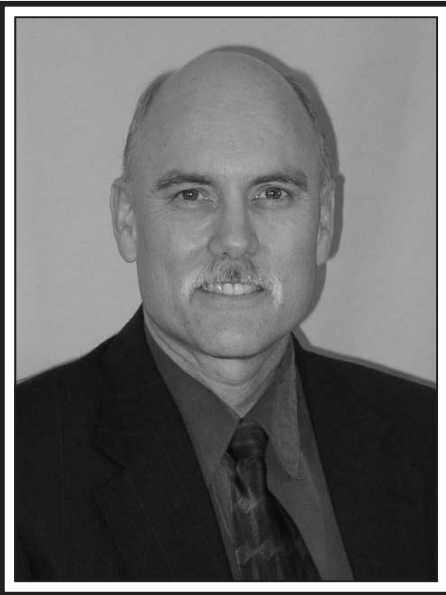


FASTING



By Elder Gordon McCann

There are many good examples in the scriptures that help us to understand the concept of fasting. Through these examples we can also see the results in spiritual blessing that come from earnest and sincere fasting before our God. Hopefully I will be able to provide you with answers to the following questions concerning fasting:

1. Why should we fast?
2. What does it mean to fast?
3. How do we fast?
4. Are there different ways to fast?
5. What are some of the purposes for fasting?

WHY SHOULD WE FAST?

Fasting should be an intrinsic part of a Christian's spiritual life. It is the means by which we can effectively approach or communicate with, in deep humility and reverence, our God. The scriptures plainly point out that to follow the commandments of God we must include fasting and prayer in our spiritual devotions to Him.

"Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matthew 9:14-15).

"And they did not walk any more after the performances and ordinances of the Law of Moses, but they did walk after the commandments which they had received from their Lord and their God, continuing in fasting and prayer, and in meeting together oft, both to pray and to hear the word of the Lord" (4 Nephi 1:13).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FAST?

Fasting is the physical separation from the worldly ties to our flesh combined with a spiri-

tual focus of our will becoming the will of our Heavenly Father. This means that we turn off the TV, radio and computer (unless we are using it in our scriptural studies, or e-mail to uplift a brother or sister) so that we can focus our spiritual life, fulfilling the commandments that God has given us. Our life becomes "a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1-2), holy acceptable to God in the flesh. God's promise to hear our prayers is predicated on our sincere desire to be heard (our faith), based upon our works as they pertain to the commandments of God. Remember the words of James the Apostle, "I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18). Jesus said very plainly that, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). The promise to those who keep God's commandments is that we will be loved of God and Jesus will manifest Himself to us (John 14:21).

HOW DO WE FAST?

There is recorded in the book of Isaiah where the children of Israel had been murmuring against their God because they had been fasting and it seemed to them that He was not listening nor answering their fasting

and prayer requests. The Lord's Spirit moved upon Isaiah to speak to the people in rebuke and guidance concerning their fasting and prayers. The following was given of the Lord as to why he had not honored their fasts:

"Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high" (Isaiah 58:3-4).

Let us take a closer look at the above referenced scripture and see what Israel was doing wrong when they fasted before God. First we can see that God had seen their efforts to keep His commandments by fasting, but God clearly was not pleased with their fasts. God pointed out to them that they would always find time, during their fasting, to satisfy the worldly pleasures of life and devote most of their time to other things. The purpose of their fasting was to be "heard on high" to prove their righteousness (of strife and debate) before men and God. God answers their question "*wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?*" with a question:

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" (Isaiah 58:5).

When Israel took the time to "afflict their souls" they would put on a grand display of public humility by hanging their heads sitting in the streets dressed in sackcloth and ashes.

Sackcloth was a coarse, dark cloth woven from the hair of goats or camels, which was normally used to sack grain. The wearing of sackcloth was more a custom as an outward show when mourning a death of a loved one or to call attention to a pending calamity (i.e. Esther 4:2; Jonah 3:8). The use of ashes comes from the Mosaic Law; they were used as a purification for sins.

"And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin" (Numbers 19:9).

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh..." (Hebrews 9:13).

Those individuals were fasting in their pride, by putting on sackcloth and ashes and sitting in the street, thinking they were justified and acceptable before God. They thought that they could invoke God's wrath upon those that disagreed with them or prove how right they were before God.

The words of Christ, as recorded in the Bible and the

Book of Mormon, give us a very clear picture as to how we should approach our God when we fast.

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:16-18).

"Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (3 Ne 5:108-109).

Our fasting before our God should be transparent to the world around us but filled with those things that God has commanded us to do.

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? 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?" (Isaiah 58:6-7).

The promise that the Lord

provides to those individuals who approach Him in a proper attitude of fasting and prayer is contained in the last part of the prophecy delivered by Isaiah to Israel:

"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..." (Isaiah 58:8-9).

ARE THERE DIFFERENT WAYS TO FAST?

The scriptures do give us guidance as to the different ways that we can fast before God. One of the ways that we can fast should be very familiar to us. Remembering the definition for fasting, "Fasting is the physical separation from the worldly ties to our flesh combined with a spiritual focus of our will becoming the will of our Heavenly Father," let us look at the following scripture verse:

"And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls: and they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus..." (Moroni 6:6).

When we come to church to worship God it should be in an attitude of fasting and prayer before our God. We are to leave the world behind and focus on

the purpose of our gathering. The following scripture verses give us the expectation of the Lord when He commanded us to "come together oft":

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:13-14).

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:10-14).

Many times we forget about God's Spirit and the words that are spoken to direct us as individuals or collectively as a church. Latter-day revelation that is contained in the Book of Commandments provides us with a very clear pic-

ture of God's expectation for fasting and prayer.

"[16] Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness. [17] Even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. [18] And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up the sacraments upon my holy day: [19] For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High; [20] Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days, and at all times; [21] But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations, and thy sacraments, unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord. [22] And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart, that thy fasting may be perfect, or in other words, that thy joy may be full. [23] Verily this is fasting and prayer; or, in other words, rejoicing and prayer. [24] And inasmuch as ye do these things with thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts, and countenances, not with much laughter, for this is sin, but with a glad heart, and a cheerful countenance; [25] Verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this the fulness of the earth is yours..." (*Book of Commandments 60:16-25; pages 111-112*).

There are other ways to fast and pray before God found in the examples that Jesus set where from time to time He

went off alone (His closet; Matthew 6:6) to fast and pray.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” (Matthew 4:1-2).

“And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone” (Matthew 14:23).

“And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him” (Luke 22:39).

“And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?” (John 9:18).

For those of you who are married the Apostle Paul provides some guidance to couples that determine to set aside time to fast and pray to their God. It is important to note the completeness of our separation from the worldly ties that God requires of us during our times of fasting and prayer.

“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency” (1 Corinthians 7:5).

So we can see by the examples recorded in the scripture that fasting can consist of a few hours, half a day, a day, a couple of days or more. We can also have an acceptable fast before God partaking some food

(...only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart, that thy fasting may be perfect, ...), or without food and drink for a time, depending upon the purpose of the fast.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PURPOSES FOR FASTING?

The scriptures provide us with many good examples where individuals or groups of people fasted for a variety of reasons. The following are some of the purposes found in the scriptures, where they fasted, for:

- Physical and Spiritual Blessings
- Spiritual Understanding and Power
- As Part of Worship
- Repentance and Deliverance (physical and spiritual)
- Spiritual Direction
- Thanksgiving

USE WISDOM IN YOUR FASTING

Our Lord Jesus Christ understood how weak we are in the flesh, and He made sure that when He found those who would listen and follow Him that they would not endanger themselves in doing so. Consider the following scripture verses and apply them to your life, not for an excuse not to fast, but to use wisdom when you do fast:

“Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them

away fasting, lest they faint in the way” (Matthew 15:32; see also Mark 8:2-3).

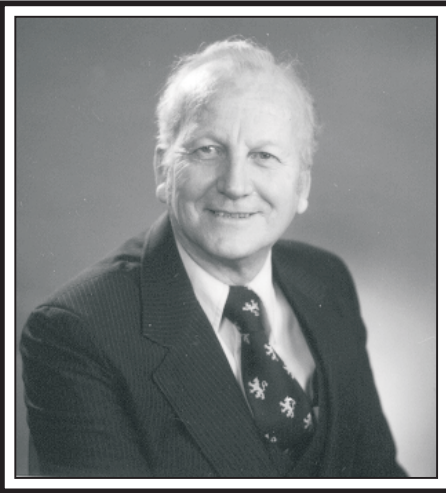
Another example is recorded in the scripture where there were those who were fasting many days because they feared for the safety of their lives. The Apostle Paul had interceded in their behalf and knew God would preserve them, and compelled them to end their fasting for their physical health.

“And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you” (Acts 27-33-34).

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF PURPOSES FOR FASTING

Please refer to the GSSA section of this Advocate where I have provided you with some good scriptural examples of “Why we should fast,” and for what purposes. Remember periodic fasting for your spiritual welfare and the welfare of others is a commandment of God and we should not be waiting for a calamity in our lives before we decide to follow the commandment of God to “meet together oft, to fast and to pray.”

Pondering the Words of JESUS CHRIST



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

Item 39: A Gathering of the Saints

The foregoing is principally a discussion of the gathering and final end of the wicked. Now let us consider the gathering of the saints of God more fully; not exhaustively, but using the words of Christ especially. It appears that the gathering of the saints follows the gathering of the wicked as has been previously discussed in consideration of the words of Christ as recorded in Matt. 13:30. In this text, the saints are alluded to as "the wheat," which is to be gathered "into my barn." The Moffat translation from the Aramaic pluralizes "barn" (barns). This term surely alludes to the places of gathering, both in Zion, or the New Jerusalem to be built in America, and in Palestine's

(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.)

Jerusalem of the last days, the sanctified holy city of God.

Isa. 2: 2, 3 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. See also Mic. 4:1, 2 & 2 Ne. 8:18-19.

"The mountain of the Lord's house (His temple in Zion/w.a.s.) shall be established in the top of the mountains." "Mountain" in prophetic terminology is "kingdom" or "government" (see Dan. 2:35, 44; Ps. 48:2 & Joel 3:17). How fitting that the kingdom or government of Christ should be found "in the top of the mountains"; in other words: in the government of the state of Missouri which is nearly central to the contiguous states of America, the place designated through Joseph Smith as the center place of Zion, and the place for the temple, or house of the Lord, being in Independence, Missouri! Here is to be the place for the gathering of the saints of God in the last days! In

Zion (the New Jerusalem to be built at what is presently Independence, Missouri) and in Jerusalem of the present nation of Israel is where the "barns" of the Lord are to be located!

What about it, friends: IS IT TIME TO BE THINKING OF GATHERING TO ZION?

Well, in His own time Christ **WILL GATHER** all those who are found worthy! This is rather mysteriously referenced in Luke, chapter 17, vs. 31-37. In verse 37 we find this:

...Whersoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

The "body," as used here, is called a "carcase" in Matt. 24:28. Of course, a carcase is thought of as a dead body; but this will take a bit of examination. To do so, we will examine one text, but in conjunction with it, please also look at Col. 3:3 & 2 Tim. 2:11:

Rom. 6:3-8 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness

of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

We are to understand by the foregoing that the saints of God have become **DEAD TO SIN, YET ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST**. This is the body or carcase spoken of in Luke 17:37 and Matt. 24:28. I suggest that this represents the body having gathered unto Zion, the New Jerusalem, the bonafide saints of the Church of Christ. But now we also see that the “eagles” are to be gathered together, presumably to feast upon that body.

This also will bear a bit of examination. I suggest that it has a two-fold application. The most obvious is that there will be wicked ones in the employ of Satan, who would desire the destruction of the “body,” the saints. Nevertheless, their desires will not be realized, for—

...The glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord shall also be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it; And it shall be called Zion (*Bk. of Com. 48: 60, 61*).

The second, and most important application has to do with the saints of God, in their scattered condition, being gathered to the place of Zion, where a body of saints had previously gathered! In this sense, the scattered saints are also likened to “eagles,” who will gather to the “body” to “feed” there! The reasoning for this assumption is in seeking to understand just who it is that Christ is speaking of. Of course, He is most interested in the care of His disciples, for He is the “good shepherd”; and so it is here. The key to the matter is found in v. 31, but continuing through the remaining verses.

Luke 17:31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. See also Mark 13:15-18.

Question: Who is “he which shall be upon the housetop”? **Answer:** The disciple who is, as it were, on the housetop “watching,” as admonished by Jesus:

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

The whole concern of Christ is for His disciples in the last days, even as for those who would be in Jerusalem at the time of its destruction in 70 A.D., as He warned them in Luke 21: 20-22. At that time, He told them to get out of Judea, to “flee to the mountains.” So likewise in the last days, He is warning us to flee from Babylon (the world) unto Zion; to be Zionic-minded and prepare to come to the place of Zion (presently Independence, Missouri)! He follows our key text in Luke 17 with verses 32-36:

Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

What happened to Lot's wife, called out from Sodom with Lot and their family to escape the fiery destruction? She looked back on the scene (which they were commanded not to do), and as a result was turned into a pillar of salt; she lost her life. The “two men in one bed,” the “two women grinding together,” and the “two men...in the field,” are general-

ized terms for those in close proximity, and possibly related; those who apparently differ in their desires for righteousness and the kingdom of God. A separation will take place; one is to remain and the other taken away.

V. 37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

Jesus had said that some would be “taken,” and the question was made and answered as above. The saints of God will be gathered out of Babylon unto Zion, as previously stated, and, sad to say, even families will be separated; the righteous and obedient disciples of Christ from those who are careless (indifferent), as well as the wicked.

Mal. 3:2, 5 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: ... And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

FASTING

CHRISTIAN FAST: is the physical separation from satisfying the desires and requirements of the flesh (the ties to your worldly existence) combined with a spiritual focus of your will becoming the will of your Heavenly Father. You become a living sacrifice or offering to God (Matt 26:39 / Mos 8:34 / Romans 12:1-2).

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the scriptures referenced below and record the important part of the scripture reference that answers the question under each heading.

Are we commanded to Fast?

- Alma 4:6
- 4 Nephi 1:13
- Moroni 6:6
- Matthew 9:14-15

How do we Fast?

- Isaiah 58:3-12
- Zechariah 7:4-5
- Matthew 6:16-18
- Luke 18:10-14
- 1 Corinthians 7:5
- B of C 60:18-24 (pg.111)

Use Wisdom in your Fasting

- Matthew 15:32
- Mark 8:2-3
- Acts 27:33-38

REASONS FOR FASTING

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the scriptures referenced and write a short reason for the fast under the “Grouping of Reasons” column, then place the number in front of the scripture reference. There can be multiple reasons contained in the same scripture verse and multiple scriptures for the same reason.

Book of Mormon

- __Mosiah 11:182-198
- __Alma 3:76-81
- __Alma 8:11
- __Alma 12:4-5
- __Alma 12:13-15
- __Alma 21:1-2
- __Helaman 2:29-31
- __3 Nephi 12:14-16

Bible

- __2 Chronicles 20:34, 14-17, 22-25
- __Ezra 8:21-23; 9:5-15; 10:1-12
- __Esther 4:12-17
- __Daniel 9:2-5
- __Joel 1:13-15
- __Joel 2:9-19
- __Jonah 3:4-10
- __Matthew 4:2
- __Matthew 17:16-21 (Mark 9:14-29)
- __Acts 13:2-3
- __Acts 14:22-23

Grouping of Reasons

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Omni 1:47: “Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offering unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth, ye will be saved.”

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

FASTING

REASONS FOR FASTING

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- 1 Mosiah 11:182-198
- 2 Alma 3:76-81
- 1 Alma 8:11
- 2 Alma 12:4-5
- 3 Alma 12:13-15
- 4 Alma 21:1-2
- 5 Helaman 2:29-31
- 6 3 Nephi 12:14-16

Bible

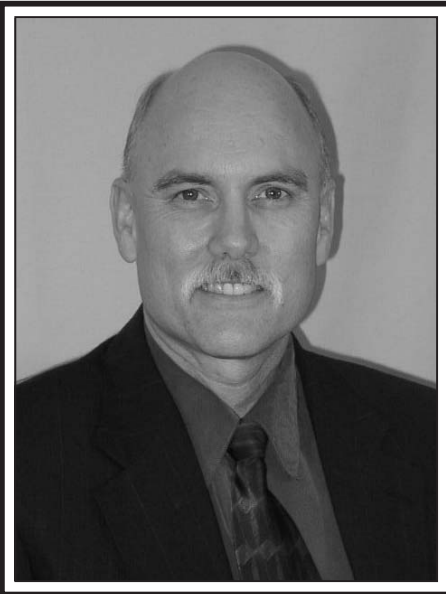
- 7 2 Chronicles 20:34, 14-17, 22-25
- 1/6 Ezra 8:21-23; 9:5-15; 10:1-12
- 7 Esther 4:12-17
- 1/6 Daniel 9:2-5
- 7 Joel 1:13-15
- 7 Joel 2:9-19
- 7 Jonah 3:4-10
- 3/8 Matthew 4:2
- 3 Matthew 17:16-21 (Mark 9:14-29)
- 3/6 Acts 13:2-3
- 3 Acts 14:22-23

Grouping of Reasons

1. Intercessor: Enlightenment, Repentance, Forgiveness
2. Revelation of Truth, Prophecy, Spiritual Understanding & Power
3. Bless Endeavors, Bringing Truth to Others
4. Thanksgiving
5. Sanctification by the Holy Spirit, from Persecution
6. Understanding and Spiritual Direction
7. Deliverance
8. Fellowship with Spirit

Omni 1:47: “Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offering unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth, ye will be saved.”

Articles of Faith & Practice



By Elder Gordon McCann

The idea that God has a specific role in preserving Israel as a nation has never been more evident than in this period of time that we live in today. I am reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.... Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift

up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers...” (Isa 49:13-23).

God has not forgotten the covenant that He made with Abraham. God’s covenant was conveyed from Abraham to his legitimate son Isaac (“...for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” Gen 21:12), then from Isaac to Jacob, and finally from Jacob to his twelve sons, who are the House of Israel. The covenant made to Abraham is three fold. First, it would be an everlasting covenant between God and Abraham’s lineage.

“And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee” (Gen 17:7).

The second part of the covenant, God gave Abraham, for “an everlasting possession,” all the land of Canaan.

“And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the

Article #22

We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the ten lost tribes.

land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God” (Gen 17:8).

Then the last significant part of the covenant is that through the lineage of Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed, which points to Jesus Christ. Jesus was a descendant of Judah, where Mary’s father Heli’s lineage is through King David’s son Nathan (Luke 3:23, 31) and by Joseph (his surrogate father), whose father Jacob’s lineage is through King David’s son Solomon (Matthew 1:6, 16).

“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Gen 22:15-18).

One of the prophetic signs of Israel’s return to their homelands is when Israel occupies the city of Jeru-

salem.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).

"Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people, be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance" (3 Ne 9:85).

"And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people, and I have covenanted with them, that I would gather them together in mine own due time; That I would give unto them again the land of their fathers, for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them for ever, saith the Father. . . . Then will the Father gather them together again, and give unto them Jerusalem for the land of their inheritance" (3 Ne 9:67-71).

Israel regained occupation of Jerusalem during the 6-day war in June 6, 1967. This was the first time since 70 AD when the Roman general Titus and his troops destroyed the city of Jerusalem (see also Jer 31:10-14; Ezek 36:16-24; 1Ne 7:22-25; 2 Ne 11:20; 3Ne 10:1-3).

CHURCH OF CHRIST NOTICES AT A GLANCE

**October 8-9
Women's Retreat**

**November 26-28
Phoenix Reunion**

PHOENIX REUNION

Dear Brothers and Sisters, The Phoenix Local would like to extend an invitation to all to attend the 2004 Phoenix Reunion, which will be held **November 26th, 27th and 28th**. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you there.

For information contact:

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WOMEN'S RETREAT

Does your lamp need some oil? Would you like to spend time in fellowship with other women in the gospel?

Then the **Women's Retreat** is for you!

WHEN: October 8 & 9, 2004

WHERE: Lake Mauer Assembly of God Retreat Center, Excelsior Springs, Missouri 64024

WHO: Overnight fellowship activity for women only over the age of 18.

MEET: at 10:00 a.m. at the Temple Lot on Friday, October 8, to spend the day in Liberty, Missouri.

COST: \$40.00 per person

MEALS: Friday—noon and evening, brown bag or eat out. Saturday—Breakfast and lunch provided.

We will break up on Saturday about 5:00 p.m.

This is an outreach opportunity, so please invite friends and relatives, members and non-members alike!

Please see sign-up form in the August Advocate.

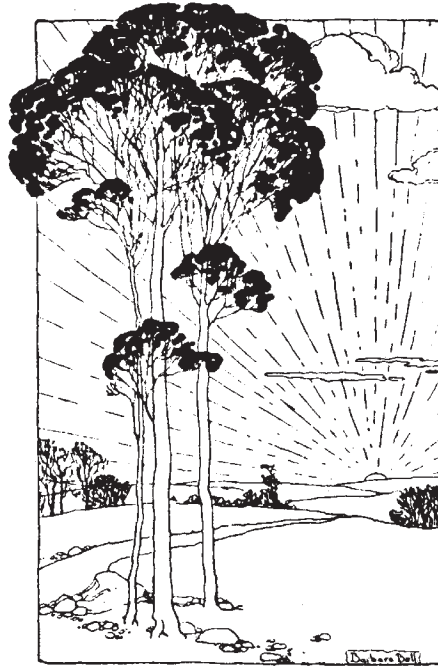
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My Life Testimony

In the year 1970, I met my Lord Jesus Christ. I was 19 years of age. I got saved when I heard God's message along the road. I knelt down and bowed my head and my tears fell down my cheeks. A Church of God preacher challenged me to study in Bible College in Sasa, Davao City. Within three years I studied a ministerial course at Davao Bible College (DBC); I graduated in 1974 with a Valedictorian Award. Then in 1976 we dedicated our lives to labor in God's vineyard for more than 21 years, together with my husband, Ptr. Tobias A. Operio. We are blessed with 7 children, 4 boys and 3 girls, namely: Jonathan M. Operio, Nathaniel, Shillah Jean, Michelle, Arnel, Hazel and Arnold. During our 21 years of ministry we were assigned in Davao del Norte, or now known as Comval Province. By God's grace we established four churches, and the mother church is located at Malvar Street, Compostela Church of God World Mission, Philippines.

Within these 21 years of ministry we experienced severe physical calamity in our lives. In 1990, I got sick, almost to the point of dying. I went to the doctor, but there was no remedy. I tried herbal medicine to cure my illness; still, I was not able to be healed, it had no effect. Still I suffered pain for two months in bed, unable to move, unable to eat alone, or talk; but thank God our daughter Shillah Jean was led by the Spirit



PATHLIGHTS

just to keep praying to the Lord and always massaged me, until one night God showed me a vision "that I am in the midst of the soldiers on the training ground with commandant instructing them, until they march to the cave where I witness that all of them did not come back. So I plead to the commandant not to go with the soldiers because I feel so sad to leave my little child. So he answered me, if you will not preach the gospel to the people, more people will go to hell. So I responded, 'I will go and follow you Lord if you will help my feet to walk.'" So when I walked I felt that my left foot could now move. So in the morning at 10:00 o'clock in the second week of Au-

gust, 1990, the vision I saw was repeated, until I promised my Lord that I will obey His will as long as I live in this world. Then I was healed on the last Sunday of August 1990. I went to church again, thinking what God has done in my life.

In the same year 1990, in the month of September, my husband was on a mission at Davao Oriental to dedicate the newly open church at Botay Panamin, Church of God. Then he was held hostage for 58 hours because the NPA (New Peoples Army) Commander, in the mountain was there and opposed the work of the Lord. But God, He is powerful and able to do miracles to them that love Him. They were all released due to the prayers of the members at Botay Panamin Church of God. But bad things happened that kept us strong, trusting the Lord. One time my husband came back home from the mission sick with disease that we could not understand and he was dying (he could not eat, sleep, and take a bath). I challenged him that this time God is here to help you and guide us, so let's trust the Lord more like Job. We sold our properties and land until only we are left behind. God also performed a great miracle in his life and healed him because I believed at the time that God called us to the ministry and He has a plan in our life.

In 1998, we began walking with the effort by farming: planting rice and corn in Bagongon. At the

same time we opened a pioneering work there, but God is good and He is jealous if we do not put Him first in every thing we do. So another calamity again happened to our corn. First, worms consumed 1 1/2 hectare of corn plants. We planted again, then the mouse (mice) came and ate our young corn grits. I decided that this is not purely mice but this is God's discipline to us. I talk to the mice and say, I surrender to God and I will follow His will to us. So I'm pleading for His guidance, then one night I dream that the whole family is sitting under the big bulb light. On the second night water flowed inside our house. Thirdly, my daughter Shillah Jean dreamed that there are many people singing in our house, praising God, and she saw an American man holding a guitar and singing with a nice voice. Through these successive dreams we concluded that God wants us to do something for the Lord.

So from 1999 until early 2001 we began having services in our house, many people requesting us to come and have fellowship with them, but we remain serving the Lord and having worship in our house without a signboard telling what church we belong to, because no banner is showing who we were at that time, but we believe we belong to the Lord. Now God helped us again in a new relation to His ministry. On July 16, 2001, God called Apostle Alvin Jay Moser and Apostle Frank Fann together with our Filipinos leader to come and challenge us to a bigger task for the Lord's Glory. We were challenged to become part of the body of Christ. We responded by November 18, 2001, after many questions, much meditation, seeking God's will and guidance. Be-

cause of the Book of Mormon, at first we could not accept, until God showed us the way. In James 1:5 we



► Mrs. Melba Operio and Ptr. Tobias A. Operio.

are told that if we lack wisdom to ask of God. God gave us real peace, and joy in His service.

God helped me see that I am encountering different people of all ages and tribes I meet. I am exhorting and teaching too. So I prayed to God that His will shall be done to us. Some day in 2002 we went to New Bataan Church to share the Articles of Faith to the Mapaso congregation. No questions were asked at first, but it was followed by persecution, and now thanks to God the church is restored. So more missions now were opened because we believe that God is using the Church

of Christ to be the way of a Restoration message of the time. Thank God for guiding us in His vineyard, and in being a servant of righteousness.

Now I've got JOY, PEACE and LOVE in my Heart, for I know that our Labor in the Lord is not in vain. So now for me and my house we will serve the Lord in Isaiah 24:15.

"GOD BLESS AND MORE POWER."

*In Christ's Love,
Mrs. Melba M. Operio
Compostela Church of Christ
(Temple Lot)
Philippines, Branch Inc.
Dated July 18, 2004*

REPORT

Philippine Youth Camp NEWSLETTER

July 17, 2004

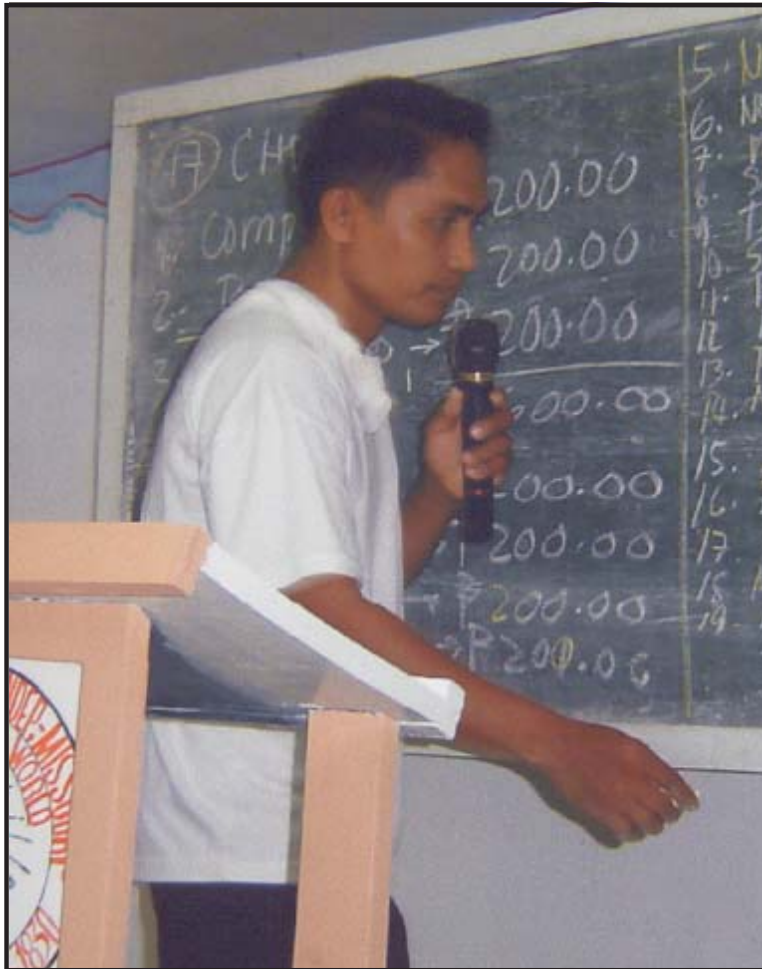
Praise the Lord!! He gave us a great opportunity to have a successful 2nd Youth Camp, May 26-29, 2004.

It is the first time I've attended this activity, because I'm very new in this organization (Church of Christ, Temple Lot). I was immediately promoted to a Youth Director of the entire Philippines in this Youth Camp.

I have experienced the great moving of our God, because our youth is multiplying so fast. In the past Youth Camp in 2003 I think sixty young people attended, but now I'm amazed that we have one hundred thirty-six delegates.

In behalf of the youth officer here in the Philippines we send a greeting to all of you. May the Lord our God bless us to achieve our goal for the work of the Lord.

By the way, we are thankful for your support to us in prayer here in the Philippines. Thank you for the ideas on how to handle the youth,



► Enrique "Eric" Canete, Jr., Youth Director of the Philippines, 2nd Annual Youth Camp, 2004.

will be with us on the next 3rd Youth Camp here in the Philippines, and we need some ideas from you.

Youth Director of the Philippines,
Enrique "Eric" Canete, Jr.
Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
Suvhai Sirawan, Toril
8025 Davao City

especially all the programs you sent.

In the book of 1 Timothy 4:12 it says, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." We are an example to each other.

Before I forget, we pray that you

The Philippine Youth Camp



Eagerness... Enthusiasm... Hunger... Need... Lead the "2nd Annual Youth Camp" to be born.

Last summer in May, on the 26th-29th day of the year of our Lord, 2004, the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) Philippine Branch Inc. lead the young people to the "2nd Annual Youth Camp" held at Puan, Davao City, bringing the theme, "Be Thou An Example," with the main speaker, Pastor Buenaventura Retanal, of New Bataan, hosted by the Panabo church.

One hundred and forty-seven young souls and leaders, along with the elders, attended. They came from various missions and places from the 3 zones: Zone 1: Panabo, Kiman-anao, Sirawan, Toril and Lizada, Toril. Zone 2: Compostela,

Nabunturan, New Sibunga, New Bataan, Mapaso and Kahayag. Zone 3: Cabilao, Luayon, Salmingkong, Kinuskusan and Lake Sebu.

Arrival and registration was done on the first day. Groups were made depending on the registration form and were named for the colors. These colorful groups are: Group 1-Blue, Group 2-Yellow Green, Group 3-Red and Group 4-Pink. Acquaintance and evening service were done at night.

Service Oriented Club-Davao, a non-sectarian and non-governmental organization conducted a Self Awareness Seminar and Teambuilding Workshop. They taught us to be aware that we are made unique by our Creator. We are each an in-

dividual who has been given talent that others don't have and we have to show it with confidence and use it for the glory of God. The Teambuilding Workshop helped us to realize that in a team, unity is a very important ingredient in having a successful outcome.

A Christian Youth must be a role model not only in words but also in works, Bro. Retanal said as he gave his inspiring message the night of the second day.

Basketball games by our courageous lads and gals, also not just our teachers but our models, the Pastors and leaders. Six games were done fighting to become the champion for the boys. Compostela versus Nabunturan, Mapaso and Lake Sebu next in line, and Kinuskusan with Panabo.



► Omega Mae & Prulie Ann Alameda, secretaries for March 2004 & April 2005 Youth Camps respectively.

Compostela, Mapaso and Panabo won respectively from the games done. Panabo grabs the 2nd prize, Compostela the 1st and the greatest champion was Mapaso after an extremely tiring but impressive game. The young ladies that were chosen from the three zones did their best to become the champion. They had played an amazingly enjoyable game, and throughout it Zone 2 got the prize as champion, Zone 1 second and Zone 3 first.

The Pastors were divided into 2 teams: Pastors from the south (Lake Sebu, Cabilao and Toril) and Pastors from the north (Compostela, New Bataan, Mapaso and New Sibunga). They did their best to win but only one could be declared the winner, which was from the south.

At last, the most exciting part in the whole affair, the last night came upon us. The evening service was done to give knowledge and understanding to all delegates. Afterward were the games; preaching, teaching, singing (solo, duet, group) contest, Bible quiz and the highlight, which was the crowning of Mr. & Ms. Youth Camper 2004. Everybody en-

joyed themselves that night, with smiles marked on their faces as the games started. In preaching, Group 3-Red Team, having confidence, got the prize. Group 1 made the future teacher for they won in teaching contest. Golden voices were offered to the Lord, four groups gave their best talents to achieve the first prize, but only one survivor. In solo, Group 2 won. Group 1 got it in duet and group singing. Being a good listener and having intelligence about the Bible, Group 3 got the first in Bible quiz.

For the most awaited part, two pairs of boys and girls were crowned. On the first night, the delegates were asked to vote, the girls for the boy and the boys for the girl whom they thought had beauty and intelligence, a role model to every young person and a faithful servant of God. Who ever gets the highest vote will be the chosen one. The girl and boy will be paired from among the delegates. Who could guess the personal things that will be asked them? The two pairs were given their evening merienda (snacks) with a little talk to make them comfortable with each other, and made them add to their close friends.

After the games were the awarding of prizes. Compostela, having the biggest delegation, got a special prize, and the declared over-all champion was the Red Team, Group 3, the toughest team among the group.

Most of the delegates were very sleepy for it was already 2 a.m. on the next day, but they still chose the best and the most responsible officers to lead them.

In the morning, sleepy but happy faces were seen all around. Though they didn't have much sleep, they still enjoyed the whole event that happened.

Happy memories were recorded in their minds. They will bring unforgettable experiences back home and a very wonderful story will be narrated to their friends waiting for them. Having knowledge not only in words but also in works, to be a role model to everyone, specially the unsaved loved ones, leading them to Jesus and



► Shillah Jean Operio, treasurer of the 2004 Philippine Youth Camp.

helping them know Him as their personal Savior.

A more enjoyable, successful, unforgettable experience is coming to the tripled number of delegates this coming "3rd Annual Youth Camp." A camp that will always be there on everyone's minds and hearts. "Till we meet again..." pasted on the minds of those young people who were once a part of a just ended "2nd Annual Youth Camp."

Prepared By:
Omega Mae Alameda
Youth Secretary
F. Y. 2003-2004

OBITUARY

Norman Russel (Russ) Jordan

September 30, 1909 ~ August 22, 2004

Norman Russel (Russ) Jordan (nephew of the late Apostle T. J. Jordan), of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, passed away peacefully at the Assiniboia Union Hospital on August 22, 2004, at the age of 94.

Russ was born September 30, 1909, at Halbrite, Saskatchewan, to W. Frank and Ana-Mae Jordan, one of 15 children, two of whom died at birth. At two weeks of age the family homesteaded to Viceroy. Grandfather said he squawked the whole trip. He took his schooling at Sunnyvale School up to grade 8, the requirement at that time. He married Cora Evelyn (Ev) Bogle on December 13, 1930, in Assiniboia. There were two children, Reta and John (Jack), born to this union. They lived in Viceroy. He walked four miles to the McNally farm where he worked all week, and then walked home for the weekend. He worked at the coal mine four miles south, also walking to and from there daily. He worked at Scott's mine underground for 2-3 years. In 1937 they moved from Viceroy to the farm where they spent their happiest years. Russ always said they would have to carry him off the farm. By 1996, they were farming two sections of land and had 20 head of cattle. You could always see the two of them with their own tractors and equipment working the land together. He lived through all aspects of farming from the horses to the modern machinery. Russ and Ev drove School Bus for 28 years. The first bus was a 1929 Pontiac. After that they used a con-

verted armed forces ambulance. They used a Bombardier in winter that sometimes doubled to transport pregnant women to Bengough. In April 1996, Russ suffered a stroke, which made his statement a reality. He had to be carried from the farm in a move to Assiniboia where Ev devoted her life to taking care of him at home until his death.

Russ was a member of the Band Committee, the Agricultural Committee, and a member of the Co-op Pasture for many years. He enjoyed reading and doing string art. Farming and his cattle were his passion in life. He did his own carpentry, remodeling his home. He had a fondness for his John Deere tractors and was very mechanically inclined, doing his own repairs. The family curled (a popular ice sport) in winter.

Religion was an important part of his life. He was a faithful member of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), and served as an elder, conducting Sunday services and preaching sermons. He was a man who tried to live up to his convictions.

Russ was predeceased by his parents, Anna-Mae and W. F. Jordan; stepmother Jenny; one daughter, Reta Stalker; four brothers, Ernie, Richard, Bill, and Art; and three sisters, Lou Embury, Mary Stewart, and Elva Kvamme. He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Cora Evelyn Jordan; son-in-law Don Stalker; and son Jack Jordan and wife, Marjorie. Also surviving him are five grandchildren:

Maureen (Stalker) and Gord Williamson; Murray and Janet Stalker; Karen (Jordan) and Dean Mann; Cheryl (Jordan) and Jonathan McConnell; and Linda (Jordan) and Shaun Smulan; and nine great-grandchildren: Candace and Jessica Williamson; Clayton Stalker; Jordan and Matthew Mann; Taylor and Lexandra McConnell; and a set of twins, Alyssa and Jarrett Smulan. Five sisters also survive Russ: Margaret (husband Al) Olsen; Eva Mooney; Jean Schneck; Shirley Norde; Donna (husband Archie) Merley; as well as numerous nieces, nephews and other relatives.

The funeral service was held in Ross Funeral Chapel, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Thursday, August 26, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. Elder Glenn Gill officiated. Pallbearers were: Dave Mooney, Garth Schneck, Duncan Norde, Harold Henrikson, Randy Irvin, and Braden Paradon. The eulogy was given by Glenn Gill. The organist was Marjorie Hamilton. Congregational hymns were "In the Garden," "Abide With Me," and "Nearer My God to Thee." Interment followed in Mount Hope Cemetery, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. Memorial donations can be made to the Saskatchewan Heart and Stroke Foundation or a charity of the donor's choice. Arrangements were entrusted to Ross Funeral Service, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan.