

The Gospel News

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The Bible Predicts the Coming of The Book of Mormon

By Apostle Joseph Calabrese

The Book of Mormon tells us that Lehi was a descendant of Joseph who was sold into Egypt (1 Nephi 5:14). This information concerning the lineage of Lehi is very important, as the Bible makes it quite plain the descendants of Joseph, or at least a branch of the House of Joseph, were to have a special land. It seems clear that this land was America. Let us examine the two blessings given by Jacob and Moses, respectively.

Just before Jacob's death, he blessed the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. Among other things, he said, "Let them grow into a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth," (Genesis 48:16). To Joseph, he said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall" (Genesis 49:22).

Moses, just prior to his death, in blessing the tribe of Joseph said, "Blessed of the Lord be his land. His horns are like the horns of unicorns, and with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth. They are the ten

thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh" (Deuteronomy 33:12-17).

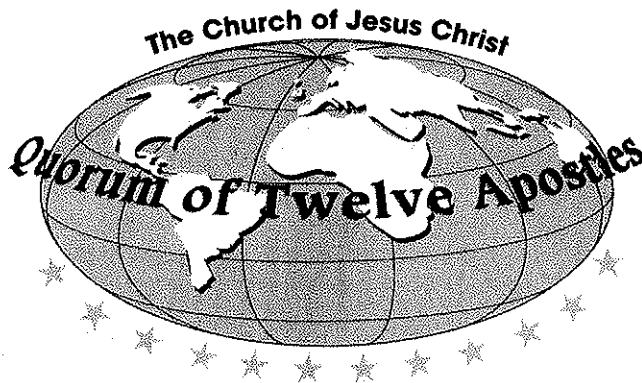
Let us notice the similarity of the three blessings in regard to the land that Joseph was to have. It was to be in "the midst of the earth," "over the wall" and "ends of the earth." By examining a globe, we find that America is almost directly opposite where the blessings were given. Note also the similarity of the blessings in regard to the population of the land, as applied in the phrase "a multitude," "fruitful bough," "the ten thousands of Ephraim," and the "thousands of Manasseh." The Book of Mormon states that the Nephites and Lamanites, who are descendants of Joseph through Manasseh, became as numerous almost as the sands of the sea on this land.

Does it seem reasonable that God should lead a portion of Israel, His choice people to a strange land, and then cease to speak to them through the voice of His prophets? We note that the Jews kept a record of the prophecies given to them from time to time, as recorded in the

Bible. Ezekiel speaks of this record as the "Stick of Judah." But he also speaks of another record, to be known as the "Stick of Joseph" (see Ezekiel 37:15-23). These sticks are to be put together, and made one in God's hand. After this is done (verse 21), Israel is to be gathered back to their homeland. The Christian World accepts the Stick of Judah as the Bible. Saints of Latter Day accept the coming forth of the Book of Mormon as the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy, believing the Book of Mormon to be the Stick of Joseph. Shortly after the coming forth of the Stick of Joseph in these last days, the Jews began to return to Jerusalem, in fulfillment of verse 21.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that a book is to come forth. Let us examine Isaiah 29:4. Here we find that God's chosen people shall speak out of the ground, and their speech shall whisper out of the dust. Verse 11 says a sealed book is to be delivered to an unlearned man, and the words of the book, to a learned man. Verse 13 tells us the condition of the world when the book comes forth. Verse 17 tells us that in just a little while after the book comes forth, Lebanon (Palestine) shall be turned into a fruitful field. Verse 24 says the book will be of a doctrinal nature. Saints of Latter Day people

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Is Baptism Essential to Salvation?

By Apostle Robert A. Watson

PART I

I shall treat this subject under seven headings, namely:

1. Essentiality of baptism.
2. Reasons why some feel water baptism is set aside as non-essential.
3. Purpose of baptism.
4. What is the sign that one is ready for baptism?
5. Mode of baptism.



Apostle Robert A. Watson

6. Authority to baptize.
7. Perpetuality of baptism.

1. Essentiality of Baptism.

There are three steps required for salvation, namely: faith, repen-

tance and baptism. It is virtually impossible to obey and fulfill one to the exclusion of the other two. The kingdom of God represents the most exclusive and selective kingdom ever formed and salvation represents that one has successfully completed and fulfilled his or her commitment made in the flesh, that is, to obey all the laws and commandments prescribed by God through His Word. It is then of the utmost importance that we place our obedient service to God as the most important thing in our life.

It is not unreasonable to believe that God's laws that rule the spiritual and mental world are any less rigid and binding than the laws which rule matter and space. The ignorance or neglect of either the physical law or civic law does not preclude that man must suffer by whatsoever consequences he engenders by his omissive actions. We have all been marshalled by the physical laws that govern such powerful forces as electricity and gravitation and we are all well aware that nature has not made any exceptions to the strict adherence of these laws by every living creature on this earth and that disobedience to these laws brings misery. Is it not safe then to equate that the same parallel of punishment must apply to those who omit or neglect to obey all the laws that govern the spiritual kingdom and the entrance thereof?

If, for example, a person keeps

all the laws of good citizenship and the only thing he does that is wrong is to steal his neighbor's automobile, when he is apprehended and brought before the judge, is he not considered a law breaker even though he has kept all the laws but the one that governs honesty? So God defines that he who breaks the least of His laws is guilty of breaking them all, and the importance of making these laws an everyday part of our life is best described in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

The Bible also states to the law and testimony meaning we must go to the books, Bible and Book of Mormon, to examine what spiritual laws have been given by God to legislate the actions of all mankind desiring citizenship into His kingdom.

The commandment we are specifically considering in this treatise is baptism and its essentiality to salvation. We must first consider baptism in the light of it being a law. Webster defines law as, "any rule expected to be observed or a divine commandment" and he defines essential as "necessary to make a thing what it is or indispensable" and finally salvation as "the saving of the soul from sin and death." Having agreed with Webster on the fact that law is a divine commandment, we must assume that baptism is a spiritual law because it is expected to be observed unconditionally and as such becomes essential as the following verses indicate. In the Bible we have the following in Matthew

28:19-20, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Mark 16:15-16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Acts 2:38, Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ."

Acts 10:47-49, Cornelius was told by Peter, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized . . ." Acts 16:30-33, the jailor asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved . . . And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized . . ."

And in the Book of Mormon please note the following: II Nephi 9:23-24, "And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it." Please read II Nephi 31:5-9, and II Nephi 31:17.

We have a great example on the compulsory nature of baptism in the example of Cornelius. Even though he was worthy to receive the visitation of angels prior to baptism, he was still required to be baptized.

2. Reasons Why Some Feel Water Baptism Is Set Aside as Non-Essential.

There are some that would justify the non-essentiality of baptism by quoting the following: Hebrews 9:9-10, "Which was a

figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

It is perhaps their feeling that the washings and carnal ordinances refer to water baptism and that this would be set aside at a designated time, but is it not more proper to feel that this rather refers to the ceremonial washings practiced by the Israelites under the Mosaical law and receiving its fulfillment under Christ rather than the baptism of Christ as practiced by the apostolic church?

There are those who would say that John the Baptist in saying, "I indeed baptize with water unto repentance but He that cometh after me shall baptize you with fire and the Holy Spirit," inferred that under the Christian dispensation, water baptism was supplanted by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There are many biblical illustrations of both water baptism and baptism of the Holy Ghost being equally required. Cornelius received baptism of the Holy Spirit and still was required to be baptized by water, Acts 10:44.

3. What is the Purpose of Baptism?

We can say as has been expressed many times, it is an outward sign of an inward emotion. It affords an opportunity for confessing to God and the whole world by performing a physical act that was preceded by repentance and complete surrender to God's will.

It has also been typified as a burial, meaning that at our baptism, we bury our old carnal nature and we come up out of the waters as a new creature in Christ, Romans 6:4-5, "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

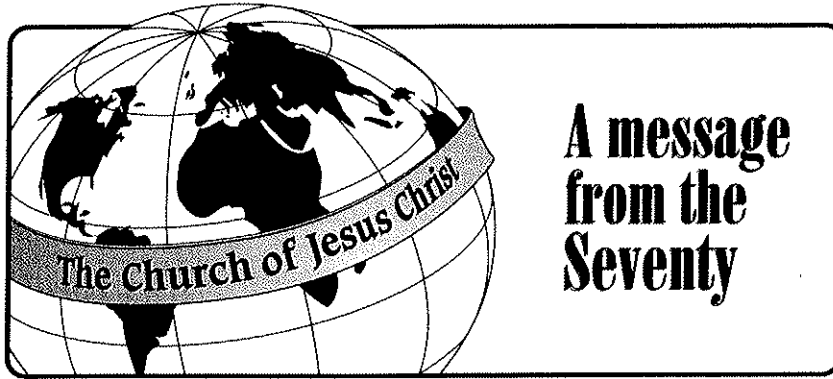
together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Baptism also affords us admission into the Church and is designed to be fully integrated with repentance as is recorded in Mark 1:4, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." See also Acts 2:38. It is also symbolic of a cleansing and its purpose is to wash away one's sins as Paul declares of his baptism in Acts 22:16, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Baptism is also referred to as a door and as such provides an entrance into God's Kingdom on earth, II Nephi 31:17, "Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; for, for this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost."

4. What Is the Sign that One Is Ready for Baptism?

One is ready for baptism when they show fruits of repentance and are willing to make a complete surrender to God as recorded in Moroni 8:25, "And the first fruits of repentance is baptism, and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins." To be willing to share with others is also indicative of one's readiness for baptism as recorded by Mosiah 18:5 and 18:8-11.

To be also ready to make complete restoration of any wrongdoing as Zaccheus, Luke 19:8, ". . . Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

(To Be Continued)



Four European Trips Since Last April

By Carl J. Frammolino, Evangelist Editor

Four trips were taken to European mission fields since last April. They were made to England, Italy (twice), and Poland to assist the laborers there and to strive to bring more souls to salvation.

The Lord's accompaniment and presence were felt while traveling and during the stays. Experiences and healing were received and time was spent in meetings and fellowship.

Brothers Nephi DeMercurio and Sal Azzinaro traveled to England on May 18 and returned May 29. They worked with Brother Pat O'Callaghan, Resident Elder, who had been afflicted. The Lord spared Brother O'Callaghan from serious peril and he was returned from the hospital in one day.

The first trip to Italy was from July 24 to September 25, and it was made by Brother Michael LaSala. While there, he traveled with Brother Rosario Scravaglieri, who is in charge of the Church in that nation, to visit the saints. Brother LaSala has gone to Italy frequently in the past and has been very active in the field, having journeyed extensively while there.

Brothers Phil Jackson and David Nolfi went to Poland on September 25 and returned October 2. They baptized Katherine Spyra on this trip. On their previous trip in April, along with Brother Paul Palmieri, they had baptized her husband, Brother Edward Spyra, who was ordained a Teacher and has been holding scrip-

tural studies and prayer services with the small group there.

The second trip to Italy was taken on October 24 by Brothers Thomas Liberto, Leonard Lovalvo, Louis Vitto, Michael LaSala (again) and John DiBattista. They all returned the first full week of November with the exception of Brother LaSala who was scheduled to stay until January. While they were there, Brother Rosario Scravaglieri was ordained into the office of an Evangelist, which had been approved by the October General Church Conference. They also were able to visit members in that nation. The focus has been to help Brother Scravaglieri in his labors because of the large geographical area which must be covered.

In analyzing the activity in the fields, it can be seen that attempts are being made to offer both support to the locations and increase the numbers in the fold.

UNDER FMOC

The European area is under the Foreign Missions Operating Committee. Other nations presently under this group are Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya in Africa and India. There are many sites in these countries, which have been reported in the past. People are inquiring about the Church from various parts of the world. The General Church Correspondent, Brother Richard Lawson,

reported that for the first six months of 1996, twenty-seven letters were written. Seven of these were addressed to people in New Zealand, Germany, Argentina, Canada, Austria, Spain, and Russia.

An overall list of the places being serviced would perhaps be of interest and benefit to readers. As of the last October General Church Conference, The Missionary Operating Committee reported on the many foreign and domestic locations. They are classified under either the FMOC (reported above) or the Americas Missions Operating Committee, which has places in North, Central, and South America under their respective regions.

UNDER AMOC

Outside the United States and Canada, fields are in Guatemala, under the Guatemala Region Operating Committee, and in Mexico, under the Mexico Region Operating Committee in Tijuana, San Ysidro, Ahome, Gomez Palacios, Cuauhtemoc, Mexicali, Ciudad Netzahualcoyoti (Mexico City), and Pedernales. In addition, trips are being made to the nations of Peru and Venezuela in South America.

Locations under the domestic regions' (United States and Canada) Operating Committees are:

Atlantic Coast: Cottageville, SC; Brunswick, ME; the Bowery, New York City; Dedham, MA; and Avondale, PA.

Great Lakes: Muncey and Six Nations Indian Reservations in Ontario, Canada.

Ohio-Midwest: Rochester and Lockport, NY; Cincinnati, Columbus, and Kent, OH; Elizabethtown, KY; Independence, MO; South Bend, IN; and Omaha, NE/Bedford, IA.

Pacific: The Pacific Region was in charge of the Mexican locations until recently and has been working along with the Mexico RMOC. Programs are now being implemented within the Pacific Region.

Penn-Mid Atlantic: Elkins, WV; Butler, PA; Cumberland, MD;

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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

It states in 2 Peter 3:8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

God is eternal. Times and seasons are known only to God. Time is not measured to God. Time is measured only to man.

The dictionary contains several definitions for the word time. As we enter a new year, one appropriate definition is, "a suitable or opportune moment or season."

Another year has passed and gone. It will never return. A new year has begun. It is in our hands. It is up to us what we make of it. It is up to us what we do with it. We can use it for our spiritual growth. We can use it for the spiritual growth and reach of The Church of Jesus Christ.

Time is extremely important. It was measured in precise terms by the people of God throughout the ages. The importance of the birth of Christ was emphasized by the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. They began to reckon their time at the coming of Jesus Christ.

Many people in scripture devoted their time by doing things for that great God, the Creator of all things. The Bible and Book of Mormon contain several accounts of individuals and groups of people who devoted their time and lives to the Lord and Saviour of the world.

The Apostle Paul devoted many years of his life to missionary work. He journeyed far and wide to tell people about The Church of Jesus Christ. He preached much and taught much about the Son of God. He preached much and taught much about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He suffered much for the cause of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul was relentless in his devotion, service and zeal for the Lord.

The sons of Mosiah spent fourteen years preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Lamanite people. Imagine, fourteen years in the wilderness, away from home and the comforts of life. They did not even stay together as a group during their missionary efforts. They separated so each one could do a part and be a part of the great work of the Lord. They were confident, they had faith in God that He would guide them and protect them. Their trust was in the Lord that they should meet again at the close of their harvest.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 states, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

What is your season? Is it now or later? Do not put your season off until tomorrow, tomorrow may never come. At the close of each day can you testify that you did something for the Lord? What purpose do we have or make for time in our daily lives?

How do we use our time? Is our primary use of time to glorify God by our service and obedience to Him? Can we lay a harvest at the feet of the Lord?

Our spiritual interests must be paramount in our lives. We should live our time to do the will of God. There is much to do for the Lord and His Church.

The world needs the Gospel of love, the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored for mankind. We must bring it to them. We must declare the glad tidings of great joy. We must go tell it on the mountain. Jesus Christ is alive! He resurrected for mankind. He overcame the permanent sting of death. He offers complete and total salvation. The Lord offers permanent and eternal life!

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The Children's Corner

By Janet Steinrock



Put Evil Down; Stand Up For God

Dear friends,

Today I want to talk to you about a dangerous problem starting to grow in the world and especially the United States and Canada. It is the problem of lonely, worried people who don't believe in God. The problem happens when these lonely people start looking for power in the areas where the devil rules—the areas of psychics, pretend psychics who take peoples' money, ugly witchcraft and magic.

The devil is tricky. He tries to make things look harmless. For example, there is no such thing as a good witch or "white witch." Witchcraft comes straight from the devil. Over and over in the Bible, God's people are warned to stay away from these bad things. Stay away from all witchcraft.

The true way to power comes from totally trusting in our Creator, God and our Savior, Jesus. As our faith grows and we practice relying on God, miracles happen. When we pray deeply for someone and God hears, something better than magic happens. When we see our bad sides and ask God to change us, a true miracle happens and we grow inside. We can be way stronger and better with God.

God also wants us to be like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. God wants us to stand up for Him and put all evil down. When these men refused to worship a statue of the king, their lives were threatened.

The king tried to kill them by throwing them in a fiery furnace. But an angel was sent down to save them. Everyone saw how truly powerful God is.

You can trust God. When bad things happen, you can pray and feel your spirits lift. But you need to remember who "you" are. You need to be strong too. When kids at school or at a party want to tell fortunes, play with toys that supposedly tell the fortune, call a psychic or even tell horrible ghost stories, say "No!" Leave the room. Play something else.

Don't read evil books or watch movies about evil spirits or even happy little ghosts. These things are not for us. God is in charge of the entire universe. You don't have to fear aliens, or evil spirits. No one has power over you when you serve Jesus and call on His name to save you.

If you've made a mistake and sinned, quickly beg God to forgive you. Then call on Him, in the name of Jesus to help you, to take away the fear and to make evil leave you. He can. He will. He cares for you. You are never alone. Keep your heart and mind clear of evil and clean and trust in your Savior. He cares for you.

With love,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

DISTRUST THROW
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UGLY ALL

WITCHCRAFT UNGODLINESS
CALL ALL
ON POWER
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TRUST SAVE
HIM HIS
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Note of Thanks

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My family and I would like to thank all of you for your prayers in behalf of Brother Anthony Loyalvo during his illness, and also for all of your loving cards and prayers after his passing. They have been very comforting. God bless each one of you.

Love in Christ,
Sister Anne Loyalvo



Our Women Today

Ladies' Uplift Circle Aliquippa, PA

By Sister Dora Rossi

The Ladies' Uplift Circle in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania has been busy this past year with a variety of activities. These activities were to support the surrounding community and the Church.

On two occasions, the Local Circle donated baked goods to the community "Meals on Wheels"

agency. This agency helps to support those that are less fortunate. We felt a wonderful blessing as we endeavored to help the needy and at the same time, set an example for the Lord. We are often reminded that we must "love our neighbor as ourself."

The sisters held a special meeting at the home of Sister Erma Rossi, who because of poor health, is not able to attend our meetings. We all received a blessing as each sister bore her testimony. The fellowship and love of God was wonderful. What a tremendous gift, the love of God. We shared it among ourselves and especially with Sister Erma Rossi.

We also visited another shut-in sister, Antoinette Giannetti at the Beaver County Geriatric Center. She was honored by over twenty visitors

who sang several hymns. The sisters of the Local Circle presented her with a beautiful plant to brighten her surroundings. We pray that it will be a reminder of our visit and our love.

The sisters wanted our Local Circle members, Sisters Erma Rossi and Antoinette Giannetti who can no longer make it to the meetings, to know how much they are missed and loved.

We had a number of fund-raisers during the year. The intent was to support the goals of the General Church Ladies' Uplift Circle, to support our Local Circle and to support our branch. May God bless our Circle as we endeavor to serve God and to help the many missionaries with our prayers and financial support.



Missionary
Benevolent
Association

Penn Mid-Atlantic Regional MBA

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

By Sister Lucetta Scaglione

The Penn Mid-Atlantic Regional MBA held their annual retreat at Antiochian Village, September 20-22, 1996. The theme was FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY.

We arrived on Friday evening with great anticipation for a blessed weekend. After a short orientation meeting, the remainder of the time was spent in fellowship and greeting each new arrival.

Saturday began very early in the morning with a beautiful prayer meeting. Brother Bill Colangelo spoke to us in our chapel service. He reminded us that "We Have An Anchor" in Jesus Christ. He told of an experience his mother had many years ago that expressed a marvelous faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. The

Lord actually repaired a fallen ceiling because she put her service to Him before anything else. Brother Bill asked us, "Believeth thou this?" Brother Jim Speck also spoke. He likened the trials and temptations in our lives as going through the fiery furnace. We could be consumed but with faith in our God, He will bring us through. We are like those vessels of gold. Each time we go through that furnace we become stronger, purified by the fire of Jesus Christ. The remainder of the day was filled with the usual activities. Everyone talked about the spirit-filled seminar classes as they discussed FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY. The afternoon was taken up with recreation and craft classes. The children had a great time taking part in a carnival of games.

Our first speaker on Saturday evening was Brother Pete Giannetti, Jr. He read the scripture about the Samaritan woman meeting Jesus at the well. Jesus asked this woman for a drink. Then Jesus told her, if she knew who He was, she would ask Him for that living water, that water that would quench her thirst so that she would never thirst again. Brother Pete asked, "Are you thirsty, tonight? Are you running to and fro trying to quench that thirst, but it

can't be quenched?" Listen to that still, small voice that says, "I am the living water, drink of me and I will quench your thirst." What Jesus offers us is sweet but we have to exercise faith to receive it. If your soul has been crying for the living water, open your heart that you will never thirst again. Brother Paul Palmieri reminded us that we were like this woman before we met the Lord. But thank God, as He forgave this woman, He forgave us. Now we have hope because He loves us. Brother Paul Ciotti exhorted us that we are at the fountain drinking. The woman at the well left her water pot to go tell the others about Jesus. Are we willing to leave our water pots or those natural things in our lives that mean nothing and pick up our spiritual water pots to be filled with Faith, Hope and Charity? We are the wells, to become fountains, to extend to others that they too can drink of this living water. Our message is a message of hope to the world in despair. The remainder of our meeting was spent in giving testimonies and singing praises to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Brother Tony Ricci opened our Sunday Service. He read from the

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Branch and Mission News

Baptism In Freehold, NJ

By Brother Carl Huttenberger, Jr.

On August 18, 1996, we thanked God to again be at the water's edge to witness the baptism of Oswaldo Reyes into the Church. He was baptized by Brother Carl Huttenberger, Jr. and confirmed by Brother Jim Crudup. As one brother put it, Brother Oswaldo was the "first fruits of Joseph," being the first young person from the Seed of Joseph to be baptized in our branch. We heard his testimony of how he, while in Maine for the Youth in Action, felt God's call the night before leaving there. While they were singing *Taste the Grass on the Summit*, and Brother Oswaldo was praying within himself if it was his time, a power overtook him and he leaped to his feet during the song and asked to be baptized.

At the water's edge, a sister had a vision in which she saw a personage in black trying to grab Brother Oswaldo but she saw him turn and go the other way. Praise God that through baptism we can turn from Satan and turn from this world to enjoy a life of blessings in serving God. While he was being confirmed another vision was had in which a sister saw Brother Oswaldo turn golden and saw a heavenly personage with his hands on Brother Jim Crudup's shoulders as he confirmed Brother Oswaldo. Another sister said she dreamed there would be more baptisms, but in her dream she saw that Brother Oswaldo was the first. She dreamed this before she even knew of Brother Oswaldo's desire. We praise God for His wonderful manifestations. The gift of tongues came forth while a visitor was testifying during our afternoon MBA. We are reminded of the scripture that teaches us that the gifts would be in our midst so long as we would

believe.

It is truly a joy when one would surrender his life to Jesus Christ and as the angels in heaven were surely rejoicing, we too rejoiced in another one of our children who is safely home. May God bless you all.

Showers of Blessings in Fort Pierce, FL

By Sister Terri Benyola

May 5, 1996 was no ordinary day for the saints in the Fort Pierce, Florida Branch. During our testimony meeting three souls made it known of their desire to be baptized in The Church of Jesus Christ: Brenda Scott, the natural and now spiritual sister of Sister Mary Cason, Melissa Martin, who is a very good friend of Sister Mary Carson and Jim Griffin, the husband of Sister Carol Giovannone Griffin. The saints gathered up hymnals and some belongings and went to the waters of regeneration. Sister Brenda Scott and Brother Jim Griffin were both baptized by Brother Rocco Benyola. Sister Melissa Martin was baptized by Brother Frank Rogolino.

When we returned to the branch, Sister Brenda was confirmed by Brother Norman Campitelle, Sister Melissa was confirmed by Brother Sam Costarella and Brother Jim was confirmed by Brother Norman Campitelle. A wonderful spirit was felt as sacrament was being passed. As this wonderful day came to an end, the brothers, sisters and friends formed a circle of love and we dismissed the blessed day in prayer.

On May 12, 1996, Mothers' Day was a special Sabbath day. The brothers met at the branch early and prepared breakfast for the mothers. What an expression of love! After this act of love, we waited on the blessings of God.

Our service began with the blessing of five children. Amanda Griffin was blessed by Brother Frank Rogolino; Summer Martin by Brother Ron Carradi; Travis Martin by Brother Rocco Benyola; Michael

Martin by Brother Sam Costarella and Daniel Shane Martin by Brother Norman Campitelle. During the blessings a sister had a vision that a personage stood by each Elder and a gold light and white light shown beyond description.

Brother Ron Carradi visiting from the Lake Worth Branch opened the meeting by saying how important our mothers are. He read concerning the two thousand stripling soldiers in the Book of Mormon and how they rehearsed the words of their mothers. Brother Ron also mentioned the necessary role of a mother towards her children. He expounded to us that we should remember our spiritual mother, The Church of Jesus Christ. Let us not take this lightly because it is an honor and a blessing to be a member.

Brother Frank Rogolino spoke, stating it was the prayers of mothers that on many occasions preserved their children. Brother Norman Campitelle asked the children to come up front. One by one he gave each child the microphone and they thanked God for their mothers. What a wonderful blessing our children are to their parents and to the Church. We enjoyed a season of testimony.

It was good to be in the House of the Lord today. Remember us in Fort Pierce, Florida. God bless you.

News from Hollywood, FL

By Sister Janet Humphrey

The sisters and brothers of the Hollywood, Florida Branch, with God's blessings, have been working very hard towards our goal of a new or expanded building. We have grown in membership to the point that we need to expand our present building or build a new one. Praise God!

Towards this end, we have been raising funds through a variety of activities. We conducted a car wash and in spite of the hot, sunny weather, the saints had a good deal of energy and high spirits as they washed a number of vehicles. We

sold candy and the sale was very successful. It helped us inch our way higher in the building fund, while giving us an opportunity of spreading the word that Jesus is the way and telling people about The Church of Jesus Christ.

A few brothers and sisters hosted and prepared a delicious dinner for our "Latin American Fiesta Fund Raiser." Our hosts were Sister Helen and Brother John Catone, Lisa and Brother Oscar Lopez and Sister Susan and Brother Dennis Moraco. Our special guest for the evening was Brother Mark Mancinelli from the Inner City Branch in Detroit, Michigan. He showed his wonderful photographic slide presentation from his travels around the Southwestern United States and Mexico. May all those who viewed this beautiful collection be inspired to work with the Seed of Joseph.

Please remember us in your prayers. Our desire is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with His help, expand our meeting place so we can comfortably accommodate the membership and visitors. God bless you all is our prayer.

Baptism in Spartanburg, SC

By Sister Connie Rossi

August 25, 1996 was a day of rejoicing and great jubilee at the Spartanburg, South Carolina Mission as fourteen year old Melissa Rossi rendered obedience to the Gospel and was baptized by Brother Darrell Rossi. It was especially a joyous day for Brother Darrell and myself as Melissa is our daughter. We have been blessed to see two of our daughters baptized within the past two years. Our oldest daughter, Nikki Marcantonio, sixteen, was baptized in 1994.

The day of Melissa's baptism started off with ominous clouds and threats of thunderstorms but the Lord graciously held back the rain for this

blessed event. However, the rain was not the only threat to stop this baptism. The water spot that we have used in the past for baptisms was now roped off with a "No Trespassing" sign across it but we did not let that stop us. We all proceeded to a nearby park and used the park lake.

After Melissa's baptism, we proceeded back to Church where Brother Darrell and Brother Harold Littlejohn laid hands on Melissa and prayed for the gift of the Holy Spirit to come upon her life.



Bro. Rossi baptizing Melissa.

It turned out to be a beautiful baptism and we thank God for His goodness and mercy and for removing all obstacles from us this day. We also thank Him for calling yet another one of our youth into the Church. We ask all our brothers and sisters to keep our new young sister in your prayers and that many more young and older souls would answer the same call and they, too, would render obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel in Cottageville, SC

By Sister Carol Racz

The Caring and Sharing Program left on one of its routine trips to the mission in Cottageville, South Carolina on the evening of May 23, 1996. We returned home in the early

morning hours of May 27, 1996. A group of sisters and brothers from the Edison and Metuchen, New Jersey Branches ventured on this missionary effort. There were three sisters, Marge Crupi, Joan Longuillo and Carol Racz and brothers from Edison, headed by Phil Arcuri and Angelo Zaino. Three young people from Edison journeyed along as well—Stephanie Crupi, her sister, Elise and Brother Marc Zaino. Laurie Schmidt represented Metuchen. It was a "sleeves rolled up ready to work" dedicated group. We worked hard and enjoyed the company of all.

The group's main objective was to distribute food and to make connections in an underlying effort to put forth the news of the Gospel Restored. Twenty-seven families were visited and food was distributed to them. A majority of these families were Native Americans of the Edisto Tribe, a branch of the Natchez Kusso Indians. The other families comprised the surrounding needy community. Is there a better combination than to spiritually feed the Seed of Joseph as we endeavored at the same time to feed and clothe, naturally, those who are poor?

A special blessing was added to this trip. During our Sunday service, Sister Juanita Riley had hands laid on as she was reinstated into fellowship in The Church of Jesus Christ. The Lord has abundantly blessed Sister Juanita during the past year. She requests our prayers on her behalf.

The Sunday meeting had an attendance of eighteen, including John Muckenfuss, a representative of the Indian community and members from the Spartanburg, South Carolina Mission. The brothers and sisters of Spartanburg always support Cottageville. Brother Ralph Lee Heung, an ordained Teacher, lives in Cottageville, not far from the mission. Every Sunday he conducts scripture lessons for Sister Juanita and visitors. Brother Ralph keeps the "home fires" burning for the mission when the brothers and sisters are away.

We ask you to remember the Cottageville Mission in your prayers.