

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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Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory

which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

—John 17:20-23

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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.

On Being ONE



By Elder Glenn Gill

Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the perfecting of the saints and about edifying the body of Christ till we all come in the “unity of the faith” (Eph. 4:13). Jesus said, “...the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost, are one” (1 John 4:15). The scriptures are full of oneness, but how can there be a oneness between God and us? King Benjamin said,

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; Believe that he hath all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; Believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend” (Mosiah 2:13-15). Isaiah spoke, reflecting God’s own words, saying, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9). “Yea, by the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake; ...and if he saith to the earth, move, it is moved: ...” (Helaman 4:60-61, in part). How can such as man have a oneness with God?

Jesus said, “And I bear record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me, and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in

...We can join in that oneness that exists between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost through our faith and our obedience.

me; And whoso believeth in me and is baptized, the same shall be saved; ...And unto him will the Father bear record of me; for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost; And thus will the Father bear record of me; and the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me; for the Father and I and the Holy Ghost are one” (3 Nephi 5:33-34, 37-38); thus, we see that we can join in that oneness that exists between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost through our faith and our obedience. Also, understanding can come to us by the revelation

of the Holy Ghost to us that Jesus is the Christ, just as it was revealed to Peter. "He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:15-17). This was the Holy Ghost bearing record (witnessing) to Peter that Jesus is the Son of God, the one whom God sent, in the flesh, to bear record of Him and offer the way of salvation.

We, you and I, can bear record too. We can demonstrate a oneness with Christ by our obedience and our faith. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:3-4).

We can bear record by our humility. "And humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel; And behold, I say unto you, that if you do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; And ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true

(Mosiah 2:21-23). These are words of King Benjamin more than 100 years before the coming of Christ, after an angel had shown him that the Savior would come.

We can bear witness and share a oneness with Him by our love for one another. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:12). "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement: because as he is so are we in this world" (1 John 4:16-17).

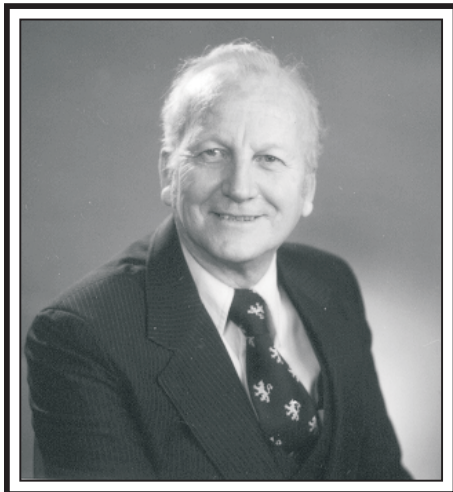
As obedient followers of Christ are perfected in love their lives bear good fruit, which is visible and beneficial to those around them. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-25).

There is a special oneness, which Scripture indicates God expects to find in the Church. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through you all, and in you all" (Ephesians

4:4-6). Paul beseeched the Ephesians, writing, "...walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

It is impossible for us as a church to experience this unity of the spirit in the bond of peace without each member being determined to walk worthy of the calling, yielding to that humility, longsuffering and forbearance in love. It requires our effort, the focus of our energy, a strong desire and our prayers to achieve this oneness with God and each other. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen" (Moroni 7:53).

Pondering the Words of JESUS CHRIST



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

Item 5: The Merciful

Mat 5: 7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy (same in 3 Ne. 5:54).

Mercy is genuine compassion, but also connotes forgiveness to another for having done wrongly; being unresentful. The merciful shall receive mercy from God. Compassion is loving kindness; it is true charity, or the pure love of God toward mankind.

Alma 19: 78, 79 Therefore, my son, see that ye are merciful unto your brethren; deal justly, judge righteously, and do good continually; and if ye do all these things, then shall ye receive your reward;

(Quotations are from the King James Authorized Edition of the Bible and from the 1908 RLDS Edition of the Book of Mormon; same chapters/verses as Independence Edition.)

Yea, ye shall have mercy restored unto you again; ye shall have justice restored unto you again; ye shall have a righteous judgment restored unto you again;

Isa. 58: 6-11 [Is it not] to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be

like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Item 6: The Pure In Heart

Matt. 5: 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (same in 3 Ne. 5:55).

The pure in heart will reign with Christ upon the earth during His millennial reign, and many shall have been numbered among the saints in Paradise; these all shall finally be in the celestial kingdom of God following the Day of Judgment and will inhabit the redeemed earth, or the new earth, as it is called. See Rev. 21:1-4.

Al. 10: 4, 5 Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin, save it were with abhorrence; And there were many, exceeding great many, who were made pure, and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.

1 Jn 3: 2-3 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we

shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

And how does one purify himself? As a beginning, see a following item entitled, "The Offense Of Sin; Its Remedy." Broadly speaking, we are to obey the principles of the gospel of Christ which lead one into his kingdom - faith, repentance, baptism (including reception of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands). From this as our base, we are counseled by Paul to "go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1). By the grace of Christ in obedience to His commandments as we search and are able to understand them, we become perfected in our spirit, though we may have imperfect knowledge. Divine grace fills the gap of our ignorance if we are innocent of spirit. This is that perfection spoken of by Jesus.

Item 7: The Peacemakers

Mat 5: 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

3 Ne. 5: 56 And blessed are all the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

A making of peace infers a gentle, loving intervention, and perhaps a different approach to the problem, especially from a scriptural standpoint and as moved by the Holy Spirit.

Heb. 12: 14, 15 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you,

and thereby many be defiled.

Col. 3: 12 -15 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Item 8: Persecuted For Righteousness' Sake

Mat. 5: 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

3 Ne 5: 57 And blessed are all they who are persecuted for my name's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The Book of Mormon is more definitive at this point, identifying righteousness with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. However, the following verses in both texts, relative to being reviled for His sake, is practically the same.

Mat. 5: 11, 12 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

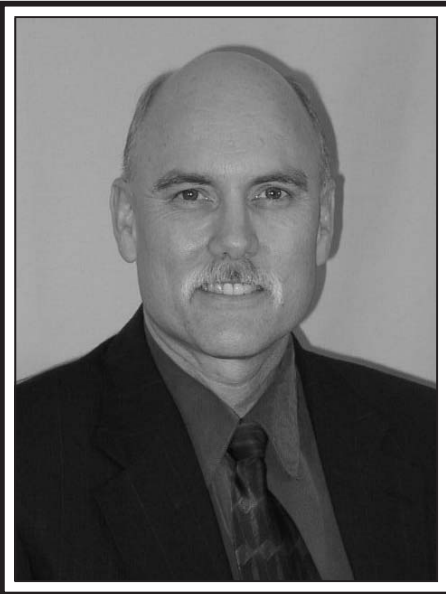
3 Ne. 5: 58, 59 And blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute, and shall say all manner

of evil against you falsely, for my sake, For ye shall have great joy and be exceeding glad, for great shall be your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you.

Apostle Paul caps all the above teachings of Jesus by his marvelously inspired summation as found in Rom., chap. 8:

31-39 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Articles of Faith & Practice



**(A continuation study by Elder
Gordon McCann)**

Article #9

When Moses was upon Mount Sinai appearing before the Lord, he was instructed to “Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.” The Lord understood the weakness of our flesh so he commanded Moses to keep a record by writing the commandments that

were given him. The written word became the standard from God for our use to read, consider, and judge our lives against. Throughout the Bible others were commanded to write what was given them of God. The Bible that we have today is a compilation of the recorded spiritual history that starts with the creation to the establishment of Israel as a nation. The Bible also includes the words of Christ while in the flesh, His death and resurrection, and the labor among the children of men by His chosen disciples.

When the Son of God was teaching in Jerusalem, prior to His death and resurrection, the following words of warning were recorded for our spiritual welfare:

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” John 12:48.

Those words of Christ confirm the writings recorded in the book of Revelation where we read the following:

Article #9

We believe that in the Bible is contained the word of God, that the Book of Mormon is an added witness for Christ, and that these contain the “fullness of the gospel.”

“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” Rev 20:12.

What are the books that the scripture in the book of Revelation is referring to? Based on the previously quoted words of Christ

the following is the answer to that question.

“out of those things which were written in the books.”

This represents a compilation of the complete word of God given to the children of men that was recorded from Adam to the Day of Judgment (John 12:48).

“book of life”

This is a heavenly book or record of the righteous (Revelation 3:5).

“according to their works”

This is a personal book or record of your life (your works).

By the written word of God we know that God is “not a respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34), nor does He change “neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). With this understanding of the character of God we should be able to understand the following recorded words of God contained in the Book of Mormon.

“For I command all men, both in the east, and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them: For out of the books which shall be written, I will judge the world, every man according to his works, according to that which is written” 2 Ne 12:65-66.

The Book of Mormon is a spiritual record of the workings of God among another nation of people. The Book of Mormon is also a witness unto us that God is not a “respecter of persons,” and that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

“Thou fool, that shall say, A bible, we have got a bible, and we need no more bible. Have ye obtained a bible save it were by the Jews? Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath; And I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth?” 2 Ne 12:53-57.

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The Phoenix, Arizona Local would like to extend an invitation to join them for their annual Church of Christ reunion, which will be held on Friday, **November 28**, through Sunday, **November 30**, 2003. If you plan to attend please notify one of the below listed members for accommodations.

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GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

THE LIAHONA

INTRODUCTION

When we last left Nephi, God had sent him back to Jerusalem again. God wanted Nephi and his brothers to get the brass plates which had the words of God written on them. He wanted their children and grandchildren to be able to learn about Him in the new land. With the help of God's mighty hand the brothers did get the brass plates and took them to the family's camp in the wilderness. God told the brothers to return to Jerusalem one last time to bring back another family with them, the family of Ishmael. Ishmael had a family of daughters who would one day marry Lehi's sons. At last the families of Lehi and Ishmael were out of Jerusalem for good. God had kept them all safe. They believed that God would lead them to a wonderful new land, but where? Where were they supposed to go now?

THE LIAHONA

(1 Nephi 5:11-41)

One morning Lehi stepped outside his tent in the wilderness. There on the ground was a beautiful brass ball! It was different than anything Lehi had ever seen. The ball had a pointer that showed which direction to travel in the wilderness toward the Promised Land. Lehi called the ball Liahona. Liahona meant compass. The family packed up their tents and set out in the direction that the Liahona pointed. The Liahona always pointed them toward places where there was water to drink, fruit and vegetables to pick and animals to hunt.

One day the tired travelers stopped to rest. It was time to go hunting. Laman and Lemuel's bows had lost their spring and wouldn't shoot well. Then Nephi's bow broke! There would be no meat for the weary travelers that day. "This is your fault Nephi! Why does everything always go wrong? We want meat for dinner!" Laman and Lemuel were angry. They didn't ask God to help them find a way to get meat. They just got mad at Nephi. They even got mad at God! Nephi felt very sad. He knew that God could help them.

Nephi knew he must do something. Into the woods he went and cut wood to make a new bow. When the bow was finished Nephi went to his father Lehi. "Father, would you ask God to help us?" "Lord," Lehi prayed, "where should my sons go to find animals to hunt?" God spoke, "Look on the Liahona." The Liahona pointed toward the mountain, but this time there was more on the Liahona. There was writing...a message from God. It said, "If you pray to me and do what I tell you, I will lead you with the Liahona. If you don't pray the Liahona will not work and you will wander in the wilderness." Nephi believed God. Up he went on the mountain, alone. There the animals were, just as God had promised! Nephi took out his strong new bow. He shot an arrow. When Nephi returned to camp he carried a heavy load, fresh meat for dinner, maybe even enough for more meals later.

From then on, when the travelers remembered to pray and obeyed what God told them, the Liahona worked. If they forgot to pray or didn't obey God they wandered in the wilderness and took longer on their journey to the new land.

We're like Lehi's family. If we forget to pray or don't do what God tells us, we won't know what to do. But if we pray, go to church and do what God tells us in the Bible and Book of Mormon, He will bless us just like He did Lehi's family long ago.

THE LIAHONA

WHO OR WHAT AM I?

I am a brass ball. My name means compass. _____.

One morning I found a brass ball on the ground in front of my tent. _____.

What the Nephites were traveling through on the way to the Promised Land.

_____.

The brass ball had one of these on it. _____.

This broke when Nephi went hunting. _____.

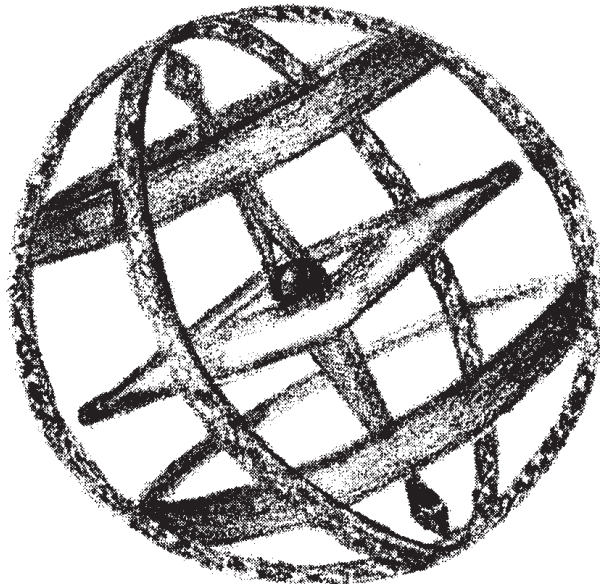
We are Nephi's older brothers. _____ and _____.

Nephi cut some _____ and made a new _____.

Something new was on the Liahona. What was it? _____.

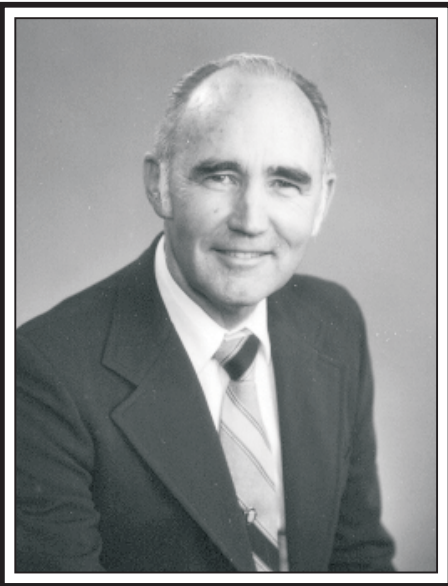
The Liahona told Nephi to go to the _____ to hunt.

When Nephi went to the mountain he found _____ to hunt.





THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE APOSTLE JOHN



By Apostle Don McIndoo

CHAPTER SIXTEEN (CONTINUED)

Verse sixteen found us observing the Lord's gathering of the nations into a place called Armageddon. Although the very name seems ominous, we are given no specifics about what took place at this gathering of nations in this, nor subsequent, chapters. The author takes the position that it is all summed up in the typically

SECTION 22: THE SEVENTH VIAL

symbolic, prophetic language of the pouring out of the seventh vial. He also foresees the specific fulfillment of many New and Old Testament prophecies in the general description of the seventh vial.

We have largely presented the Book of Revelation from a historical point of view. But as the seventh vial is poured out into the air over the earth, we are looking into the future, and the pages of history can only serve as possible types of those events which shall take place. In Section Three of this study we read that the number seven was a **"number of completeness, or perfection."** That is certainly true of its use here as the seventh vial of God's indignation poured out upon the earth's inhabitants. This is the final vial to be poured out upon the world and God's judgments are now completed.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done" (Revelation 16:17). This was not comment by John nor was it the voice of an angel that was heard by John; rather, this voice proceeded from the very throne of the Almighty. It was His voice which announced, **"It is done."** That voice shall one day resonate throughout the earth!

This final vial was poured out into the air above the earth. Barnes comments that even as storms and tempests are developed in the atmosphere, **"...so this destruction would come from some supernatural cause."**¹ The vial shall be poured out into the atmosphere and whatever effects are produced, using the laws of physics as a guide, will be rapidly diffused over the entire earth. Verse eighteen describes what takes place.

"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were

upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.”

As I read these words and consider Barnes' thought that the destruction would come from some “supernatural cause,” my mind goes to the vivid portrayal of the great destruction that fell upon the wicked inhabitants of ancient America:

“And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, in the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land; And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, inso-much that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder; and there were exceeding sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land. ...And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward: for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempests, and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the exceeding great quaking of the whole earth; (3 Nephi 4:6, 7, 9, 10).

But there is another way of looking at this description found in verse eighteen. Many times in apocalyptic prophecies such as these, terms like “voices, thunders and lightnings” have symbolic meanings. I believe verse eigh-

teen informs us of what shall happen as the nations are brought together at Armageddon. This shall be a tumultuous place of battle, warfare and judgment. In 1 Samuel 7:10 and Isaiah 29:5, 6 these very terms were used to describe the warfare and destruction that took place among the enemies of God's people. I believe there are several Old Testament prophecies that we shall see fulfilled on the plains of Megiddo (Hebrew for rendezvous – Strong, 4023) and at the time of the pouring out of the seventh vial.

*“The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And **they shall be gathered together**, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited”* (Isaiah 24:20-22).

Ezekiel in his prophecy about Gog and Magog also saw this terrible day of the Lord and recorded many interesting aspects of what shall one day occur. The words in boldface highlight major aspects of his prophecy.

a. *“And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, **and I will bring thee forth**, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers*

and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet.” (38:4, 5). Here we see that Gog and his allies shall be inevitably drawn by the Lord, even as if He had placed hooks in their mouths.

- b. *“And I will turn thee back, and leave **but the sixth part of thee**, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel”* (39:2). So great will be the destruction of these enemies of the Lord, that only 16% of them will escape. Gog and his allies will come from the “north parts.” Some commentators change this wording to read “from the northernmost part of the world.” Saying this brings confusion to most because they tend to have a picture of a 21st century world map imprinted in their minds. Our first task is to establish the identity of Gog and his allies, using the prophet's map, not our own.
- c. In Jeremiah 1:14 we read, *“out of the north an evil shall break forth.”* As we continue to read we find in Jeremiah 4:6 that this refers to the Babylonian invasion via the Fertile Crescent, or down from the headwaters of the Euphrates River. Again, in Jeremiah 50:2-13 we read about a *“great nation from the north country.”* In chapter 51, Jeremiah explains this to be the Medes and Persians, peoples that still exist and who are enemies of both Israel and the United States.
- d. In Genesis 10:2, Magog appears to be the second son of

Japheth. He is shown as settling in the areas around the Black Sea, to the north of the Fertile Crescent. The common thought about Gog is found in the *Illustrated Dictionary and Concordance of the Bible*. It says that Gog is the “political and military leader of the nations of Meshech and Tubal in the land of Magog.”² Peloubet writes, “It (Magog) appears as a country or people of which Gog was the prince. Josephus identifies them with the Scythians, and the identification is generally accepted.”³ The Scythians were a nomadic people who lived just north and east of the Black Sea. Spicer’s summary of those identified as from the north is apt: “The kings of the north in the early period of the prophecy was the power that ruled Syria and Asia Minor.”⁴ Of a truth, those nations just to the north of the Black Sea and to the sides of it are presently a part of southern Russia. All these peoples have become converts of Islam and share a desire for the destruction of Israel and those who support her. Going back to the previous page (a.) we see that the allies of Gog shall be “Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya.” Again we see those nations that shall go up against Israel in that day are Muslim nations.

e. They will be brought against the “mountains of Israel.” Mountains, in this usage, signifies governments. We notice that it is plural. I believe this refers both to Israel, centered around Jerusalem, and to the New Jerusalem in America. This thought is em-

phasized in Ezekiel 38:10, 11: “...at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates.” This description better characterizes America than any other place in the world.

f. These scriptures make clear to me that we need look no farther than the present political climate and radical Islamic thought to find the preliminary steps that will bring about this world-wide turmoil and conflagration. The prophets Joel, Zephaniah and Zechariah also referred to this day in their prophecies.

Strong’s identifies “earthquakes” (7494 – Hebrew) as a “quaking, commotion, vibration, bounding,” while the Greek (4578) says “a commotion, earthquake, tempest.” It is interesting to note that Cruden’s Concordance states, “Great alterations and changes are expressed in the scripture by a shaking of the earth. An extraordinary and unexpected alteration in the state of affairs, civil or ecclesiastical, is represented by a great earthquake.”⁵ This is exactly what we should expect with the pouring of the seventh vial.

“And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the

wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (Revelation 16:19).

We should expect to see a great alteration in the civil and religious affairs of spiritual Babylon. This term refers to the Roman Catholic Church and all those institutions affiliated with her. The resulting confusion and commotion will affect the economic and political stability of the entire world. It is interesting that many of the strong Catholic nations are today bound to the majority of European nations in an economic and political alliance. Chapters seventeen and eighteen of Revelation add detail to the events that will transpire as God’s judgment is poured out upon present-day Babylon. The severity of her judgment is shown in verses twenty and twenty-one of this chapter.

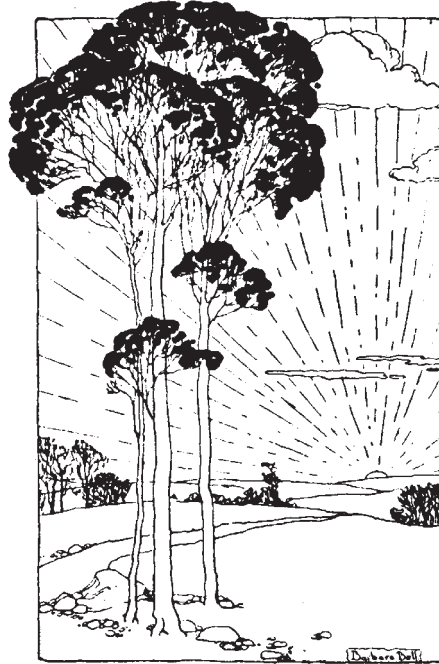
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Absolute Direction

As I was rereading scriptures from a recent sermon, two words from Isaiah 1:19 flooded my mind. It says, "If ye are willing and obedient...." This brought to mind a testimony I want to share to give strength to those who are seeking God's direction as to the path to take in life.

At age thirty-one I had come to a time in my life when I felt I needed God's ABSOLUTE DIRECTION. I went to the Lord in fasting and prayer, with a heart as described in Isaiah 1:19—willing and obedient. I told God that I wanted to know His will in my life. If I was to marry, that was fine; if not, that was fine. I just needed to know how to focus my life. I fasted from food for many days. I went without radio, television, newspapers, movies and other enjoyments, and spent every moment possible studying and praying. I was in complete and total submission to God, without reservation or fear.



PATHLIGHTS

And my direction came, not after one day or one week, but after many months. Then when that still small voice came and said there was an answer for me, the answer was that I needed to make some changes before I received what God had planned for me. So after all that time I still needed to make more changes to show my willingness to submit to His absolute will and direction for me.

This year Gordon and I

have shared 24 years of marriage, years of my life that might have been wasted had I not chosen to seek God at a point when I could not see the way.

I want to encourage anyone who is struggling. Look within, seek His help, and listen for His voice. Prove by your actions that you are willing to submit to His will. Then God will be able to work with you and direct your life.

*In gospel bonds,
Pat McCann*

MISSIONARY MOMENTS

ZAMORANO AND OCULÍ HONDURAS

I would like to share two testimonies that have happened recently.

In a small town next to us called Providence they have been having problems with some thieves that are attacking passersby on a small road and stealing all they have on them, including their clothes. The road that they have been on is also the road that I have used to go up to the local in Oculi. I, at the time, wasn't aware of the problem, because for some time my car has been broken down and in the shop. But I felt that I needed to go up to Oculi for a sacrament service. So I rode a bike up to Oculi. During the service one of the brothers, who had been working down by us and traveling on the same road, stood up and gave his testimony. During the week of work he had been warned not to travel on that particular road. Saturday when he got paid, as there would be thieves there, he took another road. And sure enough, that same day another gentleman was robbed, and so our brother was giving thanks that he had been saved. On my way up to Oculi for this service I had traveled on this road and I saw four men that looked suspicious and so I commented that I had seen this, and

another brother said that it was the four men who were doing the robbing. On my way home I began to think if I should go home on the same road or should I find another road. I knew that God could protect me no matter what, but there was something telling me that I also had been warned and that I shouldn't tempt God. I didn't really want to go on the other road because it is so much longer and I was on a bike. So part of the way home I was meditating on this and praying to the Lord for guidance. About halfway home there is a stream that you must cross, so I got off my bike and began taking off my shoes when a truck drove up who was heading my way. He just rolled down his window and motioned for me to get in back. All my questions were answered; I hopped in back and made my way home. The following day I heard that again that same day I was riding they had robbed another person. I give thanks that it wasn't me. Not that I would wish it on another.

The second testimony. The group in Oculi have various meetings during the week and I am not at all of them. But this last Friday I felt that I should go up

and be in one of their home meetings. So I went. After the meeting Florentino's daughter came up and said that their mother wanted me to go and pray for her little brother Luis. So I went down to their house, which is also where we hold our regular services. Florentino's wife was in tears; Luis had been sick for eleven days and wasn't eating or drinking. They had taken him to the doctor and the doctor said that he had a liver infection. Well, we prayed for him and I counseled Florentino and his wife that they should be sure that he drank enough, and if the fever should come back to make sure they didn't dress him for a Minnesota winter. (Honduras is known for their winter gear only when one is sick with a fever.) Sunday when I went up for the church service I asked how Luis was and his mother said that he fell asleep and in the morning was up playing marbles as if he had never been sick.

God is good.

*Thanks and take care.
Ronnie Gill*

REUNION REPORT

2003 Missouri Reunion Report

The August Missouri Reunion was held August 1, 2 and 3rd at the Temple Lot Local in Independence, Missouri. There were approximately 350 attendees.

9:00 a.m., Friday, August 1st: The first meeting of the day was a prayer service in which Elders Warren Johnson and Nicholas Denham were in charge: "We have an example to set for those with whom we associate day in and day out."

Prayers and testimonies of God's blessings followed until the preaching service at 11:00.

Czerna Kauffman and Martha Bruner sang a special.

The speaker of the hour was Elder Mark Hill: "In a tee ball game, a mentally challenged boy came up to bat. He hit the ball and stood there and stood there. The pitcher told him to run, but the batter still stood there. The pitcher took him by the hand and took him to first base. The first baseman took him by the hand and took him to second base. The second baseman took him by the hand to third base and the third baseman led him to home plate. The family and friends cheered him on."

"How are we going to lead someone to first base? How are we going to talk to someone about faith, then repentance? How will we take them by the hand and lead them to baptism? How will we talk to them about going 'home' to eternal life? If we don't know our way around the bases, how can we lead someone else?"

We had a song service at 2:30.

At 3:00 p.m. there was a preaching service. Special by Annette Whitehead and Patricia Ferrier: "Take Time To Be

Holy."

The speaker of the hour was Elder Hubert Yates: "We are just like an old guitar that is no longer in tune and has old strings. We must tune our souls to God to be in perfect harmony with Him. A teacher has to know and understand the subject that he is teaching, or he can't teach it. The gospel is the same.

"If the Lord isn't 'watering' your soul, you're brown. If you are 'too busy' to worship, visit, study—you're brown.

He never said you'd win every battle when trying to win souls. Know that you tried, be ready to go again. Your job—to love them, have a desire for them to repent and come unto God."

Closing poem by Ed Yates, "What Path?"

By the end of the Friday afternoon service, most of the campers and staff of Teen Challenge were back in town. (I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Sister Debbie Vogel for taking notes for me while I was still at camp. She has been a big help to me.)

We had a song service at 6:30 in the evening, followed by another preaching service.

We began our Friday evening preaching with another special, this time by Martha Bruner, Czerna Kauffman, and Donald Gill.

The Friday evening speaker was Elder Dennis Trudgen: "What church is this? Belief in Christ, as the head of the church. Under Him, He set 12 apostles. By grace we are saved, but not without good works. To serve in the priesthood, you must be called of God by the spirit of revelation. Although every member of the body of Christ has a

work to perform, it is only the men who serve in the priesthood. Belief that salvation comes of baptism by immersion, followed by the laying on of the hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Members must endure to the end. Belief that laying on of hands by the priesthood, members are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. Baptism must be performed by someone with authority from God.

"What church is this? The Church of Christ. But it is also the ancient Church of Christ. The church around 30 A.D. was exactly like this." Brother Trudgen then gave us a history lesson indicating how false doctrines came into the church that had been established by Christ. (Brother Dennis has his research references available.)

We gathered again Saturday morning for a prayer service with Elders Rick Olson and Jim Case in charge.

After opening song and scripture reading by Brother Case, we had a prayer and testimony service. The service was beautiful. Some of the things mentioned in the testimonies:

"Build your faith by building your service to the Lord. The more you serve, the more you witness, the more you see miracles."

"When we don't feel worthy of the thing that God has for us to do, remember that God is still there. The scriptures assure us that we are NOT worthy, but that it is God who does the work through a willing body."

We had a couple special seasons of prayer for some of the families that are in need.

At about noon we broke for lunch, and returned in the afternoon at 2:30 for a Song Service.

We were blessed to witness the blessing of a baby. Sara Michelle Kimball, daughter of Stephen and Amy Kimball, was blessed with Elders Jeff Oldham and Bob Hedrick officiating. Brother Jeff read Luke 18:16-17: "This beautiful little baby can be an example for us as a way to enter into heaven. We have a responsibility to help raise this child until she can make the decision for Christ on her own. Pray that the angels will surround this little one."

The afternoon preaching service began with a special by Deborah O'Haro, accompanied on guitar by D. A. Vogel.

The speaker of the hour was elder Merlin Eddy: "The center of it all is hope. Our hope lies in the mercy of Christ, that He would forgive us. Repentance is a bridge that brings us from the justice of God back into His mercy. That justice is what says, If ye sin ye shall die. It gets us back from the wrong side of the river back to the right side."

"We must press forward. Let's not be satisfied with where we're at."

"He can tell us things we need to know if we seek it from Him."

"We can't make excuses for things that are displeasing to Him."

"We had testimonies this morning about the great joy that people here have received because of the forgiveness that they have received. Being forgiven relieves the burden."

We had dinner and gathered again at 6:30 for song service.

At 7:00, we met for preaching service. Tabitha Case blessed us with a special.

The speaker of the hour was elder Adam Porter: "Our King is coming. He does have a kingdom and you all are a part in that kingdom. We need to understand how important being in that kingdom is and its citizenship."

"He's told us all the things that He requires and the things that He is up to. He has told us that He has our best in-

terest in mind. But we still call ourselves 'servants.' We **WILLINGLY CHOOSE** to call ourselves 'servants' of the most high God. God does not put us under a yoke of bondage. God knows all about life (He created it) and He knows how we should live it (so that life will work and will bear fruit). God has an answer for every problem that ever existed.

"Our King has riches untold. Our King paid dearly for us to live in the kingdom with Him. He lost His robe so that you may wear the garments of righteousness. He shed His blood that we may remember Him. He wore that crown so that you may choose that crown of life."

After the sermon we gathered in the dining room for an ice cream social to visit with the brothers and sisters from all over. The young people met at a gym for fellowship and games.

Apostles Mike McGhee and Roland Sarratt were in charge of the Sacrament Service. We began by singing, "Come Ye Apart" and "Sweet Hour of Prayer."

The opening comments by our apostle admonished us to think: "Are you ashamed of Jesus? Even Peter thought he would not be ashamed of Jesus Christ. We start anew today to serve our risen Savior. We are weak, but made strong through the Lord Jesus Christ. Lay down pride and come to the Lord in meekness and humility."

After partaking of the sacrament we knelt in a season of prayer, followed by five administrations and many testimonies.

Some of the things brought out in testimonies: "We are all God's children. He will take care of us, but we have to ask."

"When we humble ourselves and we fast and we pray, He will hear us and bless us."

"God prepares people for things that are going to happen."

Sunday afternoon we gathered again for a service called "Special Offerings." There were songs offered by the camp choir, a young women's sextet, the camp counselors and the Spiritual Warfare class from camp, to name a few.

For our final sermon, we were blessed to have Apostle Alvin "Jay" Moser as our speaker. Opening song, "Nearer, My God To Thee," followed by opening prayer and a special, "El Shaddai," by Sister Erica Moser.

"As preachers we are always looking for some way to keep everyone awake, to make an impression in the minds of the hearer. (Brother Moser is holding a huge knife at the pulpit.) When we speak of the gospel, it should come into the minds of the people just like this knife. Everything is not pleasant. We have to cut to the heart of the matter when talking to people in these other countries. You can't wait. You have to get right to it.

"For some people that we love so much, we may never be able to convince them. Everybody isn't going to listen, but we still must get to the heart. Even Cain didn't listen when he heard God's word directly. What are we going to say that is going to get to their heart?"

"Put away your agenda to be in the army of the Lord. Put away your own battle plan and do what the Lord tells you to do."

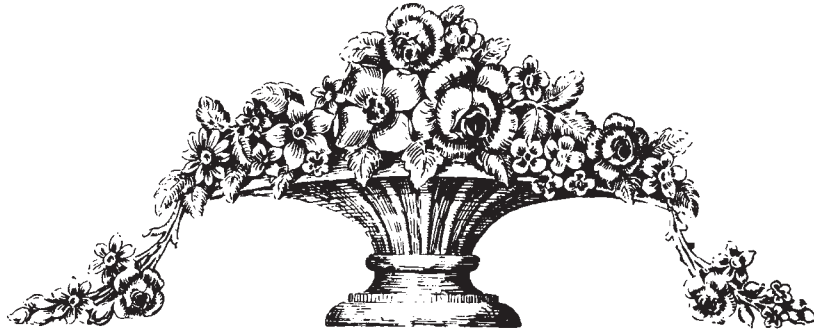
We had a really nice reunion with a beautiful spirit there. There is never enough time to visit with everyone, but we loved seeing lots of familiar faces, and even some new ones. I hope this report is a help to those who were not able to attend, and will encourage you wherever you are.

Carrie Geier

OBITUARY

Gladys W. Nast

October 8, 1918~January 22, 2003



Gladys W. Nast, of Independence, Missouri, passed away Wednesday, January 22, 2003, at Independence Regional Health Center.

Gladys was born October 8, 1918, in Zerring, Iowa, to Albert Davis and Dorothy Bryant Davis. She was a member of the Church of Christ, Temple Lot, East Local. Gladys was preceded in death by her husband, William A. Nast; two daughters, Lois Jean and Donna Mae; two brothers and four sisters. She is survived by five daughters and their spouses, Carolyn and Frank Fann, Jennifer and Robert Oldham, Belinda and Michael Smith, Melissa and Steven McGhee, and Michele and Patrick Fisher, 14 grandchildren, and 12 great grandchildren. She had many close friends, especially in the church, all of whom she considered her family.

AND HER CHILDREN ARISE UP AND CALL HER BLESSED

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" Proverbs 31:27-28.

As I reflected on what I wanted to convey most about my mother, I was saddened because I realized nothing I could say would do justice, but for most of those who knew her, they will understand.

As far back as I can remember into my childhood, I knew my mother loved God. My mother believed, with unwavering faith. When I was about four years old, I remember looking through the house one day for my mother and going into her bedroom and seeing her kneeling by her bed in prayer. I carry that picture in my mind to this

day.

My mother believed in being a mother. She was our friend and often our confidant, but foremost, our mother. When we were children and as adults, she used everyday situations, every problem, every challenge, and every heartache as an opportunity to teach us and to remind us to pray, because God had every answer.

She taught us about God the same as she taught us everything, first by example and then by repetition, until it became second nature. She'd tell us to sit up straight, be polite, mind our manners, respect our elders, act like a lady and say our prayers. She would tell us, if you're ever afraid, pray! When you are sick, pray! If you don't know where to turn for help, pray! She knew God would answer and she made us know it too.

Just before we would leave for

church or school, she'd say, "Smile, girls." She always told us if you're happy on the outside you couldn't be unhappy inside. She said, "A smile is so much more approachable than a frown, and smiles are contagious. They make other people happy too." Mom took very seriously the adage, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." So she would give us our choice, smile, or the alternative—"If you're going to be unhappy I'll give you something to be unhappy about." We smiled a lot!

Mom firmly believed that you should try to do a good deed every day. I can't remember a week ever going by that my mother didn't have someone over for lunch or dinner. On most days, at a minimum, she would take cookies to neighbors, stop in to see sick friends or send someone a card or letter.

Mom did not know many idle moments. Keeping the housework and laundry done for seven people is a full time job, but we grew up wearing beautiful home sewn clothes, eating home baked bread and hot meals on a daily basis. We learned to keep a clean house and to have dinner ready for our husbands every day so that dinnertime was family time. To her, these were just the basics of a good wife and laid the foundation of a close family.

Next to God, Mom held family very dear and wanted us all to be very close. After her stroke, she would try especially hard to respond whenever her grandchildren came to visit or to help care for her. Her grandchildren showered her with love and affection, and they were a

particular joy to her during her illness.

Mom learned what was important early in her life. It was at a very young age that she went through the heartache of losing two children. From personal loss, she taught us how precious children are, how short life can be, and how sometimes we don't understand the reason why things happen, but during those times, you just have to hold on and trust God.

Mom had seven daughters, with two of them preceding her in death. Mom always told us that from that time on, she made up her mind she would live her life in such a way as to never do anything that could separate her from being united with them. To my knowledge, she never did.

When Mom had a stroke in August of 2002, we were devastated. It robbed her of the use of her entire left side. She could no longer sit up, walk, feed herself, drink liquid, or eat solid foods. Her vision was blurred and her mind wandered. She had a hard time staying focused or carrying a conversation, but if you spoke of God her mind was clear. She had a clear remembrance of God and praised Him. She could give a 5-minute prayer without faltering.

During her illness Mom remembered and requested administration often. She loved hearing about Sunday school lessons and sermons. She would ask the guys to tell her about what they preached on. She still thrilled to hear about the work in the foreign missions.

When she heard about the children, she wanted us to take her checkbook and go buy clothes to send to them. She continually worried about certain friends and their needs. She wanted us to see to them for her.

Even then, while lying in bed for months, after all of her earthly possessions, including her health, were gone, she worried about others, and foremost about the work of Jesus Christ.

We, my sisters and I, have pondered this a lot since Mom's passing. We wondered if, after all of our earthly possessions were gone, if everything that we value in this life was literally stripped away, if even our bodies no longer functioned upon command and we had to rely on others for everything, we wondered how we would measure up. Would what was left after we "go through the fire" be burnished gold? We don't know the answer to that now, but we're confident that if we, like those two thousand Nephite sons, believe what our mother taught us, it will be. So as we were taught, we'll keep praying, and trust God for the rest.

We love you mom.

*Your daughters,
Melissa McGhee
Carolyn Fann
Jennifer Oldham
Belinda Smith
Michele Fisher*

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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.

The **2004 Ministers' Conference** (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 4. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 5. A **Solemn Assembly** will be held prior to the conference, on April 2 & 3. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

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