

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

OGDEN EIGHTEENTH WARD BISHOPRIC

SOUTH OGDEN STAKE

OGDEN, UTAH
November 2, 1944

Dear Friends:

Greetings to you splendid men and women in the Armed Services. It's my turn to write and I'm happy to do it. I'm proud to be acquainted with such folks as you.

I would like to have a little chat with you, as friend, neighbor, and bishop about some things common to both of us. First is my interest in your well being and then your testimony of the Gospel; your inner feelings and your faith-promoting experiences. What can we do to personally help you? Are you getting these letters? Do they help even a little? Do you receive your Improvement Era and do you enjoy it?

May I say to you who do not receive the Era, the Eighteenth Ward membership would like to send each of you a yearly subscription to this magazine, but Uncle Sam says, "Only upon your written request," so please write.

You realize that it is impossible for us to write each month to all 80 of you individually, so please accept these letters as though they were as personal as a tooth brush, for they bring our message of love. Our desire is to shoulder some of your burdens and be near to you and do the things you would like us to do.

The Lord has blessed us abundantly. "No," you say. I'm sure if it were only possible to put our troubles in a common heap and then see other fellows' worries and woes, we would be content to take our own and silently go our way. There is nothing haphazardly done by our Heavenly Father. There are reasons for all things, although, at times, it may be very hard to see it. The day will come when all will be understood. We need faith to carry us through this life and blessed is he who has even as much as a mustard seed, for he can move mountains.

Now, as a special favor to our ward members we would like a note or letter from each one of you to be read from the pulpit. It may be anything from a sermon to a mere sentence, but, please - some message from you. We are holding a special program dedicated to you military people. Your folks will be there and your friends too, and they'll be proud to hear from you. Your letter will be greatly appreciated by all. Please, may we have them before December 17th, 1944.

From the pen of J. Crystal comes the following bit of inspiration which I give to you as a closing thought:

"Take courage, saints, and faint not by the way,
Though storm-clouds thick and fast be hov'ring nigh;
The sun proclaims the glory of the day
Behind the clouds as in a cloudless sky.

The darkest hour is just before the dawn,
Yet who shall doubt the fast approaching morn?
Or when we see the snow-clad hedge or lawn,
Who dares to say that spring will ne'er return?

Let not the heart be sad at trials here,
But sense how e'en the Savior suffered ill;
He bore the cruel thorn, the galling spear
To glorify His Father's holy will."

May the blessings of our Heavenly Father be with you always, to protect and guide you and bring you safely home.

Sincerely,

J. Grant Sofgreen