

Zion's Advocate

*"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost...."*

1 Nephi 3:187

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If we work upon marble, it will perish; if on brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, and imbue them with principles, with the just fear of God and love of our fellow men, we engrave on those tablets something that will brighten to all eternity.

~Daniel Webster

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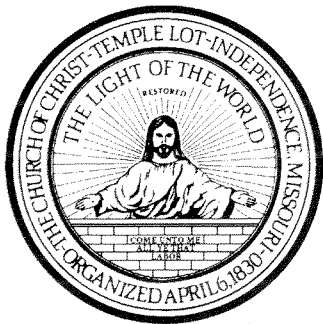
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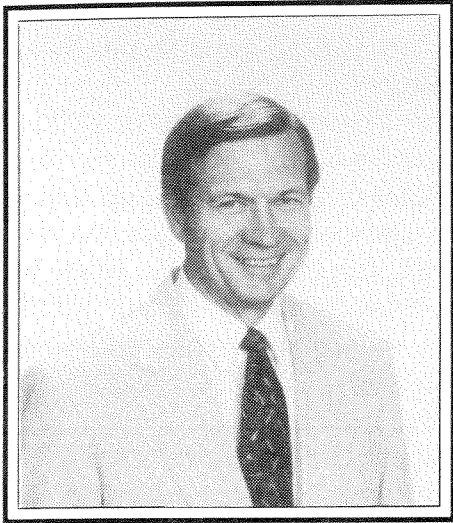
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour;
To promote His Teachings & His Church, the Church of Christ
To be a voice of warning to His people; to be Zion's advocate.

Where are the Prophets?



By Teacher Ron Temple

Several years have gone by now since many were considering the dream had by the late Apostle Leon Yates where he saw that it was five minutes to midnight. Many had considered this dream and tried to calculate when this midnight hour would be, considering it to be the time when the bridegroom (Christ) would come. In other words, the time of the end. But, those calculated dates all came and passed with nothing happening. It brought to mind the earthquake that was supposed to hit at New Madrid, Missouri, a few years ago. The predicted date came and nothing happened. Within a short time all consideration of this probability passed, notwithstanding the

fact that scientists that know the seismic conditions of that region predict that one day there will be another big earthquake there like there was in the early 1800s. Are we not thinking any longer that the time of the end is near, even though we are closer now than when we were considering it strongly a few years back? Can we not discern the signs of the times? Is this world not like Sodom and Gomorrah, and are we not told that "even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:30), that is, the day of the Lord?

We read in Amos 3:7, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." If the time is short, where are the prophets today? Why are they not telling us what is about to happen and what we must do to prepare? I have been considering these questions, and I was caused to remember Samuel. Samuel was a Lamanite, not a Nephite, through whom the Lord was prophesying. Could there be prophets prophesying who are not a part of the church? It is possible that they don't even realize that they are God's prophets? Maybe, because they are not part of the church, they can reach more people than if they were mem-

bers of the Church. All the secrets given through the holy prophets may be already revealed in the scripture, and the details are given by and through those whom He chooses in the last days, which may include those outside the church.

If we are to have prophets in the Church, we must be like Alma and the sons of Mosiah. "...they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting, therefore they had the spirit of prophesy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority, even as the power and authority of God" Alma 12:5. And we, the people, must be like the Nephites that Alma and Amulek taught so that we can receive what they had. "...The Lord did pour out his Spirit on all the face of the land, to prepare the minds of the children of men, or to prepare their hearts to receive the word which should be taught among them at the time of his coming, That they might not be hardened against the word, that they might not be unbelieving, and go on to destruction, But that they might receive the word with joy, ...that they might enter into the rest of the Lord their God." Alma 11:26-28.

Although they are not "holy prophets," there are

many individuals who are predicting the future based on what they have learned. Who is to say the Lord is not using them to warn us? We do need discernment of the spirit concerning these predictions. These researchers are keeping their "ears to the ground." Here are some of their warnings.

They are telling us that Christians are being persecuted in much of the world, that there are more Christians being put to death for their beliefs now than ever before, and that these persecutions are coming to this land.

They say we are in for a great financial crash, and that people must get out of debt or lose all. Others say that there is a movement toward a one world cashless society where you can not buy or sell without a card, or an imbedded chip containing all information about us. This technology is already being used on pets, with plans for use on children, with the idea that it will help to locate them if lost or kidnapped. Does this sound like "the Mark of the Beast" in Revelation 13:16-18?

They warn that our minds and bodies are being subjected to poisons by all the chemicals used to grow and process our food, and to germ and chemical warfare, which can kill far more people than could a nuclear war. They are also saying that there are devices that can alter weather and even affect mind control, and that they are already in use today.

Analysts are predicting the

high probability of great earthquakes that can completely destroy whole cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and even St. Louis, Missouri. They predict that there will be another world war, much more devastating than any previous wars. They predict famines, race riots, pestilence, and the list goes on. Many of these things are prophesied of the last days in the 24th chapter of Matthew and other places.

And now we face Y2K. When we reach the year 2000, because early computers were programmed with only the last 2 digits of the year, computers will not know the difference between 1900 and 2000. If it is as many experts predict, there will be catastrophic problems because of our society's dependence on computers, from services such as utilities, medical, shipping, and transportation, to virtually all commerce activity, including our banking system. We hear that many computers are Y2K compliant, but since all major computers are interconnected in a complex and vast grid, when one goes down, they will all go down. No one knows the extent of the problems that will result. These "prophets" are saying that we should prepare. Many say we should be storing food and other necessities. We should not just expect that the Lord will take care of us without doing this. Remember, Joseph of old was told by God to store up food to prepare for a time of famine in the land.

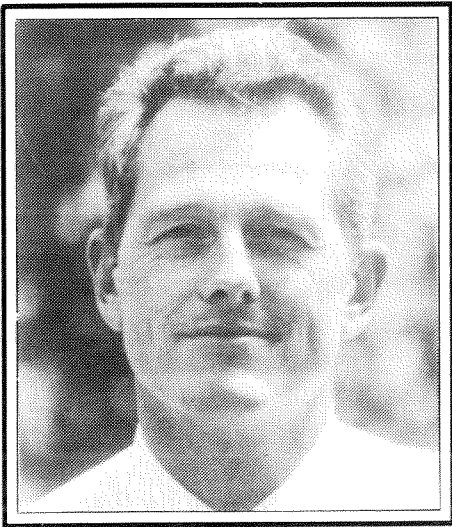
If these things are coming, will we be ready? In Luke, it tells us to "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" Luke 21:36. I dare say that there is no one now who is worthy to escape all these things.

There are always qualifications to be met for any promise of blessing. If we want guidance and protection through the perilous times ahead, we must be spiritually ready. If not, nothing we do to protect ourselves will avail. If we are not on the Lord's side, shown by our keeping of His commandments, by our works, our words and actions, our charity, we will not be His, and He will not "know" us as His sheep, and so we will not be entitled to His protection.

If we did have a Holy Prophet come to us and prophesy, we would need discernment to recognize those prophecies. We also need discernment in regards to these who are now predicting the future. If they are being used by God to warn us, will we listen? Will we seek to find out the Lord's will for us in these momentous times? We may not have much time.

THE CASTING OF LOTS

WHAT WAS IT? WHY DID THEY DO IT?
WHY DON'T WE DO IT? HOW WAS IT DONE?



By Apostle Alvin J. Moser

At first glance, the casting of lots recorded in Acts 1:15-26 appears to stand alone. The scripture seems to record an event that was unique in history. However, a more thorough search will reveal the "lot" having been practiced for thousands of years. The House of Israel was well acquainted with this custom and it was an inte-

gral part of Bible history and Mosaic Law. The priests of the old covenant during the life of Christ were still using the "lot." The casting of lots was replaced by a higher method of arriving at the truth. The incident in Acts was not a beginning of the lot, but a final touch of Old Testament life before the fulfillment of the great promise made in Jeremiah 31:31-34. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." This prophecy refers to the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the new covenant relationship between God and man through Jesus Christ.

The "lot" is rooted in our modern day life. The expression, "my lot fell" that such and such happened to me, comes from this ancient Biblical ordinance. In Alma 12:219, the author uses this type of expression, "it was their lot to have

fallen." The words "Temple Lot" are also based on this ancient practice of casting lots. We can not escape the influence of lot casting in our culture.

I MUST BEGIN BY MAKING A FEW STATEMENTS:

1 The first Apostles were justified and probably commanded by the Lord to cast lots.

2 It was never repeated again in scripture by the servants of the Lord in either the Bible or Book of Mormon after the Day of Pentecost and the reception of the Holy Ghost.

3 It was not gambling or chance when done according to the commandment of God.

4 It was not voting (democracy).

5 We can not practice it as a means of selecting ministry today. If we return to this

practice we will be rejecting the gift of God and be returning to a lesser means of divining God's truth. God will not honor this method for selecting ministry today.

WHAT WAS THE CASTING OF LOTS? WHY DID THEY DO IT?

The apostles knew who among them could be chosen to fill the position because Jesus told them (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:33, 44-53). They were to be special witnesses of Christ. He had opened their understanding of the scriptures, including the Psalms (Luke 24:44). They knew exactly how to apply that scripture because Jesus told them in person what it meant. They knew that their callings were as special witnesses "of these things" (Luke 24:48) and the one chosen to replace Judas had to be witness also of Jesus' death and resurrection. They were told to "tarry" until they received the promise (Jeremiah 31:31-33) or the gift of the Spirit. They were in the process of tarrying in the Old Testament or Old Covenant when the selection of Matthias was made. The full promise of heaven had not been given to them at that moment. God had originally appointed the Levite priests or holy prophets to cast the lots (Leviticus 16:8; 1 Samuel 10:17). These apostles had authority from Christ and represented the new or changed priesthood of the Son of God (Hebrews 7:12). It is highly

likely that they were acting on the commandment of Christ to select one by "lot" to take Judas' place. Matthias needed to be ready and in place when the promise of the Father came (Luke 24:49) or else he could not truly be a witness of this new covenant relationship. It was a complete church with twelve apostles that received this power from on high (Acts 2:1-4).

Casting Lots, as done by those of old, was not gambling. It was neither luck nor chance, but a means used by the priests of the Lord to arrive at the truth. It was God's choice. Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." In this one short verse we read the summation of the perspective of the Israelites toward the casting of lots (see also Psalms 16:5,6 and 47:4). They believed that the Lord would determine the outcome of casting lots. Casting lots removed all human elements. Desire, passion, whim and emotion could not determine the outcome of the lot. The Lord promised the disciples (John 14:13) "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." The prayer "thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen" shows that the apostles had faith in this as a means for the Lord to reveal the truth. In Acts 1:3 & 4 we read that the Lord was seen by them for forty days and instructed them concerning the kingdom. He told them to "tarry" until the promise

should come. No doubt Jesus also told them what to do while tarrying and instructed them in the use of the "lot" to select one from among them to take Judas

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place. However, the casting of lots was used for gambling by men of the world. The best example is when the Roman soldiers used it to divide the garments of Jesus (Mark 15:24; Luke 23:24; John 19:23-24). This was probably done in the same way as in other instances in scripture, but a world apart as to the outcome.

This was a common custom in Israel. Gambling is done over and over, usually until you loose what you have gained. The present "lottery" yields little or no resemblance to the "lot" as recorded in scripture. Money is not exchanged, nor could you repeat the lot when not satisfied with the results. The casting of the "lot" was done once. There were no second chances. You could not argue the outcome. It was final. It was yes or no and

not two out of three. It would be the equivalent of determining the outcome of a sports event with the opening toss of the coin. In Old Testament

It was not against the law of God to cast lots during Old Testament times. When we read of the various sins, the "lot" is not mentioned in the list.

times it was a commandment of God that the priests use this "means" to determine many things. The apostles in Acts were men who had seen the power of God on many occasions and were now witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. They were men of great faith. The important thing to know is, they believed the Lord himself would answer casting lots (Matthew 18:19-20 and John 15:7). In their minds none but God could determine the outcome of the lot.

Casting lots does not set well with Americans. Casting lots is not democracy in action. It is simply Un-American. How could God use such a thing to reveal His truth? Maybe more importantly how could He reveal it without asking our approval first? Many American Bibles have written in the margins "lots = votes." This only reflects our present times and modern way of thinking. Early

Israelites would have known with no doubts what was being done. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." We can not explain how the power of God gave the outcome of the lot, but neither can we explain other ways and means used by the Lord (i.e. the *liahona*, the *urim* and the *thummim*, the Ark of the Covenant, Aaron's rod, etc.). Explaining the power of the ancient "lot" is impossible. It was part of the Old Testament covenant, commandments and way of life.

In Old Testament times casting lots was used in several ways:

1 Lots were cast to expose a single sinner among the congregation (1 Samuel 14:24-45 and Joshua 7:10-26).

2 In the Mosaic Law it determined the Scapegoat set free on the mountains of Israel (Leviticus 16:7-10).

3 King Saul was revealed to Israel by the casting of lots even though he was previously shown to Samuel by revelation (1 Samuel chapters eight through ten, 10:17-21).

4 The Promised Land was divided among the twelve tribes of Israel by lot. Five chapters of Joshua are dedicated to casting lots as the means given by the Lord for dividing the land. Hence the term a "lot" of land exists to this day (i.e. temple lot) (Numbers 26:52-56; 33:54; Joshua

14:1-19:51 and Judges 1:3).

5 Disputes were settled by lot (1 Nephi 1:68-69; Proverbs 18:18; Psalms 22:18).

6 The lot was used to regulate the Offices and Duties of the Levitical Priesthood. Again we find several chapters (1 Chronicles 24:1 to 27:34) given completely to the practice of casting lots.

There is no place that can be found that shows that the casting of lots for these things was incorrect. It was not against the law of God to cast lots during Old Testament times. When we read of the various sins, the "lot" is not mentioned in the list (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).

The use of the "lot" to select and regulate the priests office was still going on when John the Baptist's birth was prophesied (Luke 1:5-10). Jewish historians say in Zechariah's day there were 18,000 priests. The name of any priest was placed in the "lot" process just once in his lifetime (Exodus 30:7-8). Many never would have the opportunity to have a lot cast for them. The father of John the Baptist, Zechariah, was chosen to occupy on this one day and only this once did he enter in the temple in the priest's capacity. How was the father of John the Baptist chosen to be the priest to offer in the temple if not by the power of God? The lot fell on Zechariah (Luke 1:9). "The whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." A sign was given for all

of Jerusalem because the Lord determined the outcome of the "lot."

At one time the casting of lots saved the house of Israel. The book of Esther records the casting of lots done by the enemies of Israel (Esther 3:7 and 9:23-28). The enemies of Israel decided to destroy Israel on a day to be determined by the lot. The lot was cast in the first month of the year and the lot fell on a day in the last month of the year. This delay, nearly a year, gave Mordecai time to prepare his people. They were all warned in ample time to prepare for battle. They won the battle. They won because "the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Today there is a Jewish holiday called the Feast of Purim or Mordecai's day. Purim or Pur means, "lot." The influence of lots still exists today and is a symbol of God's dealings with Israel.

Casting lots was done "before the Lord." Just any one did not cast lots. In Joshua 18:6, 8, 10; 19:51; Judges 20:9 and Isaiah 34:16-17 it is done repeatedly before the Lord God and done by some authorized agent of His [Josh 18:10]. "And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord" [Josh 19:51]. "These are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by **lot** in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

The examples here show that the Israelites were very serious about the ordinance of casting lots. They show an authorized individual casting the lot for Israel. The practice is mirrored in Acts when the prayer was offered which said, "[1:24] And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." The authorized agents for the new covenant were also the ones that cast the lots.

WHY DON'T WE DO IT?

The question would naturally occur in our minds "Why don't we cast lots today to determine who will occupy in what office, etc.?" There is a simple answer. The servants of the Lord never repeated it after the day of Pentecost. A great change took place after that day, when the Holy Ghost was given to the apostles and to the whole church. The functions previously given to the casting of the "lot" were replaced by the work of the Holy Ghost.

We read that Jesus was seen of the disciples for forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3). On the day of Pentecost, or about fifty days after the crucifixion of the Lord, the Holy Ghost fell on them and they spoke with tongues of all the nations from which the Jews had come. The lots were cast sometime between the forty and fifty day periods. After that we see this simple fact: the lot is never mentioned again as being practiced by the Church. It is

not mentioned in the Book of Mormon as a means of determining anything of importance. We must conclude that it was not used again. We are commis-

"Why don't we cast lots today to determine who will occupy in what office, etc.?" There is a simple answer. The servants of the Lord never repeated it after the day of Pentecost. A great change took place after that day, when the Holy Ghost was given to the apostles and to the whole church. The functions previously given to the casting of the "lot" were replaced by the work of the Holy Ghost.

sioned as Christ's Church to follow the example set forth by the scriptures and Christ Himself, (3 Nephi 12:34-35) "For that which ye have seen me do, even that shall ye do." Further, there is no commandment listed in the New Covenant made by Christ even remotely suggesting following this practice.

In the Book of Acts we see the Spirit performing the fol-

lowing special functions of the "lot" which were formally done by lot in Pre-New Covenant times.

There is no reason to dispute the function of the lot of ancient times. The Lord honored the lot then through the Law, which He gave to Moses. That "Law" is fulfilled.

1 When a calling came after the day of Pentecost it was by the Holy Ghost. Acts 13:1-3 "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

2 We find the Spirit guiding these new ministers with their duties. [Acts 13:9] "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him." [Acts 4:8] "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel." [Acts 8:29] "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

3 The Spirit through Christ divided the inheritances of the Lord given to the saints. Paul was sent to the Gentiles to preach an inheritance through Christ. Acts 26:18, "To open their eyes,

and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and **inheritance** among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." [Romans 8:14] "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Jesus himself said "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

4 The Spirit discovered the secret sins of liars. Acts 5:3, "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" Acts 5:9, "Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?"

There was indeed a great change made in the preaching of the word and the gifts of God were then poured out upon all men through the Spirit. Acts 2:17, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh."

HOW WAS IT DONE?

Flat stones or broken pottery shards were used for the purpose of casting lots. The name of a tribe or a person was written on one side of the stone or shard. In one of Harper's Bible Dictionaries I found a picture of eleven pottery shards with names written on them. The caption beneath the shards reads like this: "Lots found at Masada, a mountain-

top fortress on the western shore of the Dead Sea and final holdout of Jews in the rebellion against Rome, AD 66-73. Each is inscribed with a name and may have been used to determine who would slay the others in order to avoid capture by the Romans."

Sometimes, prayer was offered before the Lord, commending the outcome to the Lord's will. 1 Samuel 14:41 and Acts 1:24 are examples of this practice. Again it must be stressed that Mosaic law provided for this practice and Israel believed God would answer by revealing His will in the "lot."

The lots were cast into the lap (Proverbs 16:33). The lap was of the priest or prophet chosen by the Lord from among them (Leviticus 16:8, 1 Samuel 10:17). Some historians believe that the holy ephod (garment worn by the high priest) was used which further restricted the use of the lot. Many believe that the lap was a pocket in the front of the garments of people in those times (2 Kings 4:39) used to carry any number of things as they journeyed or worked. The present day use of pockets is our modern equivalent to the lap. In ancient times they needed to be loose fitting, facilitating a shaking action. The use of handbags is also a modern day illustration of the lap (Proverbs 1:14). Most often the lap was just the front portion of a robe or garment pulled up to make a cradle or

pocket where the lots could rest until one was chosen.

Finally, the lots were then shaken until one fell out, thus the expression, "my lot fell." Drawing one out from among the rest could simply have chosen the lot. However, "shaking" is more likely because it fits the expressions found in scripture of falling or "fell" (Alma 12:219, Leviticus 16:9-10, Joshua 16:1, 1 Chronicles 26:14, Jonah 1:7, Acts 1:26).

Finally, the lot could not be disputed. The way it fell was the way it fell. It was a way for the Lord to show signs and wonders in ancient times. It was a means to settle disputes among brethren. There is no reason to dispute the function of the lot of ancient times. The Lord honored the lot then through the Law, which He gave to Moses. That "Law" is fulfilled.

CONCLUSION

We shall all be judged by every work which we do. Through the manifold grace of God, Jesus Christ shall save us. We have a responsibility to attract our Lord Jesus by having on the wedding garments of righteousness. Those garments are obtained through the indwelling of the Spirit. We have the Holy Ghost given to us through the laying on of hands of the elders. We are accountable to God because of that Spirit. If we return to a lesser law or ordinance (casting of

lots) we negate our responsibility to be led by the Holy Ghost. Things would be easier. Laboring in prayer and fasting would

If we return to a lesser law or ordinance (casting of lots) we negate our responsibility to be led by the Holy Ghost. ... It would no longer be our responsibility to wait on the working of the Spirit. It would be like falling off a log, or a "lot" falling from the lap.

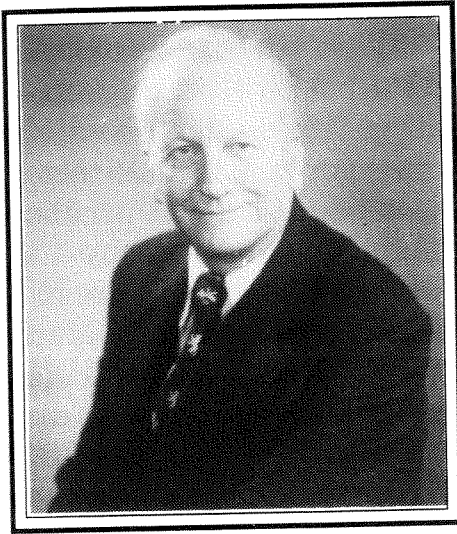
be simpler. We would not have to hunger and thirst after righteousness to be filled (or have a full quorum). It would no longer be our responsibility to wait on the working of the Spirit. It would be like falling off a log, or a "lot" falling from the lap.

No, brothers and sisters, we do have a great responsibility to be guided by God's Spirit. It is part of worshipping God in Spirit and truth. All of the present ordinances of the Gospel of Christ show the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit. Each one of them reflects the new and everlasting covenant of living under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Baptism, Laying on of Hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, Laying on of Hands

for healing by God's Spiritual Gifts, Ordination to receive authority from God, and the sacrament are all evidences of the work of the Holy Spirit directly on the flesh or the soul of man. Today we have a new law of liberty, which is simpler and yet puts greater responsibility on us to be guided in all things by prayer, study and the Spirit. The casting of lots should not replace voting at conference or by referendum when we have the Holy Ghost as an abiding counselor. The selection of a man to serve as a special witness of Jesus Christ is the special work of the Holy Ghost. We must wait for that Spirit to speak and reveal the will of God. That work began in full on the day of Pentecost when the new covenant was made complete with the church through the coming of the Holy Ghost or power from on High. The Restoration of the Gospel brought forth by the Lord in 1830 did not restore the Old Covenant Law but the New Covenant Law in Christ. [Galatians 5:18] "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Let us live in that freedom forever.

The Gathering

A Principle of God



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

(All scriptural emphasis mine.)

Part IV

"...In the dispensation of the fulness of times he [will] gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him" Eph. 1:10.

This subject is fascinating and thrilling to those who are spiritually inclined. It envisions the fulfillment of the Divine mind, by the human inclination to accept it, albeit by considerable prodding at times to bring about a

oneness with God in a unity of faith; a gathering together of the sheep of his pasture.

As pertaining to the gathering of Ephraim, or latter day Israel connected to the Restoration Movement (a gathering to "Zion") we seem to see a stirring in process, imperceptible to the outside world, and even to many within. While it is true that what is to be the "center place of Zion," as it is sometimes called, and which is Independence, Missouri, it has not yet attained to that Zion status by any noticeable evidence.

Yet the call to Zion whispers in the hearts of many. I have personally heard many who visited the Temple Lot visitors' center say: We gathered to Zion [recently] [a few years ago], etc. There are frequent visits to the dedicated site for individual and collective prayer, and oft-times the

removal of shoes in the belief that they are on sacred ground. Some of our elders have initiated or responded to requests by those outside the Church of Christ for meetings in which to pray collectively and discuss the prospects for a gathering of the saints of God, to find where there are mutual concerns for Zion. I appreciate and applaud such efforts, hoping they may gain support in the spirit of love and prayer. It is only to be deplored that the same spirit of reverence and dedication to the building of Zion is not altogether shared within this Church.

This does not infer a retreat from doctrinal position in the Church of Christ, but we should realize that there are many who are not presently numbered with us who cherish the ideals of Zion with the gathering of the saints of God, and we should

reach out to them in the Spirit of our Master. God will not be fully "in our corner" until and unless we can develop a genuine spirit of compassion and outreach to the good souls who may have been innocently deceived by the philosophies and ambitions of men.

A gathering of latter day Israel (the restored Church through Joseph Smith and others) was evidently envisioned by Elder George Cole of the Church of Christ in about 1870. In his spiritual dream, he saw a tree which had been cut down, with the stump of it on the Temple Lot. The tree represented the fallen condition of the Restoration churches. There was life in the stump which represented the Church of Christ, and there were yet live twigs in the fallen tree. He saw the time to come when the elders of Israel (the Ministry of the Church of Christ/w.a.s.) went through that dead tree and pruned out the green twigs (see *An Outline History of the Church of Christ*, p. 131).

As before indicated: a movement is discernible in which a spirit of gathering is taking place, and we will do well to ponder our own course as a people, or if perhaps we ourselves are simply content with the status quo of a spiritual and physical separation

from the body of Christ. God **WILL separate the sheep from the goats** (see Matt. 25:31-46) on the terms of

...We should realize that there are many who are not presently numbered with us who cherish the ideals of Zion with the gathering of the saints of God, and we should reach out to them in the Spirit of our Master.

their personal desires and righteousness.

"...I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion" Jer. 3:14.

"...Gather ye **FIRST** the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn (Zion/w.a.s.)" Matt. 13:30.

"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden **without the city** (outside the city New Jerusalem/w.a.s.)" Rev. 14:19, 20.

This last text shows that

the city New Jerusalem shall have been built by the gathered saints of God, including the remnant of Jacob (Indians), before the wrath of God is visited upon the wicked nations. See 3 Ne. 10:1-3 concerning this gathering and the building of the New Jerusalem.

The 17th chapter of Luke has a positive bearing upon the gathering of the saints which perhaps is little recognized because of the peculiar language employed by the Lord, speaking as it were in a parable. It parallels Matt. 24:40, 41 in the particular area of our concern, but carries it further. In Luke 17:31-36, it should be obvious that Christ was speaking concerning his saints, just as he warned the Jewish believers concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman legions which took place in 70 A.D. (see Luke 21:20-24).

In Luke 17:34, He spoke of two men being in one bed—one taken, the other left; then in v. 35: two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. The question arises: Who is to be taken, and where? His prime concern was for the welfare of His saints. These are the ones to be "taken." His angels are to gather together his elect, as we find in Matt. 24:31; and taken where? In a

few words: to Zion, or to the New Jerusalem. In all this as found in Luke 17, He is speaking in a parableized form. Why does He here (v. 37) give answer to the question, Where? by saying: "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together"? This part parallels Matt. 24:28, except that "carcase" is used in place of "body." This use of terminology describing a dead body, and the gathering of eagles to feast, is where difficulty arises in the understanding of the whole matter; but let us examine it. In Rom. 6:3-7, we find this illumination:

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by **baptism into death**: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."

Again in Col. 3:3:

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Therefore, the reference of Christ to a body, or carcase,

The Good Shepherd will gather His sheep, will be in their midst, will feed them abundantly, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

is to be taken as meaning a body of people which has become "dead" to sin, but whose spirits are alive in Christ! And just as the physical body of Christ was made alive in His resurrection, so also, in the New Jerusalem will finally be a body of people who have come forth in the resurrection or will have been changed, as said the apostle Paul, "in the twinkling of an eye" from mortality to immortality (see 1 Cor. 15:51-53). To this body of people, which shall be Zion, shall be gathered, one from the bed, one from the grinding, one from the field, etc., as it were. And they shall be hungry for the bread of life and the fountain of water coming from their Master.

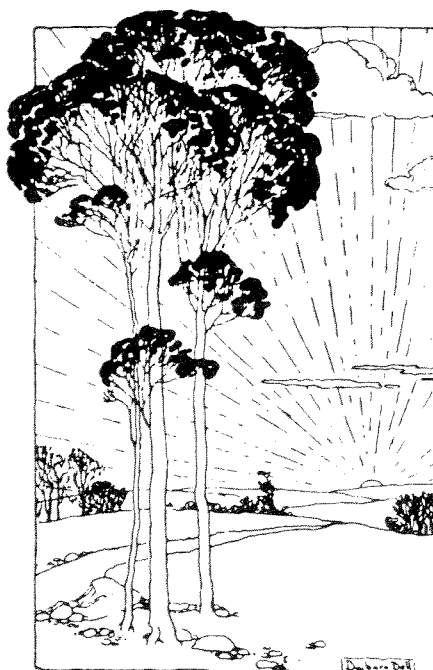
It will be the great wed-

ding feast, prepared of Christ, to which the multitudes of people out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people shall come, which shall have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, having come through great tribulation. This is found in Rev. 7:9-17. Note should be made that there will be 144,000 of the twelve tribes of Israel there (vs. 1-8), and this would include the righteous of ancient Israel and those of Israel of latter days (yes, even of the Restoration). This is the "body" of saints, to which the others are gathered, and which is indicated in Rev 14. There we find the 144,000 of Israel standing on Mount Zion (Zion), so this is where the great multitude are to be numbered with them. The Good Shepherd will gather His sheep, will be in their midst, will feed them abundantly, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (see Rev. 7:15-17).

TOWERS

Do you believe that history repeats itself? I do. In Genesis 11 we can read about the Tower of Babel. The story is so well known I won't repeat it, but it was there that men who believed in God and towers got off to a bad start. There are other stories about towers in the Old Testament and they don't always picture the edifice in a bad light. The best image that towers have in the Old Testament was watch-towers to serve as a warning if enemies were coming. However, if it was not for the wickedness of the people the watchtowers would have been unnecessary for we read in Leviticus 26, "And I will give you peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid." The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, had towers from which sermons were preached.

On page 418 in the Book of



PATHLIGHTS

Mormon we see an evil use of a tower. It was in the land of the Zoramites that the people did this. They built synagogues with towers of prayer. Whoever wanted to worship had to stand alone on top and pray a ritualistic prayer. No other prayer was prayed and no poor person was allowed to worship thus.

Now we have towers today and no poor person speaks from them. In the early 1960's one of them in Kansas City sold for \$14 million, and they must be worth two or three times that today. On the towers of Rameumtom the worshiper always prayed the same monotonous prayer. From our electronic towers we get the same monotonous stories with about five or six pleasure seeking themes. (If anyone wants to debate this one I'm ready.) What you do hear of a religious nature is to confuse the gospel—not to clarify it and make it workable. It may be nothing, but I find this an interesting comparison.

Jim Gordon

NEWS

TEMPLE LOT LOCAL

Hello, from the Independence Temple Lot Local. We are all doing fine. We are enjoying the nice cool weather. It has been really rainy lately. Here is a update on some of our current events.

On September 1st and 8th, we held business meetings. We had great elections for officers. Our Pastor is **Elder Alvin Harris**, and **Elder Gary Housknecht** is our assistant pastor. We elected **Steven Gill** for Sunday School Superinten-

dent and **Stephen Kimball** as assistant. We hope everyone enjoys their new jobs for Christ.

On September 25th, 26th and 27th, we had a great time at the Camp for All Ages! We had a lot of activites going on. Thanks **Fred Campbell** and **Pat Fisher** for everything!

On October 1st, **Sister Alice Morris** passed away. Her funeral was held on Monday the 6th. She will be greatly missed.

On October 3rd, **Meghann Welch** was bapitized by **Jim Case**. It was a beautiful day! Please pray for

her as she is off at college.

On October 7th, **Leon Yates** passed away. He will be greatly missed also.

On October 11th, **Elder Jeff Oldham** preached his first sermon at the Temple Lot Local. This was his second sermon. We were very excited to hear him preach to us.

*Love,
Your sister in Christ,
Rachelle Bruner*

ANNOUNCEMENT

1998 PHOENIX REUNION

The 1998 Phoenix Reunion will be held **Friday, November 27th, through Sunday, November 29th, 1998**. We invite everyone to come and worship the Lord with us.

■ **ANYONE PLANNING TO ATTEND OR WANTING INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Pastor Apostle Joel Yates
2924 E. Rockwood Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 569-9296

Asst. Pastor Apostle Brian McIndoo
18824 N. 30th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85050
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We hope to see you there!

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The 1999 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 4. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 5. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on April 2 & 3. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1999 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 9, 10 and 11, at Independence, Missouri.

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