

Zion's Advocate

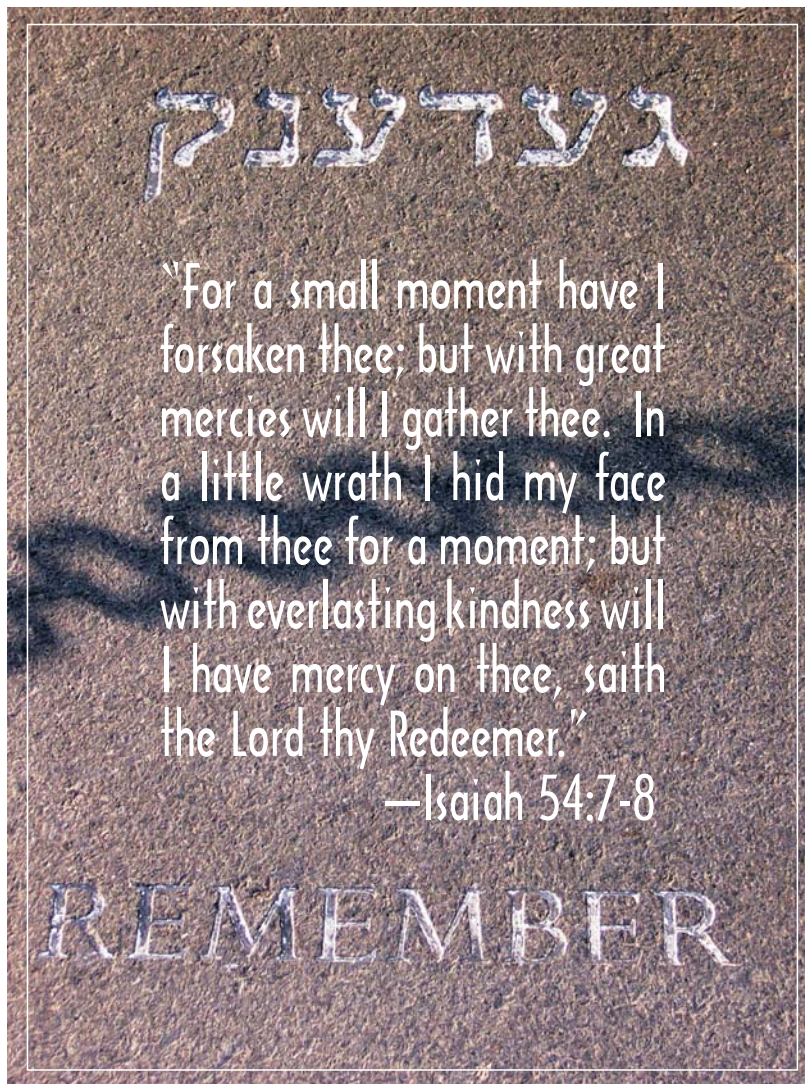
*"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost...."*

1 Nephi 3:187

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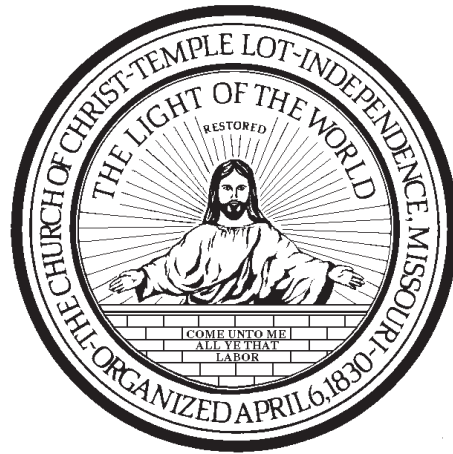


Holocaust Memorial, Boston, Massachusetts

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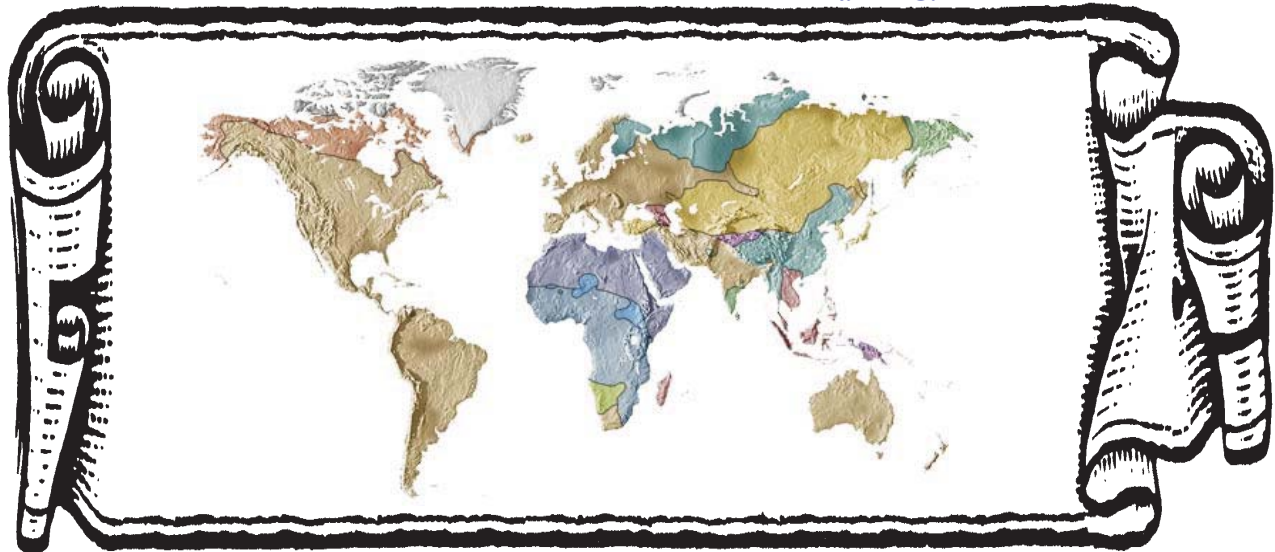
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour;
 To promote His Teachings and His Church,
 the Church of Christ;
 To be a voice of warning to His people; to be
 Zion's advocate.

ARTICLE

Justifying *our* Actions

By Priest William Malone

I doubt there is a day that goes by that we don't justify something we do, or don't do, even if it is as simple as, "I'll do it tomorrow," or "I don't feel like doing it right now." It might be completely okay to do that, but I think we all do it. However, do we sometimes try to justify something we do or say, that we know is wrong, by saying or thinking, "Well, I saw so and so do that or say that and he is a minister?" We can pretty much justify anything we want to do, whether it be action or inaction.

I can't find anywhere in the scriptures where it says that we will be judged by the action or inaction of others. The closest thing I can find is Jacob's speech in the second chapter of Jacob, verse 60-63, of the Book of Mormon, page 174:

"Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, which is the word of God, that ye revile

no more against them, because of the darkness of their skins; neither shall ye revile against them because of their filthiness; But ye shall remember your own filthiness, and remember that their filthiness came because of their fathers. Wherefore, ye shall remember your children, how that ye have grieved their hearts because of the example that ye set before them; And also, remember that ye may, because of your filthiness, bring your children unto destruction, and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day."

There are other scriptures which have similar meanings.

Our children usually do the same things they see us do. If we accept any amount of sin in our lives, why shouldn't they? Proverbs 22:6 says:

"Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old he will not depart from it."

Notice this scripture does not differentiate between good training and bad training. In 1 Peter 4:18 we read,

"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?"

I find it a full-time job trying to be one of the "righteous." Being righteous is a full-time job. If you don't apply yourself full time, that means you are probably a part-time Christian. 2 Nephi 12:10-13 speaks about this:

"And there also shall be many which shall say, eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God, he will justify in committing a little sin: yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this,. And do all these things, for to-morrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the

kingdom of God. Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false, and vain, and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their councils from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark; and the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them. Yea, they have all gone out of the way, they have become corrupted.”

1 Nephi 3:35 tells us,

“And no unclean thing can dwell with God, wherefore ye must be cast off forever.”

We must always strive to be perfect, as Jesus tells us in Mat. 5:48.

If we skip Sunday school or church on Sunday morning, or a Sunday evening, or a Wednesday night service, why shouldn't they? Do we justify missing an evening preaching service because a certain preacher is not as interesting or as easy to follow? Is skipping a service intentionally, even though we can make up dozens of excuses that we feel are justifiable, a sin? In 3 Nephi 8:49 Jesus says,

“Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you.”

So, ask yourself WWJD, What Would Jesus Do? Do you really think He would miss any church activity except for an emergency? Here again we put the definition on an emergency. Do we go to visit someone in the hospital at the same time as the evening church service, or do

we go earlier in the afternoon so we can attend the evening service? We can, and quite often do, justify something that we want to. How do you think you will feel when you are standing before the judgement bar of God and you are explaining away all of your justifications? Do you really think God will approve of those justifications? In 3rd Nephi 8:53 Jesus tell us to “meet together oft.” It is not a suggestion. He does not say, meet together when it is convenient for you.

If our children see us buy something and they hear us say we don't have enough left over to pay the full amount of tithing, why shouldn't they do the same? 3 Nephi 11:13 and Malachi 3:10 say basically the same thing,

“Bring ye all the tithes unto the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Jesus says “prove me,” and “try me.” Try paying your tithing first, before all of your other bills, and give Him a chance to prove to those with faith that His words are true.

Is there anyone of us who never exaggerates? When does an exaggeration become a lie? James 5:12 says:

“But above all things, my bretheren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other

oath; but let your yea be yea; and your nay be nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.”

If we lie about something, or just exaggerate a little, why shouldn't our children? Proverbs 14:25 says,

“A true witness delivereth souls, but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.”

In Proverbs 12:22 it says,

“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight.”

The Words of Mormon, 1:17, pg. 205, “And I know that they will be preserved; for there are great things written upon them, out of which my people and their brethren, shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written.”

We better know the things which are written if we are to be judged by them. If you are not a consistent reader of the scriptures, then you should be a diligent listener to the sermons and active in Sunday school studies.

The Bible tells us in 2 Peter 1:19-21:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy, unto which ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; Knowing this first, that no prophecy of any scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

This scripture tells me that if any spoken word today contradicts the written word in the scriptures, the written word is what we go by, even if someone says the Lord revealed the truth to them. I believe that God will not ever reveal something to someone, in this day, that contradicts something He caused to be written in our accepted scriptures.

Jesus makes these statements in the very beginning of his ministry when He is being tempted by Satan. Mat. 4:4:

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

In verse 7 and in verse 10 Jesus again quotes scripture saying, "*It is written,*" but there is a very interesting thing we find in verse 6. The devil also quotes scripture, which in the correct context is a true statement, but he misuses this scripture for his own purpose.

The Mosaic law says "*an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,*" (Exodus 21:24) so just quoting something from the Mosaic law that Jesus has done away with is the same thing as deceit and a lie, or using any true scripture in a manner that it was not meant to be used is wrong, such as taking scripture out of context, or only using part of a scripture to try to prove your point.

Alma 17:10 says, "*Behold,*

the scriptures are before you; if ye will wrest them it shall be to your own destruction."

2 Nephi 14:11-12 says, "*For if ye would hearken unto the spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit teacheth a man not to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray. But behold I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul."*

Who do you suppose it is that puts the thoughts in our mind that it's okay to talk to one another during the songs, or it's okay to dress casual and comfortable in the house of the Lord? If a visitor comes to our church will they see a "peculiar people" who show reverence to the Lord by their actions (or inactions) or their manner of respectful dress, or will they see the same thing they would see in any other church?

We are told in Romans 12:2, "*And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, will of God."*

Have we conformed to this world, not by our beliefs, but by our actions?

Jesus tells us in Mat. 7:21, "*Not everyone that saith unto*

me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Or maybe, "Have we not attended church most of the Sunday mornings, or told the truth most of the time, or paid tithing when we had a little left over, or only lost my temper a few times this week, or at least I wore clean blue jeans and a clean t-shirt?" This thinking could go on and on.

I do not want to hear the Lord say to me "*depart from me ye that work iniquity.*" The words I want to hear Jesus say are, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant—enter thou into the joy of the Lord.*"

Again, I wish to remind us of the parable of the 10 virgins. Half were wise and prepared and half were foolish and not prepared to meet Jesus when He returned for His bride, the church, us. He said to the foolish (part-time Christians) "*I know you not.*"

As we go about our everyday activities, remember to preach Jesus Christ. Use words if you have to.

Are you ready to meet God?

ARTICLE

The Difference Between the MINISTERS of the CHURCH OF CHRIST and Other Churches: HOW THEY GET THIS HONOR



By Priest Peter Moses

It is wonderful when you try to follow carefully about the ministry of the Church of Christ and of the other churches. There is a great difference. As we can start reading from the first pages of the Bible and the Book of Mormon through the end pages of these books, it was only God who chose a leader for a servant to do His work according to His will, or in other words, we can say “to call.” As it is told in the scripture:

“For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing” Mormon 4:68 (Hebrews 13:8).

It is good that these verses are reminding us that there was no time that God was to tell us to do His work these days as He was doing in the time of old.

In the book of Exodus,

“And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons” Exodus 28:1.

Now we can see here plainly God is speaking to Moses, that He has called these five men into the ministry to work in the priest’s office. Do you think He stopped there? No, He continued doing the same.

“Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me” 1 Samuel 9:15-16.

“And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee” 1 Sam 16:1, 3.

Here we can see good examples of how God was working in the old times. He was the one choosing or calling somebody, and He was the one that was removing one from the office and replacing the other. That is how God is working even in these days because He has never been late to do His will. And as we know, this is what we are experiencing in the Church of Christ. An example is the calling of our brother Duane Ely to be an Apostle. For a long time the church had gone on without twelve Apostles, and it was only recently that God called our brother to the office of Apostle to take the vacancy of a certain Apostle who had passed away.

How was it in the time of our Lord Jesus? Did He destroy anything? No, things were the same:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill” Matthew 5:17.

As we know, Christ came and preached the Gospel to the people and had many followers (disciples), and afterwards He organized His Kingdom with His ministry, through calling them. And that was the proper foundation of His church.

“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;...” Luke 6:12-13.

When He was still here in the world He continued calling others in different offices of the ministry:

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come” Luke 10:1.

These were Evangelists whom he called again to preach the Gospel full time all over the world. And after this He urged the disciples to pray to God through His name to send other servants:

“Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the

harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest” Luke 10:2.

As we read in the scriptures, since He ascended to heaven the church started to practice this, as we can read what happened at Jerusalem:

“For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection” Acts 1:20-22.

This is the time Peter (the Apostle) stood up in Jerusalem, reminding the disciples of Jesus who were meeting always, that it was good that the office of Judas who betrayed Jesus would be taken by somebody:

“And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles” Acts 1:23-26.

So there was no other time the ministers of the Church of Christ were to take this honor

on their own or to be elected by people, but only to be called by God.

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” Hebrews 5:4.

Now what are the world churches doing, are they waiting to be called by God? No, others are taking this honor unto themselves while others are employed through their certificates from their colleges. And you can see there is a great difference from the Church of Christ because God has not ended doing the same as it was done in the old times. So it is only the people of the world who have changed the teachings of Christ.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

We, the members of the Church of Christ, must be careful of these world teachings because it is good to follow the truth and keep the commandments of our Lord Jesus, and it is our duty to pray and fast for the ministry so that God may call others to work in His “Shamba” (vineyard). God bless you as you will continue doing so.

ZION - JERUSALEM



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

There is in the teachings of Christ a lively hope for mankind to live joyously with Him upon this earth in our flesh, in addition to a spiritual life in the hereafter. I wish to speak of our hope for Zion. The human in us naturally is attracted to elements of life we can experience with the five senses, but the problem is that we want those things now, not later. We are naturally too impatient to wait or labor for the better things of life which are in reality of spiritual concern. Do you admit it, or have you really discovered the better way?

Consideration of Zion can only be with regard to man's spiritual connection to his Savior Jesus Christ, but it will be a

physical connection as well. ZION WILL BE THOSE WHO HAVE BECOME SAINTS OF GOD, AND WILL LITERALLY SEE JESUS CHRIST AND HEAR HIS VOICE WHEN HE RETURNS TO THIS EARTH IN THESE LAST DAYS. It will be in the New Jerusalem which is to be built by the saints of God in these last days upon the earth in His appointed place. I am unable to put it more clearly than that.

In His sermon on the mount as found in Mat. 5:8, Jesus said this: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." They will literally see Jesus Christ, not only in the hereafter, but also by their physical eyes when He shall return to the earth for a thousand year reign of peace.

Once again: Zion will be the pure in heart, the saints of God who will be gathered in to build the New Jerusalem. Those saints will have permitted the Holy Ghost to establish the "cause of Zion," or the pure love of God, within their hearts. That pure love will not only be toward our Heavenly Father, but will extend toward others of mankind, especially within the Church of Christ, being made

evident by the development of "all things common," as was had among those in the New Testament church, and also among the Nephites after Christ came to this continent. That pure love is best referenced by the ancient direction of God, and called by Jesus Christ the two great commandments:

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" Mark 12: 30, 31.

There is none other commandment greater than these. Do you suppose you have reached that evidence of sainthood?

Now I hope to give some prophetic scriptural reasoning to support the thought that ancient Jerusalem will be rebuilt and a "New Jerusalem" is to be built by human hands prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ by power and glory in the heavens. This New Jerusalem is not to be confused with the New Jerusalem to come down from the heavens as referenced in Rev. 21:1-2, which is to be well over 1,000 years later. I do

not intend to pursue that phase in our present study, only intending to discuss this New Jerusalem or Zion as found in Isa. 2:2-4:

“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. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

This time of peace on earth is connected with the building of the New Jerusalem, which latter day revelation informs us is to be built in present Independence, Missouri. It is also referenced in 3 Ne. 10:1-4:

“But if they (gentiles, w.a.s.) will repent, and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant, and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance, and they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob; And also, as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusa-

lem; And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst....”

This prophecy is to be fulfilled in our future; so what are we to do with the quoted statement relative to the establishment of Christ’s church in this period of time? The Church of Christ was organized according to civil law on April 6, 1830, and by the commandment of God. However the word “establish” has a deeper meaning. It means in my mind, as legally defined, “to fix firmly in a particular place or condition.” Our prophetic text connects it with the second advent of Jesus Christ (He will be in the midst of that people). This connects with the building of the New Jerusalem, and such establishment will have undoubtedly caused the development of a Zionistic condition; Zion will be a reality.

This New Jerusalem is also mentioned by the Nephite prophet Moroni in recording the words of Ether, a prophet of the more ancient people who came to this land after the dispersion of the nations from ancient Babel. I urge you to study Ether 6:1-8.

The city Jerusalem (of old) was inextricably connected with the temple built by Solomon, the son of David, the house of God upon mount Zion, wherein was placed the ark of the covenant containing the ten commandments given to Israel.

That ark of the covenant was located in the “holy of holies,” a tabernacle, or temporary resting place of God in the midst of His people. Now let us look in Amos 9:11:

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.”

The tabernacle of David was the house or temple which was built by Solomon in David’s city which was Jerusalem. It will have been destroyed with the city, but God (Jesus Christ) will cause it to be rebuilt. Even so shall a city New Jerusalem be built in these last days unto Jesus Christ, and He shall have a temporary dwelling place therein as indicated by our previous reference from Isa. 2 (read vs 2, 3 again).

The temple in Jerusalem, both the old one rebuilt and the one to be built in the New Jerusalem, is referenced in our Outline History; also in Isa. 2:3 as “the house of the God of Jacob,” and in Mal. 3:1. Yes, He will appear in both temples:

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.”

Without going into details, that first messenger has already come in the person of John the Baptist who came as an angel to ordain Joseph Smith

and Oliver Cowdery to the holy priesthood in preparation for the second coming of Christ by the organization of this Church of Christ on April 6, 1830. This is alluded to in Isaiah, chap. 40, applying to his appearance in the time of Christ and also in the latter days. I suggest you read it.

I have previously mentioned the ark of the covenant, which was a box built by Moses containing the ten commandments of God and placed within the holy of holies in the temple by Solomon at Jerusalem. I have no doubt that the same provision will be made in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. I suggest also that the New Jerusalem temple to be built in present Independence, Missouri, may very well contain the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, and which has also the sealed portion which Joseph Smith was not permitted to translate; that in the New Jerusalem a modern seer will accomplish that translation, and that he will be a member of this Church of Christ.

While under the dominion of Satan and his angels, the nations of the world have been in constant variance from a recognition of the God of Israel, to say the least, and largely speaking have been in open rebellion to Him; thus the need of a Savior, the Son of God whom He has so graciously sent to redeem us from sin and to save us into His divine Kingdom; but rebellious gentiles are to be severely judged of God.

The Christian community of churches and non-denominationalists are likewise ignorant of, and opposed to, a literal city of God, a new Jerusalem; and they scarcely accept the view of ancient Jerusalem in Palestine being of divine renovation with its temple; that Jesus Christ is to literally come to such in these last days. In a few words: The world or modern Babylon is still at enmity with God. But He will not be ignored nor supplanted by human imagination or idolatry, as we read in Psalm 2:1-12:

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in

him.”

We have previously stated from the Book of Mormon that Christ is to come unto repentant gentiles and the remnant of Jacob (Indians) to establish among them His New Jerusalem. Let us see further concerning Zion, the New Jerusalem, and that of old, as found in Zeph. 3:14-17:

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee. is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.”

My lovely ones, shall we not rejoice at the sound of his voice? Will we not gladly receive the fruit of the vine and the bread He shall give? And will it not lift our souls when He takes the babes of His saints to bless them? How, too, the saints of God in Zion shall be quickened in their bodies by the touch of the healing hands of our Messiah! Yes, yes! Zion and peace shall be upon the earth for 1,000 years!

2009 Conference



By Deb Haines

The 2009 Solemn Assembly and General Church Conference was held April 3rd-7th.

On Friday morning we entered into the House of the Lord for Solemn Assembly. Apostle Joel Yates and Elder Bob Hedrick welcomed us. Br. Joel used Mosiah 2:20-23 and admonished us to remember the greatness of God and to call on Him in humility. He used Isaiah 58:6-9 to explain that we need to look upon ourselves as nothing, and Helaman 2:31 to exhort us that in the depths of their humility the Nephites' souls were filled. Many voices were raised in a season of prayer unto our Father. Following the season of prayer were testimonies of God's blessings; here are just two:

- A brother admonished us that we need to be fed and filled with the Spirit, referring to a dream given to brother Merlin Eddy. We need to strive to go up, letting go of the "stuff" of the world, and climbing toward God, the One Who wants to feed us.
- Another brother told us that the realities of life help to keep him humble. When you think of someone else's need over yours,

this is being humble. He told us of how his heart goes out to those in need and asked for another season of prayer.

Friday evening we reassembled for another prayer service. Apostle Don McIndoo and Elder Rick Olson welcomed us. Br. Don spoke to us about our nation being in a time of trouble. The day of the Gentile has come to a close and we are again entering into the time of Israel. The prophets tell us it will be a dark and cloudy day as events are coming to a conclusion, but Christ is our rock, our foundation. Br. Don used Isaiah 32:1-2, as we are told our King shall reign in righteousness. We are seeking His righteousness. When the winds blow He shall shelter us. In Colossians 3:1-2 we are told to set our affections on things above, and cleave to His guidance and His Spirit as we enter into these troubled times. Many voices were then raised in the season of prayer which followed, and there were five administrations.

Saturday morning we once again entered the House of the Lord. Apostle Roland Sarratt and Elder Isaac (Bick) Brockman welcomed us. Br. Roland spoke of the conditions of the world and told us we are witnessing something very important. He also reminded us that God created all things; at the beginning there was nothing and we were not. He read Genesis 1, and asked us to observe how we came into being... God said it was and it was, and He said it was very good. Br. Roland used Psalms 33: 6-14 where we are told blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. God created us to be good, not evil, and He loves His creation. We will have to answer to Him. He created all, and there is a glorious purpose to our lives; to worship God, exercise our faith and trust in Him. We are dependant on Him for all things.

Many prayers were lifted up to our Heavenly Father, and testimonies followed. A sister told us God plants a seed in everyone for His plan and purpose. She and her husband always desired to be near a local, but God had other plans and moved them from place to place.

She realizes now that God was using them to plant seeds. She also told us of a recurring dream. She prayed about it and feels the Lord was trying to warn her of an evil spirit trying to get at her. She admonished us that there will be bad times, and we need to pray for God to lead us from temptation. She reminded us that whoever we talk to, we witness to them with our lives.

Saturday afternoon we reassembled for another prayer service as our Solemn Assembly continued. Apostle Frank Fann and Teacher Dan Lawrence welcomed us. Br. Frank told us we have an opportunity to praise our Heavenly Father. He read Psalms 106:1-6 and asked us to focus on our thanksgiving, as God has been so merciful unto us. He then read Psalms 113 and exhorted us to praise the Lord. We were led into a season of prayer, and testimonies followed.

- A brother testified that he has been a member for 28 years and his life has been transformed. He had entered as the least worthy. He admonished us to have the desire to praise the Lord in all we do and in our demeanor.

Sunday morning we gathered in again unto the House of the Lord for a sacrament service. Apostles Smith (Buzz) Brickhouse and Roland Sarratt were in charge. Br. Roland told us our purpose is that we may eat in remembrance of God's son, and witness and keep His commandments, remembering His sacrifice. Reading most of Mark 14, he told us the day will come when we will have to answer to Christ as to whether we've partaken of His body and blood. If there is anything that stands in our way, remove it... God's will is for us to partake. Apostle Buzz Brickhouse read from Moroni 4 and 5. The sacrament was blessed, served and we entered a season of prayer in which there were many voices lifted up in concern for others, as well as in praise and thanksgiving unto our Lord. Nine administrations and many testimonies.

nies followed; here are just a few:

- A sister told of her husband being busy while he is away. He has had an experience like he has never had before; the Spirit came to him like never before and told him, "I'm not done with you yet." A new friend of his wrote a letter to her and said that "he" is the reason her husband is there (to meet and to teach him-DH).
- A brother told us of an experience he had years ago. He was lying on his back and the Heavens rolled back. He saw a council meeting above, and they were discussing him. Satan knew all. God asked, "What shall we do?" Our brother prayed, "Oh God, whatever it takes to save my soul is what I want." God said, "Let it be so."
- A brother told of God's blessings upon him and his wife during her illness and their 52 years of marriage. When she was diagnosed with heart failure the doctors told him she would have two years, but they didn't tell her. He and his wife traveled another six years before it kept her home, and then she lived another five years. God has answered his prayers.
- A brother told us there are two kingdoms: one is God's, the other Satan's. He admonished us to stand on what God says. He read from Isaiah 55 and asked us why are we spending our time and money on things that don't satisfy? God is the treasure. Look to the Lord while He can be found! Let us forsake the kingdom of the world, which corrupts. Fill your minds with the things of God. Every promise of God will be fulfilled. We must be ready for what God has for us; be prepared and be the humble followers of Christ.
- Our brother told of a great blessing given to a young woman in Yucatan. The young woman was about to cross a street when she felt someone's touch. She turned and saw a young man smiling at her. He told her not to go that way as there was danger,

so she did not. Two days later, she saw the young man again. He asked how she was, and told her that she needed to fast and trust in God for her problems. She felt peace, and there was an unusual quiet. He asked about her father, her brother and the family, even knowing her name. At work three days later, she felt someone behind



her. It was the same young man... he said he came to give her a message; he said that her father needs to continue to work for the church, and that her mother and brother need to be baptized. She asked if he was an angel. He said, "Don't ask." She asked if she would see him again. He said, "One more time." She asked his name. He said, "You ask many questions." He told her to go to church, pray and fast. She did, and during the service she felt someone's presence. The young man was there; he came to tell her good-bye. He told her to tell everyone of this experience. He said this was a blessing for her, but not to describe him physically; just give the testimony... God is working with us.

After lunch we gathered in again for a special music presentation. We were blessed with many beautiful specials, and a cantata was sung by members from the Temple Lot and the East Locals.

The Sunday afternoon sermon was given by Apostle Duane Ely. Br. Duane brought greetings from our brothers and sisters in Africa.

He gave us many examples of how there is no safety in Africa... yet God protects His people. Someday we may have to face those things here in America. Br. Duane used John 4:9-13. He told us we are seeing a steady decline in righteousness and very few believe in an absolute truth. Br. Duane used Matthew 24:37-39. It's very disturbing to see the way this nation is

going. The return of Christ is not far off. He used 2 Timothy 3:1. We are living in a time of ever increasing wickedness. The scriptures warn us of this, as we are living in the last days. He used Mosiah 8:61-65; a warning to repent. This nation is turning away and even willfully rebelling against God.

Br. Duane used 3 Nephi 5:66-68: We must repent of our sins and be baptized. He explained that it is very important to keep all of Gods commandments...we can't pick and choose. He used Galatians 5:19-21, and 3 Nephi 8:33. We'll be blessed for doing what we're commanded to do. We must be

obedient and pay our tithing as we are told in 3 Nephi 11:10-13. He used Romans 14:11-12 and 1 Peter 5:8: We are told Satan is looking to devour our souls. We must be serious, for we are living in a serious time. If we are not awake we are in trouble. We can fall away very quickly if we are not careful.

We are told that we have a great work to do, but that our numbers will be few. Br. Duane used Ether 1:31-35, which gives a warning to this nation. There is a requirement—a decree from God—for any people who possess this land; they must serve the God of this land, Jesus Christ, or they will be swept off. In 1 Nephi 7:34-37 we are told of great promises to the righteous. Revelation 20:10, 14-15 tells of torment for the wicked, and in chapter 21:1-4 we are told the righteous will have great blessings beyond imagination; God will be in their midst, and there shall be no more death, crying or pain. God has prepared a magnificent place for us, but it is required that we be diligent, faithful servants. If we are successful we will spend eternity together in that place the Lord has prepared for us.

The Monday morning prayer service was opened by Elders Randy Sheldon and Marvin Carroll. Br. Randy exhorted us that if we pray together in unity, our prayers will be heard. Pray for answers to problems that fragment us. Let God take the reins. Pray for the business of our King with effectual prayers. A season of prayer and testimonies followed; here are just two:

- A brother testified and was thankful for the protection of the Lord during a confrontation with an intruder in his neighborhood.
- A brother admonished that the Lord does not want any disputations among us.

Shortly before the evening sermon we gathered in again for a special ordination service. Elder Jim Case was ordained as a bishop under the hands of Apostles Jay Moser and Brian McIndoo.

The evening sermon followed, given by Apostle Michael McGhee. Br. Mike told us the outline he was going to use for his sermon was a long time in the making. It was from an article written in 1991 by Sr. Donna Moser. The article was about a vision given to our Apostle Placido Koyoc Yam in 1988, and a list he was inspired to make (also found in the 2008 Nov.-Dec. *Zion's Advocate*, DH). In the vision he saw his family, and all his brothers and sisters in his congregation that represented the church at large, and was overcome with a feeling of great need in the church. He was led to write down these eight things we should pray for.

Br. Mike told us that even though our Brother Placido now suffers greatly from Alzheimer's disease, he retains the power of prayer and its passion. As Br. Mike went through Br. Placido's list, Br. Mike explained each and gave examples with these added scripture references:

1 Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers into the vineyard. Jacob 3:136-137 and Alma 9:65.

2 Pray for the responsibilities and the well being of the pastors and ministry. Hebrews 13:18; Colossians 4:2-4; Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-16; Ether 5:4.

3 Pray for the responsibility of parents to God and to their children. Ephesians 6:4; Mosiah

2:25-27; Mosiah 11:105; Alma 3:86; 3 Nephi 1:37.

4 Pray for the duties of our youth toward God and their parents. Genesis 22:1-9.

5 Pray for our little ones, their duties toward God and their parents. Colossians 3:20; 2 Nephi 11:40, 43, and 48.

6 Pray concerning the physical and spiritual sicknesses within the Church and for those outside the Church. James 5:15; Galatians 5:1, Mormon 2:39-50.

7 Pray for the work of God in all the world, that others will be converted to the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. 2 Timothy 2:10.

8 Pray for the endurance of faith and Christian unity in service to our God. Colossians 3:12-15.

After the list of items was given to our Brother Placido, he brought together a Committee of Christian Energy to pray for these things. Ten years later, in 1998, we began to have marvelous blessings within the church, and today we have encouraging growth. With righteous prayer, God delivers. We need the continuous teaching of God's word, and we each need to hold up the light of Christ which is within us.

The Tuesday morning prayer service was opened by Priest Bill Malone and Teacher Dan Lawrence. Br. Bill read from Alma 19, and in verse 81 we learn that there are judgments and mercies. In verses 104-107 we learn there is law given and punishment; if judgment is destroyed God would cease to be God. None but the truly penitent shall be saved. God has given us an opportunity to listen for that still small voice of the Spirit, the voice that leads us to a life free of sin. God desires us to recognize our weaknesses and to rely on Him to overcome temptations of the world. A season of prayer followed; these are a few of the many testimonies:

- A brother told us of God's mercy unto us, and he knows the church's people desire to be obedient, but there are things coming upon the earth that we have no business being a part of. We need to correct things in our own lives that are wrong. Don't displease the Lord. Proclaim the Book of Mormon and be not ashamed. He prays to

be a more humble and obedient servant for the Lord.

- A brother told of an incident thirty years ago when two men asked him for shoes. He noticed how one man had only rags tied around his feet. He told them no, as he didn't have any shoes this man's size. Afterward he regretted his answer...he could have taken them out and bought them shoes. He immediately left to find them and buy them shoes, but he searched and searched and never could find them. Since then he has prayed for more opportunities, and that he will recognize and act on them when they happen. Our brother asked us, how many times do we overlook opportunities that are given us?
- A sister testified of God's blessings upon her and her husband, who two years ago came home from the Philippines very ill. It was a long process, but he was finally told that he had cancer in the pancreas with liver involvement, and that they could not operate. He was given two months to live. There was much fasting and prayer in their family and throughout the entire church. There was an e-mail from a Yucatan brother that told them, "Br. Frank is going to be okay." A few days later, she and her daughter both said at the same time, "The doctors are not in charge any more." Frank never complained. In July at the clinic some tubes were removed and in the recovery room the nurse told them, "This is your first miracle." The tumor was not as big as they thought it was. Surgery to remove the cancer was performed two weeks later, and during the process the main artery was accidentally cut, but miraculously they found another artery to use (which is never heard of). This was a second miracle. Frank just had his eighteen-month check up and everything is good. They spread Frank's blessing everywhere and they desire to serve Him all the days of their lives.
- A sister testified of how God took fears from her life. In a sermon one day, she heard an admonishment given, "There would have been many more heroes in the gospel if they hadn't been afraid." This touched her heart. She felt shame for her fear, but remembering this has strengthened her

ever since.

- Another sister confessed that she always had a hard time understanding how people could fall away, but a year ago she felt like her heart was slipping away, and she realized this is how it happens. As soon as she realized what was happening she took it to the Lord. It has been a humbling year for her, in realizing pride was in her life, but she is thankful for the great strength we are to her.

Tuesday evening the sermon was given by Apostle Frank Fann. Br. Frank greeted us and admonished us that it is required that we must always be prepared.

Br. Frank stated, "Praised be the Lord that I'm here tonight!" He told us we should NOT feel embarrassed to praise our Lord. In Alma 14:94, we are told we have reason to praise Him forever.

Br. Frank used Psalms 23 as he explained that David wrote from a shepherd's point of view. The Bible says we are Christ's sheep; He is our shepherd, our Protector and Provider. He used Isaiah 55:4 and Matthew 1:21-23 to show He is willing, able and qualified to save us from our sins.

Br. Frank told us we are very much like sheep: they are helpless; on their own they can't survive. Their shepherd has to provide everything for them, just as God does for us. If we submit to His will, we shall not want. God calms us when we are afraid; He is mindful of our needs.

In Psalm 107:28 we are told God will bring us out of distress. In Psalm 25 He promises to give strength and peace to the souls of His people. In Philippians 4:7-8 we are told the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will be ours if we trust and follow Him. When we slip we need to restore our souls through repentance. Many times David slipped and asked if God had forsaken him. God will NOT forsake us. He does not move away from us; He IS mindful of us. It is WE who move away from HIM!

God is quick to answer our prayers. Br. Frank gave us examples of his own health crisis, which began two years ago, and Br. Ben Retanal's (from the Philippines). With both, the situation was hopeless, but the Lord intervened and greatly blessed each man. Just as a

shepherd uses his staff to rein in the sheep, the Lord uses His to pull us back to Him. Br. Frank told us eighteen months ago when he walked through that shadow... he felt no fear because the Lord's staff was leading him. He praised God for all His tender mercies. We only have to be obedient and give our will up to Him to have this gift. He read Ephesians 2:4, John 10:9 and 2 Nephi 9:137 in which we are told, "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." ...And great is the Holy One of Israel in our midst... may we praise and honor Him continually!

The Wednesday evening sermon followed, given by Apostle Don McIndoo. There were four administrations beforehand. Br. Don greeted us. He read from Zephaniah 1:12-18 and admonished us that because of great iniquity the wrath of God will be poured out. The day of the Lord is near. In Zephaniah 3:8 we are told all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of His jealousy. In 3 Nephi 9 we read about our day, and God's great judgments to come upon the Gentiles.

Eight and a half years ago we entered into a new millennium; there were many thoughts of what that would bring. On "Nine-Eleven," as Br. Don watched a television news report and saw a man jump from one of the towers, he heard an audible voice say, "Revelation 16:12." He read this verse to us. Br. Don explained that this was the start of the fulfillment of the sixth angel pouring out his vial...that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared (*Zion's Advocate*, Nov-Dec. 2008, issue—DH). Three unclean spirits like frogs will come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet; these will spew out "poison." These kings are working for the destruction of Israel; they have vowed the destruction of the Jews. The coming of our Lord is near; He will gather them together to battle in Armageddon. There is just one last vial to be poured out, the seventh... "It is done."

In Matthew 24:21-22 we are told of a great tribulation, and we know God has a plan for His people. Br. Don read 1 Nephi 3:230-231. We shall be armed with righteousness and the power of God in great glory, and then the wrath of God will be poured out. He read 1 Nephi 7:34, and Zephaniah 2:1-3 which tells us:

SEEK YE THE LORD...SEEK RIGHTEOUSNESS...SEEK MEEKNESS...and it may be YE SHALL BE HID IN THE DAY OF THE LORD'S ANGER.

Br. Don exhorted us to gather ourselves together. In Moroni 6:6 we are commanded to gather together oft...whenever we hear of a meeting we need to gather to it! He read Alma 4:6. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; seek Him with all your heart.

Br. Don read from Psalms 63:1, Isaiah 41:17-18, Titus 2:12, Matthew 11:28, Zephaniah 3:8, Ezekiel 37:21-23, Isaiah 43:5-7, Jeremiah 16:14-16, 1 Nephi 7:17, and Jacob 3:136-137.

Br. Don spoke of Br. Placido Koyoc Yam's dream where, upon walking through a forest and coming to a clearing, he saw a young man sitting on a rock reading a book. The young man told him to read it and also told him, "This work has begun with your people." This work has begun; all who do the work of the Gospel are the hunters and fishers (Jeremiah 16:16).

Br. Don explained that Babylon is the wealth and commerce of the world. He exhorted us to COME OUT OF BABYLON! We need to be prepared; this is a day of tithing and sacrifice for God's people. Br. Don used Jacob 3:147, which concludes the prophecy about the laborers: "For because that you have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard...behold you shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard." That joy will commence with the great millennium....

The 2009 General Church Conference came to a close. Our hearts were full. We give all thanks and praise to God for His gifts and blessings. We especially thank Him for His Spirit which was with us.

Our prayers are for each of you and for the work of the Gospel.

*May God bless you all,
Your reporter, Sr. Deb Haines*

NOTICES

MEXICO YOUTH CAMP

- July 23-26
- Motul, Yucatan, Mexico
- For ages 12-21
- Contacts:
Apostle Placido Koyoc Matu
p matu@hotmail.com
Teacher Dan Lawrence
dlviolin@earthlink.net
Apostle Jay Moser
ajmoser3@cox.net

CHURCH OF CHRIST TEEN CAMP

- July 26-July 31, 2009
- Camp Far-West, Stuartsville, Missouri
- Contact:
Jeff or Michelle Oldham
(515) 339-6226
mnjoldham@yahoo.com

SCRIPTURE ADVENTURE

- July 30, 2009
- East Local, Independence, Missouri
- For ages 5-11
- Contacts:
Jennifer Yates
(602) 790-0852
hometeachin@cox.net
Aimee Brockman
aimee.brockman@tmcmcd.org

MISSOURI REUNION

- July 31-August 2, 2009
- Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri
- Contacts:
Roland Sarratt
15910 E. 36th Terr.
Independence, MO 64055
(816) 373-6605
r.sarratt@comcast.net

Michael McGhee
18907 E. 6th St. North
Independence, MO 64056
(816) 796-6255

EL ZAMORANO YOUTH CAMP HONDURAS

- August 13-15, 2009
- Honduras, Central America
- Contacts:
Elder Ronnie Gill
011-504-3357-3885
rongill@la-comarca.org
Thomas Gill
011-504-3296-6474
thomasgill@la-comarca.org

SPRINGFIELD RALLY

- September 27, 2009
- Springfield, Missouri

ARIZONA REUNION

- November 27-29, 2009
- Phoenix Local
- Contacts:
Elder Gordon McCann
18808 N. 30th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 259-2341
gpjmccann@cox.net
Elder Bob Hedrick
2908 E. Rockwood
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 494-9661
rhedrick11@cox.net

AVA WEBSITE

On the Church of Christ AVA web site you will be able to access media such as sermons on-line, studies, *Zion's Advocate*, the Bible and Book of Mormon, and much more. We invite you to take a look and discover what a useful tool this can be in expanding your knowledge and faith. The site is cofcavva.net.

CORRESPONDENCE COMMITTEE

The General Church Correspondence Committee would like to extend the opportunity for any who wish to communicate through written correspondence to contact one of the following three committee members:

- Pat McCann** (Committee Chairman)
18808 N. 30th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85050
Marlene Cobb
630 S Pickwick
Springfield, MO 65802
June Haines
11589 Genuine Rd
Clare, MI 48617

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(Available to Church of Christ Membership Only)

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If you would like a copy, please contact:

- Deb Haines** (816) 478-6839
debruhaines@juno.com
Barbara Kimball (816) 252-5829
michael.and.barbara@comcast.net
Pat McGhee (816) 796-6255
mcgheeme@msn.com

Please send your Philippine Fund donation (amount to be determined by you) to the Church of Christ, East Local, P. O. Box 2243, Independence, MO 64055-9243.

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If you or someone you know (member or non-member) would like to be visited by a member of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ, please call or write to the Council of Apostles at Church Headquarters in Independence. The phone numbers and addresses are listed on the inside front cover.



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- Article of Faith, #9 - (concerning the Bible and Book of Mormon)
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- The Book of Commandments - Its Role in the History of the Restoration
- Brief Commentary: Book of Commandments & Doctrine and Covenants
- A Brief History of the Church of Christ
- A Call to National Repentance - Hearken to the Words of Jesus Christ
- The Christian Sabbath is the Lord's Day - Sunday
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- The Cost of Salvation
- Does it Make a Difference to Which Church You Belong?
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- First Presidency or First Apostles?
- God's Promises to Israel
- God's Purpose in America
- The Great Plan of Redemption
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- The Last Maya King and the Liberation of Jerusalem
- A Latter Day Apostasy
- The Latter Day Restoration
- Priesthood—Divine Authority
- Principles of the Gospel—Baptism
- Principles of the Gospel—Faith & Repentance
- Principles of the Gospel—Laying on of Hands
- Resurrection and Eternal Judgement
- Sermonettes on the Teachings of Jesus
- Some Misconceptions about the Book of Mormon
- A Synopsis (Compares beliefs of three Restoration churches)
- That Sacred Spot is Definitely Located
- What about the Book of Mormon?
- Why? (Amplifies absence of a First Presidency in Scripture)
- Zion and the Temple of the Lord

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