

## **LIFE STORY OF ELIHU KISOR BALL**

### **John Tunnell Ball - Father**

### **Margaret Honaker - Mother**

Elihu Kisor Ball a convert to the Church, was ordained a patriarch in the Church in February 16, 1896 and served in that position until his death on March 27, 1938. The following are faith-promoting incidents he related in his later years to his youngest daughter, Pearl.

When I was a boy of about fifteen years of age, two Mormon elders came in our vicinity preaching the gospel. This was about 1870. I then lived in Russel County, Virginia, with my father and mother. The names of these elders were T. B. Lewis and C.H. Riggs. There were two of my brothers that met up with them, William and Martin. They embraced the gospel and were baptized. After they joined the Church they invited the elders to my father's house. The people in that vicinity were very bitter towards the Mormons. The country was full of misrepresentations concerning the Latter-Day Saints.

When the elders came to my father's house, my mother told my brothers that she wouldn't cook for them. My brothers asked the elders to sit out on the porch. When they sat down they began to sing a song entitled "We Are the True Born Sons of Zion." When my mother heard the song she couldn't keep from shedding tears. She then went ahead and prepared a meal and invited them to eat. My father had a large orchard of sugar maple trees and also a school house on his farm. The elders got the privilege of preaching at the school house the next day. The news was spread around of the hour when the meeting would start and a large crowd gathered to hear the elders preach--so many that the school house would not accomodate them all, so they held the meeting under the maple trees. T.B. Lewis was a large man weighing something like two hundred and forty pounds. He delivered the first sermon. He took for his text a passage in the old Bible which reads something like this: "If the Lord be God, follow Him and if Bad be God follow him."

Two hundred and fifty prophets of Baal challenged Elijah to prove who the true God was. Elijah told them to build an alter and put their sacrifice on it and pour water on it. The prophets of Baal were not to pour water on theirs, but were to call down their God to send fire to burn their offering. They did this but their God didn't hear them. Then Elijah poured water all over his sacrifice and around the alter and called down help from his God and his God answered with a fire that burned the sacrifice and licked up the water. T.B. Lewis said that when Christ had a church on the earth He had prophets and apostles. He preached about two hours. My father and mother were converted and baptized in Virginia and later they both came to Manassa, Colorado. They later went from there to Cheney, Kansas, where they both passed to the other shore and their remains were buried in Kansas.

The morning I left my father's house there were forty-two of my relatives that came to say goodbye. Some of my brothers and sisters stopped all night with my father and mother. The next morning at the breakfast table, which was a long one, I began thinking that that would be the last

time I would meet up with my relatives, especially my father and mother. I filled up so full that I couldn't eat, so I got up and left the table. Then the rest of them got up from the table and none of them ate their breakfast while I was there. Balford Owens (a nephew) was also there to go with me to Salt Lake. We started about 10:00 a.m. and he said to me after we started, "Let us look back." I said, "No, I don't want to look back or turn back." A passage of scripture came to my mind where it reads something like this: "Whomsoever puts his shoulder to the plow, do not look back." I felt like my nephew would turn back before we got to Salt Lake. After we started we traveled some thirty miles on horseback to a town named Grundy. From there we walked to Pikesville, Kentucky. At this place we bought a little flat boat and sailed down Big Grundy River to Louis. Here we landed and went over into West Virginia and spent a few days with some of my relatives. While there, my nephew got homesick and wanted me to return to Virginia with him. He even cried like a child and said he felt like he would never again see any of his folks. When he found out I would not go with him he wanted me to go as far as Louis and help him get his ticket to go on the steamboat to Pikesville, Kentucky. I did so and saw him board the boat, which was the last I saw of him.

On May 5 I left West Virginia and got on a steamboat at Louisa and sailed down the Big Sandy River to Cincinnati and there I took the train to Salt Lake. I arrived in the city May 13, 1878. I stopped overnight at a hotel named the White House. The next morning I made inquiry if they knew where my brother, William L. Ball, lived. I was told that he lived four blocks south and five blocks east of the hotel. After finding his place (I found he lived in a big two-story house), I knocked on the door and his mother-in-law answered it. I asked her if William L. Ball lived there and she said "Yes, but he is not in. Are you his brother that he is expecting?" I told her yes, but not to tell him I was there. I wanted to see if he recognised me. She said she would go and call him. I set my valise behind the door so he wouldn't see it. He came and spoke to me politely and seated himself and we began talking and I could see he didn't know me. We talked on for awhile and I said, "William, I see you don't know me." He said, "Is that you, Elihu? I'll swan, what made you fool me." He told me then to make his house my home.

After stopping at the city awhile I fell in with jack-leg Mormons, or wolves in sheep's clothing. They showed me the dark side of everything, would curse and swear and take the name of the Lord in vain. This made me doubtful whether the Mormons had the true doctrine of Christ. I attended several meetings, one in the Second Ward Sunday School. Bishop Samuel Peterson was the speaker. He spoke in regard to the sectarian preachers and the gentile world. He very often in his remarks made mention of the gentiles. I thought he was giving me a pretty close rub and I was the only gentile in the house, so I got up and left the meeting. He noticed me going out and sent an apology to me by my brother saying he did not notice me in the house and was not throwing his remarks at me. This reconciled me in my feelings. I then was persuaded to attend a priesthood meeting by my brother. Bishop Hunter was the speaker. He said he hoped he was talking to all Latter-Day-Saints, or that all were Latter-Day-Saints under the sound of his voice.

This brought a passage of scripture to my mind where there was a marriage given to a king's son. When the king came in to see the guests he saw a man which did not have on a wedding garment. I then and there set a resolution that I would join the Church, that I would no longer look at the actions of men, that their actions had nothing to do with the principles of the Church. August 11, 1878 I was baptized by my brother William. I was confirmed the same day by Bishop

Peterson. I was ordained a deacon sometime in August 1878. I remained in the City until November 7, 1878, then I went to Ft. Herriman, 20 miles south of the City. I taught a five month's school. I commenced teaching November 11, 1878, then returned to the City in the latter part of March 1879. Left the City August 15, 1879 for Southern Utah, about 350 miles south of Salt Lake. I arrived in Springdale, Utah, August 18, 1879.

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While in Springdale, I stopped several months with E.F. Green. I was ordained an elder September 26, 1879 by E.F. Green. Sometime in the latter part of September I took the chills and fever. I had a chill every other day until October 21st. At this time I called for the elders to administer to me. I had been in bed all day with a burning hot fever. After I had been administered to the elders left and the family went to their dinner in an adjoining room and left me alone, as I could not eat anything and had not eaten anything that day. While left to myself I was meditating and thinking over the past. Thinking that I was far away from home, some twenty-five hundred miles and among strangers, and without any money. I couldn't work to earn anything. While I was in deep meditation I heard a voice say, "You will be healed from this very hour." Almost as quick as lightning I felt a shock pass through my body. It penetrated my system from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. After the shock I felt as well as I ever had in my life, and the fever left me. I could not help shedding tears of joy and praise the Lord to myself, when all at once Brother Green came running in the room and asked me what I wanted. I told him I did not want anything. He said he heard a voice calling him and he supposed it was me. I told him I had not spoken. I then related the circumstances to him and told him I felt as well as I ever had in my life. I then got out of bed and went to the dining room and ate a hearty meal.

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In the spring of 1880 I left Springdale for Salt Lake. I remained in the City and its surroundings until October 25, 1880. I met one Minta Ellen Kirtland soon after that and we were married in Manassa on September 4, 1881 by Bishop William Ball.

On November 23, 1896 we moved to McCarroll's ranch, one mile northeast of Conejos, Colorado. On the morning of November 14, 1897 we moved to a ranch which we purchased from the State about three miles south of LaJara. I presided over the Mountain View Branch until 1896. At this time the branch was divided. Two branches were made out of the one and I was requested by Bishop Samuel Jackson to give the part where I lived a new name. The name Bountiful suggested itself to me. This name I put before the brothers and sisters for their approval or rejection. It was unanimously agreed by all present to call the new branch Bountiful. Afterwards we selected a new townsite which we also called Bountiful. The presidency of the stake, Albert R. Smith, etc., John Mayfield and myself made the selection of the new townsite.

Shortly after this I had a dream. I dreamed that Apostle John Henry Smith, myself and others were sitting on a stage. When we were seated there, we saw the devil appear in the doorway. He began to peer forward into the door and looked at us. Apostle Smith rebuked him and as he did so the devil glanced at a big double window that was on the other side of the room. We went

over to the window and went through it. I said to Apostle Smith, "Isn't it strange that the devil can go through a window without breaking it?" He said, "It isn't very strange because the devil hasn't any body and therefore doesn't break glass."

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John Mayfield, one of our neighbors, lost his mind. He was very jealous of two other men, William Hunnicutt and Billy Dotson because he imagined they paid attention to his wife. One day he was sitting in the house and as he looked out of the window he saw a donkey and said, "There is Will Hunnicutt or Billy Dotson." Someone who was in the room with him looked out of the window and saw only the donkey and said, "No, it isn't either one." John repeated, "Yes it is, just look at their ears." Later John came to my house and brought some evil spirits with him. When he left some of the spirits stayed in my house and I rebuked them to go follow their master, which they did.

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As presiding elder in the Bountiful Branch, I called upon Brother Aaron S. Hawkins to assist me in teaching the families of Bountiful. Many times we visited a family and a man by the name of Henry H. Arthur. Each time we brought up the subject of tithing he would say he believed in tithing but he couldn't pay any because they sent the money to Salt Lake where the authorities and their wives spent it. We told him there was a sugar factory in Utah that belonged to the Church and that enough money was made there to keep the men who were laboring among the people. He said if they would not send the money to Salt Lake, but would keep it in the stake, he would pay as much money as anyone. I then asked him if he paid fast offerings.

He said, "No, I haven't paid any fast offerings." On our way back we felt quite blue because our teachings didn't have any effect on him. It was just like pouring water on a duck's back. I felt impressed to say to Brother Hawkins that the Lord could take the tithing from him and even more than the tithing by causing his stock to die. While he was putting in his crop of grain his stock began to die. Each horse died with a different disease, and some of his cows died also. That left him without any horses to farm with. We felt sorry for him, so each one of us loaned him a horse to finish putting in his crop. Our horses didn't get sick and die and were returned to us in the fall, as well as when we loaned them to him. In the fall of the year he told me he had lost more than \$566.00 worth of horses and cows. You can see that was more than his tithing would have been.

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One year when I lived at Bountiful, I sowed a lot of grain and it locked fairly well. There was not any fences from Bountiful to the foothills, west. There was a band of horses running on the foothills. One day when I was down in the field working, there came up a great hail storm. It commenced on the foothills west of where I was farming and was coming towards my ranch, where I had my crop. It made a terrible noise and the band of horses came running towards my place. I knelt down and prayed that the hail storm might divide and not come and ruin my crop.

The storm did divide, part of it going to LaJara and part of it to Romeo, where it did great damage.

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My father and mother came out to Manassa from Virginia. After they had lived there awhile they went to Cheney, Kansas, where they both died. Shortly after their death I had a dream that my mother came to me, dressed in white and said, "Elihu, the next time you go to the House of the Lord, I will be 87 years old and your father will be 93." The next morning I told my wife and eldest daughter about the dream. I said I didn't know what she wanted unless she wanted me to do the work for them in the temple. I knew their ages and counted up and said it would be five years from that time until my mother would be 87 and my father 93. I thought no more of the dream after that time, until one Sunday I attended a meeting in the stake house in Manassa. President Albert R. Smith called me to the stand and said he wanted to talk to me. He said, "Brother Ball, I want you to go to conference which is to be held in a short time in Salt Lake City and represent the High Council of the stake." I said to him, "Brother Smith, I don't know whether or not I can get the money to go." He said, "I want you to take your wife with you. You might want to do some work in the temple while you are gone."

When I went back home I told my wife that President Smith wanted us to go to Salt Lake to conference and I didn't know if I could get the money. She said, "Well, we'll go." I said I would go down to LaJara and see if I could borrow the money at the bank. On the way to LaJara I thought of the dream I had had where my mother appeared to me in white and I counted up and found it had just been five years since the time of my dream. I went to the bank and asked them if I could borrow a certain amount of money and they said, "Yes, you can get all you want." When I got home I asked my wife if she remembered the dream I had had about my mother five years ago and she said, "Yes, I thought of it while you were gone to LaJara." I then told Brother Smith we could go. President Smith then told me he wanted us to receive our second anointings while we were in the temple.

We went to Salt Lake and attended the conference of 1904. We went to the temple and did the work for my father and mother and got our own blessings. When we returned home, the next Sunday we attended meeting in Manassa and President Smith called upon us to preach and we reported our labors while at conference and in the temple. My wife talked for 30 minutes and Bob Hanie said it was the best sermon he had ever heard a woman preach. When I got up to talk I was feeling good and I told about the dream I had had about my mother and that it was just five years after the dream that President Smith called us to go to Salt Lake. President Smith then got up and said he didn't know anything about the dream but that he had felt impressed to call upon me to go.

On February 16, 1896 I was ordained a patriarch. Up until this date, July 26, 1934, I have given 1,125 patriarchal blessings. I have had many experiences while giving blessings.

While giving a blessing to William Christensen, son of Martin Christensen, in the year of 1899, I was left to myself and the spirit withdrew from me, and it was just like a white sheet of paper that was dropped before my eyes and I couldn't utter another word. I took my hands off from his

head and said I didn't know what was wrong. "There is something the matter with either you or I. I can't go ahead with the blessing." I suggested that we then kneel down and pray. His brother Erastus was acting as scribe. I asked him to lead in prayer. After we got up I felt at liberty to continue with the blessing. I laid my hands upon his head and the blessing came free. When I got through I said, "There was something the matter with either you or I, I don't know which." He said, "It was with me. Just as you were where you couldn't go any further I was thinking and wondering if you were guided by the spirit of the Lord or if you were just making up a little recitation of your own. That is the greatest testimony I have ever received." When his brother Erastus was delivering a sermon afterwards he told of the circumstances of the patriarch giving his brother a blessing and that he couldn't continue giving the blessing until we knelt down and prayed, and what surprised him more than anything else was that the patriarch commenced in the middle of the sentence where he had left off and finished giving the blessing.

(The following story was told by Elihu's daughter Pearl).

I was a scribe when Father was giving a patriarchal blessing. A husband and wife were receiving theirs together. Father gave the man his blessing first. He promised the man he would become a father in Israel. I wondered if my father had slipped up on this blessing because I knew that the wife had had an operation making it impossible to have children. When Father gave the wife her blessing, he didn't promise her she would have children. Within a year this couple had divorced. Later the man remarried and had a family by this second wife. This was a testimony to me that my father was inspired when he gave patriarchal blessings.

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In the year of 1894 Andy and George Darty and myself worked for Dan Newcomb. George Darty married my niece. Andy had a premonition that he wouldn't live long. We were working on top of a large barn and he was afraid he would fall off and kill himself. He was bitter against the Mormons. One Sunday morning I told George and Andy that I was going to Manassa to meeting and Andy said, "I'll go with you." There was a Mormon girl by the name of Laurie Daniels that was working for Newcoms at the same time. She asked if she could go along also. We told her yes and a little later George asked if he could go along and we told him yes. We hitched some horses up to a double rig. They were none too gentle. When we got ready to start Mrs. Newcomb said to Andy, who was a good shot, to take his gun along and their old dog--who was no good--to the brushland and shoot him.

We started with George and I in the front seat and Andy and Laurie in the back. Andy took his Winchester with him and then called the old dog. On the way Andy said "Laurie, when I die I am going to dog heaven." When he said this, cold chills ran down my back. We went on a little farther and Andy said, "When I die I am going to be bishop of dog heaven." Again, cold chills ran down my back. When we got down to the brushland Andy said, "Here is the place to kill the dog." He got out of the buggy and the dog was about 25 yards away. He shot but missed the dog. The dog ran a little way and Andy shot again and missed, and then the dog went on farther and he shot the third time but only glazed the top of the dog's back. The dog ran too far so he came back to the buggy and started to shove the gun under the back seat. The lock caught on the back ingate, causing the gun to go off and shoot him an inch below the left nipple. When I

unbuttoned his overcoat and shirt I saw the bullet had gone in about one inch below the left nipple and came out at his back right at the cross of his suspenders. Andy only spoke three or four words after he was shot. He said twice, "Oh, what will my poor mother say when she hears of this? It's dark, It's dark, it's dark." We put him in the buggy and drove back to Ed Newcombs, which was nearer than Dan Newcombs. We sent a runner for the doctor, but Andy was dead before the doctor arrived. I felt impressed this was a judgment sent on Andy because of the remarks he made about being bishop and going to dog heaven when he died.

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When I was working at Platora curring cord wood for the mining camp, so I could support my family, I went to the post office one day and a letter was handed to me and I immediately felt by the spirit that something was wrong at home, that some of them were sick. I knew just as well before I opened the letter as I did when I read it that some of them were sick. It said my oldest daughter, Alta, was sick with pneumonia. My wife didn't say she would send for me, but I felt impressed that she would do so. Brother Leroy Martin was hauling the posts I was cutting, and I told him to keep a sharp look out for a gray horse and buggy, that someone was coming for me. Brother Martin and myself were doing our own cooking and the buggy didn't appear in the daylight, but as soon as nightfall came and we were seated at the supper table, I heard the horse and buggy coming. I said to Brother Martin, "There they are now." Carson Kidd was driving the horse and he said that Alta was very low and my wife wanted me to come home and he would stay and work in my place. There was no moon and it was very dark and a fearful snow storm had set in. I would have to go through a large woodland, and I didn't think I could find my way so I prepared to start by daybreak the next morning. There had fallen during the night about one foot of snow on top of the old. I had faith enough to believe that if I could get home before Alta died and I could administer to her, her life would be spared. I drove in great haste, and when I got home I found her very bad indeed. I administered to her and she seemed to be relieved at once and was speedily restored to health and strength. I have always believed in following the impressions of the spirit, and I have always believed in dreams.

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While at Platora working, one evening just before supper, Brother Martin came in and told me that he had lost \$10 somewhere on the streets of Platora, and he asked me to kneel down and pray that whoever found the money might be led to return the same to him. My first thought was that that was a little thing to pray about, but when I looked at Brother Martin (he was a one-armed man and had a large family to support), my heart went out in sympathy to him. He asked me to lead in prayer and I did. I asked the Lord that whoever found the \$10 would be led to make inquiry who had lost the money, and that it would be returned to Brother Martin. When we got up from prayer we went ahead to get our supper. Soon a knock came at our door, and when I opened it a man was standing there and he asked me if either one of us had lost any money. I told him yes, that Brother Martin had lost ten dollars. He then said, "Here it is. I picked it up on the street." This man's name was John Langston, and he was rather a wicked man, but he was honest.

One time I had decided to go into the mountains and take two teams to get a couple of loads of wood, and I was going to take my son James, just then in his teens, to drive one team for me. The

night before I started I dreamed the team that James was to drive ran away and the neck yoke came loose from the tongue of the wagon, and the wagon went down the hill so fast that the tongue ran under a stump and I had to hitch my team on the back of the other wagon to pull it out.

The next morning I was so impressed with the dream that I thought it was a warning not to take my boy with me for fear he would come to some harm. I hired a man to go with me instead of Jim. On the road to the mountains I stopped and told a man named Roy Burnhart about my dream and he said, "Ah, hell, that will never happen." After getting up on the mountain and starting back with a load of wood, the neck yoke of the wagon this other man was driving gave way and the team began to run and the wagon tongue ran under a large stump and we had to hook on to the rear of the wagon to pull it out, just as I had dreamed it.

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On another occasion I went up in the pinion hills to haul a load of wood all alone, and after driving up a rocky dugway on top of the hill where I loaded, I had an impression that something was going wrong with me or my team or wagon, but I couldn't figure out what it was. After I loaded and started back down the dugway the wagon wheel broke down. It completely broke the spokes and fellies out of the wheel. I went back to find the wagon tire which was 300 yards back. I back-tracked the wagon and found the tire. If I had heeded the impression I would have been saved from the break-down.

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My two sons, James and Fred, each had taken up a homestead near the Mesa Mountain in the year of 1916. Fred was camping at one of the cabins, and I was at the other. During the night there came up a heavy snowstorm, and the snow was drifting very badly. It was understood that Fred was to come over to my cabin early the next morning. I felt impressed that he would get lost among the timbers, as they were very dense, and he had to pass through the pinion and cedar groves. I thought that I had better go and try to find him. I went up in the timber quite away and called for him. He had started to the cabin where I was and had gotten lost and was away off in the timbers. He heard my voice and came towards it and saved any further trouble.

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While we were located in Mountain View, the people in the locality decided to build a school house. John Fee, Roy Burnhart, Sr., and myself were elected the directors of the school board. We let a contract to a man by the name of Baker to build a lumber school house for seven hundred dollars. The lumber was hauled on the location where the house was to be built, and Baker went to work building the same. He had put up the frame and the weather-boarding to the house and had put on a shingle roof and was building the flue. At this time Burnhart and I went to inspect his work. We hadn't been there previous to this time. When we got about 200 yards from the house where he was at work, I felt impressed that the flue would fall down. I said to Burnhart, "What if the chimney would fall down and kill the teacher or some of the pupils?" He said, "Oh hell, that will never happen? Baker has built too many houses not to brace the flue well

enough so it won't fall down." The chimney was just out of the roof of the house at this time. We hadn't gone 100 yards when we heard the crash and saw the dust rising up and Burnhart said, "Well, I'll be damned! There it goes now." The bricks fell and broke the top joists right where the teacher would have had to sit. Burnhart didn't belong to the Church, and that was a great surprise to him.

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One time my wife and I were milking when we were living at the McCarrol ranch, and our team that we farmed with was right close to the lot where we kept our milk cows. This happened about sundown. We saw both of the horses there when we went to the house. Just after dark one of the horses came close to the house neighing, and we wondered what was the matter with the other horse. I started out to hunt him. The fence was around 160 acres of land. When I started out it was after dark. I went all over the 160 acres in every direction, and I couldn't find the missing horse. This was a very dark night, no moon shining, and I thought after looking a long time that I would have to give up and go back to the house. I started back, and I had to go through a potato patch. When I had completely given up finding him I heard a voice say, "Go north." I turned and went as near north as I could in the dark. I went about 25 or 30 steps and there lay the horse. He had been rolling and had turned over between two potato rows, his back down so he couldn't get a foothold. I took a rope and tied to his feet and turned him over, and he got up and it saved his life.

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About three weeks before Elihu died, his youngest daughter Pearl was about to give birth to her fifth child, a daughter. He was very old and near his death, yet he walked about one half mile to Pearl's house to tell her of a dream he had had. "Pearl, I had a dream last night, and it worries me. I dreamed that you were having a wedding in your home and that you had your piano draped in a white sheet and had white sheets on different articles of furniture. There were flowers around, and there was a large crowd, so many that they couldn't get into the house and they were standing out in the yard. I hope this doesn't mean the reverse for you." Soon after Elihu died, Pearl gave birth to her daughter, little Jo Ann. This child only lived for four days. It wasn't until Jo Ann died that Pearl remembered the dream her father had had. The funeral had been held in Pearl's home, and they had put a white sheet on the piano with flowers on it. There was a large crowd. The house was filled and people were standing in the yard. Everything about it was just as Elihu dreamed except it was a funeral for her little daughter instead of a wedding. Elihu evidently felt it would be the opposite or he wouldn't have gone out of his way to tell Pearl about it.