

# 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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## Three Things

I know three things must ever be,  
To keep a nation strong and free:  
One is a hearthstone bright and dear  
With busy, happy loved ones near;  
One is a ready heart and hand  
To love and serve and keep the land;  
One is a worn and beaten way  
To where the people go to pray.  
So long as these are kept alive,  
Nation and people will survive.  
God keep them, always, everywhere,  
The hearth, the flag, the place of prayer.

—from *Scrapbook*

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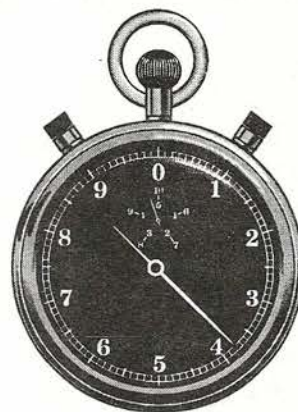
## ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.



## SERMON

# It is TIME



By Elder Joseph Smith

Ether 1:109-112: *“Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will shew unto you the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief. Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief. Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you; Yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel....”*

Again it is my pleasure to have the opportunity to address this congregation this morning. I do greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. If you have come here this morning with the idea of snoozing through this sermon, then let me invite you to stretch out and begin your nap. If you wish to day-dream let the dreams begin. But if you have come here with the idea of learning, or perhaps the hope that you might gain a little tidbit of knowledge from what I will bring to you, then get yourself a pen or pencil and paper and your scriptures and follow me.

As I read in the scripture reading there is much that has been held back from us because of unbelief and hardness of heart. Hardness of heart comes because we like to put one foot in the Kingdom of God, and keep the other one in Babylon. To me Babylon is a way of life that does not glorify God but rather glorifies man. Unbelief comes because we blindly determine or judge all things by our traditional thinking. Brothers and sisters, if you believe in God, believe His words. If you believe in Christ believe also His words. Today you may not believe every-

**Hardness of heart comes because we like to put one foot in the Kingdom of God, and keep the other one in Babylon.**

thing I tell you, but believe this: What God has purposed, what He has promised, will be done. We may not totally rend that veil of unbelief this morning, but I hope when I am through that you will have a better understanding of the work of the Lord in these last days, and the purpose of the Restoration of the Church of Christ.

Throughout the scriptures there is mention made of the covenant made by the Lord to the Children of Israel. The prophet Mormon in his book, chapter 4:26:

*“And he that shall breathe out wrath and strifes against the work of the Lord, and against the*



*covenant people of the Lord, who are the house of Israel, and shall say, We will destroy the work of the Lord, and the Lord will not remember his covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel, the same is in danger to be hewn down and cast into the fire; for the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled."*

Now a covenant can be so enhanced by modern day scholars as to make it complicated. We don't want to make anything complicated. A covenant is a promise, a sacred promise sometimes, and sometimes not so sacred. Now Moroni has said here that the eternal purposes of the Lord will roll on until all His promises are fulfilled, regardless of the past history of this Restoration movement. We need to plant this firmly in our minds, for the adversary uses the tool of doubt to lead us astray. Once you get something understood stick to it, and change it only when you can improve on it. Settle this in your minds: God is going to accomplish His purpose.

3 Ne 13:61: *"Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel, for behold the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn...."*

We need to know and understand this covenant made to the

house of Israel. The whole purpose of the covenants God made to Abraham was to enhance the relationship between them. That Abraham and his seed through Isaac and Jacob would become God's chosen people, and He would become their God.

Gen 17: 12-13 (God speaking to Abraham): *"And thou shalt observe to keep all my covenants wherein I covenanted with thy fathers; and thou shalt keep the commandments which I have given thee with mine own mouth, and I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, a land wherein thou art a stranger; all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*

### And I will be their God

**T**his is the whole purpose of the covenants God has made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the children of Israel. That He would become their God.

Ezek. 32:22-23: *"And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them*

*out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God."*

In general, most of the Restoration churches typically believe that the purpose of the Lord in restoring the Church in these last days was to bring salvation to mankind, and to prepare a people worthy of becoming Zion. While this is undoubtedly one of the reasons, if we look further into the scriptures we find that is only a part of the grand scheme. Let us go to 1 Cor. 15:24:

*"Afterward cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power."*

And the following from Zephaniah 3:8-13:

*"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent. ... In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will*



*take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth...."*

It would seem to me that His purpose is to bring the Kingdom to perfection and then deliver it to God the Father. The Kingdom is made up of souls that have obtained salvation through obedience to God's commandments, meeting the requirements of the ordinances of His doctrines of faith, repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom represents the fullness of the work of Christ. We know that Christ's work consists of more than just the sacrifice on the cross.

With the thought of Christ's endeavor to bring the Kingdom to perfection on our minds let us look at another scripture.

*Micah 4:1-2: "But in the last days (we are there) it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his*

*ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."*

What this tells me is that the House of the Lord is going to be established in the last days, and that it is the House of the God of Jacob. When it is established people will see something there that will cause them to want to go up to the House of the God of Jacob. WHY? So that they can learn of His ways and walk in His paths. Let us search on and find what it is that they see.

*Mat 5:15-18: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth; but if the salt shall lose its savor, wherewith shall the earth be salted? the salt shall thenceforth be good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Therefore, let your light so shine before this world, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

He still wants to be the God of Israel.

In 3 Nephi 5:60 Christ again made this declaration and in both cases it was directed to Israelites. It is a well known fact that Israel

was chosen as God's special people. One reference will suffice.

*1 Pet 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light...."*

They are chosen to show forth the praises of Him, or to "Let your light so shine before this world..." so that the world "may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." To be an example of His marvelous grace, to show the fullness of His righteousness. WHY??? That some might see and say, Come let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob. Well let us see if it is Israelites that will glorify God in the House of the Lord in the last days.

*Isa 62:1-4: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."*

Notice that here the prophecy changes from the personal. The first person is dropped and the words are directed at the second.

*"And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; (who will be saying let us go up) and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand*



*of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Delightful, and thy land Union; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."*

The King James version of the Bible does not give as clear a view of "Zion" as the restoration peoples know it. Much of our understanding of Zion is derived from the Inspired Translation and the Book of Mormon. There is some information on this subject found also in the revelations. While the term Zion means a lot of things to many different people, basically it is understood to be the city where Christ will dwell after His return. Would this not be the location of the House of the God of Jacob that Mica spoke of? This idea is in conjunction with the following from the Holman Bible Dictionary: "The most common usage of Zion was to refer to the city of God in the new age (Isa. I :27; 28:16; 33:5) (KJ version JFS). Zion was understood, also, to refer to the heavenly Jerusalem (Isa. 60:14; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 14:1) (KJ Version JFS), the place where the Messiah would appear at the end of time. The glorification of the messianic community will take place on the holy mountain of "Zion." Oh my goodness! How well that last line fits with the information found in Mica 4:1 and 2, that I just quoted above.

In Isa. 62 above, we see the determination of the Lord to establish His righteousness in Zion.

Notice that at a time when the world is to be very wicked, and the Lord's sword hangs over them, He says that the angels are waiting to reap down the world. He says "...For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace...." It says He will not rest until His "...righteousness and His salvation..." goes forth from Zion. From this it would appear that the Lord intends to establish a righteous people worthy to be called Zion. That they are to be an example unto the world is obvious in the reference from Mica 4:1 & 2:

***"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob...."***

Why will they say this? "*The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory...*" Isa 62:1-4. What was it Zephaniah said? "*...For my determination is to gather the nations....*" Why? That they might see. Also did you notice the quotation about the land of Zion: "*...called Delightful, and thy land Union....*"

I believe that with the few references I have given here we can conclude several things. 1. In the last days, (which I believe we are well into) the Lord is going to set up a Kingdom called the house of the God of Jacob, which will be made up of Israelites, which the prophet Nathan told King David the Lord would "plant." 2. He is determined that it is to be such a place of righteousness that it will impress the whole world. He is not going to rest until the "*righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation*

*thereof as a lamp that burneth.*" 3. The name of the place is called Zion. But He does not give us a clear indication so far, as to where this will occur. Let us see if we can find where this is to be.

2 Sam. 7:10: "***Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them anymore, as before time....***"

God is still working to bring a people who will have Him for their God, not half heartedly but who will have Him with full purpose of heart. King David had proposed to build a house for the Lord to dwell in, for the Ark had been in a tent since the children of Israel had come up out of Egypt. The Lord spoke through Nathan the prophet showing some of the things He had planned for Israel. You will notice here two words that are important to our study: "appoint" and "plant." He is telling King David that He is going to "appoint" a place, and bring Israel and "plant" them in the place He appoints. Let us look at something else...

Doctrine and Covenants, Sec 57:1a-b: "Hearken, O ye elders of my church saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together; according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the Saints: wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the



city of Zion.”

In the history of the Church we find that in the spring of 1831, the Lord had commanded Joseph Smith and several elders of the Church to make their journey to the land of Missouri. They made their trip by carriage, by horseback, and by canal boat to St. Louis, Missouri. From that place they walked the distance to Independence, Missouri, arriving there about the last of July 1831. Not long after they had arrived this Section 57 was given. In the first two verses we find the statement that this “... *is the land which I have appointed*” fulfilling the promise made to King David some 3000 years before. “...*And the place for the city of Zion....*” “...*The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel*” (Isa 60:14).

One can almost visualize the tears of joy that must have flowed down the cheeks of these brethren. After 3000 or so years, the promise to King David was fulfilled, the location for the establishment of the house of the God of Jacob was appointed and consecrated, and the work of the Lord had begun in these last days. I still believe that the land of Zion, as was located here at this time in 1831, will be established as the Lord said, and the City of the Lord, the New Jerusalem, will be built up in the place where it was appointed and consecrated by the hand of the Lord's servant, Joseph Smith. Between this future time and now I believe we will see much tribulation. At the same time I must say that our responsibilities remain the same. We are the “salt,” the city built upon a hill, a candle put upon a

candlestick, the light that is to shine.

We are not called to this responsibility because we are righteous. We are called to become righteous. For this purpose the Book of Mormon was brought forth with the “fullness of the everlasting gospel” with a clarity of wording, that we might understand. To bring us to righteousness, the Authority of the Priesthood was restored along with the ordinances of the Doctrine of Christ. After hundreds of years of darkness our eyes were opened to divine light, the opportunity to be born into the family of God was again found upon the earth. Christ restored through Joseph Smith, Jr. and several others the Church of Christ, and these brethren were charged with a tremendous responsibility. [Chapter 1, Book of Commandments]

**“...And also those to whom these commandments were given might have power to lay the foundation of his church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity, and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I the Lord am well pleased....”**

Thus was the foundation laid for the establishing of the House of the God of Jacob. This is the good news gospel of the Kingdom.

A while back a young lady told me she had heard that I was a fiery preacher. I suppose in some respects I am, for there is a fire in my heart that heats my zeal. There is a yearning to see the Saints of God move forward

towards a condition worthy for the Lord to begin to bring about that House of The God of Jacob. Fifty years ago, when I first came to Independence, the membership of the Church of Christ was between two and three thousand. What is it today 23/24 hundred? My heart hungers for the command to “*Rise up O Israel, awake from your lethargy, the time is come when God... shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.*”

We have waited long, it is time to cease the waiting, to take up the cause of Zion and push forward towards that House in the top of the mountains, Yea the House of the God of Jacob, and submit ourselves to be His people that He might become our God. It is time that we learn to love the Lord our God, with all our hearts, minds, might, and strength, to put Him and His work first in our lives. And to learn to love one another even as Jesus loved us. It is time for our light to so shine that others might see good works that glorify God. It is time for us to “*show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.*”

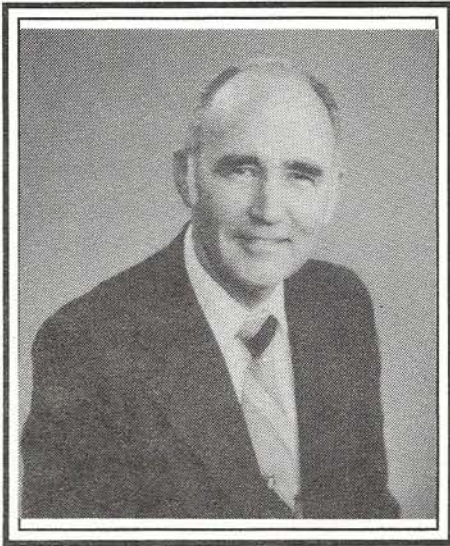
It is time....

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# THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE APOSTLE JOHN



By Apostle Don McIndoo

What shall be presented in this study is an overview of *historicist* thought and writing about those things that were to take place in the world after the days of the Apostle John. Rejecting the *preterist*, the *spiritual* and the *futuristic* approaches (See Section Two, Alternate Points of View) to Revelation, I look to the *historicist* to help me find some firm, stable ground within the quagmire of ideas that permeates the religious world

## SECTION FOUR: THAT WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER

today, especially concerning this book. We find differing points of view even among the historicists, and we may need to further modify some of their thought to make it applicable to what we now know to be true. This overview is but our beginning point. Our spiritual journey begins with Chapter Six of the Apocalypse.

This is the chapter of the well-known "Horsemen of the Apocalypse." Let us remember that the approach of the *historicist* is "to align specific historic events with certain details in Revelation." Like a good writer, John often introduces each new portion of the Revelation and ends this

"For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

portion with a concluding, or summarizing, statement. So it was with chapter six as the first six seals were opened. He summarized this chapter with these words: "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:17). So we see the opening of these seals is all about the wrath of God being poured out upon those in the world. That will help us interpret the scenes correctly.

Simply stated, the pertinent question is "Upon whom shall the wrath of God first fall?" When we have the answer to that question, we know in what point of history to look for the fulfillment of this portion of



Revelation. At a point in this chapter, with the opening of the fifth seal, John arrives at a scene unfolding in heaven (Revelation 6:9-11) where he sees the souls of Christian martyrs who had given their lives for their testimony of Christ. By whom were these believers martyred? Christianity, quite by design, had her birthing during the very time when the fourth great beast of Daniel 7 had sway over the world. That beast was Rome. Her pride and pagan beliefs and, above all, her demand for emperor worship, made her an enemy, both to God and His people. Yet I said by God's design, for it would be by the Roman conquest of the known world, by Roman law and peace and by Roman roads that Christianity would be carried to the Gentiles, thus fulfilling the great purpose of Jesus Christ (See Matthew 28:19 and Acts 9:15).

**4** Let us look again to the Book of Mormon for help in answering this all-important question, "Upon whom was the wrath of God first to fall?" Nephi, in his vision of world history, saw this beginning of the Christian era. He also saw the enemy of Christ and His church. He simply stated it like this: **"I saw the multitudes of the earth, that they were gathered together to fight**

**against the apostles of the Lamb..."** (1 Nephi 3:88). This was Rome that Nephi saw; a nation that did not even exist when he had departed from Jerusalem. He described this enemy of God's people in the following manner:

**"And I beheld that they were in a large and spacious building, like unto the building which my father saw. Behold the world and the wisdom thereof; And it came to pass that I saw... that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world..."** (verses 90, 91, and 93). He also saw the growing enmity of the Jewish leadership toward the new Christian movement, and their willingness to use Roman law and authorities to persecute Christ's people. However, by the time the apostle had received this Revelation of Jesus Christ (circa A.D. 96), the wrath of God had already fallen upon the Jewish nation; Jerusalem had been destroyed by Rome in A.D. 70 and her people carried into captivity.

**5** So what was seen by Nephi now relates, in John's day, to the Roman state. He tells what is going to happen to this great enemy of Christ and His work. As we are accustomed to expect when

reading the Book of Mormon, he states quite simply, **"And it fell; and the fall thereof was exceeding great. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying, Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb"** (verses 94 and 95).

**6** So I conclude **"that which shall be hereafter"** will begin with the wrath of God poured out upon the Roman Empire, bringing about its great collapse. Revelation 1:1 tells us its purpose is to show to the servants of Christ **"things which must shortly come to pass."** It wouldn't do justice to the English language to suppose that these events would be 1,800 years in the distant future. We would naturally look for their beginning in the time just subsequent to the days of John and the reign of Domitian. So the *historicist* looks to the history of Rome for those events that will correspond to those described in chapter six of Revelation. All the classical *historicists*, together with George Njeim of the RLDS and M. Harvey Seibel of the Church of Christ are in basic agreement about the removal of the first four seals and



their interpretation. Others of the Church of Christ have espoused a *futurist* view.

## CHAPTER SIX

**I** John saw the Lamb remove one of the seals and was spoken to by one of the living creatures: **"Come and see"** (Revelation 6:1). John looked and beheld a white horse. Upon it was a rider carrying a bow and wearing a crown. He went forth conquering and to conquer. There are five symbols used in describing this first event:

a. A horse—This symbolizes fleetness, strength and war.

**"The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord"** (Proverbs 21:31).

**"Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle"** (Zechariah 10:3).

b. Its color was white—This denotes innocence, prosperity or triumph.

To the Hebrew white was chosen to represent triumph. **"Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment..."** (Judges 5:10).

c. Its rider held a bow—This is the symbol of the warrior, the hunter, one who has power over others.

"Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (Genesis 48:22).

"But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob..." (Genesis 49:24).

d. He was given a crown—This denotes that he would be victorious.

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown..." (1 Corinthians 9:25).

e. He went forth conquering—He had the attitude of a conqueror.

**L**The *historicist* equates this white horse with the Roman Empire during the reigns of the five emperors succeeding Domitian, from A.D. 96 to the time when Commodus made peace with the Germans in A.D. 180. Those classical *historicists* who lived after 1787, when Edward Gibbon finished publishing his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, relied heavily upon this classic work. Their major concern is, therefore, can they find in

the pages of history the unfolding of events that can be adequately portrayed by the symbolism used in Revelation?

**B** Albert Barnes says this of the famous historian: **"...a writer who, skeptic as he was, seems to have been raised up by Divine Providence to search deeply into historic records, and to furnish an inexhaustible supply of materials in confirmation of the fulfillment of the prophecies, and of the truth of revelation."**<sup>1</sup> And what did this famous historian have to say about this period of time that could relate to the very symbols John used to describe these events?

**4** The Emperor Trajan **"...undertook an expedition against the nations of the East; He descended the River Tigris, in triumph, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian Gulf. Every day the astonished senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations that acknowledged his sway."**<sup>2</sup> Under Hadrian **"...the empire flourished in peace and prosperity."**<sup>3</sup> **"If a man were called to fix the period of the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most**



happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus."<sup>4</sup> Barnes also states that during this period, "The crown was...the distinguishing badge of the Roman emperor."<sup>5</sup> Later it would be the diadem. Had John lived after this period of history he described in verse 2 of chapter 6 and seen all that had transpired, he could not have chosen more accurate symbols to describe this era.

5 John's attention is caught by the voice of the second living creature, who calls him again to "Come and see" (Revelation 6:3). Now he sees a fiery red horse. To the rider of this horse was given a sword. It was granted unto him to take peace from the earth. In the Greek the word peace was accompanied with an article; hence, take *the peace* from the earth. Finally, people would be killing one another. Again there are five symbols that John uses to describe this period of history. These symbols seem quite self explanatory.

a. The horse—Symbolic of fleetness, strength and war.

b. It is fiery red—This denotes carnage, discord and bloodshed.

c. A sword—An emblem of authority, bloodshed and slaughter.

d. To take away peace—The former peace replaced by discord and bloodshed.

e. Kill one another—Implies internal chaos, strife and bloodshed.

6 Thinking of what time period John was speaking, it is natural to think of that which followed the opening of the first seal. The *historicalist* relates the appearance of this fiery red horse to the reign of the emperor Commodus, A.D. 180 until the A.D. 284. We now look to the historians to describe this time period, to see if it indeed relates to John's description of his vision.

7 Gibbons devotes 147 pages to this period of Roman history, beginning with Commodus. He writes that during the first three years of his reign "**his hands were yet unstained with blood.**" But then, he wrote, "**When Commodus had once tasted human blood, he was incapable of pity or remorse.**"<sup>6</sup> Commodus was assassinated by his own court, as they feared for their very lives. The historian, Sismondi, in his *Fall of the Roman Empire*, writes, "**With Commodus' death commenced the third and**

**most calamitous period. It lasted ninety-two years, from 193 to 284. During that time, thirty-two emperors, and twenty-seven pretenders to the empire, alternately hurried each other from the throne, by incessant civil warfare.**"<sup>7</sup> This state continued until Diocletian ascended to the throne in 284 A.D. Just as pronounced as the difference between a white and red horse was the difference between these two periods of Roman history. This last period saw the beginning of the collapse of the great empire.

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1. Barnes, Albert, Notes on the New Testament: Revelation, 1851, Glasgow, p. 142.
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# WHAT'S in a NAME?

Lesson: Naomi

Scripture References: Ruth 1:20-21; Ruth 4:13-17; 2 Nephi 13:16-31; John 10:27-28

**H**ave you ever taken the time to look up your name in a baby name book? Like many other parents, I poured over them while pregnant with my children looking for just the right name that embodied all the qualities I prayed my children would possess. While Jim was pretty comfortable with the girl names I chose he had something to say about boy names. He wanted a son with the middle name of Ammon like his grandfather, so we worked together for the right combination for a strong boy name. We settled on Seth Ammon. However, in the throws of labor, I raised up off the bed of my affliction, grabbed Jim by the beard and said, "His name WILL be Chase Walker!" He smiled and agreed. Today, Chase is proud to tell people he is named after our president, George Walker Bush.

Proverbs 22:1 says, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." The story of Naomi is intertwined with the story of Ruth and is a beautiful example of leading someone to the Lord through a Godly daily walk.

But Naomi, whose name means "pleasant" or "my joy" also teaches us the value of a name.

## HER STORY:

**N**aomi was the wife of Elimelech, the mother of Mahlon and Chillion. Originally from Bethlehem-judah, a famine caused the family to migrate to Moab, a neighbor to the east of Israel who shared a similar history and language (they were descendants of Lot) but NOT worship (Moabites worshipped Chemosh).

In Moab, Elimelech died. His sons took wives: Chillion chose Orpah and Mahlon married Ruth. The family lived in Moab for ten years and then Mahlon and Chillion died. While the Law of Moses provided for widows in the home of their sons, Naomi was without providers and so was without support—destitute. Knowing that the famine at home had passed, Naomi, Orpah and Ruth set out for Bethlehem-judah. Naomi entreats her daughters to return to their families and blesses them, saying, "The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of

you in the house of her husband" (Ruth 1:9). The daughters refuse. Naomi knew the **Leverite Law**, the custom that allowed marriage between a man and his brother's widow so that the dead brother's name and inheritance would be passed on to the first son of the union. Naomi had no more sons and her days of bearing children were long gone. She begged her daughters again and this time Orpah returned to her family, but Ruth gave her heartfelt entreaty to stay with Naomi, "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God..." (Ruth 1:16). What an amazing woman Naomi must have been to have this influence on Ruth. They traveled together on to Bethlehem-judah.

As they enter the city, women working in their homes or passing on the street see them and ask, "Is this Naomi?" (Ruth 1:19). It had been a long time; Naomi had certainly aged. Returning to the home of her youth, the place of her marriage, birthplace of her sons,



the cradle of her family memories, her heart must have been written all over her face. Naomi replies "...Call me not Naomi, call me **Mara**: for the almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me" (Ruth 1:20). It is no coincidence that **Mara** means "**bitter**."

**TAKE A MOMENT—  
Food for thought...**

1. Spend a few moments thinking about each of Naomi's names.
2. What evidence was there that Naomi was pleasant or full of joy?
3. What events contributed to Naomi's desire to change her name?

**OUT OF AFRICA**

**I**t has been a very interesting to hear Brother Brian McIndoo talk about his experiences in Kenya. One experience that caught my attention had to do with the names of the people. They might tell Brother Brian one name and the next visit that same brother or sister answers to a completely different name. Brother Brian tells us that members of the church choose their own names. They might choose the name of an influential grandmother, a strong aunt, or a well loved friend. **They choose a name which exemplifies the qualities for which they want to be known.**

So, how do you want to be known? There is one name above

all names that you can choose to be known by: Jesus Christ. Using 2 Nephi 13:16, 20-30 and John 10:27-28, answer the following questions.

1. (2 Nephi 13:16) How do we take on the name of Christ?
2. (2 Nephi 13:20, 29 & 30) Is this all we must do? What else must we do?
3. (John 10:27 & 28) There is an added benefit to taking on the name of Christ. What benefits does John list?
4. (2 Nephi 13:30) What is the big payoff?

**HAPPILY EVER AFTER**

**N**aomi does not remain bitter. With Naomi's guidance Ruth secures a husband, Boaz. In due time Ruth and Boaz have a son, Obed. Naomi has a grandson, but more important, a kinsman, "...a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age.... And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David" (Ruth 4:15 and 17).

As followers of Jesus Christ we are not promised that this life will be without bitterness. However, we are promised that if we are baptized and endure to the end we will be saved. We'll enter into the eternal kingdom and we will have **eternal** joy.

**Take the Name  
of Jesus With You**

—Mrs. Lydia Baxter, *Zion's Hymnal*, #223

Take the name of Jesus with you,  
Child of sorrow and of woe;  
It will joy and comfort give you,  
Take it then where're you go.

Take the name of Jesus ever,  
As a shield from ev'ry snare;  
If temptations round you gather,  
Breathe that holy name in prayer.

O the precious name of Jesus!  
How it thrills our souls with joy,  
When His loving arms receive us,  
And His songs our tongues employ!

At the name of Jesus bowing,  
Falling prostrate at His feet,  
King of kings in Heav'n we'll crown Him,  
When our journey is complete.

(Chorus)  
Precious name, O how sweet!  
Hope of earth and joy of Heav'n;  
Precious name, O how sweet!  
Hope of earth and joy of Heav'n.

—Kim Yates



## COLLINS, MISSOURI

So much has happened since I last wrote to you. It seems that the very foundation of our nation has been shaken since the terrorist attacks of September 11th on the World Trade Centers in New York City. Surely it has touched every citizen of the United States in one way or another. I'm grateful that through the tears, sorrow and uncertainty, many have lifted their hearts to God in prayer. However, the devil does not rest and is ever active and seeking perhaps other ways to drag us down. I've noticed a progression of filth and ugliness being played before our eyes on television—particularly the satellite stations. For a short time after the attack on our nation, programming "seemed" less offensive, but it's back and I think it's even more aggressive than before. We can never afford to let our guard down—because Satan never misses an opportunity.

We gathered together with our friends and neighbors of the community and enjoyed a Thanksgiving service together, hosted by the Baptist Church here in Collins. We had several offerings for the program from the three churches represented that evening, as well as a nice sermon from their pastor, Rick Steigman. The Sunday evening before Christmas, we again gathered together, but this time at our church, to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Elder Jack Martin was our speaker that evening, after a short "volunteer" program of songs and readings. We had a nice evening together and I guess 'that' was Christmas for me. I love to hear the "Christmas Story" read and feel the thrill and wonder of the shepherds as the angel told them of Jesus' birth. Maybe we get too used to some things, but not the won-

der of the power and love of God for His children. It's never old or uninteresting to me. I find that it has a greater drawing and sweetness to me as time goes by. I hope it does for you as well.

On November 9th, our son, Brian Coberly, and Rachel Wood became husband and wife. They live in a nearby town with Rachel's six year old daughter, Peyton. Brian drives a truck for Sho-Me Trucking and Rachel works at one of Collins' finest restaurants. Brian and Rachel went to school together and I don't believe they even liked each other much. Isn't it funny how time changes things?!!

Jack and Betty Martin spent a couple of weeks with their family in Oklahoma just before Christmas. While there, Betty was encouraged to see a doctor about her knee and leg problems. So, they have been home for a couple of weeks and have returned again to Oklahoma to continue their family visiting and see the results of tests the doctor ran for Betty. We sure miss them and look forward to their safe return.

In this new year of 2002 I hope we will look back at the wonderful things God has accomplished in 2001—in Yucatan, in Honduras, Africa, the Philippines, the United States, and Canada—His hand is upon His people. We have cause to rejoice and look ahead and participate in the things He will yet bring to pass.

I'll leave you with a few sermon quotes for your consideration—oh, and thank you for allowing me to visit with you and share my feelings and for being my brothers and sisters in Christ. You are of great value to me. God bless you.

- *You don't solve problems by ignoring them.*
- *People today tend to take the scriptures and make them fit their lifestyle; to make them feel comfortable; to justify themselves.*
- *If a picture is worth a thousand words, how much is a good example worth?*
- *If parents do not wake up and save their children the world will end in a tragic affair.*

### A NATION HUMBLLED!

- *The sins of a nation are the collection of those who sinned individually.*
- *All of my children have done things that I'm ashamed of, but I'm not ashamed of any of my children.*
- *I'm thankful for every veteran and never want to forget what patriotism really means.*
- *It's a shame strength has to come out of adversity. . .*
- *Be careful what you say and what you do and what you leave behind because you will only pass this way once and cannot come back and make right something done wrong.*
- *To misbehave in front of God is shameful.*
- *What if Jesus had said "No!"—or Mary had said "No"—or the ministry had refused their call—or YOU had said "No" to baptism?? We have that choice.*
- *Be not "seasonal Christians"—but come unto the Light. Hope we all have a well- "lighted" new year!*

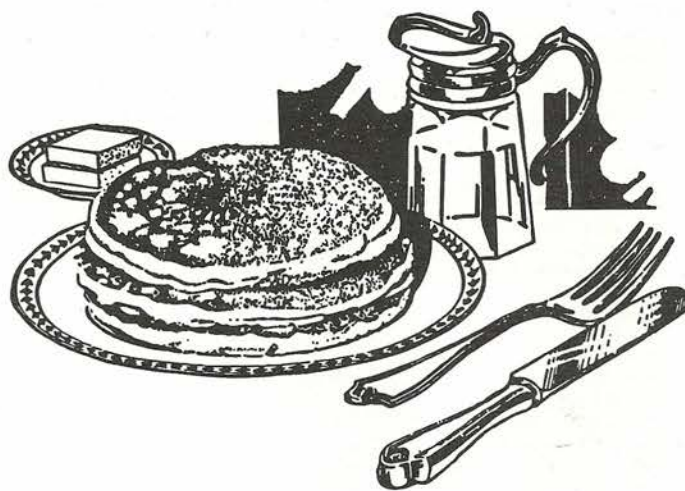
*Your reporter,  
Czerna Kauffman*



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

# PANCAKE DINNER

- ▶ **WHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2002**
- ▶ **WHERE: IHOP, 20100 E VALLEYVIEW RD**
- ▶ **TIME: FROM 6:00-8:30 P.M.**
- ▶ **COST: ADULTS \$4.00; CHILDREN \$2.00**
- ▶ **MENU: PANCAKES, JUICE AND COFFEE**
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- The Church of Christ, Temple Lot, web address is: [churchofchrist-tl.org](http://churchofchrist-tl.org).

## SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, RALLY

We are planning a Springfield Rally to be held on June 23, 2002, at 4319 W. Chestnut Expressway, just off I-44. The schedule of services will be similar to that of

the Collins Rally, and will be announced as soon as accommodations and speakers are finalized. If you have questions or suggestions please contact Martin Addie

at 6861 W. Lone Oak St., Springfield, MO 65803, (417) 862-2255, e-mail [ec05959@earthlink.net](mailto:ec05959@earthlink.net) or call James Addie at (417) 831-9572.



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