

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

VOLUME 80

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NUMBER 4

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms....
—Isaiah 14:12-16

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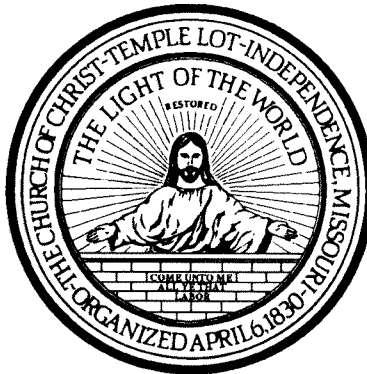
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Priesthood articles and sermons, testimonies for Pathlights, submissions to other regular monthly *Zion's Advocate* features, and news items of Church-wide interest are requested, and should be sent to the Editor as listed above. Deadline for material requiring publication in any certain month is the 10th of the previous month.

Format of submitted material: Please type all submissions (if possible), on one side of the paper only. Please avoid overuse of

underlining, ALL-CAPS and *italics*. The most important thing, though, is to send the material—the staff can arrange for typing or otherwise preparing anything you send.

Word Processors/Computers: We can utilize text files on IBM or compatible computer floppy disk of any size or format and nearly any word processor. If you have this capability, it is a big help to our process.

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Articles published in this paper do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Church, nor the opinions of the editorial staff. Declarations and notices authorized by the General Conference reflect the practices and beliefs of the General Church.

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.

Easter Sunday

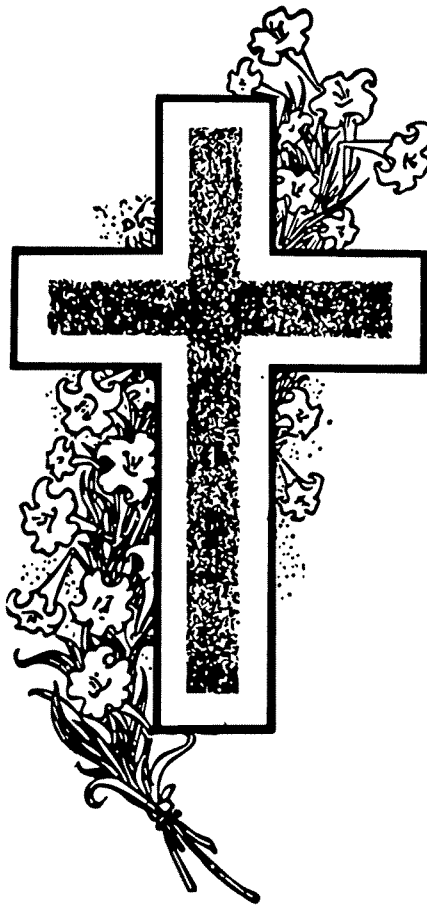
"THE DAY DEATH DIED"

By Priest Glen Orsted

1 Corinthians 15:55-57:
"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I would like to chronicle for you death's biography, with emphasis on its demise. If you will permit me, I would like to do so by speaking of death as if it were a person, so if you will use your imagination, let's begin:

Let's start with Death's birth and early years. Death was conceived at the time of Adam and Eve's temptation and birthed when they first sinned. As scripture



tells us: *"Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..."*

(Romans 5:12). Additionally, we find in the genealogy of death that sin is his parent and Satan his grandparent: *"He that committeth sin is of the devil..."* (1 John 3:8). So, on the day that Adam fell to temptation and sinned, there was a bouncing baby born into the household of the devil and his name was Death!

This young infant lost no time in making his name known, and in very short time had changed the world. You see, before Death's birth, this world was quite a different place to live. It was actually pleasant. There were no thorns, thistles, pain or travail. The fruit of the land yielded itself willingly. The human body was made to last for eternity. But this young lad was ambitious and had a vision for the world into which he had been born. He was going to

change all of that! He started slowly at first with thorns, thistles, pain and travail. He then expanded with the addition of aches and pains and the deterioration of the human body and decay. With time he was able to perfect his skills and accelerate his influence and with that we find Cain striking down his brother Abel and leaving him to be devoured by Death.

Death had reached maturity, and now it was time to build his empire. He soon was the strongest predator on the face of the earth—relentlessly tracking down each victim, catching and wrestling him down to the rot and mire of the grave! Soon Death is seen daily and nightly, and more and more succumb to his increasing power. He is the terror of the night. He plays no favorites, he leaps upon the young and the old, men and women and people of all races.

He gains accomplices, as with Ahab and Jezebel and their murderous plot devised against the devout Nabob only to later turn on them after they have done his beckoning. Death was drinking the lifeblood and

stealing the souls of men. Death was all-powerful! There was nothing on earth that could stop him—or so it seemed.

The day comes where Death for the first time realizes that there might be one worthy opponent to stand against him. It occurs when three Hebrews are thrown into a fiery furnace (Daniel 3:8-30). Death watches with glee, awaiting the charred remains of his latest three victims, but something happens! From somewhere a fourth man has appeared in the furnace and foils Death's plan for that day. No one had escaped death's hold, and he would eventually get these three Hebrews, but he was going to be wary of this fourth man that somehow had power to withstand him. Death soon had his sights set on this fourth individual from the fire.

The day came that Death received news once again of this fourth man from the fire. It was told that he was the Son of God and had taken upon himself human flesh to dwell with mortal man. Death rejoiced! Death thought: "If he has come in the flesh,

then he is mine!" This fourth man had made a grave error, or so death thought.

We see Death arriving at the garden of Gethsemane with the guards. Death watched for the look of terror on this man's face, but it was not there. This fourth man of the fire, now known as Jesus, looks death in the face and does not flinch. Death swells in his chest; finally, a worthy opponent! Death thinks: "When this one falls into the grave there will be no one that can stop me."

Death follows from the garden to Caiphias and then to Pilate. When it seems that Pilate might not have the strength to follow Death's beckoning, Death whispers into the ears of the crowd and the frenzied mob is soon crying out to Pilate, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!"

When Jesus was handed over to the scourgers and they applied the lashes to His back, with each one ripping open his flesh and exposing the bones and internal organs, Death laughed— "He won't even make it to the cross!" With every lash of the whip Death leaped

upon this man Jesus, but for some reason Death could not get a grip on this man Jesus that would hold.

Death would have to be patient—the cross would finish him. Death watched with glee as the cruel Roman soldiers nailed the spikes into his hands and feet. Death laughed as they lifted the cross and dropped it into place, tearing the flesh of Jesus as they did so. Death's grandfather, Satan, and his cousins, the demons, stood at his side on this proud day. Satan warns Death—do not release your grip on this one for even a moment!

And then it happened; Jesus said, "It is finished," slumped and died. Creation mourned the death of its Champion. The earth was covered in darkness, the earth convulsed, the birds hushed their singing and the angels stood silent. But in hell there was pandemonium—Death had triumphed! The party continued the first day! It continued the second day, but Death was a little fatigued. This was certainly understandable after the confrontation with such a worthy opponent and then two days of partying. The party

continued the third day, but Death was not feeling well. And suddenly it happened—Death had died!

What had happened? CHRIST HAD AROSE FROM THE GRAVE!!! As the song tells us:

*Up from the grave He
arose with a mighty
triumph o'er His foes*

*He arose a Victor
from the dark domain
and He lives forever
with his saints to reign.*

*He arose, He arose,
H A L L E L U J A H,
Christ arose!!*

On the day that Christ arose from the grave, Death died. Man must no longer fear Death. Death has no power.

*"I am he that liveth,
and was dead; and, behold,
I am alive for evermore,
Amen; and have the keys
of hell and of death"*
(Revelation 1:18).

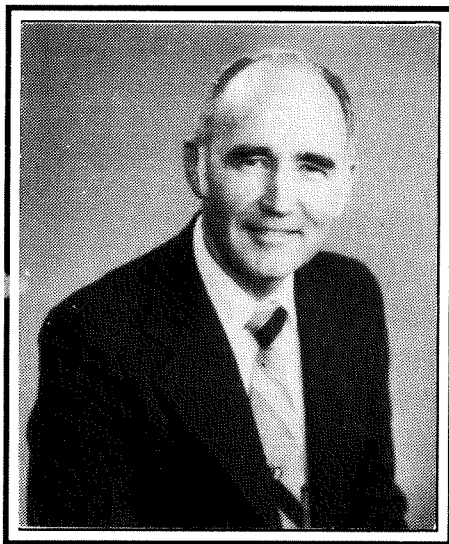
*"...Death is swallowed
up in victory. O death,
where is thy sting? O
grave, where is thy victory?"*
(1 Corinthians 15:54-55).

Death need no longer

hold terror in your life. Easter morning, Christ defeated Death. Christ has triumphed! He fought the battle which we could not. That first Easter morning shall forever be known as THE DAY THAT DEATH DIED!



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE APOSTLE JOHN



By Apostle Don McIndoo

CHAPTER SIXTEEN (CONTINUED)

The Apostle John wrote, **“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea”** (Revelation 16:3).

Some *historicists*, such as Uriah Smith and W. A. Spicer, look for a literal fulfillment of

SECTION SEVENTEEN THE SECOND VIAL

these plagues of chapter sixteen. Most *historicists*, however, believe that just as the majority of the Revelation uses symbols to indicate exact historical events to come, the plagues described in this chapter are, likewise, symbolic of events that will be written on the pages of world history. We shall consider two views about the symbolism of verse three, describing the second plague.

Most *historicists* look at the second vial, that which was poured out upon the sea, as representing the terrible defeats suffered by the naval forces of the Catholic nations. The primary naval forces of the Catholic world during this period were those of Spain, Holland, Portugal and France. These nations were motivated by the desire to

Spiritually, the Age of Enlightenment was a sore curse. Intellectualism, humanism, agnosticism and human secularism are its legacy to the modern world.

both destroy the enemies of Catholicism and carry the cross of the Roman Catholic Church into the entire world. They would be engaged in heated battle with English forces from 1793 until 1813.

Does recorded history aptly portray the symbolism of verse three? Lambert writes that on June 1, 1794, the British naval forces, in a well-planned battle in the Atlantic, **“reasserted the Royal Navy’s mastery in**

battle.”¹ In 1795 the French Mediterranean Fleet was soundly defeated by the British, and in 1797 a Spanish fleet of 27 ships was intercepted off Cape St. Vincent by 15 British ships and driven back to the harbor of Cádiz in disorder.

In 1798 Napoleon conquered Italy and invaded Egypt with 36,000 men aboard 400 transports and other warships. While the fleet was anchored on the Egyptian coast, Lord Nelson attacked, destroying the French fleet, stranding Napoleon's army and his dream of an Eastern Empire. **“The Mediterranean became an English lake.”**²

At Cape Trafalgar, off the southern coast of Spain, England's Lord Nelson positioned his experienced captains to penetrate the line of Franco-Spanish ships on October 21, 1805. The French and Spanish lost twenty ships and more than 6,000 men in a few hours of furious fighting. The historian, Miller, describes the sight: **“The coming of day revealed a scene of silent, smoking desolation. ‘An awful sight it was,’ recalled John Nicol, a seaman in Goliath. ‘The whole bay was covered with dead bodies, mangled, wounded and scorched, not a bit of clothes left on them but**

their trousers.”³

One of the Franco-Spanish ships had lost five-sixths of her crew and was sinking. **“‘Blood ran in streams about the decks, and in spite of the sand, the rolling of the ship carried it hither and thither until it made strange patterns on the planks,’ recalled a crewman.”**⁴

Certainly God's wrath was poured out upon sea in those years of conflict, and those men who supported the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy were the primary recipients of that wrath.

A completely different interpretation is given to the nature of this *second vial* by the RLDS commentator, Njeim. He sees as important the fact that the contents of this vial were poured out upon the sea, and not upon the earth, as was the first vial. He writes, **“Out of the sea came the seven-headed monster of the thirteenth chapter, and was interpreted as ‘people, multitudes, nations and tongues.’ So this plague is peculiarly the lot of the powers which came out of the Roman Empire.**

A dead man has no blood as such. The red corpuscles disintegrate and only a watery fluid remains. Once blood is

gone, life is gone. Naturally, the Revelator has something else in mind other than the literal substance of blood. His language was symbolic, and the blood was used as a symbol of the Spirit of God. When the Spirit of God and of life is gone from man, man becomes a corpse. Our Lord put it this way: ‘without me ye can do nothing.’ Dependence now is on the intellect rather than on the spirit.”⁵

Before commenting on Njeim's interpretation, let me reiterate: I believe the wording of chapter fourteen, verses 6 and 9, and the beginning of chapter sixteen point out that the plagues of the first portion of chapter sixteen have a relationship to the restoration of the Gospel. In the Book of Mormon this period of time is called **“the fullness of the Gentiles”** (1 Nephi 4:16 and 3 Nephi 7:28). In chapter 48, verse 27 of the Book of Commandments it is referred to as **“when the time of the Gentiles is come in.”** Verses 26 and 27 tell us **“the whole earth shall be in commotion”** at that time, and their hearts shall be led by **“the precepts of men.”**

Now I believe that in this time period there were righteous men living in the Euro-

pean nations, those nations upon which the wrath of God would be poured out. These were brave men and women used by the Lord to bring about, and sustain, the Reformation, many of them looking forward to the Restoration of Christ's church. They were led by the Holy Spirit of God and were among those "saints" with whom the beast made war (Revelation 13:7).

I would take this viewpoint of Njeim a step farther with a question: What is it that would cause the Spirit of God to be withdrawn from the peoples of these nations, leaving them to their own intellect? Those years which introduced this pivotal era of time in Europe are well known for an epic movement, a revolution in our way of thinking. It is called the Age of Enlightenment.

"A great premium was placed on the discovery of truth through the observation of nature, rather than through the study of authoritative sources, such as...the Bible. Its thinkers...saw the church—especially the Roman Catholic Church—as the principal force that had enslaved the human mind in the past...."

"According to Immanuel Kant, the motto of the age should be 'Dare to

Know'. A desire arose to reexamine and question all received ideas and values."

The Enlightenment **"marked a key stage in the decline of the church and growth of modern secularism..."**⁶

Moroni and Nephi correctly saw the day in which these things would all be fulfilled:

"Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches, and teachers, in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches;" *Mormon* 4:36.

"And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another; and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance. And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people, Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; For behold, there is no God to-day, for the Lord and

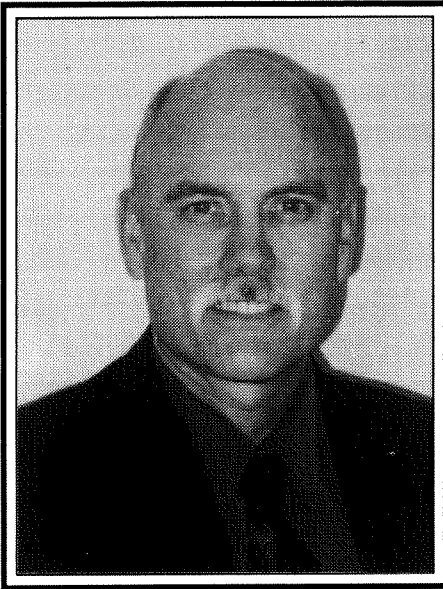
the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men" *Nephi* 12:5-7.

Spiritually, the Age of Enlightenment was a sore curse. Intellectualism, humanism, agnosticism and human secularism are its legacy to the modern world. This is why, on any given Sunday in any nation of Europe, less than ten percent of its citizenry will be found in worship of the Lord.

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2. *ibid.*, p. 157.
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4. *ibid.*, p. 298.
5. Njeim, George A., *Insights Into the Book of Revelation as Illuminated by the Book of Mormon*, 1970, pp. 187, 188.
6. Funk and Wagnall's *New Encyclopedia*, "Enlightenment, Age of," Vol. 9, pp. 302, 303.

Articles of Faith & Practice



**A continuation study
By Elder Gordon McCann**

Article #4

We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression, and that as a consequence of the atonement of Christ "all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of

redemption cometh on all they that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, can not repent; and unto such, baptism availeth nothing" (Mi 8:25-26).

Jesus fulfilled the demands of justice for Adam's disobedience towards the law of God when He hung on the cross and uttered the words, "It is finished" (John 19:30); then, bowing His head, passing from this mortal existence and ascending into heaven.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" Romans 5:19.

The fall of Adam has caused mankind to experience a temporal death and a spiritual separation from God. The atonement that Christ made on

the cross brought about the plan of redemption through the resurrection of the dead, bringing mankind back into the presence of God.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" John 14:6.

The plan of redemption provided each one of us the right to exercise our God given free will agency to choose between eternal life with the redeemed of God or to suffer the second death with those who reject His word.

"Therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state, which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead" Alma 9:41.

Our freedom of choice and how we will ultimately be judged of God will be based upon our opportunity to have heard the word of God and how we re-

spond to that word by our faith in Jesus Christ through our works in this life.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin" John 15:22.

God has provided a way for us to hear and learn of His commandments through the word of God, His holy prophets and servants, and by His spirit.

"For the Spirit is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. And men are instructed sufficiently, that they know good from evil" 2 Ne 1:65-67.

Now, because of Christ, all mankind will have an opportunity to stand before his Creator to be judged of their works according to their choices that were made in this life.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" Revelation 20:12 (see also Romans 2:1-13).

The plan of redemption is made perfect where those who die in their ignorance not having salvation declared unto

them, and little children are redeemed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come, when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found blameless before God, except it be little children, only through repentance and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent..." Mosiah 1:121-122.

NEW YORK REUNION 2003

Where: Hogansburg, New York
When: July 11-13, 2003

The Akwesasne New York Local welcomes all of our brothers and sisters to fellowship and worship with us starting Friday evening at 7:00 p.m., July 11, through Sunday afternoon, July 13, 2003.

In order that the proper preparation may be made, please let one of the people listed below know if you will be attending, how many, and any dietary restrictions that you may have. We have some housing available with church members, as well as some space for campers. There are also plenty of motels in the area.

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A Month in Yucatan

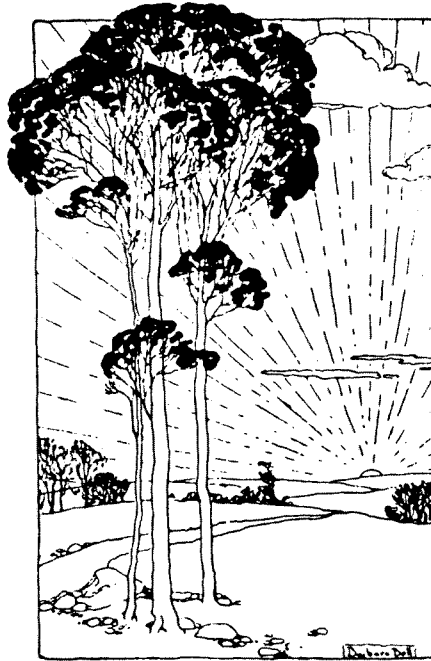
During the month of July 2002, I was privileged to travel with Apostle Don McIndoo to Yucatan, Mexico. I was greatly blessed to be able to meet many of our brothers and sisters during my time there and fellowship with them in their church services and homes. Apostle Placido Koyoc Yam and his wife Matilde graciously opened up their house to me, and I'm thankful to be able to call Yobain my home away from home.

I had many amazing experiences during my month in Yucatan. I was able to visit several archeological sites and learn a lot about the Mayan culture and history, but the greatest memories I have are of the conversations I was part of and the many testimonies that were shared with me. I would like to share some pieces from the journal I kept during my stay in Yucatan. I hope they give a small glimpse of the wonderful time I spent with our brothers and sisters.

7-3-02

This place is beautiful. I'm sitting under a short tree with spreading branches and large rabbit-ear leaves. When I woke this morning the sun was already up, and Don's hammock hung empty. I got up quickly, dressed, and made my way outside. Placido was bent over a wash basin scrubbing small towels.

I talked to him for as long as my Spanish would allow (about two sentences), and then went back in-



PATHLIGHTS

side, where I promptly hit my head on the top of the door frame.

7-4-02

About 10 a.m. this morning I went with Don and Placido to Merida. It's only my third day here, but so far I've been to Merida three times. It's a large city, greater in population and density than Kansas City. On our way back from a grocery store Don told me he wanted to show me something. We crossed a corner of a plaza to a wide storefront sidewalk. Don pointed down at the

sidewalk, and I noticed that it was subtly different from the concrete sidewalks that shoulder most of the town's streets. "The sidewalk here was made from stones cut from the Mayan temples." He had explained to me earlier that one of the first things the Spanish conquerors did in the Americas was to tear down the Mayan temples and use their stones to build lavish Catholic churches. I guess Don and I were standing on the remains of a once glorious temple.

7-7-02

Last night we had a special service to celebrate the birthday of a church member. Don preached a great sermon on preparing for Christ's return, and I was happy to find that I can understand his Spanish. Most of the native speakers here speak so quickly that I have a hard time understanding the points of the sermon because my brain gets stuck on the words.

Jose from Merida made the trip here for the service and sang four songs. I found out he has often been invited to sing for special services within the church. I went up and talked to him after the service, thanked him for his singing and asked him if we could play guitars together. He agreed, so we sat inside the church for a while playing and singing. We found out that we both

knew "Espiritu Dios" and "Damos Gracias." Someone came in eventually and told us to come outside and play.

We walked out to an amazing sight. There were probably over 50 people sitting around tables on the back patio area visiting and laughing, and a group in the corner fixing a huge meal. Don called us over to sit at a table with Placido Koyoc Matu, himself, and some of the local's young people. Many of the Yobain youth work in Merida during the week but travel home for the weekends. So far all the people my age that I've met here are really mature, spiritual, and all around beautiful people.

7-9-02

Well, right now I'm sitting outside Placido's house because our plans have changed. Don, Placido and I were supposed to be on our way to Mayapan for church tonight, and I think Dzan tomorrow, but we got a call in Merida telling us that Placido's daughter Raquel was very sick. When we got back here Placido and Don talked with her and administered to her, and now I guess we're going to wait and see if she needs to be taken to the hospital in Merida. I think she's having a problem with her liver or kidney, but I haven't found out yet.

7-11-02

We took Raquel to the hospital yesterday and spent the rest of the morning looking for some stuff Don needed for one of his classes at camp. The doctors said Raquel

would need to be in the hospital for several days. When Don and I emailed this afternoon we both sent letters asking for prayers for her. Hopefully the receiving parties checked their mail before they went to their prayer services.

Last night we went to the local in Merida for church. The service was over around eight so we traveled back to Yobain afterwards and caught the end of the service there.

7-14-02

Yesterday I was really sick. We left from Yobain, and when we got to Merida I was already feeling poorly. Don and Placido administered to me for the second time when we got to Mayapan, and afterwards they talked to me about whether we should try to find some antibiotics or go to a doctor. I had been thinking about this during their prayers and decided to practice my faith that God could take care of me. That afternoon I got weaker and weaker. I rested until church time, but when I sat down in the chapel I was too weak to even hold my head up. I was administered to again and tried to rest while the service was going on. When Don and Placido came in after the service they hooked up a fan which helped to combat the heat and mosquitoes that had kept me restless. When they turned off the lights I fell right asleep and didn't wake up until about three in the morning. I felt a lot better and immediately knew that I had been blessed by God. I got up at seven to get ready for church and although still weak, I felt

like I could make it through the service.

Our sacrament service went from eight to eleven-thirty and all but three of the testimonies were in Mayan. I really didn't know that they were in Mayan until I asked Don afterwards because they threw in enough Spanish words to keep me guessing. Don told me that the Mayan vocabulary is relatively small so they use Spanish words to supplement it. I guess deeper into the Yucatan peninsula the children don't learn any Spanish until they go to school, so most of my generation, and a few before, speak both languages fluently. Most of the older generations know very little Spanish and seem to prefer Mayan anyway.

My testimony was one of the three in Spanish, and I was very thankful that God helped me use my very small vocabulary to express my thoughts. In one part I forgot the word for yesterday, so I had to say "the day before this day."

7-16-02

Today has been partially disappointing, probably because it has involved doing things that could be done just as easily in the states, seeing things that are too familiar to be seen 1,500 miles from home. One of my fears down here is that I will be mistaken for a tourist.

So far I feel like I've failed in my idea of helping out down here. I asked Don what I could possibly do and he said it is good for the people just to see that their brothers and sisters from the states are interested in them and their lives. I can see

what he said is true because this trip has also helped me see that I'm part of something bigger than just my local.

7-20-02

Don and I have begun our weekend trip and made it through the first night in our hotel. Yesterday we left Yobain about 10:30 a.m. and arrived here in Ticul after noon. We went to visit one of the church's Hispanic poets, Renan Chuc, around about 2:00 p.m. When we got to his house, a cement block room with a palm-leaf roof, he got up to greet us and welcome us in. Moving around is quite a challenge for him because of a war time accident that took away his sense of balance. He now moves around his home by clinging to strategically placed ropes and roof braces. Despite all his hardships, he has a simple, kind spirit about him. He wanted to converse in English with us, and I must say that he speaks his second language much more precisely than I do. Even with his disability he is able to peddle a three-wheeled bicycle around town to help support himself. He also brings some of the elderly members to church on his bike. Before we left, he gave both of us four of his poems, one of which was in a *Zion's Advocate*.

Don has put together a neat scrapbook of the work here in Yucatan. He found a bunch of black and white photographs that were taken of the people here and brought the ones that he didn't use in the scrapbook here to disperse. So far,

he has given quite a few to the people in them, including several wedding pictures that the now elderly subjects had never had copies of before.

7-29-02

I've really learned a lot about self-sacrifice from these people. One of the big distractions for men and boys down here is soccer. It is by far the most popular sport, and there are some very talented players. The problem is that to be on a team requires your Sunday mornings for the games, and the drinking starts right after the game ends. Because of the time requirement and the environment, the dedicated church members sacrifice their love for soccer for their church attendance.

7-31-02

At the youth camp last weekend I really experienced how disappointing it is to be unable to fully express myself. Yesterday at Yobain was the same way. I wanted to tell everyone how appreciative I was for their love and hospitality, but my few crude phrases couldn't touch the way I felt. I'm really glad God let me come down here at this time because now I'm much more motivated to continue learning Spanish. There are so many people I want to really visit with down here.


We just boarded the flight to Kansas City. It's amazing how the first four weeks went by so quickly and how today has taken forever.

Don showed me the list he made of the times we visited the

different locals. We made a total of 21 visits to ten locals, and Don probably preached at 15 of those services. I can't imagine being called to preach at a moment's notice like he is. On the way to church, or sitting next to him during the beginnings of the services, I would ask him if he was preaching and most of the time he said that he didn't know yet. I learned a lot about the book of Revelation and God's promises to his Ancient Covenant people, the very ones we were visiting, from his sermons. He ended his sermons with, and sometimes wove throughout, a call for the people, all of us, to leave behind our worldly baggage.

The disasters that our brothers and sisters have gone through in the last year have greatly changed the face of Yucatan and the church there, but it has been a great witness to me to hear that their faith and trust in God has stayed the same.

D. A. Vogel



Testimony of Juana Dalila Cauich

Translated by Don McIndoo

February 28, 2000
Kancabchén, Yucatan

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I send you a loving and cordial greeting. I pray that God will bless you and illuminate you with His divine light. I would like to share with you my testimony.

It has been four years that I have known Christ, received Him into my heart and accepted Him as my personal Savior. My friends and brethren in Christ, if you believe in Him, continue faithfully onward.

It has now been a year since the doctors discovered an illness in my son, Didier. The doctors told me that they needed to operate on my son as soon as possible. When I heard this it made me cry, but a voice whispered in my mind and said, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: nor be dismayed; for I am thy God that strengthens thee. I will always help thee. I will always support thee with the right hand of My righteousness."

When I heard these words, they caused me to pray and I asked the Lord to help me and give me patience to await His answer. On the 14th of January when they hospitalized my son, I heard all the voices of the families of the sick people saying things like, "Poor little boy, he is too small to withstand the surgery." I

looked at them, but said nothing. I also heard the nurses saying, "Poor little boy, I don't know if he can tolerate the operation."

When they took my son into the surgery, I began to tremble and cry. The doctor told me, "Madam, please help us by controlling your son." Then I remembered the words of my Lord that told me, "You must abide in me, because he that does not abide in me can do nothing." So I began to pray. It made no difference that there were people watching me; I could only pray and put my hope in Christ because I know He lives and will live forever.

I could tell that God was with me because I was able to control my little son as the doctors came for him and carried him away. I continued praying to my Lord, Jesus, that He would help me. I waited two hours in the waiting room before they called my name, telling me that I could enter and see my son, for he was in critical condition.

The doctors told me, "Madam, your child needs help and he doesn't need to see you crying." I asked the Lord to have mercy upon me and my son. I pleaded with him to help me that my tears would cease and that He would be with me. When I saw my son, he was screaming. He could not quit crying and he hit at me because he did not recognize me. The doctors were watching me and I could see that something was taking place. I asked them if they could

not give my son something to calm him down, but they said they had already given him three shots to tranquilize him and could give him no more because he was only three years old.

So I took the hand of my son and prayed, saying, "Father, touch my son with Your mighty hand and heal him." As I was thus praying, I suddenly was aware of my little boy speaking to me. He said, "Mama, don't leave me." I could only praise God because now my son recognized me. Then he said, "Mama, look there. I see the blue sky and clouds so very white, and look at all the birds. Look, Mama, look how beautiful it is."

When I raised my eyes to look, I could only see the ceiling of the hospital room. Then I understood that this was the work of the Lord: that I had never received a greater blessing in my life. I gave thanks to my Lord, seeing the splendor He had showered upon my son and over my family. I had exercised my faith and saw that He loved me.

Brothers and Sisters, I am grateful to God, and I give thanks to my Lord, Jesus Christ, for His rich blessings. I ask you to pray for me, my children and my husband. May God bless you.

*Your Sister in Christ,
Juana Dalila Cauich*

Testimony of Manuel and Reina Balam

As you read the following testimony of a young man and woman, ages 24 and 21 respectively, you can gain a picture of life, and culture, in a small village of Yucatán.

Translated by Don McIndoo

February 28, 2003
Kancabchén, Yucatan

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I send my testimony that you may know how great is the kindness of my God toward me, my family and all those in Yucatán, although we do not merit it. Nevertheless, God loves us, and for this I shall never tire of giving thanks to Him.

I give thanks to my God for having taken me from the vile things of the world when I was lost in them. Permit me to tell you about my life before knowing Christ. I enjoyed going to the dances, the fiestas and the entertainment of the world with my friends. My only thoughts were in enjoying the lusts of the flesh, where none even cared to speak of God or give thanks to Him who gave us life, health and family. I thought only of myself.

There came a day when I began to court a young lady that was in the same situation, walking in the things of the world without God. I knew that our relationship would be difficult because my parents be-

longed to the Church of Christ and her parents would not accept me. My parents counseled me always to seek the help of God, and that I should change my life and draw near to Him.

One day I paused to meditate about what my parents, and my sister Heidy, had been telling me. I told myself that if I ceased going to the world's diversions, or my friends saw me with a Bible in my hands, they would ridicule me. But I give thanks to God for placing Brother Jeremias (the visiting pastor of that congregation - dem) in my life. He, like my parents, counseled me not to be ashamed of God. As time passed I felt a great desire to go to church, and I began to attend. Little-by-little, I was leaving the things of the world. It was no longer important what my friends were saying. I asked God to help me be able to tell them of the marvelous things he had done for me.

Thus the days were passing, and I was slowly learning more of the words of our Lord, Jesus Christ. I asked Him to help me with my relationship with Reina, the girl I was in love with. The Lord heard my plea, and her parents accepted me as a suitor. I went with my parents to her home to ask for her hand in marriage, and they agreed. I began to invite my fiancé to go to church with me. What a blessing I had received, and continue to re-

ceive from God! I shall be grateful all my life.

Reina and I were married in November, 2001, in the Church of Christ, by Elder Sergio Uluac, who taught us a great deal. When he and other relatives were killed in the terrible accident a year later, it made us very sad; nevertheless, we felt a great comfort knowing that they were faithful, as good soldiers, until the end of their lives.

In August, 2002, my wife gave birth to a beautiful baby. At one month's age he was healthy, alert and acted as a much older child. We named him Manuel Isaiah Balam and took him to the Recorder's Office in Motul to have him registered. We lacked one week from taking him to the church to have him blessed. We were filled with joy hearing the cry of a baby in our home. Touching his tender body filled us with tenderness.

I remember well, on September 22nd, when Hurricane Isador struck Yucatán. My family, my parents, brothers and sisters and others who no longer had roofs on their homes were gathered in a large room of our house to spend a night that I will never forget. We were all praying, asking the Lord to protect us from the winds that were hammering the walls and the glass windows of the room where we had taken refuge. We never lost faith that God was watching over us and

protecting us, even while many houses were being destroyed. Our bathroom, the kitchen and the home of my parents were all destroyed, but in this room no damage was done because the Lord protected us.

After the hurricane passed, a neighbor asked me how it was that the glass windows of my home were not broken when all of the windows in his home were shattered. I could only answer that it was one of the many miracles that God had done for us.

One week later on Wednesday evening we went to the church, taking our little son for the first, to have a service of thanksgiving to God for watching over us. On the very next day our son became ill, and we took him to Motul to see the doctor. He told us it was only a case of colic, so we returned home and he seemed a little better. On the next day, October 4th, he became more ill. He wasn't taking any food nor the medicine which the doctor had prescribed, so we took him to the hospital in Motul.

At the hospital the doctors told us his condition was very serious, so we took him to a larger hospital in Mérida, where the doctors told us that he was suffering from a "cerebral discharge" and was at the point of dying. They said they could do nothing and he was in the hands of God. Their words caused my wife and I to weep. They put him on a machine to help him breathe. For half an hour all our family was around his bed praying to God in his behalf. Suddenly the apparatus ceased to function and the doctors

ran in and told us we would have to wait outside while they took him to Intensive Care.

When the doctors allowed my wife and I to enter, we could see his little body had tubes running out of it all over. For five days he remained like this. Finally the doctors told us he would not last another fifteen minutes. God knew what would take place, for He had given us time to prepare ourselves for whatever would happen, whether our child would live or return to our God in heaven. Each time I entered the room, I touched his little head and prayed for him. When I prayed thus, I felt as if someone had placed their hands over my own. I knew it was the Lord Jesus who was with us through every moment, for He never left us.

Throughout this time, our pastor and his family were with us to help and counsel us. I am grateful to him and to all my family, for we were more at peace even though we suffered great anguish. On the fifth day the doctor told me that our child was "brain dead." On the following day they placed him in another bed with all the apparatus removed. That night at eight o'clock I entered his room and began to pray to God that He would accomplish His will, and whatever that would be my wife and I would accept. He passed away at four o'clock in the morning. We took his body to our home in Kancabchén, where the pastor came for a funeral service.

On the following day we buried him with a great pain in our hearts. One of our sisters drew near and

said, "Don't cry, for you had the blessing of having an angel with you for a while, but now he had to return to heaven for God had so decided." Thus passed the days, with our families and all the brothers and sisters of the Church of Christ coming to console us with words from the Holy Scriptures that helped us greatly, my wife and I, my little brother and my sister who were very sad, but at the same time happy in remembering the words of the Lord found in John 11:25-27.

The days and the months have passed and we continue with greater intent and strength to serve our Lord, Jesus Christ. He knows why such things have to befall us, and I believe they are to make us spiritually stronger. On February 23, 2003, my wife and I made a covenant with the only Master of our lives to serve Him until the end of our existence.

*Your brother and sister in Christ,
Manuel Balam and Reina Cauich*

(Four months after the loss of their only child, Manuel and Reina made a covenant with God in the waters of baptism during the annual Anniversary Reunion of the Church of Christ.)

PROSPECTIVE CIT'S

It may seem odd to say; however, Teen Challenge 2003 is fast approaching. We are calling out to all prospective CIT's who would like to take the Challenge and sign up for Camp.

It may seem early to sign up for camp; however, we need your help from the very start of this important service. As taken from Mosiah 1:49: "...that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God." We are CHALLENGING you to be in SERVICE of your God. WE NEED YOU!!! Below are a few details that relate to Camp:

WHEN IS CAMP?

Camp will be held this year from July 27th through August 1st, 2003.

HOW DO YOU SIGN UP?

That is the easy part. Please e-mail Bro. Bob Hedrick at (bobnliza@juno.com), or call at (602) 494-9661.

WHEN DO YOU NEED TO SIGN UP BY?

We are asking that you sign up to be a CIT no later than May 10th. We need your help in setting up classes, and taking part in the planning process of Camp.

DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY! Additionally, be thinking about any suggestions or ideas that you may have for a class at Camp!

Don't delay; sign up today! We look forward to seeing you there!

May God Bless,

Brothers Robert Hedrick and Jeff Oldham

P. S. Keep in mind the Camp Theme for this year:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" 1 Peter 3:15.

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI—TEMPLE LOT

Our Missouri winter has settled in. We have the typical cold and wind, with a 50 degree day thrown in occasionally just to remind us that spring is not far away. The cold has not hindered the Temple Lot Local's busy schedule, though, and there is much to share with you.

The projects that were begun on the building in October have been completed. The building has new carpet, fresh paint on both levels inside, vinyl trim outside, and a new fire sprinkler system which, as Pastor Alvin Harris said, "We hope and pray we never have to use."

The United Workers met in November to make wooden ornaments for the youth choir members. The women have carried on a tradition that is anticipated each year. When Sister Manon Lawrence takes the young singers caroling in December, they return to the church to find refreshments and ornaments waiting for them, all provided by the United Workers. Most of the children can count their years in choir by their dated keepsake ornaments. The women also had a Christmas party in December and a soup/pie luncheon with craft time in January.

The Jr. Young People's group, ages 7-12, has new leaders: Sisters Angelita Sprague and Danielle Eddy. In November they enjoyed a bonfire and hay ride, and in December they

had a party and made a craft. Their crafts had a special purpose this time, and they touched many hearts with their creations. It is a local tradition that the Sunday school department provides a paper sack of goodies for each child following the Christmas Sunday School program. The Jr. Young People surprised us this year by turning that tradition around and providing decorated goodie bags for each older member of the local. The recipients were surprised and delighted with the children's thoughtfulness. Then in January, the Jr. Young People enjoyed bowling together. They are a small group right now, usually 3-5 children, but their leaders plan exciting monthly meetings for them.

The YPCL has kept busy through the winter. In November they had a pumpkin painting contest, non-perishable food scavenger hunt, car safety night with Brother Virgil Rudd, and a study with Pastor Alvin Harris. December found them having a little-kid game night, costume party and white elephant gift exchange, caroling at a nursing home, and a study with Apostle Smith Brickhouse. In January, they toured Kansas City's Toy and Miniature Museum, had a study with Apostle Mike McGhee followed by an ice cream social, enjoyed a fun time at a gymnasium, and had an educa-

tional on the Armed Forces, listening to experiences of some of our veterans: Brothers Jim Case, Alvin Harris, Norman Warfield,, and Brother Scott Hale, who is active duty.

In my last report I listed our young adults who were temporarily away to college. I failed to mention our Sister Leann Hale, daughter of Scott and Marie. She is attending college in Columbia, Missouri.

On December 15, our local enjoyed the Sunday School Christmas Program, organized by Brother Stephen Kimball. Each class gave a presentation, and there were several specials. The next week, both Independence locals met together for a morning of worship and praise. The service began with a short song service, followed by special offerings. The Jr. Choir sang "Follow the Star," followed by the Sr. Choir's "Go, Go to Bethlehem" and "Mary, Did You Know?" Both youth choirs were directed by Sister Manon Lawrence. Then the East Local Choir sang three songs: "Once in Royal David's City," "Brightest and Best," and "Redeeming Love." They were directed by Brother Gerald Cox. Elder Steve McGhee then preached, and the Temple Lot Local's choir, directed by Sister Janice Welch, sang a cantata, "Gloria."

The Temple Lot was the setting for the wedding of Brother Jason

Christian and Kimberly Cox on December 28. Jason's daughter, Tanner Lynn, was a candle lighter. Apostle Frank Fann officiated at the ceremony, and a dinner reception followed the service. Jason is the son of Brother and Sister Dick and Marcia Christian. Jason's sister, Melody Hayes, her husband Tony, and their two girls, Marissa Ann and Shelby Grace, also traveled to Missouri from Tennessee for the wedding. Jason and Kim are at home in Lee's Summit, Missouri.

About 20 of the women from the local attended the women's retreat on January 17-18. The event, organized by Sisters Lana Hill and Carrie Geier, was held in the snowy woodland of Parkville, Missouri. A total of 46 women attended the retreat, ranging from 18-year-olds to... those older. The fellowship was rich and the meetings and sharing were spiritually uplifting. The women look forward to the retreat being an annual January event.

We recorded two new members to our local recently. Sisters Geri Adams and Diana Brown both transferred their memberships into the Temple Lot Local.

We were glad to welcome back Brother Darin Crull and his family: wife Loreli, and children Jose, Yolibet, Dennis and Corina. They returned to Independence after living in California this past year.

One last thought... I've heard it said that the youth are the future of the church. That's logical, I sup-

pose, but being middle-aged, I find I often look to the examples of the older ones for encouragement. The Temple Lot Local has a fair share of these "enduring ones," elderly brothers and sisters who are still attending and actively serving, and they are one of our greatest treasures. Sister Velma Wheaton has recently been unable to attend with us, but until a few months ago, Velma seldom failed to be the first to testify at a sacrament service. Her husband Dick would help her stand, and her voice once again would praise God for His blessings. Brother Dick's testimony usually followed. Brother LeRoy Wheaton, accompanied by his wife, Mildred, would come when he could, even though in pain.

Sisters Lois Harris and Katie Moyer are there week after week. I look for them in their front row seats. I listen for Katie's comments in class and anticipate Sister Lois' testimonies on Wednesday nights. Brother Forest Maley, with his beautiful bass voice, still contributes in song and testimony, traveling an hour with his family to be at church. Brother Rolland Sprague is there week after week, steady in his testimony, and Sister Adelia German comes bringing her four young granddaughters. Brother and Sister Vern and Wanda Ferrel come when they can. Newer converts to the church, they testify and pray with an enthusiasm for the gospel. Sister Winifred Hansen comes now

each week with her niece Geri Adams. Though I don't know her well, she always greets me with a smile.

Until recently one of the faces I always looked for, depended on being there, was that of our Sister Jean Chapman. Sister Jean recently died, but I still find myself surprised when she is not in her place near the front. She had a quiet dignity about her, was solid in the gospel and her faith, and was a strength to anyone who took a moment to visit with her after church.

Then there is Brother Nicholas Denham, a patriarch to his family, and a dear brother to all of us. He is a steadying force in the local, still standing with a strong testimony. These dear ones, along with the strong generation close behind them, shore up the younger ones—the "future of the church"—and all of us somewhere in between. That is a local, both young and old serving together, depending on the strength of the older and the vitality and hope of the younger.

Debbie Vogel

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CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The **2003 Ministers' Conference** (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 6. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 7. A **Solemn Assembly** will be held prior to the conference, on April 4 & 5. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The **2003 Ministers' Conference** (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 4, 5 and 6, at Independence, Missouri.

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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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