

Joseph Smith Ministries

VOL. 3

JANUARY 2014

NO. 1

“LAY DOWN THE FENCES AND FIND COMMON GROUND”

✧ The Willing & Obedient ✧

“So likewise, mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors.” (Mk 13:46)

A PURE PEOPLE

One reason that the Lord restored His gospel was to prepare the world for His return. It was *“a voice crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom”* (D&C 65:1c).

Jesus did not return in that generation nor in the generation that the faithful returned to land of Zion. *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise and coming, as some men count slackness; but long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Pet 3:9).

The first generation was ill-prepared. The Lord said, *“In consequence of the transgression of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion, that they themselves may be prepared”* (D&C 102:3c). *“There were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them”* (D&C 98:3a). Do those things still beset the saints?

The Lord is long-suffering. He wants to make us holy. He promised, *“I will raise up unto myself a pure people, that will serve me in righteousness”* (D&C 97:4d).



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 His grace, too. Only He can do it.





Sign of the Times

As we enter this New year, our minds naturally look to the coming seasons: spring, summer, and fall. The question that comes to my mind is: what will each season bring? Will we have good weather, or will we suffer through a bad spring or a hot summer? As a farm boy, our family wondered: will the crops produce enough food to feed the family? All of us have questions like these about the coming year. I believe we have more to be concerned about that this year than the weather or our gardens. We all see many signs, both on the earth and in the heavens. They are the signs for which the scriptures warned us to watch. They are the signs that foretell the coming of Jesus Christ and the tribulation that precedes it.

The disciples all expected Jesus to return in their day, but many years have past since then. Today, many shade tree prognosticators have produced varied prophetic interpretations. Radio prophets and television preachers alike broadcast their visions of coming events. Some predict the dates when specific events will take place.

Both Peter (2 P 3:10) and Paul (1 Thes 5:2) revealed that Christ would come as a thief in the night. They meant that His coming will be a surprise. Jesus is the source of this conclusion. He said, *“Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh”* (Matt 25:12). Does that mean that we should not look for the signs of Jesus’ return? Of course not. He told what those signs are. He even added, *“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when its branches are yet tender, and it begins to put forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh at hand. So likewise mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors”* (Matt 24:41-42). Paul even revealed that the faithful will not be surprised when Jesus returns. He wrote, *“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief”* (1 Thes 5:4). We are to be made aware of the times and seasons. We should understand the signs of His coming. I want to bring to your attention the time in which we live and the signs that are before us. We have been forewarned and should be prepared. (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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Sign of the Times (con't)

Jesus revealed the events leading up to His return. His disciples had asked Him, “*Master, when shall these things be? And what sign wilt thou show, when these things shall come to pass?*” (Lu 21:7)? His disciples were asking about the Temple’s destruction, which Jesus had just prophesied. Jesus began by foretelling the difficulties that they would meet. He explained how they were to be persecuted in Jerusalem and driven out into all the world. He revealed how much the world would hate them: “*Before all these things shall come, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you; delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons; being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake?*” (Lu 21:11). Then, Jesus turned His attention to Jerusalem: “*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled?*” (Lu 21:23).

History shows that all these things happened. Most of the disciples were martyred. Jerusalem fell to the Romans in 70 AD and was trampled underfoot by the Gentiles for centuries. The reason that I mention these items is to glean the date in which the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled. Jesus explained that time is when Jerusalem is no longer under the rule of Gentiles.

Jerusalem is no longer governed by Gentiles, but by the Jews. Two dates could be considered: 1948 when the nation called Israel was established; and 1967 when the Jews captured all of the city. According to Jesus, these dates mark when the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled. You may ask why that is important. Let us look and see.

Luke wrote, “*Now these things he spake unto them, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. And then his disciples asked him, saying, Master, tell us concerning thy coming? And he answered them, and said, In the generation in which the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, like the sea and the waves roaring. The earth also shall be troubled, and the waters of the great deep; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory?*” (Lu 21:24-28).

I was born on Jan 3, 1935. In 1948 I was thirteen years old, I am now 79 years old and I am a part of that generation in which the fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles took place. Jesus pointed out, “*Verily I say unto you, this generation, the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled?*” (Lu 21:32).

We have another witness. The Lord spoke through Joseph Smith Jr. and answered the same question that the disciples had about Jesus’ coming. Much of what the Lord revealed to Joseph is the same information that He told the disciples at Jerusalem. I want to draw your attention to this portion: “*And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; and there shall be men standing in that generation that shall not pass, until they shall see an overflowing scourge, for a desolating sickness shall come over the land; but my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God, and die?*” (D&C 45:4d-e).

If we are the Lord’s disciples in this last generation before Jesus returns, we need to stand in holy places. If not there, we should prepare ourselves by repenting and humbling ourselves. Perhaps we need to learn to love each other, especially those of like faith. “*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?*” (Matt 22:36-28). As a people of the Restoration movement, we have not been particularly loving to each other. Perhaps we can begin here.

Joseph F. Smith

Joseph Smith Ministries

PREPARING THE FAITHFUL FOR A TIME OF



TRIBULATION AND ZION'S REDEMPTION

JOSEPH SMITH *Ministries*

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