

# The Gospel News

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## Anticipation, Preparation, and Focus

By Brother Anthony J. Scolaro

The signs placed around the university campus read, “No Fireworks July 4.” However, the Lord seemed to have other plans for His saints on July 4, 2007, when the Wednesday evening service at the GMBA Campout was given over to a feet washing service. It would be no exaggeration to compare the blessings we experienced that evening to a display of spiritual fireworks.

In keeping with the camp’s theme, “Love One Another as I Have Loved You” (John 13:34-35), it was fitting for this sacred ordinance to play a part in the week’s activities. For many who attended, it was the central, crowning event of a Campout filled with the blessings of God. (See the inspired account of the Campout—and this service in particular—in the September, 2007 *Gospel News*).

Without recounting again the events surrounding this historic service, let it suffice to say that no one who was there will soon forget the beautiful Spirit that prevailed that evening. Reflecting on the sacredness of what we experienced, I had to ask myself whether blessings like this are available to us throughout the year, at other times and other places.

Perhaps, as with natural fireworks, blessings of this magnitude are remarkable and memorable to us by virtue of their infrequency. Realistically, isn’t every day that we can gather together with hundreds of brothers and sisters in Christ. But for the 350+ days out of the year that we’re not at a Campout, is there anything we can do, individually, to experience and enjoy God’s blessings with more regularity?

Whether you’re part of a congregation of 5 or 35, working to have your spiritual lamp burn more brightly each day will benefit you as well as those around you, both in and out of the Church. Certainly, special events like Campouts are beneficial, but we all need to make sure the rest of the time that we’re applying three important principles that will enable us to enjoy the maximum benefit of God’s blessings whether we’re at our home branch, or at a Campout. What follows are the key ingredients for spiritual success wherever we may be, trying to put the Lord and His Church first and keeping the rest of our lives in balance:

**Anticipation**—At the Campout, the GMBA officers had set the tone

in advance by announcing at the end of the Tuesday evening meeting that we would be having feet washing the next evening. In the context of the preaching, teaching, and study topics surrounding the Campout’s theme, everyone was anticipating the blessings that were promised. The unexpected departure from the customary, in this case including the observance of a sacred ordinance, engaged everyone’s attention and brought them to the service barely able to wait and see how—not if—the Lord would bless them, individually and collectively.

**Preparation**—So many prayers by so many for a blessed Campout and a blessed service had surely formed a spiritual foundation for the event. Those planning to attend the Campout had been praying for months, not knowing exactly what was planned, what would be taking place, or how their prayers would be answered. Other aspects of the preparation that took place were a combination of the natural and the spiritual: As the head deacon and deaconess planned how to carry out their duties in a feet washing service of this magnitude, they sought and received spiritual direction that resulted in orderly proceedings, with simple instructions for the brothers and sisters to follow. The apparent

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## Anticipation, Preparation

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simplicity and straightforwardness that enhanced our encounter with the Spirit of God that evening, however, was the result of prayerful preparation for the evening's events, with provisions and safeguards carefully put in place to forestall any confusion that might interrupt the Spirit's flow. Truly the Lord was in the details that evening as everything proceeded so smoothly and beautifully.

**Focus**—At the start of the meeting, everyone in the congregation was lovingly reminded to remain focused on the purpose of this evening's service, regardless of where in the chapel they might be sitting. (It was a long, narrow building; people in the back were several hundred feet from the activity taking place in the rostrum and choir areas.) Distractions normally associated with a Campout-sized congregation had been eliminated: Young children were occupied in a large room downstairs, a provision which contributed greatly to keeping their parents, and everyone else, focused on the ordinance as the service proceeded.

As all of these details helped this large congregation stay focused, the service proceeded unhindered. The absence of confusion allowed the Spirit to flow from vessel to vessel without interruption. The cumulative effect of everyone's focus set the stage for many, many blessings and manifestations of the Holy Spirit to occur, as was witnessed both by individuals and by the congregation as a whole. As stated in previous accounts, over 350 people took part in the ordinance of feet washing in less than an hour's time.

What can we bring to our branches and missions—and to our daily lives—from this experience? Can we enjoy the same type of blessings with just a handful of members? Is there a way for us to employ these same tools to experience similar blessings every day?

A Campout is always a special occasion. With so many people working so hard for so long before-

hand, with so many prayerfully making the journey, with so much unity of thought and spirit, we are guaranteed to experience an outpouring of God's blessings as we assemble for a week out of every year. I would venture to say that no matter what circumstances we may be coming from, both spiritually and temporally, we experience blessings at a level above the ordinary when we go to a Campout.

However, while we may not be able to compare the Campout atmosphere with everyday situations, there are areas we all can work at in order to enjoy a greater portion of God's blessings wherever we may be. Following are some of the ways that we can employ the same elements in our daily service to God that brought His blessings into the feet washing service we held on July 4 during the 2007 GMBA Campout. While each of us is responsible for his or her own personal effort, to allow the Spirit full reign requires the collective, united effort of the entire congregation.

**Anticipation**—When we're attending a Campout, we generally expend a great deal of temporal and spiritual energy looking forward to the blessings we will receive there. I use the word "will" rather than "may" because we already know, in faith believing, that we will be blessed before we even begin the journey. If we can work to maintain that attitude in our daily lives, regularly asking ourselves, "How is God going to bless me today?" we will find ourselves thinking more about God's goodness, looking forward to seeing more of His will played out in our everyday lives, and finding more opportunities to give a word fitly spoken to someone. Furthermore, as we make room for Him to work in our lives, we will be more open to the surprises God has in store for us, and will be less tempted to decide for ourselves what is the best outcome for every situation. If we put our energy into actively seeking God's will and blessings in our lives, we will be less likely to miss them.

When we're at Campout, we are in "vacation" mode, far removed

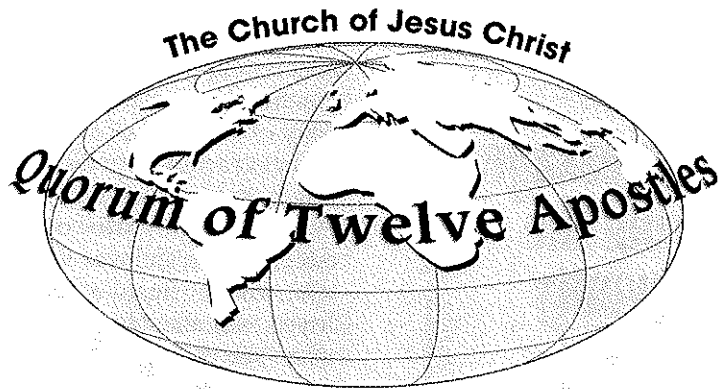
from so many of our routine responsibilities of life, work, and home. We work hard to set things in order prior to our departure, so we can fully relax and enjoy the blessings of God and the fellowship of the saints. By the time we depart for Campout, we are usually already focused on anticipating the blessings that await us.

So it should be with us each and every time we go to the house of the Lord to worship. Our other responsibilities will still be there awaiting us, but we can work a little harder at detaching ourselves—at least momentarily—from the cares that can keep us from feeling God's Holy Spirit when we meet together in worship. The sooner and more fully we can shift out of that "rush-here-rush-there" mode, the more we will be able to anticipate and look forward to God's blessings, and the more of His blessings we'll be poised to receive.

**Preparation**—How hard do we work at ridding ourselves of spiritual detours and distractions, foreseeing spiritual roadblocks, and adequately outfitting ourselves to maximize the opportunity for God to rain His spiritual blessings into our lives? Conversely, how easy is our spiritual "apple cart" upset when just one thing goes awry? And what can we do in advance to prevent either 1) that one thing from going wrong, or at least 2) having it upset our spiritual apple cart? In working to ensure the success of the feet washing service at the 2007 GMBA Campout, questions very similar to these had to be asked and addressed, believe it or not. And as stated before, the solutions, and preparation, were both natural and spiritual.

So much could be written here in the way of practical advice for making preparations to ensure spiritual success in our lives. Indeed, preparation is included as part of the Armor of God in Ephesians 6. Sometimes we blame the devil for what is often attributable to a lack of preparedness on our part. Prayer and fasting form the primary and most powerful line of defense against spiritual unprepared-

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## The Importance of What You Believe

By John R. Griffith, Apostle

**“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21).**

How much importance is given to what one believes as long as he believes with sincerity? Doctrine affects life. Truth leads to life and God; error to death and destruction. Would we consider there is no difference as to what god we worship as long as we are sincere? Would we eat anything as long as we relish it? Sincerity is a virtue; but it is not the test of sound doctrine. God wills that we shall know the truth, and He has made provision whereby we may know what is truth. God’s truth is the way to salvation and eternal life.

**“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thess. 2:13).**

As leader of the nation of Israel, Joshua thought it very important of serving the only and true God. He had found that all idolatrous worship was spiritually degrading. Also to serve the True and Living God leads to the riches and promises the Lord allows His followers. It is so very important for The Church of Jesus Christ to hold fast to the principles and precepts of Christ’s teachings as He brought to earth in flesh the very will of the Heavenly Father for His creation to receive. It remains as Joshua pointed out that it is the choice of each of us to choose whom we will serve.

**“Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord” (Joshua 24:14-15).**

Scriptures suggest that we may determine the truthfulness of doctrine. If indeed we are to “prove all things,” we need to test or prove all doctrine. The Holy Scriptures are our test of all doctrine. Doctrine is the standard of ones faith. It cannot vary from God’s will. Sounding good or making sense to the human mind does not justify doctrine. It must comply with His very will. Almighty God is our creator, the author and finisher of our faith. We each set the boundary lines as to our acceptance and application of that heavenly based plan. Whatever does not harmonize with them (the teachings of Christ/Holy Scriptures) should not be accepted. Isaiah spoke of this test.

**“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).**

In Ephesians 4:14, Paul the Apostle suggests we as believers should not be as children, being tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Calling a doctrine a wind of such does not make it such. A wind of doctrine is one not sustained by the word of God.

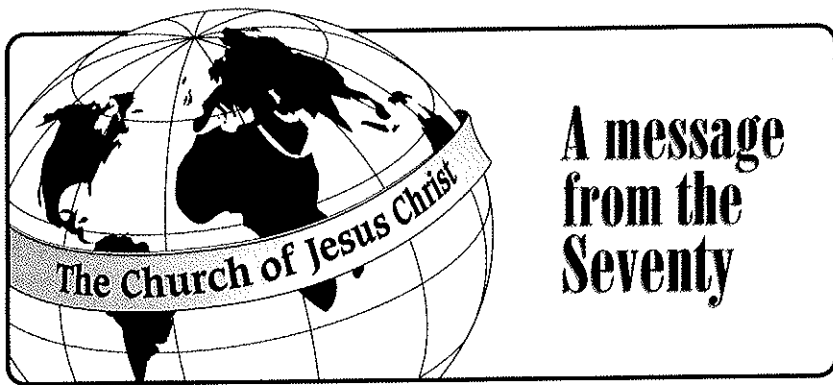
If a prophet is promoting such a wind, he is not a prophet of God. Remember 1 Kings 18 where it states that Jezebel, wife of King Ahab, chose some 450 false prophets of Baal to surround her as she chose to serve Baal and not the Almighty God of Truth. As we vary from God’s truth, recognize we are choosing to serve the god of Jezebel and thus become servants of evil. Prove each line and precept. Your soul’s salvation depends upon it.

**“And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them” (Jeremiah 5:13).**

We read in 2 Timothy 3:16 that *“all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine.”* As Timothy was preparing for his ministry the Apostle Paul advised him to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and (sound) doctrine (1 Tim. 4:13-16). Paul literally charged Timothy to preach the word; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine (2 Tim. 4:1-2). His concern was that the time would come when believers would not endure sound doctrine, but through personal wickedness follow after their own lust and accept teachers of unsound doctrine, turning away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

Titus was given similar instruction in Titus 2:1-7 to *“Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine...Showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity and sincerity.”* Titus was taught that as a faithful teacher he could exhort and convince the gainsayers through sound doctrine (v.9). The danger of teaching false doctrine according to 2 Timothy 2:18 is the faith of some could be overthrown. These false teachers are quickly divided from the Disciples of Christ as the true disciples have the words of truth with them and they are blessed of Christ in the truth which makes them free (John 8:31-32).

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## Our Recent Missionary Visit to the Countries of Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

*By Evangelist J. Joseph Perri*

God is continuing to bless The Church of Jesus Christ in the Countries of Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Evangelist Nephi DeMercurio and I made an extended 34 day tour of these two countries during the months of August and September.

With perseverance on our part and much prayer by our brothers and sisters of the Church in America and also our membership in the country of Zambia, we applied, were issued and received our Church Registration Certificate the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September from the Registrar of Societies. This was something our church membership in Zambia had been praying for. They are thankful to God who made this all possible. This process took just about five weeks to accomplish. We, as a church, are now officially recognized by the Zambian Government as a legal organized religious entity that can operate within the entire country.

The Church of Jesus Christ has received exposure and recognition by the Zambian Government when the Registrar of Societies received in his possession our Faith and Doctrine along with our Church's constitution. We were introduced to a man by the name of David Masupa, a Pastor placed in charge by the Zambian government of investigating churches who file for registration. He became very instrumental in assisting us in obtaining our Registration Certificate.

Brother Nephi and I both felt God placed this individual in the position he occupies to assist us in obtaining our Church registration. He is a very humble, kind, soft-spoken person who loves to pray and talk about the word of God.

Brother Nephi and I spent many hours together with Pastor Masupa in prayer and introducing him to the Faith and Doctrine of our Church before and after applying for our Church registration. He asked a number of questions regarding our beliefs and acceptance of the Book of Mormon. We read many scriptures in the Bible that refer to the Book of Mormon and scriptures

in both the Bible and Book of Mormon concerning the seed of Joseph. He mentioned of hearing and receiving a copy of the Book of Mormon, but it was never proven to him about its origin, purpose and future events. Pastor Masupa visited our Church congregation and was very pleased with what he heard and saw. His wife, Joyce, was also pleasantly surprised when she entered our worship service and met several sisters of our Church whom she grew up with and lived nearby in the village where they were born. Was it a coincidence? We do not think so. God brought us all together for an explicit purpose.

Pastor Masupa's parting words to us were, he felt it was not a stroke of luck or a coincidence we were introduced to each other, but it was God who had a purpose for us in becoming acquainted. He requested if it would be possible for him to visit the United States where he could learn more about our Church and Her operation. Perhaps God has another purpose for this Pastor being introduced to us.

After an absence of approximately one year from Zambia and the Congo, renewing our acquaintance with the brothers and sisters who have remained faithful to the covenant made the day of their baptism and to the Church was exciting. We were

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**IMBA Membership at the Katuba Branch in the Congo.**



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## Editorial Viewpoint . . .

*"For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.... The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it" (Jeremiah 30:17, 24).*

The incurable wounds of Israel will be healed and those who have oppressed Israel will be punished. The nations who supported Israel in their fight with Babylon in ancient times have all but abandoned her and want to destroy her in these the latter days, but Jerusalem will be rebuilt and its splendor will rival that of the days of David and Solomon. Jesus said He would be their God and they would be His people once again. This magnificent day is coming. The time of Zion is drawing nearer, and Jerusalem will be the great holy city of the Lord once again. The Jews who have become a hiss and a byword in this entire world will come to the knowledge of Christ once again, and be restored to their former glory. Many will gather back in Jerusalem, their homeland. This will come about when they acknowledge Christ as the Son of God, and repent of all their sins. Peace will be established in Jerusalem, and the Lord will put a hedge about the city, and Jesus will be in their midst. In the land of America, this same condition is coming. The seed of Joseph will repent and be converted and build a new city upon this land called the New Jerusalem, and people will live in peace and simplicity. It will be like the Garden of Eden, and all the modern distractions that take us away from the Lord will be removed. The other tribes of Israel will be identified and sincere people from all nations will come to Zion and live in this state of peace and tranquility. The very animals will change their nature and live at peace with one another. The scripture says we will build our own homes, grow our own food, and there will be equality. Read the 4<sup>th</sup> book of Nephi, and you can get a good sense of what the condition will be like. The scripture above in Jeremiah mentions God's anger, which is destruction of the wicked, that must precede God's blessings. This day will be very different than the way we are living today.....VERY different. Satan will be bound because of our righteousness, so the work of Satan will be stopped during this time. We are certainly in that "era" of time when Zion can be established. Whether or not you, who is reading this, actually sees that day or not is irrelevant. We should pray often that God's kingdom will be established on earth as it is in Heaven. We are the only people that believe the prophecies in this way, and have a message to the world. We cannot be ashamed because our belief may not be the same as others. We have a responsibility to tell the truth. We have been given much and where much is given much is required. All of God's promises have been fulfilled in the past and will be in the future. There should not be a question in our minds "if" this will happen, we should "know" this will happen. The Book of Mormon says that when the Gentiles exercise faith as the brother of Jared, then He would reveal the great things that are hidden due to unbelief. When that day comes, then we know God's kingdom, or Zion, can be established to its fullest. So, as saints of God, our role today is to increase our faith each and every day until we can say we have faith equal to that of the brother of Jared. Quite a challenge, but I believe this is possible. It all depends on how strong our desire is to be that faithful. Faith eliminates stress and worry and gives confidence in the things God promised He would do. And His promises should cause us to be comforted and feel safe in His arms. He will take us through this time of extreme change upon the earth, and in the end, we can land in the Peaceful Reign.

What a wonderful hope and vision we have! How we should embrace these wonderful promises of the Lord, and live each day in preparation for the days that are to come. Remember, in the days before Christ's birth, the people who believed the prophets lived every day in preparation for that day. Some even began baptism! In the same way, we should prepare ourselves for the great plan of God that will land us in a new day of peace. Happy New Year.

# The Children's Corner

By Sister Jan Bork



## Something to Change This Year

One of the best things about our religion is that we can start over any minute. We do not have to wait until some special festival or time of year to be forgiven and start over. We do not have to pay a religious official or priest to go and talk to God for us; we have Jesus Christ! He is free. We can talk to him anytime, anywhere out loud or in our hearts.

The only thing that Jesus wants from us is a broken heart and contrite spirit (being deeply sorry). Even if we know we are wrong, but do not feel that sorry, we can go to Jesus in secret and talk it over with him. In private, we can tell Jesus that we know we are wrong and ask Him to help us change our heart. When we are angry with someone or feeling hateful or jealous, we can tell Jesus that we know we are wrong, and ask Him to help us change our heart. He knows our hearts and thoughts anyway. Why wait or try to hide our thoughts from Him? He can take away mean and unkind thoughts and give us peace, forgiveness, and clear thinking.

When I was growing up, my Mother used to say, "If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all." I was shocked and annoyed. I wanted to talk bad about my friends that I was mad at. Sometimes I talked about them because I wanted to figure out what went wrong. Other times I talked about them to be mean and make other people mad at them too.

At Church Camp when my cousin and I were mad at some other teenagers from another state, Mother

said, "Remember those verses you had to memorize in Sunday school about the Seven Things God Hates? Think about what you are doing." We had learned Proverbs 16:16-19, "These six things does the Lord hate, yea seven are an abomination to him... a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, feet that are swift in running to mischief [people who are always doing wrong things], a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among the brethren [plants little bad ideas in one person's mind about another person]."

We had to memorize this verse because it is so important to follow all of our lives long. She was telling me that God heard what we were saying to each other and did not like it. In fact, God hates this when we do it.

Our job is to be loving, caring, and prayerful for all other people, especially in this church. We are not to be critical and gossipy. It is not our job to talk about other people when they are going through a problem. Not even in one little sentence should we try and cause bad thoughts about another brother, sister, or friend.

We need to pray and ask the Lord to help them. Remember, sometime we will have problems in life too. All of us constantly need to look at ourselves and try to change to be better people. If any of us were perfect, we could stay home from church and worship ourselves! The less we are saying bad things about, or being angry towards others, the happier we will be in the long run.

Don't you want to be happy and feel the power of God? Don't you want Him to be pleased with you? Then stop talking badly about others.

Jesus teaches us, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (see Luke 6:31). This means treat people the way you would like to be treated. Do you want people being cruel or unkind to you and your family? Then stop talking in a mean way about them.

The Bible also warns us in James 4:17, "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." So, if you decide to cause problems for a brother or sister by talking about them, when you know better, you will be sinning against God.

You know what God wants you to do. Make this the year that you change yourself and please the Lord.

With love, your friend,  
Sister Jan

### WORD SEARCH

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## Missionary Visits

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introduced to many who were baptized during our absence whom we had never met before that shared their love and fellowship with us.

The young people in both the countries of Zambia and the DR Congo have taken a great interest in the Church. They are very active in attendance and participation. Since introducing and establishing our Church in these two countries, we informed them of the GMBA, the IMBA as well as our Local MBA, its purpose and activities. They had been holding meetings but not officially organized for over a year, so their request was they be officially organized as an IMBA Local and also recognized by the GMBA. The excitement shown to us is equal to what we see among many of our young people here in America. Their choirs sing beautiful arrangements with words and music made up as they gather during the week days in preparation for Sunday worship services.

The IMBA was organized in the branch of Chilibombwe, Zambia and the branches of Katuba and Ruashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The youth of both countries requested whether it would be possible to begin a program which we call Pen Pals. They also requested a Casio to accompany the choir in singing, asking for nothing to benefit themselves personally but as a group.

We were blessed to witness 17 baptisms during our visit to Zambia, one being a schoolmaster named Bernadin Mulenga who had been previously associated with both of our Pastors. Another schoolmaster named Murray who had also been associated for a number of years with Brother Mulenga in the Church they once attended was also baptized. Brother Murray stated in his testimony the evil power came into the church he was attending and caused it to fall apart. He had not attended any church for a number of years; however, one day he met Brother Albert Kawama who was evangelizing in the village where they hold their worship services and was

invited to attend worship services. Brother Murray testified he accepted the invitation, began to attend our Sunday worship service, was touched by the Spirit of God in what he heard, saw Brother Mulenga whom he had not seen for some time and they both decided to get baptized. Brothers Murray and Mulenga both stated after their confirmation that this was now their church and their last baptism. Our Church membership in the two branches has grown to about 145.

During our visit in the DR Congo we were blessed to witness 13 baptisms. We traveled to a very small body of water where many children were swimming, and ladies washing their clothes. Water at this time of the year is very scarce because of the lack of rain for the last five months. We managed to quiet the crowd but could hear some of the children wanting to get back into the water because it was hot. Brothers Cipeng and Fontaine did the baptizing and since the children became noisy, both brothers started to baptize at the same time. This is a first time experience for us and given the circumstances we were faced with, it was a good decision. A number of people who stood by observing had never seen or witnessed a baptism. The membership of the two branches in DR Congo is now listed at 138.

Since we have been promoting the Book of Mormon each time we visit, the membership has embraced its acceptance of the Book of Mormon. They are pleading for us to get the Book of Mormon to them in their language as soon as possible. Bemba and English are the languages of Zambia. The only individuals who understand, read and speak some English are the young people who are required to take this course. French is the predominate language of the DR Congo. The last question of our Church membership in both of these countries is, "How can we defend our acceptance of the Book of Mormon if we do not have the book to read or know what it contains?" The excitement in listening to their comments and questions and their interest in wanting a copy of the Book of Mormon to read

was very encouraging. This was the first trip we spent more time in teaching and giving instruction from the Book of Mormon than any other subject. All because it was the request of our brothers and sisters in both of these countries.

Before concluding this article, I would like to share a few experiences we heard which are very encouraging, allowing us to understand God is manifesting His Power in the Church in Zambia and the DR Congo.

A brother, who is a bricklayer by trade, bore testimony that since he was baptized last year, he has not experienced a day of being without work and has more jobs than he can handle. Simple but a blessing.

A sister related that, prior to her hearing of the Church and making an effort to attend when invited she lived very poorly. There were days when she would go without food not knowing where her next meal was coming from; but since she has been attending church, was baptized and is serving the Lord. She praised God, who has provided a better home for her to live in and has not gone a day without food.

A sister was pregnant with twins and one of them passed away at birth. The death of her child had a serious affect on her mental health and she began hearing voices that tormented her. She was having a nervous breakdown and also experiencing nightmares. To add to her problem her natural sister also passed away. She could not have or find peace or rest anywhere. Her testimony was she continued to ask Brother Chalwe, the Pastor of her branch, to anoint and pray for her. People who knew of her condition and that she was attending our church kept telling her she was wasting her time. She said the more they kept telling her not to attend, the more she was determined to attend and ask to be anointed. Her faith was if she did not relent in her service to God and attending our church worship services and continued to ask Brother Chalwe to anoint her, God would heal and restore her health. God saw her faith just like the women who had the

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## Missionary Visits

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issue of blood who wanted to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. One day, all of the tormenting of the voices she was hearing were gone; she does not experience having anymore nightmares. She praised God with a strong sincere voice during the Sunday worship service we attended for this miraculous healing which has increased her faith and was a blessing to the membership of her branch. She ended her testimony by saying she now sleeps all night without interruptions and the mental condition she was experiencing does not trouble her anymore. God is good all the time.

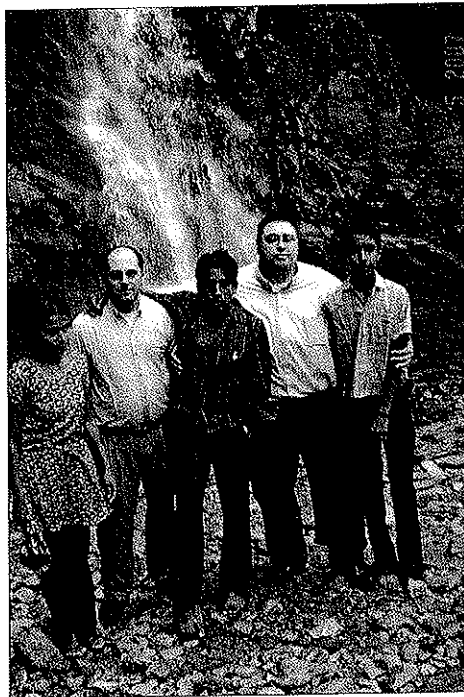
The following experience happened to Brother Nephi and me. We firmly believe it was the hand of God that protected not only the two of us but everyone on the aircraft.

After departing from Lusaka, Zambia during our flight to Johannesburg, South Africa, the plane in which we were passengers made its approach with the wheels and flaps down and was within a few feet of landing on the runway when a gust of tailwind pushed the plane forward beyond the point of a safe landing. The pilot saw he would not have enough runway to land the plane safely so he thrust the throttle forward with full power to the engines and regained the altitude needed for another approach to the runway and a safe landing. Every one of the passengers on board became frightened because of the near mishap which could have been a tragedy with the loss of many lives. The pilot came on the intercom and jokingly said he does that kind of maneuvering all the time; however, we knew that it was the hand of God and the prayers of our families and our brothers and sisters offered in our behalf to God for our protection that were heard and answered. Thank God, we are so blessed as His Saints. How can we ever sufficiently praise Him? It is very important we remember to pray and ask God for His hand of protection to be upon all of our missionaries who travel abroad to foreign mission fields.

## "...Thy Faithfulness Reacheth Unto the Clouds"

By Evangelist Anthony Ricci

The writer of Psalms 36:5 simply states, "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." From November 1-9 of 2007 our Brothers John Genaro, Nephi DeMercurio, Ron Giovannone, and Anthony Ricci were witnesses to this on their missionary trip to our "mission in the clouds" in Limchong (Sikkim), India.



**Baptisms in Limchong**

The mission of Limchong is an extension of the Nepal work and is a six-hour drive up thousands of feet into the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains. The scenic views and beautiful settings are secondary to the wonderful love and spirit of your brothers and sisters in this very remote, little mountain mission. To be able to stand in a place like this and declare the truth of the Restored Gospel truly makes you understand our great God sees and knows everything, and HE never forgets His promises!

What a wonderful blessing to

arrive at the mission and to find a congregation hungering and desiring for the fellowship of the saints. Dear readers, because of the remoteness and difficulty in getting to Limchong, we currently send a minister from Nepal to service them once every four months. My spirit soared to see my brothers and sisters partake in the ordinance of communion. Truly, blessed be the name of Jesus! To see our people take communion in full remembrance of the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ and to fully understand how important it is for their spiritual well being and relationship with God, I rejoiced for what God has done.

Our brothers spent the time in fellowshiping, teaching and preaching this wonderful Gospel. I watched in awe as I saw the faces of our saints. The singing and praise are just too beautiful to explain by words. The fellowship and blessings we are privileged to feel and witness from week to week is how our people in Limchong appreciated this experience. Many prayers were offered for the sick and afflicted. One man said his knee was so damaged he could hardly walk. What a wonderful witness to God's power that the day after he was anointed he stood to tell us that he was healed!

My truest blessing was in the testimony meetings. It is no different in Limchong or any other part of the world where this Church is established. The testimonies of the saints ring loud and clear of the greatness of God in our lives! To hear a young man stand to say he was a drunkard, a smoker, a man who took drugs, a robber, and a violent man—then ask for his baptism. WOW!! And to have his father stand to say how he and his wife prayed greatly for their son, and now see the prayers answered—GLORY TO GOD!! This young man's wife then stood to declare that she wanted her name written in the book that our brothers spoke about in their preaching!!

I have had the wonderful privilege to take several mission trips and I have seen many healed, I have seen the blind to see, I have seen devils cast out; but I state to you, there is nothing



more beautiful or powerful than to see the life-changing power of our Lord and Savior in the lives of men and women. I truly stand in amazement as I see the power of the blood of Christ work in places that you might think time and man has forgotten—but God never forgets!

At the unbelievable scene at the basin of a 200 foot waterfall, we had the wonderful privilege and honor to baptize this young man and woman along with another young man into The Church of Jesus Christ: two new brothers and one new sister, baptized with the same baptism as you and I were. They were confirmed with the same Spirit as you and I were. Although we are separated by half the world, we are joined together in the faith, unified in love. What a glorious work, the Great Work of the Lord!

Dear readers, I struggled as I wrote this. How do I relate to you the beauty of their singing? How do you relate the conviction of their testimonies? How do you convey their belief in the Restored Gospel? I realized, I am not able to. All I can do is give you an account of the things I have seen and heard. I must rely upon the Spirit of God in you to stir up to remembrance **your** singing, **your** testimonies, and **your** belief. I pray as you read this, that this ignites in you a desire to bring these same things to your branch and mission. I promise you, the same Spirit, the same power, and the same love we feel in the foreign work is available to us in each of our places of worship. May you feel the blessing and love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and as always—TO THE WORK!!

## Israel's Advocate: "Chance Meetings" and the Need to Be Prepared

By Brother Peter Benyola

Several seemingly random, but interesting meetings have taken place between First Nations people and

brothers on the Native American Outreach Committee. In these cases, God allowed the brothers to recognize the opportunities before them to share the Good News, they prayed for quick guidance, and thank God, listened to the subtle but persistent voice of the Holy Spirit.

Brother Joe Pennell, a Teacher of the Columbus, Ohio Mission was walking outside of his office at work to get his lunch. "I very seldom leave the office during lunch," said Brother Joe. "As I walked out the door a Native American walked past me and entered another room. As I walked to the elevator I kept thinking I should introduce myself and see if he knows about the NAICCO [the Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio]."

As many of God's Called have probably been in such a position to do, Brother Joe was tempted to forget about it, telling himself that this was none of his business and not to be so idealistic as to think that making conversation might actually be productive. Brother Joe said that at the Moment of Truth, "I almost let the door close, worried that this man who doesn't know me from Adam might think I was crazy, but I decided to go ahead and follow him."

When Brother Joe asked him if he was Native American—which was obvious—he said he was and they talked for at least 10 minutes. After learning his name, tribe and especially how friendly he was, they parted ways. Brother Joe recalled, "I was left with the strong feeling that God meant us to meet for some reason. He said that he dances at the NAICCO powwows and I told him I hoped to see him there."

Several weeks later, Brother Joe and his wife, Sister Denise, saw this man at the powwow and stopped to greet him. Brother Joe said, "He was happy to meet me and he introduced me to his family at our mission's snowcone booth. It turns out that he converted to Christianity about 10 years ago although he still practices his Native traditions. When I explained we were not Mormons he said he had read what he termed 'The Book of Moroni.' He mentioned 'the lost tribes

of Israel' and I told him about our belief of the Tribe of Judah and the remnant of the Tribe of Joseph and the other hidden tribes that will one day be revealed to us. Now tell me that's coincidence!"

He said that the Native American man was very open-minded to these things and seemed to be very receptive as he listened to the reasons for our beliefs. Since these two men work in the same building, the mission sees it as a great blessing that they are now acquainted and are prayerfully looking forward to the Lord unfolding His perfect work in His perfect time.

Brother Joe, who has been laboring assiduously with the NAICCO for over a year, was recently asked to be a trustee of the local nonprofit. He commented, "When you consider America's not-so-squeaky-clean history with the Native people, we can only call it the Lord's work when a non-Native American is trusted enough to fill such an important role."

Our hope and prayer is that by Brother Joe serving on the NAICCO council, the Church can continue to build the highway which we, the saints, and the Native Americans will run upon side by side (II Nephi 29:8).

Brother Mark Kovacic, an Evangelist from the Atlanta Branch, and his brother-in-law, Brother Jerry Lee Warden, were in the Marietta Public Library on the northwest side of Atlanta, picking out some new audio books for Brother Mark's commutes to work. He overheard a man on the other side of the shelves. "I could not see his face," said Brother Mark, "But his voice and what he was saying told me he was an American Indian.

"I thought, *what an opportunity!*" Brother Mark continued. "Then I hesitated. I started rationalizing, *it's a public place, I should be careful*, and so on, but as I started for the stairs I stopped and prayed in my heart, asking the Lord for assistance."

Then the man started up the steps and Brother Mark asked him what nation he was from. The man responded that he was a Lakota Sioux, a plains tribe from North and South

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