

**Family History**  
**Tanasbourne Ward**  
**November 18, 2001**  
**by Mike Baird**

## **Introduction**

Malachi 3:5-6:

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Today I would like to share with you how I have come to not just understand intellectually the phrase

“turn... the heart of the children to their fathers”

But how it has become written in my heart such that I feel what this means.

I will try not to be emotional about it but I'll warn you I suspect I'll fail.

- I served a mission to Sweden 1976-1978
  - Excited – I'm 1/8 Norwegian
  - Languages very similar
- My Mother's Mother – my Grandma Allen was excited when I came home
  - Gave me a hug
  - Then gave me 2<sup>nd</sup> Great Grandmother - Anne Larsen's box (show)
    - Book - clearly had pedigree chart type information (show)
    - Lots of letters
    - But was in Norwegian!
- Anne Larsen born in 1844 in Ringeby, Oppland, Norway
  - A small farming community (about 3,000 people in 1801 census)
  - She moved to Kristianstad (Oslo) sometime around 1870
  - Had two children – boy (Martin) and girl (Margaretha)
  - In early 1890's she and her daughter joined the church
  - Sometime before she joined the church she left her common law husband (Oluf Teslie)
  - In 1894 Her and her daughter emigrated to Utah where she married my great, great Grandpa Allen
    - Her son remained in Norway
    - I have on my wall a piece of her trunk with her name on it

## BYU

- After my mission I went to BYU
  - While there I looked up the Ringebu parish records at the family history center
    - Go back to 1696
  - Looked up Logan temple records
  - Verified information in her book but really didn't get any further.
    - Her parents (my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandparents)
      - Born about 1812 -1815
    - One of her grandparents (my 4<sup>th</sup> great grandparents)
      - Born in the late 1780's to 1790's
    - Really didn't find anyone else to do work for
    - Difficulties in Gothic Script
    - Patronymics
- I graduated in 1982 and moved here to Oregon
  - Really didn't do much more with it
  - Guilty thoughts occasionally
  - Felt it was my responsibility for this line

## Moved upon by the Spirit

- Fast forward to about 1 year ago - November 2000
  - One day I felt an overwhelming feeling to pick up the family history on this line
    - The best way to describe how I felt was I was “moved upon by the spirit”
  - I did two things.
    - I went to the family history center
      - Ordered the films for Ringebu Parish
      - Checked Temple records to see what was done
      - Checked Ancestral file to see if anyone else had found information
      - Found no progress, in fact some erroneous information was there
        - Anne Larsen’s work was done for her vicariously even though I had the dates as to when she had done it herself!
    - I got on the internet
      - I’m very computer/internet literate
      - I looked up Ringebu
        - Found descriptions, pictures, faces
        - Found the Church from the 11<sup>th</sup> century
          - I’m sure this is where they were my ancestors were christened, married
          - Where they worshiped
        - It brought a place across the world from me alive.
      - In my searches on the internet I found out that Norway had digitized census for 1865 and 1801
        - Searchable on line
        - Critical – the 1801 Census sliced across my pedigree chart exactly at the spot where I was stopped.
          - My 2<sup>nd</sup> great Grandmother born 1844
          - My 3<sup>rd</sup> great Grandparents born 1812-1815
          - My 4<sup>th</sup> great Grandparents alive during the 1801 Census
      - Within a few days I was able to find the Anne’s 4 grandparents (my 4<sup>th</sup> great Grandparents) and thus push things back 1 generation
        - Census gave their age and relationships
        - One boy was 14 years old and living with his uncle
          - How would I have traced that back?
        - Parental relationships
          - 1<sup>st</sup> marriage etc.

- Using Census information I was able to push information back 1 generation in the films
  - My 4<sup>th</sup> great Grandparents
    - But not all of them
    - Certainly not any of the brothers and Sisters
  - Same problems
    - Records are getting worse to read
    - Gothic script
  
- By then it is December 2000.
  - I am seeing lots of grueling search through the films at the library trying to decipher the gothic script and handwriting of the Priests ahead of me
  - Again I was led by the spirit
    - I felt driven and kept searching on the internet
  - I found the University of Trondheim in Norway had a project that was digitizing some of the parish records
    - About 7 or 8 parishes were done
    - Ringebu was actually the parish in process when I found it!
    - I wrote to find out when would be available – They said soon
    - In mid-January 2001 the Ringebu parish records went digital on the internet
      - Birth, marriage, death records
      - Searchable on internet
  - Since then from my home I have pushed things back on the Pedigree chart
    - Starting with Anne Larsen who is my 2<sup>nd</sup> Great Grandmother as the 1<sup>st</sup> generation I have completely filled in up to the 4<sup>th</sup> generation beyond her.
    - 12 of 16 on her 5<sup>th</sup> generation
    - Back to 7<sup>th</sup> generation in spots – Mid 1600's
      - Far as I'll be able to go (records end)
  - Found 85 names (several hundred records) over a span of 3 weeks in January and early February.
  - By the end of March had found some 165 people in Anne Larsen's line

- During this time I again felt driven
  - I couldn't leave it alone
  - I would stay up late following track after track back in time
  - I have felt a burning inside me, knowing that this was what I was supposed to do
  - I feel that I have come to know these people
    - At times they have felt so close
    - I could envision their farms
    - I could envision their lives
    - I have rejoiced with them when I found marriages or the birth of children
    - I had moments where I have ached and wept with them over children who died as infants or as small children
      - Christopher Christensen and Aase Siversdr
        - Married in 1755
        - 9 children
          - Christen (d)
          - Christen (d)
          - Kari
          - Christen
          - Mari (d)
          - Syver
          - Anne
          - Mari
          - Hans
- I took the names to the Family History center in April
  - Ran through Temple ready
    - Only a handful had their work done.
- Early in May our ward youth arranged a temple baptism
  - I had the privilege of baptizing my son and daughter along with other youth in the ward for these names
  - We confirmed them.
- My Mother who is in the Hazeldale ward then took on the co-ordinating job
  - Farmed out the names through out our family for initiatory work and endowments
  - I gave my special family Christopher Christensen and Aase Siversdr to my newly wed daughter Jennifer & Darin her husband to do their work
  - We are nearly there and don't have too many more to do.
  - I anticipate sometime after the first of the year (2002) we will have all the individual work done and we will then be doing sealings of couples and families
    - I am looking forward to it immensely

- I often try to imagine what these people must feel and what the scene might be like where they are
- As we know those who die without receiving the ordinances of the gospel are sent to the Spirit Prison.
  - There they are taught the gospel

D&C 138:29-30:

29 And as I wondered, my eyes were opened, and my understanding quickened, and I perceived that the Lord went not in person among the wicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them;

30 But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men.

D&C 138:57

57 I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead.

- Who leads the missionaries in the Spirit World?
  - The Savior
- Who are the missionaries in the spirit world?
  - The prophet Joseph, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff – they are there along with others we may have known.
- We are needed here
  - “Even the Prophet Joseph cannot baptize there”
  - “They cannot lay their hands on their heads to confer the Holy Ghost”
  - This can only be done by us, the living
  - I remember as a missionary the great joy to baptize converts and confer the Gift of the Holy Ghost.
- Knowing all this I try to imagine the scene beyond the veil as my family and I are doing the work of our kindred dead
  - I look forward to the day when I get to meet these my ancestors

What does it mean and why am I sharing this with you?

- I know I was moved upon by the Spirit
  - Nobody could ever convince me that the timing of all this was co-incidental
    - I was moved upon when the time was right, when the information was available
  - I felt and listened to the Spirit
  - As I have listened and followed the promptings I received the doors have been opened
  - I feel that the important thing I did was to be in a position to listen to the spirit
  - I feel I am an instrument – that this was a chosen work for me to do
    - I know the language and have the computer skills
  - I feel these people have been waiting
    - Sometimes when I found certain individuals I had a overwhelming feeling that they were rejoicing that they were found and the time would be soon for them to receive the blessings
  - I feel it was time for them to receive the blessings
  - My heart has truly been turned to my fathers
    - I don't just intellectually understand Malachi 3:5-6, I *feel* it.
- I am still working on filling in the holes
  - I just recently found two more families with their children
  - Two more families to receive the blessings of the gospel
  - I know there are others for me to find
- My hope is by sharing this with you that you will be inspired to do what you can do.
  - He will open doors
  - I have a hard time articulating the joy that doing this work for my kindred dead this past year has brought me
  - I promise as you ponder and pray you will know what you can do
    - It certainly will mean attending the temple
      - If you are not worthy – get worthy
    - It may be finding you ancestors
    - Whatever it is if you seek it you will find it

Close