

Joseph Smith Ministries

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“LAY DOWN THE FENCES AND FIND COMMON GROUND”

✧ The Willing & Obedient ✧

“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow . . . If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”
(Is 1:18-19)

ONE CHRISTMAS HOPE

Although the Book of Mormon reveals that Jesus was born on the 10th of Nisan shortly after the spring equinox, our traditions celebrate our Savior’s birth near the winter solstice.

Even in our irreverent society Christmas time fills the air with hymns and praise for Jesus’ birth. It makes people more generous and kind, often happier.

This Christmas provides latter-day saints a wonderful opportunity to remember the mission of our Savior. He came to cleanse His people. He

opened the way when He died for our sins and rose from the dead, but His crucifixion did not make anyone holy. Each

person must choose that goal. We do when we receive the Holy Spirit. That is the power working in us that makes us holy.



Jesus also came to build His kingdom. In our day, He appointed laborers to build up the land of Zion, but that work is abandoned. Jesus must save it. When He does, those who have willingly nurtured the Holy Spirit within will flourish in that Holy City.



Joseph F. Smith

is the son of Arthur Smith, the grandson of Alexander Smith, and the great-grandson of Joseph Smith, Jr. He comes in Christ’s name to invite all those who believe in the Book of Mormon and the restored gospel to prepare for Zion’s redemption.



The Promise to Zion

We depend on the grace of Jesus, especially when we leave this life. The mission of Christ, for which He restored His church, now depends on grace, too. Only He can do it.



Salvation for Zion

“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (Is 61:11).

We seldom question the seeds that we plant in our garden. Placing the seed corn in the soil, we fully expect, weather permitting, to reap ears of corn in due time. The Lord planted the seed of His latter-day work over 180 years ago. Just like we have faith in our ability to reap fruit from our gardens, we should have faith in the Lord to bring forth righteousness and praise from His planting.

The seeds of His promise were planted in this land when the angel first flew in the midst of Heaven. He restored His church or His Kingdom. He revealed the location of the land of Zion. He called His servants to go forth and establish the place for the Holy City. He authorized them to build up Zion and prepare a people worthy of it. None of these seeds have yielded fruit yet. That does not mean righteousness and praise will not spring forth before all nations.

Isaiah also prophesied, *“For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (Isa 62:1).* How long will God hold His peace? How long will He wait for His planting to produce? Isaiah revealed that He will *“not hold my peace.”* For the sake of Zion, His latter-day work, our Lord will not rest *“until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”*

Zion's righteousness is not burning like a lamp. It is not showing forth the brightness of His coming. The light of His latter-day work still lingering among believers is not glorifying our Heavenly Father. Why? Is it because we are awash in contention, confusion, division? How long will He wait on us? How long will it be before He sets His hand to finish His work? I fear that He must bring us to submission. He already warned, *“Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days” (D&C 64:7a)* (Continued on next page)

Support Joseph

Joseph has a message and a plan. The time of tribulation is near and Zion's redemption is now. You, along with fellow believers, can begin preparing for it today.

Taking this message and promoting this plan takes money. We depend on your contributions. They will help send Joseph where he is needed. All contributions are tax deductible. Please send your contributions to **The Joseph Smith Support Fund**, PO Box 774, Blue Springs, Mo 64013. Thank you for your support.

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Salvation for Zion (con't)

I believe that most of us gave Him our heart and a willing mind as long as doing so complied with our understanding and point of view. We decided what was right and did it our way. For instance, we pursued higher education and became content to walk in its light. Some held to traditional plans and procedures without questioning the source from which they came. Others questioned everything and threw the baby out with the bath water. Did we follow our Lord's directions given by His Spirit or did we set aside His words for that which "*seemeth right unto a man*" (Pr 16:25)?

If any think that we are bringing forth the fruit of God's planting, look at what we are producing. The Restoration is broken in parts. Members doubt the spiritual wisdom of their own leaders. Our children are turning to attractions in the world. Where is His Holy City? Where is a perfected priesthood? Where is the kingdom of righteousness and praise that sends its shining light out into the world? Our works are obvious and they condemn us. How can the Lord bring forth His fruit among the weeds of our hands? How can righteousness spring forth in its own due time?

Consider Micah's prophecy, oft quoted this time of year: "*But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto he that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*" (Mic 5: 2). The Ruler of Israel came from Bethlehem. Jesus was born there 2000 years ago and the world still celebrates His birth. Most Jews in that day failed to see the salvation that appeared. They expected a deliverance that they had imagined, one after their own thinking, and one that they believed they deserved. Although righteous in their own eyes, they were so corrupted by sin that they mocked, rebuked and eventually crucified their Deliverer.

Before Jesus can justly rule His people, He must cleanse them from their errors. Jesus died on the cross to take away our sin. His grace saves all who give them Him heart and a willing mind. Do the saints of God need that grace today?

Our self-righteousness has polluted His vineyard. His garden is full of wild grapes; but our Lord came out from Bethlehem to wash away our filthiness and cleanse His creation. While we acknowledge this teaching in principle, the Lord will cause us to understand it in fact. He will save us and the work of His planting despite the works that we produced. Although we corrupted His vineyard, His grace will cleanse it and us. We will learn firsthand how glorious our Savior's grace is "*when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion*" (Is 4:3).

I believe that we need to fully engulf ourselves in the knowledge that Jesus died for our sins and that we have a responsibility to conform to His will and His purpose in us. While most of us went down into the waters of baptism, cleansing our body and preparing it to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, it takes more than just the laying on of hands with prayer from one having authority for us to fully embrace that gift.

Micah continued his prophecy: "*Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel*" (Mic 5:3). We have been called to build up His Kingdom on earth and bring about the gathering of Israel. Joseph and the early Saints were told to lay the foundation and bring the Church forth out of obscurity. This work was begun, but somehow it was became disrupted. Although the Lord gave us up for a time, He will yet bring Zion forth. Micah revealed that she (Zion) would travail. Perhaps the faithful travail now. If so, it is to loose them from complacency and self-righteousness. Those who return and labor for Zion's redemption must do so under the merits and provisions provided by the Lord. We are the seed of His garden. Let us, therefore, utilize the resources He has supplied. It will lead us to all truth.

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PREPARING THE FAITHFUL FOR A TIME OF



TRIBULATION AND ZION'S REDEMPTION

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