people (the Nephites, with whom He's visiting) a comment that He made to another specific group of people (the Jews that were located in Jerusalem) about the ministry that He had at that moment as a resurrected being, ministering to the scattered sheep of Israel in the various parts of the vineyard where branches of the real, authentic, original house of Israel (or branch of the olive tree) had been transplanted. He was going to visit with all of those, and He was not going—at that time, in that generation, among those people—going to visit with the Gentiles. The Gentiles, at that point, were intended to be converted to the truth as a consequence of the ministering of the people with whom He visited. It's a time-specific event. It is not a bar to the Lord appearing to people at a later point in time.

So that brings us, then, to Moroni 7:6 that I want to take a look at. I'm going to read from Covenant of Christ. After talking about everything that the Lord had accomplished, Moroni poses this question:

*And because He's done this, my dear people, have miracles stopped? I tell you: No. And neither have angels stopped ministering to mankind. They are obedient to Him, to minister according to His commands, revealing themselves to those of strong faith and of a firm mind in every form of godliness. The responsibility of their ministry is to call people to repentance, and to fulfill and do the work of the Father's covenants that He's made to mankind, to prepare the way among [the] people by declaring Christ's words to the Lord's chosen vessels, so they can bear testimony of Him. And by doing this, the Lord God prepares the way for the remainder of mankind to have faith in Christ, so the Holy Ghost can have a place in their hearts according to the power of the Holy Ghost. This is how the Father vindicates the covenants He's made to mankind. Christ has said: If you have faith in Me, you'll have power to do what[so]ever I consider needed and proper. And He's said to everyone on earth: Repent and come to Me and be baptized in My name and have faith in Me, so you can be saved. (Moroni 7:6 CE)*

This is a promise that is being made at the end of the Book of Mormon, generations after when Christ had appeared to people. And Moroni is trying, in the final concluding section of the book (and there's only that much left [holding up his book and showing the pages], and all of this preceded it), he's trying to say to us in our day, "Hey, this stuff that you've been reading about in this remarkable account of the Lord's dealing with people: This is on-going; it won't end; it will continue." Whenever we have people of faith, whenever we have people that are willing to have a firm mind in every form of godliness, this process remains open.

So, then we get to First Nephi, in which language... (And again, I'm gonna read from Covenant of Christ. But you can read these same words, a little more turgidly written, in the King Jamesian language in any Book of Mormon.) But this is what the promises made by a prophet, writing a record intended for our day (because he CLEARLY says he's got US in his mind when he's recording this stuff), he despairs... He KNOWS that his descendants are all gonna fall into apostasy. He KNOWS that his people will be destroyed. So he's writing to give hope to YOU. You're his target audience. And that becomes much more clear in this book

than it is in the King Jamesian version that we have to read in the traditional Book of Mormon.

*If the Gentiles then obey the Lamb of God [meaning, “then” to him is “now” to us; if the Gentiles today obey the Lamb of God,] He’ll reveal Himself to them in word and power and in person, in order to remove barriers to their belief, and if they don’t harden their hearts against the Lamb of God, they’ll be included with your father’s descendants — indeed, they’ll be included as part of the house of Israel. And they’ll become a blessed family in the promised land forever. They won’t be enslaved anymore, and the house of Israel won’t be embarrassed anymore. (1 Nephi 3:25 CE)*

He’s saying—even if you want to go to the words in Third Nephi that says He’s not gonna appear to the Gentiles—he’s saying the Gentiles who will accept Christ will become Israel. If you accept Christ, you inherit this land and all of the promises that were made in the prior covenant. Indeed, that’s exactly what the Allegory of the Olive Tree is trying to tell you. That’s exactly the purpose of the regrafting of the various branches into one singular, original mother tree at the end, which is Israel. Israel is being reclaimed—this time by covenant. This time, the blood of Israel becomes adopted into the family by covenant, which was the whole purpose of the Lord commencing the work and the grafting that has been taking place since 2017 and continues to enlarge by the words that we have been given today.

Now, I’ve written a small book; it’s entitled *Ten Parables*. And the tenth parable in the *Ten Parables* is something called “The Missing Virtue.”<sup>1</sup> I’m not going to read that parable to you, but what I’m going to say is based upon what you read in the tenth parable. So if you haven’t read it, it’s a little book. The guy who convinced me to go ahead and publish *The Second Comforter* . . . I had put out *The Second Comforter, Eighteen Verses*, and *Nephi’s Isaiah* (I think *Nephi’s Isaiah* was second), and he told me, “If you really intend to be a writer . . .” and I didn’t really intend to be a writer, but he said, “If you really intend to be a writer, you really need to write at least one work of fiction.” So I wrote *Ten Parables*.

I have to tell you that the first parable in *Ten Parables* is really not me writing fiction. It’s an actual story that the Lord told that’s been lost. And so the first of the ten parables is a retelling of a story/a parable that belongs to Christ, restored. And the tenth parable is actually not a parable really/exactly. It’s actually autobiographical. So I cheated when I called it “Ten Parables.” There are eight of them—well, eight that I wrote; one belongs to Christ, and the last one is (I’m now admitting, and some of you have already figured that out—and I don’t know how I’ve evaded the answer when you’ve asked me, “Is that about me?”), it is based on actual events that took place, but I did change some details to be able to claim, with a straight face that it was a parable instead of actual history—but it’s based on actual events. I’m gonna give you a couple of examples of how the reality was changed in order to let me say, Yeah, it’s a fiction.

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<sup>1</sup> With permission from Denver Snuffer, the text of “The Missing Parable” will be included as an appendix to this talk.

The black fellow with the open guitar case in the parable, based on my recollection, was named James. He wasn't named John. I used the name John, but... And it was odd to me that here's this fellow, he was sitting on the ground with the open guitar case asking for donations. It was odd to me that a guy in his reduced condition would tell me his name was James because you would normally expect someone in that reduced, pitiable condition to say, "Jim" or, you know, some less formal name. But he said his name was James, as I recall. I'm gonna read you a couple of entries from my journal. This first one is from my journal on September 11, 2005:

It is Stake Conference this weekend. Yesterday, [Brother] Holmes and I went to the Priesthood Leadership Meeting at the Conference Center downtown. Traffic was so bad with all the people driving to the Conference Center that we parked three blocks away at the bank on 300 South and West Temple.

As we walked to the Conference Center more and more people joined us in walking. Stake Presidents, Bishops, Elders Quorum Presidents, High Councils, High Priest Group Leaders and others in leadership joined us on the sidewalks. All of them dressed in suits and ties and gathering to see President Monson, Elder Ballard, and a 70 named Davis. I was going to hear from the Lord. As we approached the Conference Center there was an elderly woman holding a sign saying she was homeless and begging for help. The Priesthood Leadership were all passing her by without noticing her.

As I got to her corner, with the traffic light making us stand beside her, I got out a dollar from my wallet and gave her the money. Her eyes had been downcast, but she looked up and thanked me. I told her she was more than welcome and blessed her.

After the conference, when returning to my car, there were others and to each of the beggars I gave a donation. The three block walk to and from (6 blocks total) only cost me \$11.00.

Last night as I slept my mind returned to the scene of this woman. I awoke. It seemed to me that as I gave her the money she transformed from the elderly beggar woman to mother Sarah, wife of Abraham. And instead of saying, "Thank you" this time she said, "Your sacrifice is accepted. You have passed the test." I responded this time (thinking of her standing on the corner I would pass, and the traffic being stopped so that I had to be beside her) and said: "But you made it so easy." She replied: "It was easy for the rest, as well. But they did not pass, nor show mercy."

She was a woman of extraordinary beauty. I thought it no wonder that Pharaoh had wanted her.

So about a week later, my journal has this entry for September 17, 2005:

Years ago, ...I left the US District Courthouse after a hearing before Judge Winder, a young man approached me asking for money. At that moment I had

none on me and so I truthfully told him I didn't have anything for him. He seemed out of place. Although his clothes seemed [to be] the part of the beggar his countenance seemed pure.

After turning him down I went to my truck where my wallet and some change were kept and I went back to find him. I couldn't see him anywhere however. So I got in my truck and drove about the blocks nearby the Federal Court. I couldn't find him anywhere.

In reflecting on it the comment of Paul in Hebrews came to mind: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for some have entertained angels unawares." I wondered if this young man was an angel. And if he had come to test me. And if I had failed.

This event was many years ago – perhaps 15 years ago. Though I could not find any reference to it in my journal I recall it as if it were yesterday. I could even describe the young man's appearance. I think there was something deeply meaningful about his contact with me.

Last night I awoke and realized there had [been] 'bookends' to the[se] events. The beggar at the Courthouse and the beggar at the Conference Center were mirrors. The one as I left, the other as I entered. The one where I failed, the other where I 'passed.' The one a young man, the other an old woman. The one a lingering guilt, the other a thrilling reward. These events are part of the overall sacred narrative of my life.

I begin to see how the latest event[s] fits into the picture of my life's curriculum. God is a patient, careful teacher. He prepares us with caution and with deliberation. When at last, we are prepared to see then we are permitted to see.

So you should be able to see from the journal entries that "The Missing Virtue" could be called a parable because of some slight differences, but the story of the events is based on actual personal history.

Now, I've covered this to deliver a very specific message. The parable explains why the Lord began interacting with the man. The Lord explained, "He is complete, having a wife whom he loves and who loves him. They are as one of us and their company would be well suited to mingle with our company."

I know there are those who hunger and thirst for the hope of having Heaven reach out to them. There are many who long to have the Lord minister to them. In the book *The Second Comforter: Conversing With the Lord Through the Veil*, I discuss the subject matter of the Lord in His role as Second Comforter. Before anything else, however, I should add that the search to regain the Lord's presence in your life begins first and foremost through a godly marriage. The Lord evaluates the candidate recommended by the angels and first determines that he's suitable to begin to work with, "...having a wife whom he loves and

who loves him.” Not only that, but the marriage in the parable is described as, “They are as one of us and their company would be well suited to mingle with our company.”

Love your spouse. As a husband, respect and uphold your wife, and make it your purpose to have her life benefited by your kindness to her. As a wife, love and help your husband in his struggles and challenges. Make it your purpose to ease his difficulties. Q’s comment about “the first 15- of a 30-year marriage was hell” is probably not just an appropriate description of what it’s like to be married to Rob, but probably an appropriate description of what it’s like to be married to any of us men. Let your wife’s long-suffering with your failings be rewarded by finally growing up, coming ‘round, and dealing as an honorable, loving, supporting spouse should be. And for the sisters/the women who are here: Don’t give up hope. As parents, give your children the benefit and blessing of loving parents. Provide them with the security of a happy, supporting, and committed marriage to shape their childhood experiences.

If you want to be welcomed back into the Lord’s presence, first and foremost, make your spouse love and look forward to your presence. Now, I’m gonna read you something I footnoted at that point in this transcript. I wasn’t gonna read this, but I think I should.

Consider that it was the marriages of the Lamanites that persuaded the Lord to spare them from destruction, while the Nephite corruption of marriage justified Jacob's condemnation of his people. “Wherefore, because of this observance in keeping the commandment, the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them, and one day they shall become a blessed people. Behold, their husbands love their wives, and their wives love their husbands, and their husbands and their wives love their children; and their unbelief and their hatred towards you is because of...iniquity of their fathers. Wherefore, how much better are you than they in the sight of your great Creator?” (Jacob 2:11 RE).

Jacob’s posing the question to the audience, “Why do you think you’re better than them? In addition to all of your compromise of the virtues that you were taught to obey, you don’t have good marriages, but the Lamanites do. And as a consequence of that, the Lord is going to preserve them, and you are gonna lose your lease on the land.

More than anything else you can do in life, turn your marriage into something that transplants part of Heaven onto the fallen Earth.

Parables demonstrate a principle or idea. It isn’t possible to cover everything in a single story. Accordingly, the tenth parable is the story of one side of a two-sided coin. Before a lesson about marriage can be complete, it needs to represent other aspects of the marriage relationship. My wife will speak next, and following her talk, we will speak together to conclude this afternoon’s agenda.

So, you’re up!

## APPENDIX

### **The Missing Virtue**

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Angels came to the Lord and reported there was a young man who sought to do good, who loved his wife and treated her with great affection. Not only that, when the man and his wife spoke, they shared such joy and kindness, such light and truth between them the angels were coming to listen in to their daily discourse.

The Lord said He would come and see the man and his wife for Himself. So it was that the Lord came down and looked upon the young man and his wife. He found them together, preparing a meal for their children, joking about the events of the day. Their conversation was witty, filled with mirth and insight and great love was shared between them.

The Lord then considered the young man carefully. He spoke to the angels and said: “We will present this matter at the council, and you will receive word.”

The Lord returned from where He came, and presented the matter to the council to consider. The Lord said, “I have considered the case of this young man, and have found his intent and desires to be perfect. He has labored long to gain light and has collected great light. However, he is lacking in one great virtue and it will be necessary for us to intervene if the young man is to be prepared to become one with us.

“He is complete, having a wife whom he loves and who loves him. They are as one of us and their company would be well suited to mingle with our company.”

Because of the Lord’s recommendation, the council determined to intervene, to preserve the young man and his wife. The Lord was to do all He saw fit to cause the preservation of this man and woman.

So it was that the Lord called His servant and instructed him what he should do.

Thereupon the events unfolded in the life of the young man as follows:

One day as the young man was leaving a courthouse in Salt Lake City, he was approached by a very young beggar. The beggar asked for money so that he might buy food.

The young man said he had no money with him, which was true. However the young man did have money in his car which he did not offer to give. As he walked away, the young man thought upon the beggar and was troubled that he gave nothing to him. The poor man seemed to be honest, even pure, though his clothing appeared tattered and worn. The contrast between the purity of the young beggar’s face and the apparent decay of his clothing seemed odd. The young man determined he would return from his car and give to the beggar. When he returned the beggar was gone. Though the young man searched the area—then the block—then drove about for blocks searching—the beggar could not be found. The young man returned to his office.

That evening as the young man was thinking of the beggar he recalled the beggar's face. He wondered if he was able to satisfy his need.

For many months the young man would think of the beggar. He found himself reflecting on the petition for aid and how he refused. He regretted not bringing the beggar with him to his car and thought it was wrong to refuse one in need.

Some years later the young man taught a lesson from the Book of Mormon in which the sermon of King Benjamin was discussed. As teacher he asked, "How seriously should we take King Benjamin's instruction to give relief to the beggars?"

The class responded with comments that beggars should not be encouraged. "Most will use the money you give them to buy alcohol," said one. "They are violating the law," said another. The class thought the words of King Benjamin may have worked in a primitive society but in modern societies the government takes care of welfare needs. People could not be expected to tolerate beggars in their communities and certainly not make them welcome by almsgiving. The young man thought the class was harsh and wondered out loud whether they were wrong. One of the class jeered, "You are a witless liberal!"

The young man pondered on the lesson and remembered the young face of the beggar outside the courthouse years before. He grew in the conviction that King Benjamin was not talking to another people in another time but was telling us what we ought to do with the unfortunate among us. But he did nothing with this reflection.

It was some years later when the man, no longer young, taught a lesson on the Book of Hebrews. As he taught he came across Paul's admonition to not be forgetful to entertain strangers, because sometimes strangers were really unrecognized angels. The man asked the class, "How seriously should we take the suggestion that sometimes angels come among us in disguise?"

The class responded with comments that such things were really allegory. "Good people, or children, are what is meant," said one. "Angels do not come and walk about the streets! The idea is preposterous," said another. The class thought the words were written to a primitive, even superstitious society, but modern societies cannot expect angels to be on the loose. But the man thought the class was faithless, and wondered out loud whether they were wrong. One of the class jeered: "You are a gullible simpleton!"

The man pondered on the lesson and remembered again the face of the very young beggar outside the courthouse many years before. He grew in the conviction that Paul knew what he was talking about, and that angels visited all peoples in all times, even when they were faithless. He wondered if the beggar with the innocent face had been an angel after all. The man believed this had been an angel. He determined to never permit a beggar to put up a petition for help to him without responding to give aid.

So it was that for years the man took deliberate effort to give aid to those who begged. Oftentimes, as he went into the Temple in Salt Lake, there were beggars on the sidewalk outside the gates. He never failed to give money to all those who were there. On many occasions those entering the Temple with him would reprove him for encouraging beggars



to remain outside the Temple gates. They thought this a foolish thing to do. He did not defend his acts, but thought to himself that a great crowd of beggars receiving relief outside the Temple gates would be a great tribute to the charity of those who entered in. "Perhaps no greater tribute could be made," he thought.

But in all this the man was still not right. He had gained some understanding, but still lacked the virtue he needed. Then it happened.

It was a rainy day, when the man was in a hurry. He parked on the side street of the office building he intended to enter. He rushed from his car around the corner of the block, and into the building. Some hours later he left and returned to his car. As he rounded the corner, however, this time he saw a beggar sitting across the street, beneath an awning.

The man was not going that way, and wondered if he ought to cross the street and give money to the beggar.

This beggar was not petitioning him. He was not in the way he was traveling. He would have to cross the street, and go out of his way to provide money to this beggar. He thought about how he had for some years given money to all who asked. But now there was a man who was not asking him for money. He reflected on what he should do.

He sat in his car, sheltered from the rain and pondered. He remembered the face of the beggar outside the courthouse many years before. He wondered if he failed to give help this day, in the rain, if he would not again regret for years the failure to do so. He determined to not make that choice again.

The man walked to the corner and waited in the rain for the light to change. When it did, he hurried across the street and went to the beggar, who sat with his eyes downcast.

The beggar had an open guitar case for people to drop money into but had no guitar. The case was nearly empty except for less than a half-dollar in change. He had a sign in his hand asking for help. The beggar was African-American, which was unusual in Salt Lake City. He was shabbily dressed, and somewhat wet despite the store awning under which he sat. As the man put money into the guitar case, he spoke to the beggar: "I suppose it is good we are having rain and we ought to be grateful; but I'd just as soon see the sun."

The beggar looked up and smiled. As the man turned to leave he noticed the traffic light had changed and did not hurry to leave. When the beggar saw he stood there, he spoke up and thanked the man for his kindness. Then the two of them, the beggar and the man, spoke with one another for some moments while the light changed, and changed again.

As the two conversed, the man reflected on how the beggar's countenance seemed to light up as they talked. He noticed, too, that as they spoke people seemed to now notice the beggar and to be dropping money into the guitar case. Before it was nearly empty, now there were many dollars being dropped into the case. The man wondered at the change.

The black beggar was from St. Louis and had only been in Salt Lake for two days. He hoped to return to St. Louis, but needed money for the trip. He had no wife and had never been

married. He did not play the guitar, but could play the harmonica. However his harmonica had been lost last month and he hadn't replaced it as yet. His name was John.

The conversation was not strained, and the man did not doubt that if John were his neighbor they would be great friends. He wished John could be a part of his life, but realized it could not happen.

The man parted from his friend, the beggar named John, when the light changed for the seventh time. Though they were never to meet again, they would remain friends.

Friends change each other. This day John and the man had each changed. As he returned to his office he reflected on the difference in the money given to John from before his donation and after. He concluded, however, that it was not his donation which mattered. It was the notice he had given to the beggar. No one paid any attention to John sitting under the awning until he had stopped to talk with him. Then people could see the humanity of the beggar. Before John was just an object. But when a man dressed in suit stopped to talk to him, he transformed from an object on the sidewalk into a human.

He reflected, too, on how John had seemed more grateful for being spoken with, for friendly notice, than he had been for money. And it seemed to the man that he had gotten more from giving money to John than the money given away. He wondered if all along the money given away was not the best spent money in his lifetime. For he realized all those to whom he had given money were just as much to be loved as John.

A regional conference was held and an evening Priesthood Leadership meeting was set for the Conference Center in downtown Salt Lake City. The man came to the meeting, but it was crowded with traffic and he could not park near the Conference Center. He left his car in a lot blocks away and walked to the meeting. The sidewalks were crowded with many men, dressed in suits, walking in the same direction toward the meeting.

When he arrived at the corner of South Temple Street, a crowd waited for the light to change. The man moved along the eastern edge of the crowd till he came to the sidewalk on South Temple Street then skirted along the outside until he could approach the curb. As he emerged from the side of the crowd, the man nearly bumped into an elderly woman, standing on the curb, holding a sign asking for help. The old woman did not so much as lift up her face, but stared at the ground for her shame in begging. No one was giving her any aid from the great crowd of men wearing suits.

As was his practice, the man had money in his pocket to give to beggars. Since he had encountered but this one beggar, he gave to her more generously by reaching for her hand and putting money into it. At the kindness shown her, the old woman glanced up and said, "thank you so much." The man responded: "God bless you," and he meant it.

The crowd moved, and the man went with them into the great Conference Center. There were talks given by Church Authorities and all who came were suitably entertained. The speakers' faces were projected onto great screens on the walls on either side of the Conference Center, greatly magnified to heroic proportions. Overhead lighting dimmed, while spotlights shown on those who spoke, or prayed, or sang making them shimmer in

the artificial light. It was a wondrous visual spectacle designed to cause awe for the beholders. When the meeting ended, they all left as they had come. The man looked but did not see the elderly woman, nor any other beggar as he left that evening.

In the middle of the night, the man was awakened and summoned by the Spirit. He was taken by the Spirit back to the place where he had been earlier that day and stood now before the old beggar woman on a deserted street. As he stood before her, she transformed before his eyes, from an elderly beggar woman to a beautiful young personage whom he recognized as Sarah, wife of Abraham and Mother of all the righteous. When he saw who she was he wondered at what this all meant.

Sarah spoke to him and said; "you passed the test."

The man, thinking she spoke of his giving her some money, said, "It wasn't much of a Test." She responded, "But no one else had mercy." And as he thought about all those who had been beside him in the crowd, none of whom had even noticed her, he was taken by the Spirit back to his home and bed.

He awoke his wife and told her of what had happened. She inquired: "What test?" "I do not know," he replied. "What do you think it means?"

"I think it means you are quite full of yourself," she replied. They both chuckled and returned to sleep.

In the morning as he awoke, the Spirit commanded the man to write the account. As he sat down to write, the words were given to him. Where he intended to write about the events of the day before, instead it was given to him to write the following:

"I have been instructed from On High, and have been taught for years. Eighteen years ago I failed the test; today I have passed. I was confronted by two beggars:

"With the first, I was going out.

"With the second, I was coming in.

"The first was young, the second was old.

"The first was a man, the second a woman.

"The first was outside a courthouse, the second outside a church.

"To the first I did not have charity, but to the second I did.

"In the first I did not know the identity of the beggar; but in the second I knew her name.

"The first left me with a lingering guilt, which I have carried until the second left a sense of relief.

“God’s patience in bearing with me has given me eighteen years to learn the great lesson. It has all been punctuated as if by two great bookends in these visits by His angels, and God has been there all along.”

The man had learned the missing virtue.

Within days the Lord came to him and instructed him further. The Lord dressed him in white and gave him further light and knowledge to prepare him. When he had been fully prepared by the Lord, he was summoned into the Heavenly Council, where he heard unspeakable things. Circles within circles were assembled, the Father being in the center of it all, and great rejoicing took place. The words of Psalms 2: 7 were spoken unto him.

He met the hosts of heaven, and they were as a family unto him. He returned to his wife and made all things known to her and they rejoiced together at the things they were promised, and waited upon the Lord for their time to come, when they might leave this earth and join the choir above and be One with them. But the world did not know them.

Now this happened because the Lord determined to preserve the young man and his wife.

Whatever the Lord takes in His mind to do, He will do; for the Lord is God.