

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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Thanksgiving Prayer

Our God, we acknowledge that you are the Lord of the Nations; that kingdoms, kings and queens, and political leaders rise and fall within the purpose and plan that you have for this universe. We thank you for the freedoms that we enjoy as part of this experiment in democracy that we call the United States. We thank you for the freedom of religion; that we can gather together to sing of your faithfulness, to give of our resources, to open your Word, to listen to your voice; and we do it without harassment, intimidation, threat of imprisonment, or persecution.

—Edward Dobson

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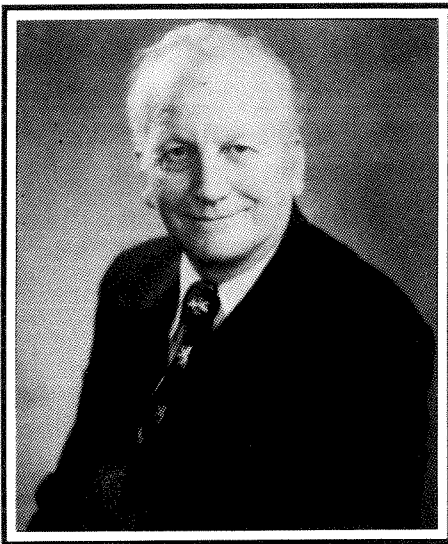
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

BABYLON'S FALL AND THE WAY OF ESCAPE



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

THE TIME OF HARVEST

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints

together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" Psalms 50:3-5.

Babylon's fall (Rev. 14:8) which chronologically follows the restoration of the "everlasting gospel"(vs. 6 and 7), and which fall is preceded by the Lord's warning voice to His people to depart therefrom "that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4) would be incomplete except He has also provided for their gathering and protection. We may be sure that He will do just that. Christ is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11) Who has laid down His life for His sheep (the saints of God) and will gather them into "one fold" (ibid. , 15-16). To assist Him in this work of the gathering, He will send forth His angels.

We are prone to think of angels only in the usually ac-

cepted sense as being specially created spirits to bear messages from God to chosen persons according to the Divine will. However, God has other agents also, some having been saints upon the earth, and being sent from the courts of glory to impart His word. A few recorded instances will suffice: Rev. 19:9-10; 22:8-9; Moroni and John the Baptist appearing to Joseph Smith (see the *Church of Christ Outline History*, pp. 21, 35, and histories of other latter day saint bodies).

However, there are also those referenced as "angels" who are living servants of God, because they deliver God's word and minister to His people in gospel ordinances, as shown in Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14. These "angels" were those whom we would call pastors, who were concerned with the sev-

eral ancient church bodies during the times of the original apostles of Christ (see Rev. chaps. 2 & 3).

Therefore, we are to understand that where prophecies speak of "angels" connected with the gathering of the saints in the last days, we need not necessarily consider those angels as being the commonly accepted host specially created as spiritual messengers of God.

Christ said—

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" Matt. 24:31.

This text seems to refer exclusively to that heavenly host, but Christ is not limited in this, for He will use his human agents (angels) as well to lift the warning voice to His saints (calling them from Babylon), and to all of scattered Israel:

"Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" Jer. 16:16.

This gathering is not lim-

ited to the literal descendants of Israel, for we are further informed that—

"...The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth (to the place of the fold of Christ, to Zion/w.a.s.), and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" ibid., 19.

Yes, those of Israel and of the truly believing gentiles shall be "fished" and "hunted," gathered out of Babylon (the world) and assembled upon mount Zion (in the U. S. A.) and to Jerusalem in her redeemed condition. See Rev. 7: 14:1-5; Jer. 16:14-15; Ezek. 37:21-27.

A careful analysis of Luke 17:31-37 in connection with Matt. 24:28, Rom. 6:3-8, Col. 3:3 and 2 Tim. 2:11 will show the Lord's concern for the gathering of His saints (being dead to sin but alive in Christ) to a "body" of saints, and there to partake of the wedding feast at the marriage of the Lamb of God (see Matt. 25:6, 10 and Rev. 19:7-8), having been called from the midst of Babylon.

With further regard to human "angels" being used of God in the gathering process of the Lord's sheep, I wish to refer to a spiritual dream had by Elder George Cole of

the Church of Christ in 1870, and as recorded in our *Outline History*, p. 131. It would be well to quote it all, but I will refrain for brevity. The reader should see this because it is such an outstanding vision relative to the work of this Church of Christ in the gathering of latter day saints.

Suffice it to say that he saw a tree having been cut down, whose stump was on the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri, which was dedicated by Joseph Smith for Zion's temple. That dead tree represented the fallen condition of the latter day saint churches. Nevertheless, there was life in the stump (the Church of Christ), and there was a measure of life in the dead tree.

"I looked and seen that the day will come when the messengers of the Lord (the elders of Israel, who are the angels of God/w.a.s.) will go through that dead top. It seemed to me that they were pruning the tree, but not as we prune a tree, for we would bring from it the dead branches, but they did bring out the green twigs from the dead tree...."

Thus we see in this a small part of that great work of God in gathering His saints; a gathering from the Babylonish spiritual confusion among those of latter day Israel, as represented by

the dead tree, which Elder Cole saw in his dream.

A more comprehensive gathering of the saints is alluded to in Deut. 33:16, 17, which references those of the tribe of Joseph as God's principal servants in this task:

"...His horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth (to Zion or the New Jerusalem, and to Jerusalem in Palestine/w.a.s.): and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh" (v.17).

It may come as a surprise that there will be those of Manasseh, together with Ephraim, as a mighty proselytizing force in the last days, in this time of harvest. Jesus spoke to the descendants of Manasseh on this continent as "a remnant of the house of Jacob" (3 Ne. 9:88), and it will be a relatively few of these ("the thousands of Manasseh") of which we read further:

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord..." (Micah 5:7).

The significance of this is shown in Deut. 32:2:

"My doctrine shall

drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

This process of gathering includes not only a gathering of saints, but also a gathering of the wicked (which is spiritual Babylon) to be burned.

It is well at this juncture to briefly speak of the gathering of the remnant of Jacob (Lamanites/Indians); of one especially to be prepared of God for that work. This will be a descendant of Joseph, a son of Lehi (see 2 Nephi 2:44-48), who shall do a mighty work among his brethren, convincing them of the Book of Mormon and of the restored gospel of Christ.

We have thus only briefly referenced the gathering of the saints of God. This will include the stupendous gathering of all the tribes of Israel; all of this to be accomplished by an endowed ministry, the servants of God. See 3 Nephi 10:5-12 of the Book

of Mormon, and the great commission of Christ to His apostles as found in Matthew 28:18-20. That commission was not fulfilled during the time of the ancient apostles, and so it applies especially to the last days, "the end of the world," or the fall of Babylon.

Contrary to a prevalent conception, this commission is not given to all so-called believers, however commendable it is that they bear a witness for Christ; rather, the commission is to those with a divine calling to the holy priesthood as is found in the restored Church of Christ brought to earth by angelic ministrations (Rev. 14:6, 7).

This process of gathering includes not only a gathering of saints, but also a gathering of the wicked (which is spiritual Babylon) to be burned. The matter is briefly, but poignantly described in the Master's parable of the sowing of "good seed in his field: but while men slept (the ancient apostasy of the church/w.a.s.) his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat...." (Matt. 13:24-25).

When asked by the servants of God, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?", He said:

"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers (his an-

gels/w.a.s.), ***gather ye together FIRST the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn***" (Zion/w.a.s.) *ibid.*, vs. 28, 30.

Please note that there is to be firstly a gathering of the tares, including the wicked, from among the saints in the kingdom of God (see v. 41), and they are to be bound in bundles **before** being consigned to the burning process. This was also alluded to by John the Baptist, referring to Christ:

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly (thoroughly/w.a.s.) purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" Matt. 3:12.

The binding of the tares into bundles signifies the gathering together of the many and varied forces of corruption and wickedness, whose underlying aims are inspired by the enemy of all mankind for the purpose of destroying them from the presence of God, and briefly, to fight against Zion.

These "bundles" of wickedness include *Mystery, Babylon the Great* and her many daughters, the so-called harlots (Rev. 17:5) which

(lumped together) are the churches of men, or the "church of the devil" as opposed to the church of the Lamb, or the Church of Christ in its perfection. Additionally, we find "bundles" of economic, political and moral or social intrigue, inclusive of, but not limited to, the secret combinations of men. See 1 Nephi 7:50-53, 2 Nephi 11:93-95, Alma 17:64, Ether 3:94-100.

Rev. 14:14-20 treats upon the reaping time, the "harvest of the earth" (v.15), and which includes a gathering of "the clusters (bundles/w.a.s.) of the vine of the earth...into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (vs. 18-20).

This "winepress" is to be trodden "without the city" (outside the New Jerusalem, or city of Zion) showing that Zion will have been established through the gathering of saints before the "burning" or destruction of Babylon.

The general corruption and wickedness which characterizes the nations of these latter days, and probably surpassing that of Noah's time, of which Christ spoke so graphically (Matt. 24: 15-39), will finally provoke the Lord's all-consuming wrath upon such; a great burning of His vineyard following the ingathering of the good fruit.

Is it not imperative, then,

that the saints of God shall even now:

"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense" Jer. 51:6.

Those who remain after the gathering of the "good," are those who will have "fought against Zion" (2 Nephi 11:116-121), being "drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations" (*ibid.*, v. 116). It is these of whom the psalmist said:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed (emphasis/w.a.s.) saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.... Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" Psalm 2:1-4, 9.

But the wise are counseled:

"Serve the Lord with

fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him” (ibid., vs. 11, 12).

A CITY OF REFUGE

Since at the second coming of Christ it is to be even as it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, then it follows that it not only describes the wickedness and indifference of men to God, but also describes the means of escape from wrath for the saints. Just as the Lord commanded Noah in the building of an ark to save his family from the flood, and as He permitted Lot and his family to go into a small city to be saved from fiery destruction (Gen. 19:17-22), so also will He provide a spiritual “ark,” a city of Zion, the New Jerusalem, for the salvation of His saints of the last days.

This can only be accomplished through a literal gathering of the saints, and this gathering is to occur as they assemble to build a “New Jerusalem,” or to assist the “remnant of Jacob” in this task (3 Ne. 10:1). According to the prophet Joseph Smith, that city will be built, “beginning at the temple lot” in Independence, Missouri

(revelation given September 22, 1832; see the Church’s “An Outline History,” p. 46; also a revelation given in July

Since at the second coming of Christ it is to be even as it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, then it follows that it not only describes the wickedness and indifference of men to God, but also describes the means of escape from wrath for the saints.

1831, *ibid.*, p.44, concerning the Lord’s temple to be built there [*Millennial Star*, Vol. 14, supplement, p. 72]).

Evidently the temple envisaged by Joseph Smith, and which has been confirmed through spiritual dreams, etc., to many others, is the focal point in the building of the New Jerusalem. This will not be the New Jerusalem as viewed by the apostle John (Rev. 21:1, 2), for that city follows the millennial reign of

Christ and the “little season” of the devil’s release to deceive again the nations (Rev. 20:1-8).

That New Jerusalem will not be built with men’s hands, and shall come down from heaven (the habitation of God), while the new Jerusalem preceding the millennial reign shall be built by human labor.

This nearer new Jerusalem is to be built following the “great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21, 22) spoken of by Christ and referenced in 3 Ne. 9: 101-106, which is indicative of the fall of Babylon. Now, concerning this city of refuge, we quote again from latter day revelation:

“Go ye forth into the western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me; and with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you, and it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there, inasmuch that the wicked will not come unto it: And it shall be called Zion: And it shall come to pass, among the wicked, that every man

that will not take his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee unto Zion for safety. And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven: And it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another. And it shall be said among the wicked, Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; Wherefore, we can not stand. And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion singing, with songs of everlasting joy" *Book of Commandments* 48:59-67.

The following scriptures reveal the humiliation of the nations as God saves therefrom and exalts those who are righteous, who are worthy to be named as the saints of God.

"And in the days of these kings (see Dan. 2:34-35) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom (the latter day restored Church of Christ/w.a.s.) which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people (emphasis, w.a.s.), but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (v. 44).

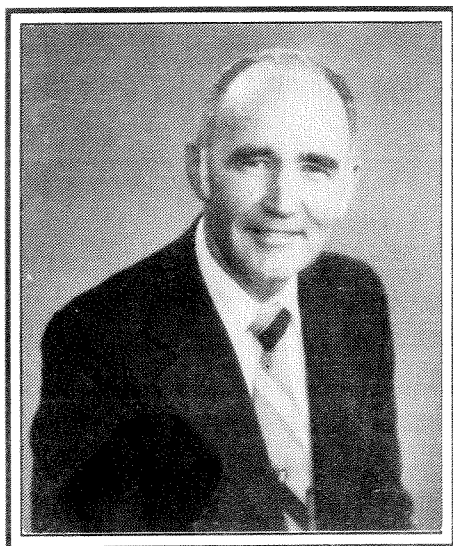
"Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low" Isa. 25:3-5.

"For he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto destruction of their enemies by fire" 1 Nephi 7:35-36.

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord (the sanctified Church of Christ/w.a.s.; see Isa. 60:21) be beautiful and glorious; the fruit of the earth excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, them that are left in Zion, and remain in Jerusalem,

shall be called holy, everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion (including that of the latter day Restoration fragments/w.a.s.), and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory of Zion shall be a defense. And there shall be a tabernacle (the Lord's holy temple/w.a.s.) for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from rain" 2 Ne. 8:66-70.

A Book of Mormon CRITIQUE



By Apostle Don McIndoo

History of America, told in radiant
brilliance
Of wondrous and mystical splendor:
The doctrines which the prophets
spoke
Were the flowering paths of the
Nephite.

—Renan Chuc

“THE DOCTRINES WHICH
THE PROPHETS SPOKE.” Just
as the Bible, the Book of Mor-

Part 5

What begins as
prophecy, ends
on the pages of
history books.

mon is full of wonderful prophecy, but there is a notable difference between the two books. The majority of the prophecies in the Book of Mormon relate to the inhabitants of the Americas and their future. So this book becomes a very important book to those who dwell in this land. Some of these prophecies are directed to the indigenous peoples, while others speak to the Gentiles who arrived much later from European nations. Each prophecy, as does all God's Word,

has great relevance to us and to our children.

A powerful witness to the divinity of this book is that it contains many prophecies that have already been fulfilled. Let's consider some facts we can now read in the pages of history that have been fulfilled according to the words of Book of Mormon prophets.

Nephi prophesied of the discovery of this land in later years by an individual who would be led by *“...the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many wa-*

ters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land" (1 Nephi 3: 147). Of course, this unnamed explorer is known to us as Christopher Columbus.

Critics could proclaim that Joseph Smith certainly knew about the discovery of America by Columbus, and they would be correct. However, it has not been written in our histories that he was a man inspired by the Holy Spirit in his quest as the prophet had stated. Now comes a chronicle written by Columbus himself: **"It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel his hand upon me) the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit..."**¹ Do the biographers of Columbus indicate that he was a man who would be apt to receive inspiration from the Almighty? Let's examine the literature:

a. **"He looked upon himself as in the hand of God, chosen from among men for the accomplishment of his high purpose. He supposed that he saw foretold in the Holy Writ his contemplated discovery, shadowed forth in**

the revelations of the prophets."²

b. **"In the end he looked past the geographers, astronomers and philosophers and sought interlocutors among the prophets. The Bible came to his aid."**³

The history of America is rooted in this beautiful prophecy of Nephi. **"And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles; that they did prosper, and obtain the land for their inheritance..."** (1 Nephi 3:151). Anyone seeing the little band of Pilgrims referred to in this prophecy would laugh at the prospect of their prosperity. The spring of 1621 found only five men left alive, strong enough to work and defend the little colony. Almost half the original colonists had died, leaving but five of the original eighteen wives among the living. One day a lone Indian, named Tisquantum, entered the compound. Who was he, why was he here and from where had he come?

He arrived in the camp by way of a tortuous journey. Twice kidnapped and carried to Europe; once to be sold on the auction block of slavery, he spent more than fourteen years away from America while in England and Spain. When finally returned home

by Captain John Smith, he found himself the lone survivor of his people, who probably had been exterminated by some white man's disease. Like young Joseph so long before, in his sufferings he was a special man prepared by God for His purposes.

Tisquantum, an English speaking Christian, now showed the men of this starving colony how to fish for eels for an immediate food supply, how to plant and fertilize corn for next winter's food and how to trap beaver for a future commodity of sale; in short, how to prosper in this new land to which God had led them. One year later, while on a trip with Governor Bradford, Tisquantum became ill and died. He was prepared and present in that moment necessary to fulfill prophecy.

In his beautiful prophecy about America, Nephi was caused to know that these colonists God had brought to this new land would be delivered out of captivity because they **"...did humble themselves before the Lord, and the power of the Lord was with them..."** (1 Nephi 3:152). The pages of history record the validity of this prophecy:

John Hancock, President of the Provincial Congress, declared to them, **"We think it is incumbent**

*upon this people to humble themselves before God on account of their sins, for He hath been pleased in His righteous judgment to suffer a great calamity to befall us.... And also to implore the Divine Blessing upon us, that by the assistance of His grace, we may be enabled to reform whatever is amiss among us...."*⁴ (Wouldn't you love to hear such words fall from the lips of our political leaders today? Or see them written in a child's history book?) Heeding his counsel, the Congress declared May 17, 1775, as a day of national fasting, prayer and humiliation.

We shall continue with a prophecy found in 2 Nephi 7:17-19: *"But behold, this land, saith God, shall be a land of thine inheritance; and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land. And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles: and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles. And I will fortify this land against all other nations...."* This prophecy was given about 550 years before the birth of Christ. The only inhabitants of the land known to the prophet were of the house of Israel. The Gentile peoples of

Europe had yet to discover this land, but upon the arrival of Columbus in 1492, the door was opened and a flood of conquerors sailed in to establish their empires.

In North America the Gentiles were governed by the powerful king of England while the king of Spain, the king of Portugal, the king of France and the emperor of Russia governed other parts of the Americas. But the prophecy in 2 Nephi 7 said, *"there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles."* Let's return to the prophecy in 1 Nephi 3:153-155. Nephi saw that the Gentiles to the north *"were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations."* He was prophesying of the Revolutionary War of 1776 when the United States gained her liberty. After this historical revolution, all the nations of the Americas began their struggle for independence. Mexico was liberated in 1810, Venezuela in 1817, Columbia in 1819, Peru in 1822, etc. By the time the Book of Mormon appeared, just as recorded in Jacob's prophecy, the era of foreign dominion was coming to a close in America. What begins as prophecy, ends on the pages of history books.

The marvel is that during the course of our lives we

have seen with our own eyes the fulfillment of many of those prophecies. Let's use, as an example, the prophecy about the gathering of Israel in the latter days. Seventy years after the birth of Christ the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, and from that time forth Israel has been scattered among the nations of the world. But God had given a promise to them through prophecy:

"And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; And the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance. Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers..." (2 Nephi 7:13-15).

Through the leadership of the United States and Great Britain, leaders among the Gentile nations, the United Nations made, in 1948, a mandate making the state of Israel a free nation for the first time in nearly 2000 years. It was an action that no one thought possible,

but with God all things are possible. Our generation has seen the fulfillment of this marvelous prophecy. The only thing that detracted from the joy of the Jewish people was the fact that they still had no free access to the city of Jerusalem.

When Christ arrived in the first Christian century among the ancestors of Native Americans in Mexico, there is a great deal of evidence that He appeared in the area near Chiapas or Tabasco where the Mayan people lived. Some of the inhabitants of this area later moved to the Yucatan Peninsula. While Christ was teaching the multitudes He revealed to them many important things that would take place in future generations. An example of this is found in 3 Nephi 9:85:

“Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people, be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance.”

In verse 87 of this passage Jesus continued, *“And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign...”* The Master explained what the sign

would be for this marvelous event. Then in verse 88 He told them that the Gentiles would receive these writings now known as the Book of Mormon. This part of His prophecy was fulfilled in 1829 when the book was translated and printed. His promise continued in verse 89 when He told them that some day the Gentiles would return these writings to the descendants of those hearing His prophecy that day. This was to be the sign that the liberation of Jerusalem was about to be accomplished.

This prophecy was fulfilled in 1951 when Apostle Clarence Wheaton came to Yucatan with the Gospel of Christ and the Book of Mormon. With the baptism of the first believers in 1953 and the calling and ordination of the priesthood among them, the Church of Christ really commenced among the Maya, descendants of those original hearers of the prophecy. The sign for the deliverance of Jerusalem had appeared. Fourteen years later, as a result of the Six-Day War in 1967, Jerusalem was liberated for the first time in nearly 2000 years. This is one of the great prophecies fulfilled in our day, and a definite proof of the divinity and dependability of Book of Mormon prophecy.

In like manner there are many other important

prophecies that shall be fulfilled. When illuminated by the light of day, this natural world appears as the beautiful creation of our God. In the same way, the life of man shall appear a beautiful creation when illuminated by the revealed word of God. Certainly the inhabitants of America should give attention to the prophecies of this sacred book. Of great importance is a prophecy found in the Book of Ether:

“And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them” (Ether 1:31).

REFERENCES

1. Peter Marshall & David Manuel, *The Light on the Glory*, 1977, p. 17.
2. Brownell, *The New World*, Vol. 1, p. 31.
3. Gianni Granzotto, *Christopher Columbus*, 1985, p. 56.
4. op. cit., Marshall & Manuel, p. 269.

Another Point of VIEW



By Jim Gordon

In the Book of Commandments, chapter 48, verse 26 we read,

“And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men’s hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth. And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound; and when the time of the Gentiles is come

in a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness and it shall be the fullness of my gospel; but they receive it not, for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men; and in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled: And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass, until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land....”

This passage of scripture troubles some people. I have heard some men try to explain it, but I would like to put forth a different explanation than I have heard.

In Deuteronomy, chapter 18, verses 18 through 22, we read,

“I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in

his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

The problem here is that

if we use the criterion laid down in Deuteronomy we have to look at the prophecy thus: that the light of the gospel would break forth among the Gentiles, the Gentiles would receive it not, and within the lifetime of some men an overflowing plague would sweep the earth. This prophecy has a built-in time frame that makes it necessary for it to be fulfilled in a lifetime or not at all. But let me suggest that is just what happened. Now let's look and see what occurred.

By April 6, 1830, the Book of Mormon was printed, the priesthood ordained and the Church was organized according to the laws of the state of New York. Thus did the light break forth. By 1844 the gospel can be considered rejected, Joseph Smith had been assassinated and the Church had been persecuted in four states for 14 years.

In the spring of 1918 a light flu epidemic started in Spain and later it was also in America, Britain, France, Japan and China. This would have gone unnoticed in our time except for what followed later that summer. Since it began in Spain it was named "The Flu of the Spanish Lady." The second wave of flu was in Chunking, China, in July. It reached Iran in early August, France in the

middle of August, and on the 28th of that same month a sailor in Boston was diagnosed with the disease. The infection spread over the east coast in days. Some of the sailors from that crew were transferred to Michigan and Illinois and thus the disease was spread to the Midwest.

The pattern was about the same in every city where good health records were kept. The plague would come into the city and spread for one or two weeks. Then followed two weeks of high mortality, after which the disease would subside. Surveys conducted in various parts of the United States revealed an infection rate of 28 per cent.

In most of the third world countries it was worse. In Samoa 80 to 90 per cent of the people were too sick to prepare the food or use the medicine that relief agencies sent, and some starved while others languished who might have been saved.

My mother was very small but claims that she remembered looking out of the window in Lexington, Missouri, and seeing the funeral processions go by at night. She said they buried the dead at night to keep the plague from spreading to the people on the street. All of my mother's family were sick except her older brother, Clinton. He cared for the rest of

the family day and night. In those days if you would phone your order to the grocery store they would deliver your groceries, but during the flu epidemic they would leave them on your porch. If you came outside the door they would leave you without your order.

My grandfather was a mining inspector working out of Washington, D. C. at the time. He traveled the entire nation while working at this job. He told a story about a mine that was shut down because they took the steam shovel to the graveyard. It seems they couldn't dig graves fast enough by hand and the undertaker was falling behind in his work. And of course, they didn't want to leave those bodies lying around to infect others. He visited a town in Kansas where they were nailing pine boxes to bury bodies in because they ran out of coffins, and the coffin companies were swamped with orders. According to Nicholas Denham, Independence, Missouri, was as hard hit as anyplace else.

In the United States the dead numbered 548,452. In North America and Central America combined 1,075,685 was the death toll. In Europe the number of the dead was 2,163,303. Africa and Madagascar were estimated at

1,353,428. Asia was hit hardest with 15,757,363. All told over a billion people were infected of whom 21,642,000 died. It is still the third largest plague in recorded history.

So what does all of this have to do with our prophecy? Just this! A child born on the day the Church was organized, April 6, 1830, would have been between his 88th and 89th birthdays when this disease occurred, which fulfills this prophecy!

Before we stop there is one more aspect of this topic I would like to discuss. This is total speculation on my part, so if some of you choose to not believe this I'll understand. I have read that only two epidemics in recorded history can be compared to the 1918 flu epidemic, so let's look again.

The worst pandemic in history was in Rome in the reign of Justinian. It lasted from 541 until 593 A. D., and took the lives of 100,000,000. Years ago Daniel McGregor established the date of the apostasy as being 570.

Therefore, this plague and the apostasy were occurring simultaneously.

The second greatest plague ravaged this earth from 1346 until 1350. This was called the Black Death. It took the lives of an estimated 37,000,000 in Asia and

25,000,000 in Europe. (I could find no estimates on Africa.) Shortly after the Black Death one of the earliest attempts to reform the Church occurred.

Some romantic writers have pictured the Protestant Reformation as occurring overnight. Actually the idea grew slowly and started long before it burst full force upon Europe.

John Wycliffe was born about 1320. As a young man he studied at Oxford and lived through the Black Death. As this scholar matured and grew eminent he began to criticize the Church of that day. He was the first religious reformer to start a systematic translation of the Bible into English.

Wycliffe held that the Bible was the highest source of truth and organized a group of men to go about the country teaching Bible truth as opposed to church law. The Church did all it could to silence him and those who followed his teachings, but in spite of persecutions the reform idea continued to grow.

Let us sum this all up now. The worst plague ever on earth came during the apostasy. The second worst plague was on the leading edge of the Protestant Reformation. From 1830 until 1844 the world was given a choice of half belief in Christ

or the fullness of the gospel.

By 1918 the world was still rejecting the gospel. If we look at the timing of the first two world wide plagues we realize that each had religious significance. Then when we look at the 1918 Flu epidemic it doesn't take much of a stretch of the imagination to realize that it has religious significance also. It makes sense that it occurred when it did, albeit, it makes sense to us of the restoration and to none else.

As I said earlier this may be coincidence but the closeness of the timing makes it a striking coincidence. May God bless you in your reading is my prayer.

Author's note: I wrote this from material gleaned from three books and an encyclopedia and found very little agreement between them on the exact dates or numbers of people that died in epidemics. So please don't expect the dates to be exact.

REPORT

TEEN CHALLENGE 2000

The 2000 Teen Challenge Youth Camp began this year on Sunday, July 30th. After things get settled...the bus arrives, your cabin is found, the race for the good bunk is over (which the coun-

selor always wins!), and hello's are said to old friends; the camp is officially underway. Each year on the first day of camp we start out with an ice breaker to help everyone get to know each other. This year

we had an activity in which each person was given a name of someone else at the camp. The idea was to find your own name, and then proceed to get as many signatures of other campers and staff on your name tag



as you could in the time allowed. Everyone had a good time and it was an opportunity to find out the names of people that you otherwise may not have known. We had quite a few people there that I certainly wasn't expecting: Rush Limbaugh, Mr. T, and Rocky (all aka Trevor Stancil) to name a few.

Teen Challenge has had its share of injuries in the past but it usually takes a day or two for anyone to need any real medical assistance, but not this year. We started what I hope is not a new tradition on Sunday night with a broken ankle. Cody Riley had a "little" mishap on the jungle gym and ended up in the emer-

gency room on his first day. But that did not stop him from being a part of camp. He was back before we knew it, crutches and all. He didn't want anything to keep him from being there. The other campers really reached out to him, letting him know that their thoughts were with him. They sent a giant banner with signatures and get well wishes to him at the hospital, and quite a few used their time and energy to help Cody in any way they could by making sure that he had a good time, and didn't miss out on any of what camp has to offer. I think Cody really proved how much this camp means to the young people.

He was willing to endure a lot just to be a part of it.

This year was the start of something new called "Buzz Challenges." The campers were given a challenge every night for the next day, and if the challenge was met, Buzz agreed to allow himself to be a part of their reward, part of which involved wearing a grass skirt and leading us in our morning exercises (something he did do, by the way!!!). The challenges were taken very seriously by the campers. The possibility of seeing Buzz in a grass skirt or with purple hair proved to be great motivation.

Another first this year was the introduction of the



slip and slide as an afternoon activity. If the idea of throwing yourself down on the hard ground, sliding across a wet tarp and landing in the mud sounds like a good time, and it did to quite a few campers and staff alike, then this is definitely the activity for you. (I must say I was quite impressed with my cabin and their sliding skills. Six out of seven of my girls were out there showing everyone else how it was done...just wanted to let them know I was proud!!) Although the people involved were having a good time I think those of us on the sidelines were enjoying it just as much. There's something about watching little campers, and little counselors, going face first into the mud. When it was all done everyone walked away with a smile (and mud) on their face and a few battle scars.

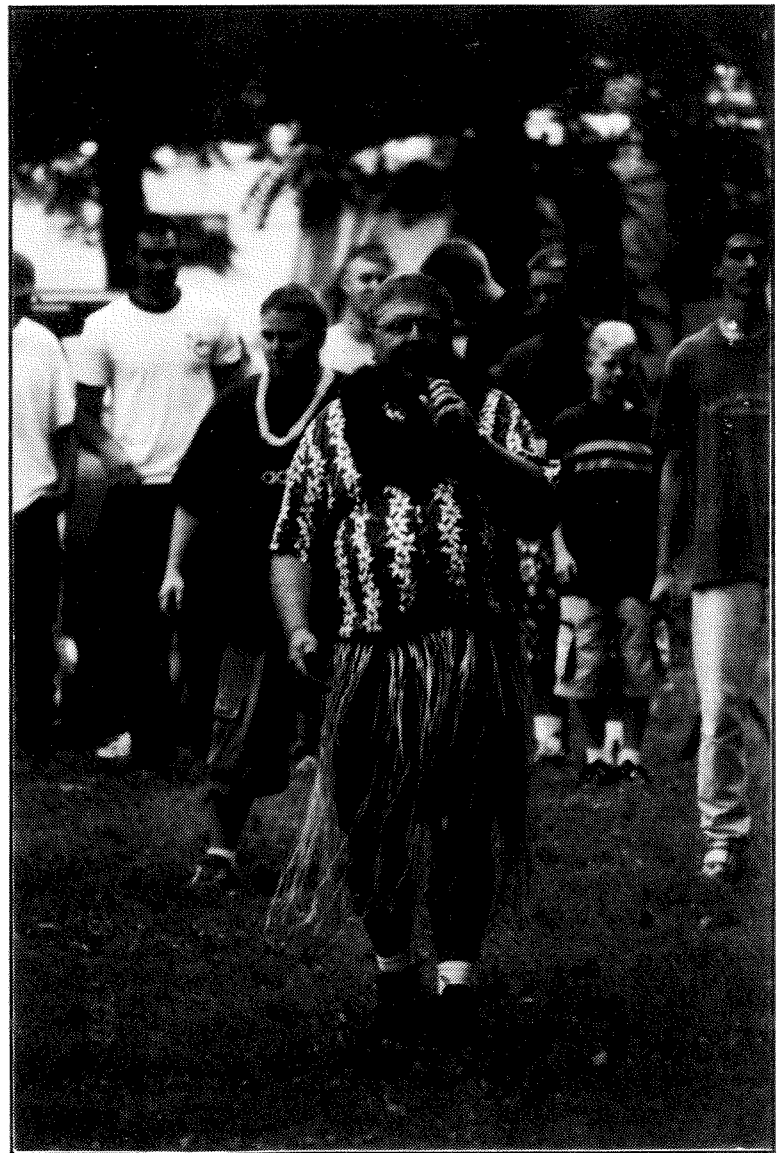
As always the week is full of study classes and fellowship, but the culmination of the week always seems to be the Thursday night campfire. There were many wonderful and uplifting testimonies given by the youth of our church, as well as some cries for help, but what better place to ask for it than with a group of people you know will take your needs to the Lord in prayer? We heard people express their love for each

other and for the camp. They also made mention of quite a few things they had learned in their study and quest classes that had really touched upon a need they had in their lives and had helped them to address it. I know this service really means a lot to the campers and to the staff.

This year, as it has always been, was a week filled with things that make great memories. A week where

the young people from across the country had an opportunity to strengthen their faith, increase their knowledge of the scriptures, and have a lot fun at the same time. A week in which friendships that will last a lifetime can be, and are, made. A week that will never be forgotten.

Rebecca Oar

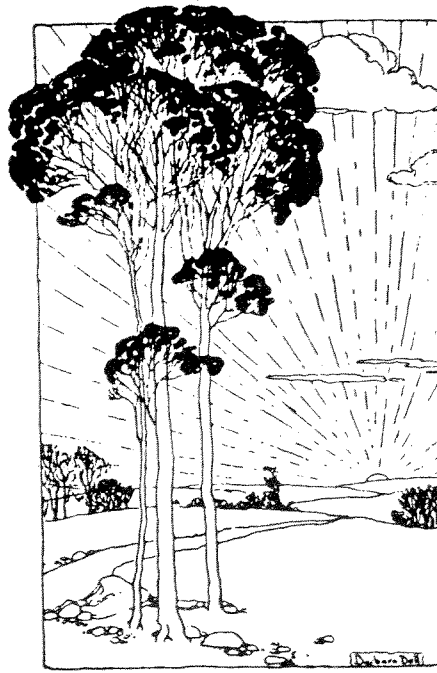


Comforted

Brothers and Sisters,
The testimony I would like to tell you about happened many years ago. First, for those who do not know me, I would like to tell you a little about myself. I am the youngest of three daughters born to George and Cynthia Miller. I was very blessed to be born and raised in the Church of Christ. I was raised with the knowledge that God is alive and is the same yesterday, today and forever. My dad died when he was only 45 years old, after being in the hospital for several months. My mother and I were very close, as we learned to depend on each other during this time.

Five years after my dad died, my mother became very ill due to high blood pressure and kidney failure. She was put into the hospital and we all spent many days and nights there. My husband and I went home to get a little rest and had not been home long when we received a call to return to the hospital as soon as possible. When we were not far from the hospital, I had my eyes closed,

my head leaned back against the seat and I was praying. All



PATHLIGHTS

of a sudden, my mother's voice spoke to me. She said three things to me that are as real to me today as when she spoke them to me and they were my strength and hope to help me through that time of loss and a promise of the wonderful plan God has for all His people. She said, "I'm not alone. I'm so happy. You wouldn't want me back would you?"

All I could do was shake my head no. I knew she was not alone, as I could feel the presence of someone with her. My mother's voice was so happy and excited I will never forget it. I couldn't ask her to come back and as I was shaking my head no, she and her companion left so fast I could just feel the speed of their departure.

Later, when we arrived at the hospital my sisters told me that my mother had passed away. I told them that I already knew because mother had spoken to me, as we were on our way back to the hospital. This testimony is as wonderful to me today as it was on December 9, 1964, when God so blessed me with it.

*Your sister in Christ,
Georgia (Miller) Trudgen
Bradley Michigan Local*

—Posted on the CCEG

PATHLIGHTS

“There is Still Time”

For several years, until I was in my early 20's, God had no place in my life.

I was a drinker, gambler and smoker—not a likely candidate for the Church of Christ. One day I started taking stock of my life and did not like what I saw. I wrote to mother and was put in contact with an elder in the Church of Christ.

My life started to change but I struggled; for several months I had one foot in the world and the other in the gospel. I loved to visit and study about the gospel but the world still had its pull on me. I was still, from time to time, doing many of the things that displeased God. One night I had a dream that changed my life.

In this dream, I was sitting at a square game table and sitting across from me was the man in whose home we often played poker. In the dimly lit background, I saw what appeared to be a room filled with many people dancing and drinking. There was music and laughter and because of the dimness of the scene I could not make out any faces.

All of a sudden over the table a bright light came on and a voice said to me, “There is still time.” The light immediately went out and the same voice said, “Not every one who cries Lord, Lord will enter into the kingdom of Heaven.” The dream ended.

When I awoke this dream was still vivid in my mind and I knew it was the voice of the Lord who had spoken to me. Within a few months I had changed my life and was baptized.

Ken Oar

—Posted on the CCEG

In the Lord's Hands

My parents raised my brothers and I in a sheltered and loving environment. We did not have much of this world's goods but we were content. Because of prayer and the knowledge of Christ's promises to us, written in scripture, and because we also had support of our Church of Christ family, I do not remember having much care or any real sorrow.

But there is one incident that I will always remember as being a great favor of the Lord to me. When I was a teenager, my bedroom was upstairs in my parent's home. The stairs were enclosed with a door at the bottom that was kept closed. One time as I was coming down the stairs from my bedroom I tripped and fell from about the third step from the top. As I was falling I remembered thinking that I would probably break my neck if I hit that closed door at the bottom. I was not in the least afraid. Just at the moment of probable impact, my brother Randy opened the door to go up the stairs. He was very much surprised to find me in his arms.

I know only the Lord could have coordinated these things so I did not even receive a scratch, but more importantly, every time I think about it, I am reminded of His love and His power to save us. It also makes me realize how critical daily, and even “constant” prayer is to our well being and for those whom we care.

Darl Temple

—Posted on the CCEG

NEWS

COLLINS, MISSOURI

Greetings! from hot, dry Missouri. Of course, we've just come through August so I suppose this is fairly normal for this time of year.

I've noticed how quiet the early mornings are when I'm walking. The birds used to be singing their break-of-day concerts, but already many have gone on their way and won't be back until spring. I'll miss them. The Bible speaks of being able to read the signs of the times as we do the seasons and such. We must be prepared—watching and waiting with oil in our lamps. Our Savior's return is amazingly close—or am I just imagining things?!

Elders Rick Olson and Bob Oldham came and gave their presentation on the validity of the Church of Christ: its set-up, purpose, history, etc. We appreciated the time and effort they put into this to teach and share it with us.

Also Apostle Buzz Brickhouse brought some of the slides and pictures of the missionary trip he and Apostle Brian McIndoo took while in Kenya, Africa—amazing testimonies of lives prepared by the hand of God to receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. What a great joy to witness!

And what did you think of the Missouri Reunion? Allen and I were able to attend and I thought it was marvelous. I wish it were possible to go to all the reunions, because I read the reports and know they were equally wonderful. The hand of Almighty God is moving among His people and He is trying to prepare our hearts. Oh that we can remember the sermons and hear the whispers from the testimonies, as we live our "everyday lives" and go about doing our "stuff."

On July 30th Allen and I were thoroughly surprised by all our friends for our 25th Wedding Anniversary. This event was master-minded and carried out by our sly daughter, Shawna Herd, and several sneaky helpers, who, I might add, played this thing out very well! What a joy to walk into the back of the church and be greeted by so many smiling faces, after having just greeted 20 or 30 others on the front lawn! (I can't imagine what Shawna must have had to pay them to come!) And to make me look even dumber—I had gone with her and actually helped her pick out the decorations—for "someone" else! Thank you all so very much. We loved every minute of it!

Here, for you to ponder, are a few quotes and thoughts from recent sermons.

- *Slowly we're caught up in tangible treasures.*
- *A remorse of conscience is pretty healthy.*
- *Meaningless—come to church; good fellowship—go home and life continues on.... What value are you to the Kingdom?*
- *The devil is a gentleman who never goes where he is not welcome!*
- *If we do what we can—God will do what we can't!*
- *What we do in our lives will either bless us or HAUNT us!*
- *We have covenanted with Jesus Christ, but have made a commitment to one another.*
- *Giving is receiving and receiving is giving.... Think about it.*
- *Be aware of what you portray in your life. We don't want to do anything, wear anything, say anything that would be a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters.*
- *God has a plan for our lives, but we can change His plans by—our choices!*

■ *You can't break a law of God, but you can break yourself against it!*

*Your reporter,
Czerna Kauffman*

COWGILL, MISSOURI

Greetings to all our brothers and sisters in the Church of Christ.

We have had a quiet, peaceful summer here at our little church. We have a new speaker at our services. Bro. Trevor Wrath has given us some wonderful sermons. We also enjoy our visitors from time to time.

Trevor and Lisa and their sons Ian and David flew to the northwestern states in July to visit relatives. We are thankful they had a safe and enjoyable trip and it's good to have them back.

Our little church was badly in need of repairs so on September 30 we were blessed and thankful when a number of the members from Independence came with equipment and willing hands to put new white siding on the building, as well as a new roof and other miscellaneous jobs that needed to be done, such as a new front door with a new stoop over it.

The sisters of the church, including Irene Case, got together and prepared three meals for the men. We enjoyed this very much. We are small but we love to cook.

We feel very blessed and thankful to have this done. It looks very nice on this hilltop.

May God bless this church and all those who came and helped. We invite everyone to come and worship with us.

*Reporter,
Elizabeth Crist*

NEWS

RAVENNA, MICHIGAN

There's a hint of fall in the air in Michigan as we notice that the days and nights are getting cooler and the days a little shorter; the trees are beginning to exchange their summer green foliage for the beautiful autumn colors of red, orange, brown, and gold; and the kids are, some reluctantly—making their way back to the classrooms. God blessed us with a beautiful summer and fall, for which we are grateful.

On July 30 we welcomed a new member into our local when Dana Brantner, young son of Doug Brantner, was baptized by his grandfather, Elder Gale Brantner, and confirmed by Elders Brantner and Aaron Heath. Following the baptism at Crockery Lake, the hand of fellowship was extended to our new brother and our Sunday service was held at the lake, cut short by the rain which sent us scurrying for shelter. We ask an interest in your prayers for this young brother and his family as he begins his new life as a member of the body of Christ.

We enjoyed having Brother Charles and Sister Jeanne Brantner join us on August 27 during one of their visits to Michigan. Of course, Brother Charles was pressed into service as preacher of the hour.

On Saturday, September 23, several of our local met with the folks at Bradley for the annual pig roast and potluck hosted by Adam and Sue Porter. Bad weather caused the moving of the pig roast to the church at Bradley from the park at Middleville, where it was originally scheduled. In spite of the weather, there was a good turnout with lots of good food and fellowship.

September was the annual business meeting, with Elder Aaron Heath being retained as pastor for another year and the

rest of the officers being reelected for another year also.

We would like to extend belated congratulations and best wishes to Brother Michael Horn, son of Sister Annette Bazinaw, and Sister Amber Oudsema, daughter of Sister Cherye and Kurt Oudsema, on their recent graduation from high school. May God's blessings continue to attend these two young people as they begin their college journey this fall.

Our ministry have been quite active in the missionary field the past few months. Elder Max and Sister Vivian Spencer attended the New York reunion in July. They also attended and participated in the Teen Challenge in August and the Tri-State reunion in September. Brother Bruce and Sister Deb Haines met with Elder Andy and Sister Carol Brantner and held services with the folks in Wisconsin the weekend of July 23. Elder Aaron Heath and Brother Bruce Haines drove to Wisconsin to spend the weekend of September 10 with the saints there.

It is the desire of the people of our local, although small in number to become increasingly active with other locals and scattered members in spreading the gospel and ministering to members of the church wherever and whenever possible.

Until next time, our prayers are for each and every one of God's people and for the continued going forth of His gospel to all the world. God bless.

*Your Sister in Christ,
June Haines, Reporter,
Ravenna Local*

MOGOLLON, ARIZONA

Greetings brothers and sisters in all the land. We pray that God is delivering you daily from the battle that is being waged all around us. The enemy is moving

his players into position. Spiritual wickedness is the rule. The day of fierce battle is yet to be fought. Daily we must put on the whole armour of God to stand. You are the bride of Christ, build your relationship. Honor and cherish the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Savior.

Again He has looked over a summer of activities. We just finished Camp for All Ages in Heber. It was kind of a small gathering this year, missing some of the young people because of work schedules, others traveling in the ministry, none of our native friends attended this year, but God gave us beautiful weather and wonderful fellowship. We were truly blessed when Joel Yates didn't break his back or anything else when climbing rocks and the rock gave way, and that Robert Grimm was not crushed under him, but somehow was gotten out of the way.

Joel and Jenny ministered to us in Payson; we miss Jim and Kim who are traveling and visiting other members. May the Lord bless their way.

Bob and Liz Willig lost their mother to brain tumors. She died peacefully at Bob's home on August 27. Alice had recently been attending the Church of Christ and reading her Book of Mormon. She had a very sweet spirit, she didn't suffer, so this was a blessing. Our God has a great plan; mourning will turn into joy when we see His promises fulfilled in the resurrection.

So I finish with a prayer in my heart for us all, that we finish the race that is set before us as the devil is trying to destroy our lives and those around us, oh yes! He thinks he has us in check, but the Lord is not idle. He is working, building up His ranks and will finish the plan with a victorious "Checkmate." Hold fast brothers and sisters, Hope is about to appear.

*Love in Christ,
Kathy Cloyd*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PHOENIX REUNION

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently

lead those that are with young" Isaiah 40:9, 11.

The Phoenix Local wishes to invite all to come and join us in worshipping our Lord on Friday, November 24th through Sunday, November 26th, for our annual reunion.

Please contact the following people to help you make preparations for your visit with us:

Gordon McCann,
Pastor
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(602) 569-2341

Bob Hedrick
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Glenn Orsted
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Phoenix, AZ 85024
(623) 780-8764

YUCATAN REUNION

We invite you to our reunion to celebrate our 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Church in Mexico.

This event will be held in the city of Merida, on the 25th of February, 2001, beginning at 9:00 a.m. There will be preaching services and a special music program.

Please let us know if you are coming. For more information contact:

Placido Koyoc Matu
calle 24 #99 H x 17 y 19
Yobain Yucatan Mexico
Phone: 50-14-42
e-mail: p_matu@hotmail.com

We're looking forward to seeing you. Please come and worship with us on this special day.

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CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 2001 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 1. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 2. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on March 30 & 31. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 2001 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 6, 7 and 8, at Independence, Missouri.

CHURCH OF CHRIST PUBLICATIONS

Send all orders to the Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472

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*Note: Donations will be accepted to cover postage & printing costs. (Multiple copies available: 6-50¢/100-\$5.85 plus postage)

Church of Christ

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Specify program(s) wanted, anticipated dates of use, and the make of your projector. Slide projectors and tape players are not provided except in the Independence, Missouri, or Phoenix, Arizona, areas.

Allow adequate advance time for handling and shipping, and for your own preview of the programs. Write to the AVVAA Committee, Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472.

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