

M. T. Lamb—Author of The Golden Bible—Resurrected!

If you believe in Divine intervention, you might want to classify what happened as a miracle. It happened this way:

I have been fascinated both with Rev. Martin Thomas Lamb and his work, *The Golden Bible*. Those of you who have received this newsletter for some time know that I have restored that book to print. It was written by Rev. Lamb while he was assistant pastor of First Baptist Church in Salt Lake City. Lamb published it at the request of the Governor of Utah and other prominent citizens in 1887, when Lamb was nearing his fiftieth birthday.

I first read a poor photocopy of the book nearly 20 years ago, a few years after I was saved out of Mormonism. It had a dramatic impact upon me then, and has influenced my own writings, particularly my book, *Have You Witnessed to a Mormon Lately?*

After I brought *The Golden Bible* back into print, I began to search for information about Martin Lamb. I think the reason for my intense interest stemmed from a few sentences he penned in the introduction to his book. He wrote:

The preparation and delivery of the following lectures was undertaken with great diffidence and hesitation. Among those consulted only one person favored it. The majority of [my] own people were not present at the

delivery of the first lecture. They had heard so much upon the various peculiarities of the Mormon Church that



Rev. Martin Thomas Lamb

the subject had become nauseous, and the Mormons themselves had become so used to the sallies of their opponents that they took it as a matter of course and only smiled when a new announcement was made.

Man Oh Man, how I identified with Martin—how I *still* identify with him. How clearly I remember the beginnings of my own ministry twenty years ago in Idaho Falls, Idaho. We pioneered a church starting with about fifteen people. I was

Spencer—Decker Summer Tour

I thought I had done my last tour with Ed Decker two years ago. His health was bad and we encountered more than usual opposition to our seminars in Idaho and Utah. I remember calling Margaretta from Pocatello just before one meeting. She is a registered nurse. I said, “Ed is as red as a beet and I’m very concerned about him. What do you think I should do?” She said, “Well, if he passes out, call 911!”

He didn’t pass out and the meeting was a success. It was, as I recall, the last one in the series.

A lot can happen in two years. So now he tells me he is ready to go again. This time we will start in Boise and wind up in the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming, where I was born and raised. I like to

(Cont. on back page)

Please remember *Through the Maze* this summer, when support traditionally plummets!

Factoid:

We are receiving more than 10 thousand “hits” every month on our web site, mazeministry.com

there nine years and left a healthy church in capable hands (we even helped start nine or ten other churches). However, about a year after we began our work, I became determined to do a seminar in Idaho Falls which directly challenged Mormonism.

I was more fortunate than Martin, at least *some* of my people attended my lectures. But most of our parishioners were not enthusiastic about the Mormon phase of my work. Many asked, why I would want to stir up the community with controversy when we had before us the work of building a church. Of course, the very obvious answer to that question is that if one attempts to build a church in a predominantly Mormon community such as Idaho Falls, it is impossible to be honest and *not* confront Mormonism.

Will you allow me to elaborate on the last sentence a little? To build a church means to convert the unsaved who dwell in your community. If those unsaved are part of an organization like Mormonism—which at its root is spiritually misaligned with the Gospel of Christ—it is dishonest not to identify your aim to convert them and to go about it with clarity and openness. Nevertheless, human weakness being what it is, reluctance to evangelism (which implies *confrontation*) is natural. I, myself, am not immune to the fear and doubt that comes with the confrontation. How much worse for Rev. Lamb in Salt Lake City in 1887, when Blood Atonement was still common.

But the amazing thing about Rev. Lamb's work in Utah was that *Mormons* came out to hear him! This point can't be made too often—we are not evangelizing each other, we are evangelizing the lost. When I go into a community and declare the Gospel in the face of Mormonism, most Christians do not support me and the Mormon Church openly opposes me. But a few—always a few—*Mormons* are touched. I have come to say it this way: “When we confront Mormons they win!” What I mean is that when we confront Mormonism a lot of heat is generated, but some light also is generated. And some Mormons step into the heat and are touched by the light.

Why am I so confident of the above

statement? It is born of experience. Ed Decker says publicly “Jim Spencer has led more Mormons to the Lord than anyone I know of.” That is because I have done hundreds of nights of seminars throughout Mormonism. *And in virtually every meeting at least one Mormon is touched.* We don't always know it at the time. Sometimes we find out about it months, or even years, later.

We certainly should not be surprised when Mormons are converted. The Bible teaches us that the Word of God never returns void:

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55: 10-11)

The Search for Martin

My friend Glenn Miles (You have read about him in *Through the Maze* in reference to his library ministry*) began researching references to Rev. Lamb. He discovered that Martin was born in 1838, 50 miles northwest of Detroit, Michigan. Martin's father (and numerous of his forebears) were ministers.

Martin attended a Baptist College (which later became Kalamazoo College). He was very poor and sustained himself by braiding buggy whips from deer skin. Later his brother, Isaac, who also braided whips, invented several automatic knitting machines and held international patents at an early age. (However, Isaac, himself, entered the ministry at the age of 29 and served a pastorate in Perry, Michigan for thirty years.)

The only other thing we knew about Martin was that he showed up as the assistant pastor in Salt Lake City in 1885, authored *The Golden Bible* in 1887, and died in (we thought) Trenton, New Jersey in 1912. We also discovered he wrote another version—a shorter version—of *The Golden Bible*.

The “Miraculous” Breakthrough

One very late night I thought I might try some of my Internet book search skills to see if I could find anything else written by M. T. Lamb. I could not. However, when I typed in his name as a general search term, I was directed to a genealogical web page which said, “Searching for information about and other researchers interested in the following LAMB and WIXOM Families. . .” There was Martin Thomas Lamb's name and the email address of the person seeking information about the Lambs and Wixoms. I quickly responded. A day later I received the following email message:

Jim,

It was a portrait of Martin and a companion portrait of his wife, Ermina, hanging in my grandmother's living room that sparked my interest in family history. I've been chasing Martin in one way or another since about 1962. Martin is my great, great grandfather.

As you can imagine, I was very excited by the email. Subsequently, Martin's great-great-granddaughter provided me with—as Paul Harvey would say—the rest of the story. After Martin left Utah he went to New Jersey where he founded Children's Home Society—an organization dedicated to placing orphans into foster homes. Up until that time most all orphans were warehoused in orphanages or almshouses.

How He Got to Utah

Martin's great, great granddaughter, Susan, provided me with the research she has done on Martin. Included are photographs of Martin and Ermina, and a timeline which allows me to trace his movements throughout his lifetime. While the information contains many blanks, we can follow him from his birth and education in Michigan through his early pastorates in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Indiana—right up until 1880, where we find him at his daughter, Elsie's, wedding in Hannibal, Missouri.

Three years later we find him in Montana, near the Idaho Border. Another daughter was born to Martin and Ermina in Glendale, Montana, a tiny settlement between Dillon and Butte. By 1886, after establish-

ing churches in Montana as well as Idaho Falls and Blackfoot, Idaho, we find him in Salt Lake City where *The Golden Bible* was published in 1887.

As I traced Martin's steps, a question began to form in my mind: "How did he wind up in Salt Lake City?" Upon reflection, it is quite natural that a Baptist missionary with this particular background would be interested in Mormonism. He pastored for twenty years in the vicinity of the Mormonism of Illinois. Nauvoo, Illinois, the last residence of Mormonism prior to its exodus under Brigham Young to the Salt Lake Valley, lies exactly halfway between Hannibal, Missouri and Clinton-Davenport, Iowa where Lamb served from 1869-1870. Winchester, Illinois, Lamb's last Midwest residence prior to his arrival in Montana, is about sixty miles from Nauvoo, as the crow flies.

Martin also was obviously acquainted with life on the Mississippi River. He pastored on its banks in Clinton, Iowa and lived within a quarter of a mile of the docks in Davenport. He attended his daughter's wedding a hundred miles downstream in Hannibal. Should he have made a trip downstream between the two cities, he would have passed within sight of what was left of the Nauvoo. He would have seen the ruins of the Nauvoo temple (which had been torched and later destroyed by a tornado). He certainly must have been well aware of the controversy, the doctrine, and the intrigue of Mormonism.

We do not know if Martin traveled west by train. He could have done so because the nation was linked by rail ten years earlier, when the Golden Spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah. On the other hand, his route seems to have taken him from Missouri to Montana, then south through Idaho, and finally into Salt Lake

That being the case, it is possible he could have caught a steam powered barge from St. Louis up the Missouri River to Helena, Montana, and then made his way south. In any case, I have a very strong sense that Martin was headed to Salt Lake to investigate Mormonism at its core. Whatever the reason, I thank God for his

However, by 1894 Martin was engaged in a new adventure—he moved to New Jersey and set about to reform the way orphans were cared for. He founded the New Jersey Children's Home Society (CHS) in Trenton and served as its superintendent for fifteen years. In 1912 he died. The Society's magazine, "Homes for the Homeless," dedicated its October, 1912 issue to Martin's memory. That issue describes the founding of CHS:

Mr. Lamb came to New Jersey in 1894 with a big idea; that the "Father of the fatherless had somewhere a good home in a Christian family for every normal child in the State. He found large numbers of children surrounded by vicious influences for the relief of whom nothing was being done—the almshouses to which dependent children were committed at the time did not provide suitable care and protection. He went up and down the State, telling whenever and wherever he had opportunity, the story of New Jersey's neglected children and their great possibilities. . . .

Martin, we are told, met with "a great deal of opposition" from the old establishment—"the orphanages of the State misunderstood his purpose and his methods and opposed his work. . ." The existing orphanages wanted to keep the children institutionalized, and not to "place them with New Jersey's best citizens." And they apparently worried that contributions would be diverted from their work to the CHS.

A Final "Miracle"

As I finished reading the material Martin's great, great granddaughter, Susan, had sent me, I wondered if it were possible that any reference to the New Jersey Children's Home Society might be found on the Internet. Initial searches pro-

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Free Book

A copy of this book may be downloaded free of charge from the Internet—a printed copy may be ordered for \$19.95



July 2, 1885

His Excellency Eli H. Murray, Governor of the Utah Territory, and twelve other prominent Utah citizens made a formal and unusual request of the Rev. M. T. Lamb—they asked him to have the text of his lectures on the Book of Mormon printed in book form.

Rev. Lamb was a Baptist minister in Salt Lake City (as well as in Idaho Falls and Blackfoot). In 1885 he presented a multi-part seminar on the Book of Mormon to overflow crowds of Latter-day Saints.

The seminar was so successful he gave it throughout the Territory—often in Mormon Church buildings. He said the crowds always treated him civilly, even though his message was clear—The Book of Mormon is not from God!

We are proud to bring this text back into print

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work because the result was *The Golden Bible*, which, as I have said many times, is the best answer to the claims of the Book of Mormon.

What Happened to Him

In Martin's own words we know that he toured the Utah Territory giving his lectures on Mormonism. We also know he published an shorter version of *The Golden Bible* in 1903. It was titled *The Mormons and Their Bible*. We have since learned that he may have written as many as seven books during his lifetime.



duced no results. But I kept trying. Finally, I found a reference that looked promising. Going to that reference, I came to the web page of the Children's Home Society of New Jersey.

This is an organization which provides adoption services for children from all over the world. It includes a crisis pregnancy center and provides foster care for infants and toddlers. It also provides "Protective Intensive Services" for cases of child abuse or neglect. It is the "lead agency administering all State of New Jersey child care funds in Ocean County." But could it be the same organization Martin established in 1894?

A link to "A Brief History" answered my question:

The Children's Home Society was founded in 1894 by a group of Presbyterian [sic] ministers committed to the idea that every child deserves a loving, permanent family. Our founders did not agree with the prevailing practice of warehousing children in almshouses, or with allowing children to live on the streets. Nor did they believe in loading children onto orphan trains and taking them west for placement with farm families, where they were often used as servants.

Despite the distances and the mud roads, the bicycle was the primary means of transportation for our founder, Reverend Martin T. Lamb and his staff. Rev. Lamb and his wife, Ermina, were themselves the first foster parents for CHS. In the early 1900s, so many children were coming to the agency that private foster homes couldn't be found fast enough.

More than one hundred years have passed since Martin founded the CHS, and more still since he stood in the pulpit of First Baptist in Salt Lake City to deliver the addresses which would become *The Golden Bible*. Apparently the CHS has forgotten entirely about his Mormon work, no mention of it adorns their web site. In fact, they seem to have forgotten he was Baptist, not a Presbyterian, ministers. I have yet to come across any other of

Martin's books. I have found a reference to a book entitled *The Making of a Man*, which I am guessing is about the influence of environment upon the life of a child.

I continue to promote *The Golden Bible* as the best deconstruction of the Book of Mormon ever written. We have put hundreds of hours into its republication. I have persuaded several Christian bookstores in the West to carry it. I have advertised it in the Idaho Falls Post Register (at a cost of \$238.00) I received two orders, one from a Baptist minister in Wyoming. Nevertheless, I just sent another \$238.00 to the newspaper to run the ad again. I believe it is "the right thing to do." I believe eventually I will be allowed to run the ad throughout the West and that hundreds of Latter-day Saints will gain access to the book. Of course in every ad I mention that the book can be downloaded free of charge from the Internet.

This work we do is important. It is a grind; we are grinding gold nuggets from the stubborn rock wall of Mormonism. I have been grinding for twenty years. I am now the age at which Martin Thomas Lamb took up his work with the orphans. I have no such plans. Who knows, maybe a hundred years from now, some young evangelist will come across *Beyond Mormonism*, and bring it back into print!

You, many of you, are grinding out the work with me. Through your financial support you have made it possible to bring *The Golden Bible* back to life. You are making it possible to distribute it. And you are making it possible for other—similar—projects to be undertaken and completed.

We are in this together. As my old friend, Dr. Roy Hicks, Sr., says, "We need each other." I sure need you. Thank you, thank you, for making my work possible.

*Glenn recently told me that *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder's Story* has been checked out 120 times in the past three or so years from the Boise Public Library system.

Spencer-Decker Summer Tour

get there every couple of years if I can. The Big Horn Basin is heavily Latter-day Saint. My great grandfather was one of the first businessmen to settle in the area. He founded the first bank in the town of Basin, the county seat of Big Horn County.

We also plan to be in Idaho Falls and Pocatello, and perhaps Northern Utah. Every city we visit will have a Mormon population of between 30% and 70%. Pray that many Latter-day Saints will be touched and that Christians will be built up and encouraged.

Something special happens when Ed and I get together on these tours. We encourage each other to new heights of boldness. The Bible tells us that when brothers cooperate their ministries are multiplied. Certainly God has given us a precious friendship and an effective joint ministry.

Ed is one of the most prophetic men I know. He has an innate sense of where God is going and he has keen insight into the workings of Mormonism. I am always amazed by the things which flow out of his spirit. He makes preaching look easy.

I also appreciate Ed's wonderful sense of humor. He coins phrases and creates word pictures that bless my soul. Two years ago on our tour, I remember when he was describing the difficulty of attempting to tell Mormons about the salvation which comes by faith *alone*. Being very honest with the audience he said, "It is hard to witness to people whose lawns look better than your own." He captured in that image the reluctance so many of us feel about trying to tell people who are so *outwardly* together that they need drastic change. That same sentiment was expressed by another friend who said witnessing to Mormons is somewhat like rowing a small boat alongside the Queen Mary and telling the passengers they need to abandon ship. What those passengers do not understand is that their large, painted, stately ship is leaking belowdecks. The little rowboat—the unassuming Cross of Christ—is a humble bridge over troubled water.

Pray for us. It will be fun, challenging, sometimes dangerous, and always humbling.