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The Gospel News

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GMB
Campout 2024



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A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

GET REAL!

A common expression, usually spoken when one or more persons in a discussion seem to be expressing ideas or holding to hopes and beliefs that are based in extreme unlikelihood. The strange fact is that anyone can have his own version of reality. One person's reality might seem complete fantasy to another.

How can that be? The dictionary definition of reality seems pretty straightforward:

- the quality or fact of being real
- something that is real; fact
- the quality of being true to life

Basic understanding of natural reality relies upon our physical senses. Something is real to everyone who can see, touch, hear, taste, or smell it. At the next level, something we cannot see, touch, hear, taste, or smell—such as gravity—is real if, using those same five senses, we can witness its effects in some consistent way. Accordingly, starting in early childhood, each of us has developed a personal belief of reality from life experiences.

Another level of widely accepted reality is based on data and science, including mathematical calculations. These versions of reality are generally accepted for long periods of time, but they also are vulnerable to new discoveries and updated calculations that resolve defects found in previously theorized truths. (E.g., At a time in the past, the accepted reality was that the sun revolves around the earth.)

Society tends to accept that which arises out of currently available data and the prevailing conventions used for interpretation and calculation. An example of this is current conventional wisdom which accepts that it has been 13.8 billion years since the Big Bang. Note that, by far, the majority of people who accept this as reality cannot begin to expound on the various rules of physics and mathematics that are used to prove it. Nevertheless, it remains the commonly understood reality. (This writing is neither meant to support nor dispute this. That is an argument for another day.)

This brings us to another form of accepted reality which is based on what "everyone" else believes. This may be the most powerful version of truth and can be dangerous when influencers

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Guess this back-to-school theme;
hints in bold

Alma 12:24
Therefore this life
became a pro**B**ationary
state; a time
to prepare to meet God..



I John 2:28
And now, little childr**E**n,
abide in him, that,
when he shall ap**P**ear,
we may have confidence...

Alma 16:16
...the Lord did pou**R** out
his Spirit on all
the face of the land to
prepare the minds
of the children of men...



I Corinthians 16:13
Watch ye,
stand fast in the faith,
quit you like men,
b**E** strong.



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

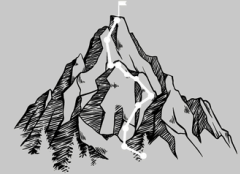


II Nephi 9:46
Prepare your souls
for that glorious d**A**y
when justice shall be
administered
unto the righteous.

Matthew 24:44
Therefore
be ye also **R**eady:
for in such an hour
as ye think not
the Son of man cometh.



I Nephi 10:18
...and the way is prepared
for all m**E**n from the
foundation of the world**D**,
if it so be that they
repent and come unto him.



BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck

One hundred and eighty-nine years ago this month, on September 14, 1835 the counsel of the church met in the unfinished Kirtland Temple and appointed Emma Smith to publish her hymnbook with William Phelps as publisher.

The project was begun in preparation for the dedication of the Kirtland temple. Emma's hymnal was finally typeset in 1835, the date of the imprint, but the run of 1,000 copies was printed in early 1836. Fredrick G. Williams owned the printing press. The book contained 90 hymn texts with no music, and cost one dollar. It was a small book—3 ½ by 4 inches, easily kept in the pocket for daily use. Instead of music the book offered metrical designation. The preface, most likely written by Emma, was as follows: "In order to sing by the Spirit, and with the understanding, it is necessary that the church of the Latter Day Saints should have a collection of 'Sacred Hymns,' adapted to their faith and belief in the gospel, and, as far as can be, holding forth the promises made to the fathers who died in the precious faith of a glorious resurrection, and a thousand years' reign on earth with the Son of Man in his glory.

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Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to 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 commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America



Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



"You ARE More Than What You WERE"

By Brother Doug Obradovich

"If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." (John 16:7)

Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:2-4). Was this rushing mighty wind from Heaven God breathing His spirit out onto the Church? Is this what such a magnificent, divine transference from Heaven sounds like?

Peter explained the phenomenon, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...saith God, I will pour out OF my Spirit upon all flesh...and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days OF my Spirit" (Acts 2:16-18). Peter actually misquoted the prophet, with one of the single most important two-letter prepositions ever uttered. He did it twice, so this certainly was no accidental misstep. Peter's amendment of "OF," was wrong, yet so right. He had accurately captured the goings on in the upper room and on the Day of Pentecost perfectly: The Holy Spirit poured out OF Jesus Christ and then the Father, respectively!

Paul shows how this wonder is made available from within them to within you! "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Prior to your baptism, the Holy Spirit visited you. Afterwards, a powerful change. Why is baptism necessary in advance of this change? Consider the first act in moving into your own physical dwelling place. You most likely cleaned it thoroughly, with a desire to begin fresh and healthy! However, when you visit your friends and/or family, you would never clean upon entering their home. Such accountability on your part in someone else's abode makes no sense; as it is with the Holy Ghost with us.

Once Jesus becomes your permanent commitment, you no longer represent a place for Him to simply visit, but to dwell. You are transformed into a "temple of God." So, you are washed clean and filled with His goodness. You now possess all you need to reach His intended potential for you. You are converted into a fully endorsed, Heavenly authorized representative of the Son of God. You are changed for the good. YOU ARE MORE THAN WHAT YOU WERE! Or as Candace and her fellow Pittsburghers might say, "Younz are more than what younz were!"

Each time she goes back to Aliquippa, Candace's Pittsburgh accent returns (ex.: "you" becomes "younz"). We are all influenced by others, as the beautiful song, "For Good" (from the musical, "Wicked"), states, "Because I met you, I've been changed for the good." Jesus possessed the single greatest influencer of all: His Holy Spirit.

He recognized the cost of passing this glorious gift onto His followers involved His own passing, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, The Comforter will not come unto you" (John 16:7). Solution: He allowed mankind to crucify Him. Then He resurrected and kept His promise. He first kept it with The Church's leadership (apostles), "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost'" (John 20:23). Then He kept it on the Day of Pentecost, "Suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting...they were all filled with the

(Continued from cover)

persuade people to accept false realities, often using simple twists of the truth—additions and omissions—that fall favorably upon itching ears. Disciples of these influencers tend to persuade others until significant segments of society accept a false reality just because so many others seem to accept it. History is replete with examples of this kind of false reality and the damage that can be done. Extreme manifestations of this were seen in nazism and various racist practices that have prevailed in segments of society. As the Apostle Paul prophesied, the Apostasy sprung out of such distortion of truth. (See 2 Timothy 4:3-4.)

Examining this last form of reality, we ought to recognize the great overlap between our perceptions of natural reality and spiritual reality. In fact, there is only one reality: In the beginning God created...and God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good (Genesis 1:1-31). From the most basic fact discerned by our physical senses to the most elegant theory backed only by sparse data and complex calculations, all of natural reality is merely a subset of God's reality. Although we tend to be profoundly confident in the nature of things (natural reality), everything is subordinate to the will of God. As Moses stood amazed before the bush that burned continuously without being consumed, he enquired as to the identity of the voice that called out and instructed him, and the Lord answered: I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:2-15).

At another time and place, from the midst of impenetrable darkness which covered this land for three days upon His crucifixion, Jesus introduced Himself to the Nephites: Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified His name...I am the light and life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end (3 Nephi 9:15-18).

God made all the rules of nature, and He supersedes them whenever He wants to. We know this, but it is no small thing to maintain within our hearts and minds the reality that is God's truth. Peter, as he actually walked on water, struggled to dwell within that level of reality which empowered him to do so. The boisterous sea drew his mind back into the boundaries of natural reality; dominated by fear, he could not continue to believe, and he began to sink. Note that, even with his diminished faith, he still called on Jesus to save him, and Jesus, while catching him, admonished: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:22-33)

It is clear that faith is not just a yes or no, but a matter of how much the mind of Christ dominates the carnal mind within each of us (1 Corinthians 2:16). It is our faith or lack thereof that determines each of our personal versions of reality.

In other words, what we believe or how completely we believe in Christ determines how closely our perception of what is real matches the Lord's truth.

Faith being the key, Alma laid out a wonderful template to follow in order to develop faith from just a desire to believe until continuous nourishment of the word of God within us takes root and grows like a tree springing up to everlasting life (Alma 32). One of the implications of this chapter is that we should not be satisfied with reaching the next level of belief/faith, but rather regard each step upward in faith as having acquired new knowledge (something discernable, a reality), a solid basis from which to aspire to the next level.

Perfection being the goal, Paul wrote to the Philippians: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after,...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14).

It is this engagement, this faithful desire and pursuit of greater alignment with the Lord, that enables us to envision our salvation and the fulfillment of God's promises as part of our own spiritually enhanced reality. What level can we aspire to? Well, remember the Brother of Jared asking for the Lord's touch upon the stones he had prepared, God said: "... never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger..." (Ether 2:9).

Brothers, Sisters, and friends, we live in an era of time that has been prophesied. Although we cannot pinpoint precisely where we are in the timing of God's plan, we know we are very much closer to fulfillment than were those of whom we read in scriptures. Moreover, we are actually witnessing many elements in the sequence of events prophesied in God's word, and He has been generous with dreams and revelations encouraging us to prepare our hearts right now.

Our June Apostles' meeting was blessed with manifestations of the Spirit of God providing clear direction for the Church which the Apostles embraced thankfully for immediate follow up. Like the "cloud of witnesses" in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we have every reason to be living the life of the believers. Rather than being bound by the limits of natural understanding, they received a good report through their faith. Despite not having received the promises during their natural lifetimes, their reality was aligned with God's such that they were able to see those promises afar off (Hebrews 11). "Wherefore...let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

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All in God's Wisdom

By Brother Mark Kovacic

The Gospel according to Luke states:

And he [Jesus] taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [Isaiah] and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" [Isaiah 61:1-3]. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:15-21).

It was my understanding that during Jesus' ministry a portion (parshah) of the Torah (first five books of the Old Testament) was read each week in local synagogues. But Jesus, who was beginning his ministry in the Nazareth synagogue, was handed the prophet Isaiah scroll to read instead of the Torah scroll. Why?

I questioned a Jewish friend of mine and asked him if there is a time when the Torah reading was not used. His answer was that the Torah is always read, but there is a second reading, known as the Haftarah. This reading came from a collection of scriptures selected by Jewish sages during a time of Greek-Persian oppression when the Torah was forbidden to be read publicly. Usually, the Haftarah is related to the Torah reading of the week. People are selected, or they volunteer to read, such as with Jesus.

In God's wisdom, Jesus read the Haftarah for that sabbath service which included Isaiah 65:1-3. He knew what day to volunteer to read the Haftarah that explained His ministry.

So, it was not coincidental that the Isaiah scroll was handed to Jesus instead of the scheduled Torah scroll for the standard reading. My friend stated, "In the synagogue service, Haftarah means "Concluding Portion" and the practice of reading the Haftarah has continued over the centuries even until today."

The Haftarah with Isaiah chapter 65 usually is read in September or October on the Jewish calendar. The underlying Torah reading is the third chapter of Genesis, where Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden is recorded.

So, what does all this mean to us? It was no coincidence that Jesus was handed the Isaiah scroll in the synagogue on the day he was announcing the start of his ministry in Nazareth. Note the phrases used by Isaiah (and Jesus): preach good tidings to the meek, bind the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty, opening of the prison, comfort all that mourn, give beauty for ashes and oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. That they might be called trees of righteousness. (See Songs of Zion #65.)

Coincidence? Hardly! "But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things." (2 Nephi 2:24)

GMBA CAMPOUT 2024



"I am overwhelmed by the blessings and joy I felt throughout the week. God truly blessed this Campout. Focus Renewed!" - Sister Sophia O'Connor, Camp Director

"I had a blessed week getting closer to God and the Saints of The Church of Jesus Christ. I was renewed, refocused, and refreshed for the year ahead." - Brother Marco DiMelis, Assistant Camp Director



"It's a humbling and awe-inspiring experience to see what God does year after year at Campout. The camp team and volunteers were amazing. The youth and family of God came eager and ready. Our love and unity opened the doors for a spirit filled week that truly impacted lives and strengthened us spiritually with a reNEWed focUS!" - Brother Lucas Martorana, GMBA President



"GMBA camp was such an immense blessing this year. The theme of Renewed Focus helped us all reflect on what it means to be a new creature in Christ. I was inspired to see so many young people make their commitment with the Lord and ask for their baptism." - Brother Ryan McDonnell, GMBA Vice President



"I hope this year's camp was life changing for everyone who attended. Don't let it just be a week in history. Let the lessons, sermons, and songs sink deep into your hearts. Let's come to Camp 2025 even better than we left camp this year." - Brother Chuck Maddox Jr, Forest Hills, FL Branch



"Praise God for how He blessed over 450 people all week and gave all of us a renewed focus. The love, unity and spirit we felt all week allowed all of us to leave in a better place than we came. Let's keep it up and continue to lift up Jesus Christ everyday." - Brother Chuck Maddox, Lake Worth, FL Branch



68,000

steps by a camper this year

445 people in attendance

Attendees under the age of 18 **151**

89 kids aged 12 and under

average temperature (felt way hotter!)

85 DEGREES

75+ songs sung all week

30 tie blankets made for kids in need

animals at the petting zoo **17**

6 musicians on stage nightly

people baptized at this Campout

4

1 amazing Spirt filled week that Renewed our Focus!

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We are reminded of an old hymn, number 194 in the Saints Hymnal:

*Tho' life's changing values may vanish away,
and things that were real become dreams,
How blessed to walk with the Lord day by day,
And know He is real as He seems.*

***Jesus is real to me, Yes, Jesus is real to me;
I never will doubt Him, Nor journey without Him, For He
is so real to me.***

Jesus, His kingdom, His miracles, and all of His promises are reality! Let's get real!

In the love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

James Crudup, Joel Gehly, Pete Giannetti, John Griffith, Scott Griffith, Paul Liberto, Thomas M. Liberto, Leonard A. Lovalvo, Frank Natoli, Paul A. Palmieri, Peter Scolaro, Jerry Valenti

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www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org

Ladies' Uplift Circle News



Yesterday and Today By Sister Marty Jumper

*We will work with a will, His law to fulfil.
From one link to a strong chain we've grown.
His blessings we know, In sweet fellowship grow,
When united we stand for the Lord.*

These beautiful words are the second verse of "The Ladies' Uplift Circle Song," written by Sister Amy Martin and the music by Sister Mabel Bickerton, for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the General Ladies' Uplift Circle.

Recently Sister Donna Bogle found the book, "Experiences Yesterday and Today," published by the Ladies' Uplift Circle of the Church of Jesus Christ. As I looked through it, I realized how many amazingly talented women we have had in the Church, yesterday and today. I have seen women organize fellowship weekends, develop interesting weekly lessons and devotions that stir our hearts with the word of God, create unique fundraisers and teach children how to live for Jesus through interactive games, crafts, and especially music.

"Experiences Yesterday and Today" is full of beautiful songs and the testimonies that inspired their writing. In the foreword of the book is written that "We, the Sisters of the Ladies' Uplift Circle feel that the hymns and intimate stories are so valuable, they should be preserved." In 1980, the book came together and was printed by The Church of Jesus Christ Print House. The following are a few excerpts from the book.

One of my favorite songs was written by Sister Sadie Cadman for a Christmas program for the young people in Monongahela, PA. Many of the common Christmas carols fit

the New Testament scriptures she had for the program, but there were no songs to follow the Book of Mormon scriptures. To fulfill that need, she wrote and composed the music for "The New Star," as found in 3 Nephi.

Also in the book was an experience by Sister Carmella Mazzeo. She and her husband were experiencing a difficult year. Sister Carmella was fasting one day and was carried away in the Spirit. She was being lifted up toward heaven and could see the profile of God in the distance. She reached out to touch His face, knowing if she could touch Him, He would help them. Then finding herself on her knees, she unconsciously wrote the words to the song, "Wonderful Promises," the words which correspond to 2 Peter 1:4. One morning while doing her housework, Sister Virginia Pizzera was inspired to write a song. "The words came one after another until I had written four verses. 'No Other One, But Jesus' seemed to be the answer to all my questions," she wrote in her testimony.

For several weeks the ministry preached on the theme, laying up your treasures in heaven and preparing to meet the Lord (Matthew, chapter 6). Their words, "There are treasures untold for man to behold," stayed with Sister Nancy Harvey and one day she was directed to write "Treasures Untold."

*There are treasures untold for man to behold,
Of Jesus and His wonderful love;
How he came down to earth—of the wonderful birth,
To die and ascend up above.*

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Chorus

*The message to all is to answer the call,
From Jesus our heavenly King;
And the treasures we'll find in our hearts and our minds,
Are the praises and joys we will sing.*

Sister Nancy stated that she wasn't a poet, but, as we know, with God, all things are possible.

Sister Esther Dyer was thinking one day about how she could teach her Sunday School Class, ages nine to thirteen, the Restoration and Joseph Smith. Repetition came to her as an effective way to learn and at the same time, the chorus to "Hallelujah, The Gospel Is Restored." The children learned the words and tune of the chorus very well. With a little prodding by her father and as an answer to prayer, she composed the rest of the verses as we sing it today.

Days before a district conference, Sister Arlene Buffington

heard the Spirit speak the words "An Era Such As Never Known." She wrote them on a piece of paper and laid them on her piano. Ten days later, on her way to the conference, the melody of the song came to her. She prayed that the Lord would allow her to remember it. The next day, after finding the piece of paper on the piano, the melody again was given to her, and the song was written. This is only a sample of the beautiful experience concerning this song. You will find the rest of the experience on page #111 of "Experiences Yesterday and Today."

I only wrote a small part of each experience. There is much more to read about each one. There will be treasures untold that we may be privileged to see in the future, but until then, we have treasures from yesterday to be discovered today found in the literature of The Church of Jesus Christ.

This book is no longer in print, but there will be a limited number of copies available at the General Ladies' Uplift Circle Conference in October.

Compassion *By Sister Karen L. Progar*

We are personally blessed to experience the Power of God from time to time. When that blessing occurs during a meeting, all receive it.

In a recent meeting, the members of the Aliquippa Branch enjoyed one such special blessing. After hearing a beautiful message delivered by the Aliquippa Branch ministry prior to our Feet Washing Service, 13 people, the most I can recall ever approaching the Mercy Seat in a branch meeting, came forth seeking relief from the Lord. Those who came forth were begging for the Lord's help with grievous afflictions and devastating personal problems.

During the process, I felt as though the Lord was paying close attention to this process. The Lord blessed me with the knowledge that He is mindful of His people and has compassion on them. His compassion was palpable.

In addition to what the Lord allowed me to feel, He also blessed Sister Janet Oestreicher with an incredible experience that day. "When the Elders finished anointing, they prepared to pass Sacrament. I (Sister Janet) heard intense weeping up front by the Mercy seat." This brought to her mind an experience she had several years ago as the ministry was passing sacrament and she heard behind her someone weeping softly. She looked and didn't see anyone, but heard a voice say, "I am well pleased."

Sister Janet knew that the weeping was different after the

anointings, and was sure that it was not coming from any of those who were anointed. When pondering on the weeping and the location from where it came, the scripture, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35) came to her. Sister Janet realized that the Lord cares for and loves us just like His friends, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, for whom He wept in that scripture.

This confirmed that God does not take our pain lightly. Jesus cares and is aware of what we are going through. Many felt comfort and relief from their anointing that morning. It was so reassuring, and we praise God for His everlasting compassion in our lives. It is a joy to serve a Savior who looks at us as individuals, and yet can bless us as a congregation. May it comfort and remind each of us how Jesus loves us and shares our pain, while encouraging us to press forward.

(Blast From The Past - continued from page 2)

Notwithstanding the church, as it were, is still in its infancy, yet, as the song of the righteous is a prayer unto God, it is sincerely hoped that the following collection, selected with an eye single to his glory, may answer every purpose till more are composed, or till we are blessed with a copious variety of the songs of Zion." It was an immediate success and sold out. Emma moved forward with a second approved edition during a malaria epidemic and while caring for four young children.



God Continues His Miracles for His People!

Dear Friends,

Do you remember someone praying for you and you were healed? Or being in a car accident and not dying? How about the last time you were really scared or worried about something you must do, or a big change in your life and you prayed? Or have you ever been afraid of a bad person or bully? Remember, those of us who follow the Lord, who trust in Him and pray to Him, have Him as our Secret Weapon! He will protect us, guide us, keep us safe, and even send angels to help us.

Scriptures say "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever!" (See Hebrew 13:8.) That especially means the Lord is there for us also in times of trouble. In the Bible, after King David died, many people stopped following God's laws. Their country split into two groups. One prayed to statues; they invented horrible ways to worship, including sacrificing babies! They liked to go to the high hills and dance and be wild. God warned them to stop. Prophets warned them that God saw their evil ways and it was wrong!

The other country, Judah, was ruled by a wise king who taught his people to serve God. His name was Jehoshaphat. He sent men of God to teach the people. He set up judges that were honest and warned them that God was watching them, so be fair. He built walls around the cities and trained armies to protect the people. Since God had blessed them, they became a very rich country. Some countries had even given them gifts and money to become their friends.

But now huge armies of enemies were gathering to attack from all sides! Judah was outnumbered by thousands and thousands of fierce fighting enemies! King Jehoshaphat was terribly afraid. But he knew what to do! He announced a fast throughout all the country. Nobody ate and all prayed for God's help! And everyone, in all the cities, came to seek the Lord (to find out what God wanted them to do). As the King prayed, he thanked

the Lord for all the good He'd always done for them. He was humble and grateful. All of the country stood praying before the Lord with their wives and children. (See II Chronicles 20:12.) When King Jehoshaphat bowed, and then fell to the ground begging God for help, all of his people joined him.

And the Lord was pleased. The Spirit of God spoke through a prophet. He said, "Listen, all of you in this country of Judah and King Jehoshaphat! The Lord says unto you, do not be afraid or dismayed by this great multitude who is coming to attack you, for the battle is not yours, but God's! Tomorrow, go down against them: behold, they come up over by the cliff of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the brook, by the wilderness."

And he continued, "You will not need to fight in this battle. Set yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord with you! Do not be dismayed! Fear not. Tomorrow go out against those armies, for the Lord will be with you!" (See II Chronicles Chapter 20.)

King Jehoshaphat and the people believed God's prophet. The next morning before the army left, the King's belief in God was so strong, he ordered, "Put the musicians praising God's goodness first!" And the moment the praising began, God touched those armies planning to attack and kill, and they turned against each other! First two against one country, and then as they wiped that country out, they fought against each other!

When King Jehoshaphat and his people of Judah reached the cliff overlooking their battleground, they were shocked! Every enemy, thousands of them, had murdered one another! No one dangerous was left to hurt them! God had saved a grateful nation who prayed and thanked Him!

They went down among those killed and started removing all the gold, jewels and anything of value! It took three whole days before those riches came back with King Jehoshaphat's army! And on the fourth day they all met at the temple, praising our powerful God again!

When other countries heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of His followers, the fear of our one true living God was on all those kingdoms! They were afraid of them! And God gave His people rest from being attacked for years! And we serve the same God!

As those years passed, King Jehoshaphat continued to lead his people in the right way. God blessed him for doing right. He protected the people and country with peace! God was their one and true weapon. God is also our one and true protection. Never forget that when we serve Him, are prayerful, grateful, and do right, He will continue to protect and guide us. He is our secret weapon, too.

With love,
Your friend and Sister In Christ,

Sister Jan

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What was your favorite moment from Campout 2024?

"Daily prayer meetings." -Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"Of the many blessings, my favorite camp moment has to be standing at the water's shore and witnessing the baptisms of those who repented of their sins and entered into a covenant with Jesus!" -Brother Frank Natoli, Detroit, MI Branch 1.

"Watching my kids build like-minded friendships." -Sister Lisa Meador, Oldham County, KY Mission.

"Sunday night communion service was so filled with God's spirit, praise God!" -Brother Giovanni Lind, Lake Worth, FL Branch

"Interacting with others from other locations." -Sister Kerry Mackley, Vanderbilt, PA Branch

"My favorite moment(s) was seeing how spiritually charged the young adult members are." -Brother George Kovacic, Middle Tennessee Mission

"The moment I saw our daughter, Audrey, feeling God's spirit. She asked for her baptism and was baptized at campout. Praise God for His goodness and our children following the Lord!" -Sister Colleen Moore, Columbus, OH Branch

"I'm kind of breaking the rules a bit here because I wasn't able to attend campout personally, but I can honestly and thankfully say my favorite part was when my son, Nico, asked to be baptized. Thank you, Lord, and thank you to all who played a part in this year's camp. God bless you." - Brother Tom P. Liberto, San Diego, CA Branch

"Camp felt like a little Zion." -Sister Sandra Cotellesse, Irvine, CA Branch

"Over a decade-long prayer of mine was to see the camp broadcasted live the whole week so that others who could not attend could be there remotely for the night meetings. That prayer finally came to fruition Monday night through Thursday. Praise God." -Brother Duane Werley, Liberty, OH Branch

"My favorite thing about campout was that no matter where you go the love of God was so strong and always present. It was enough to change my life, and I know so many others were blessed by the pure love of God as well!" -Sister Gabriella Cihomsky, Irvine, CA Branch

"All of it!" -Sister Megan Garcia, Kinsman, OH Branch

"The Indoor Glow-in-the-Dark 5k! Being indoors wasn't how it was originally planned, but it ended up being really fun!" -Sister Christine Martorana, Lake Worth, FL Branch

"Either testimony or the fellowship late at night after the day has ended." -Sister Leah Calabro, Metuchen, NJ Branch

"I was so blessed to hear the Spanish-speaking Brothers and Sisters sing. It took me right back to doing YIA years ago in California. Their voices and spirit filled my heart!." -Sister Jen Bertolo, Detroit, MI Branch 1

"Rekindling old friendships and creating new ones!" -Brother Jack Loyalvo, Farmington Hills, MI Branch

"The favorite camp moment was everything! It was a very blessed week with a theme that constantly made me reflect on my relationship with Christ. The magnifying glass is on my refrigerator as a reminder to focus on Him." -Sister Janice Frammolino, Detroit, MI Branch 1



Gospel News Testimonies

I am a fan of paper. I like the feel of different types of paper. I love the smell of a new book. I love the print edition of the Gospel News (GN) because I can touch it and hold it and do the word search and leave it on the kitchen counter to come back to later. I also like to be able to easily go back and look at something in a past issue. A clean email inbox is important to me and I don't want to rush through the GN because I want a clean inbox. If the GN is only in my inbox, my granddaughter won't know it's important to us. As a prior newspaper advertising salesperson, it was a very sad time for me when our newspaper transitioned towards the digital world. The flashy full page color ads lost their allure when they were displayed on someone's 7-inch tablet screen. What does this have to do with the GN? We don't have any full page ads in the GN, but we do have a two-page spread after campout that showcases highlights with pictures and facts of the week. It's not quite the same to look at this on a tablet. I personally find it frustrating to have to pull and drag something on my screen to see it in its entirety. I will always prefer the print edition of the GN!- Sister Dianne Maddox, Lake Worth, FL Branch

I grew up always having the Gospel News in the house and doing the word searches once my parents were done reading it. Once I got older and reached college age, I started receiving them in the monthly college boxes from my branch. I was then able to have a new appreciation for them. I love reading the testimonies and experiences from people around the Church. I prefer being able to have a physical copy of those testimonies and experiences that I can then keep and go back and read whenever I need encouragement. During the school year when I'm anxious about so many different things, reading the Gospel News each month and hearing what the people of God have to say is a good reminder that God is always with me and that I have a community of Saints there to support me.- Sister Marisa Hamet, Farmington Hills MI Branch

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Blessing Bits

BB An Unforgettable Summer

After nearly a decade of missing GMBA Campouts, I was able to return with my three children who are now 13, 10, and 7. Throughout the week, I watched them form new friendships with kids from Church and I heard and saw them grow closer to the Lord. One of my girls even had a beautiful, personal experience during Tuesday's seminar class. It was a wonderful blessing for my family to attend GMBA Campout, and now we look forward to going every year as we are able! -Sister Elise Kehr, Kinsman, OH Branch

BB A Friend for Life

Campout was such a blessing to me this summer! I had been praying about my rooming situation because I knew camp would be the first time meeting my roommate, and we ended up being such a blessing to each other! I genuinely feel like I made a friend for life and I'm so grateful the Lord put us together! I'm especially grateful because the way the rooms in our dorm worked out, we had the option of rooming

together or to be alone, and I'm so so happy we both agreed to have a roommate because it truly was incredibly special! -Sister Brittany Gray, Perry, OH Mission

BB Cleansed and Set Free

One of the many blessings that I took away from Tse Bonito Youth In Action, is that I was really struggling with something that left me feeling unworthy, worthless, and undeserving of the opportunity that I was given to be on the YIA trip. I asked for prayer early in the week so I could be at peace and be able to put my all into the work that I have been called to do. While I was getting prayed for, an experience was given to a minister within the circle: "A white cloak came down and covered you during the prayer and I heard the words, 'This is how I see my daughter, cleansed and set free.'"

That remains a tremendous blessing for me and it's allowed me to have a tremendous feeling of peace. It's given me the ability to let go of the things

I have been holding onto. I can't thank anyone other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His kind, merciful, and undeserving love that He shows to all of us each day. I am so blessed to be cleansed and set free in God's eyes! That truly is an amazing feeling! - Sister Cattée Huttenberger, Mesa, AZ Branch

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at eksanchor@gmail.com. [in approximately 150 words]. Answers to Question of the Month to gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org.

Q

Question for this month:

What advice can you give to those baptized at camp the last few years or someone who is just starting their journey with Christ?

A

Answer from last month:

For those who attended Campout 2024, tell us what was your favorite camp moment was.

On Thursday, the 11-13 year olds joined the first part of our seminar. It was really uplifting to hear what they learned during the week and how God Blessed their time together, meeting new friends. They all shared in the excitement of being part of the GMBA. Praise God!" -Sister Lisa DiBattista, Detroit, MI Branch 1
(Turn to page 11 for more answers.)



Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Cor 5:17