

ZION AFTER WORLD WAR III

By Elder Joseph White

A spiritual manifestation received in September 1941, three months before the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941.

During the summer of 1941 the groups of the Stone Church [saints] were holding prayer meetings on the [church] lawn. This particular evening was rather cool, so the groups moved into the lower auditorium of the Stone Church for the prayer service. The groups' priesthood sat together on the stand in front, to make more room for the membership.

The year of 1941 was a very critical year for our country. About all one could read in the newspapers was what Hitler was doing. One country after the other was falling to the Germans. Our people were very disturbed, and this spirit was being voiced in the prayers and testimonies of the saints.

Brother Samuel Burgess [the Church historian] stood and bore his testimony and spoke by the Spirit to the saints of the world conditions. He admonished the saints to live closer to God and the work that they had been called to do.

At this time I stood to bear my testimony. I had spoken for a few moments, when the spirit of prophecy came to me in a great power. Never had I felt such power before in my life! At this moment, I became conscious of a heavenly angel standing by my side and speaking to me. I could feel his breath upon my ear as he spoke [with a message from the Lord]. His first words were:

Behold, thus saith the Lord to you My people. It was I who hung upon the cross for you, that you might receive eternal life. Tonight, I plead with you to come unto Me. Oh, will you come unto Me? For verily, thus saith the Lord, the day of the Gentiles is over. From now on, they shall go down and down, until there shall not be one left against Me, saith the Lord.

You could have escaped this hour, but ye would not. Now you will have to bear

the burden and sorrow of this hour, for My judgments are upon the Gentiles and all the ungodly. My Zion waits for a later day, and thou art caught in the judgments of the Gentiles. Yet will I spare thee.



Elder Joseph White 1902-1978, grandson of Alfred White who received the vision concerning the redemption of Zion (see Restoration Voice, issue 9, p. 10, and Infallible Proofs, pp. 84-89).

These words were spoken by the angel who stood by my side, whose voice I heard as a man hears another man's voice. At this time the angel quoted a part of Section 102:2 a little differently than it is recorded in our Doctrine and Covenants. The words of the angel, which he spoke for the Lord were:

"Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of My people, Zion could have been redeemed long ago. But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I require at their hands." One can read the first and second paragraphs of Section 102 and see the full import of what the angel quoted to me.

At the time this was taking place, the Second World War lay at my feet—but seemingly it was nothing [compared to what was to come]. Here again the angel spoke to me saying not to fear this, but that which is to follow. Here at this time I seemed to be looking down on a

scene that was being shown to me—whether in the body or out of the body, I know not. This experience was somewhat like a moving picture.

The next scene that came before me was the general priesthood of the Church—both appointees and local priesthood members. Although I did not know any one of these men, I looked upon them as you would look upon any group of men. These men sat in a U-shaped [formation], somewhat like the Joint Council room [in the Auditorium]. As I stood viewing these men, I was made to know and understand their condition. They were weak and very pale looking, not measuring up to their calling [which] God has placed upon them. The [inspired] words of Joseph Luff fit very well here: **"They have forgotten their calling, for they have returned to the world for their equipment and the weapons of their own choosing."**

At this time the scene changed from the priesthood to saints of the Church. They were sitting in a large congregation. They too, looked weak and pale. Many [were] trying to rise to higher grounds of living, but some [were] falling by the wayside. Others were indifferent. Here the angel said to me: **"My people cannot rise to [the] higher ground of righteousness until My priesthood are living and ministering up to their calling."**

I believe the condition that the angel showed me is now [1967] upon the Church, and only God can set the Church in order. I knew [in December 1941 that] this experience was pointing to a later date in the Church because of what was being shown to me.

Here the scene changed from the condition of the Church to the war with Russia. It was shown to me in a spiritual sense, although I knew I understood while under the Spirit. It came like a flash of lightning from

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Period of turmoil ending

The actions by former Parkview members to form an independent congregation, bring to a close a turbulent period for Blue Valley Stake, and all sides appear to be relieved.

"We hate to see this happening," Barnhard said. "But if they feel they can worship better in that setting, then that's good."

Meanwhile, he sees the stake moving forward — recovery from its past problems, greater participation by members in the life of the churches and people enjoying worship. He also sees growth in the future, noting an increase in attendance this summer at church camps.

The stake is rebuilding new congregations at Grain Valley and Buckner and now will begin the building process at Parkview. The Atherton church building was sold, so there is no RLDS congregation there. The former fundamentalist congregation is back in that building.

The three other fundamentalist congregations are functioning and have become part of what is called the Restoration Movement, composed of fundamentalists critical of world church policies.

The Buckner congregation was locked out of its building in September 1987. Members filed a suit to keep the building, but the court ruled in favor of the world church. Since then, what is now called the Buckner Restoration Branch has been meeting at Fort Osage High School.

Jim Rogers, presiding elder, said attendance has grown from about 250 to 400 in two years, and two weeks ago, the congregation bought 10 acres in a rural area between Buckner and Independence for its future home.

"We feel much better because we don't have the controversy, and we're not bickering with the hierarchy," Rogers said. "We feel better because we're not being subjected to the things that we had been put to; it was a constant uproar."

"We've been forced into this. We would have been happy to remain in our building and to be left alone."

The Grain Valley story

In March 1988, the Grain Valley congregation was changed to a mission. Many of the 500 members left to start the independent congregation, first meeting at a school and now at a church in Oak Grove. The congregation has bought 10 acres in Grain Valley for its future home.

The congregation began with 180 members, and now attendance runs from 90 to 100, said Joe Burkart II, the presiding elder. Some transferred to Restoration churches that were nearer to them, and some of the 500 scattered to other congregations, he said.

He sees a growth in the Restoration Movement and a future coming together of the groups. Although accurate figures are hard to obtain, Burkart estimates that there are 150 such groups across the country. The world church says these groups are a small minority.

In June 1988, the Atherton congregation walked out when it was announced that it would be changed to a mission. At that time the membership was 365, said Dale Carrick, presiding elder. Some people who were against the formation of a separate church stopped attending, and attendance now averages 265, he said.

The congregation bought back its building for \$70,000 through a third party in March, after first meeting in a warehouse.

"I'm an old farmer, and I don't believe you should have to pay for a horse you've already paid for," he said in reference to the purchase. "But, we would not have been able to buy other property and a building for that price."

"However, I told my people not to have hard feelings and not to be bitter. They (world church leaders) were trying to do what they feel is right, and we must do what we feel is right."

He said the people are happy to be back in their building.

"We don't feel that we are being pressured, so now we can get along with the work the Lord has called us to do," he said. "We are still members of the RLDS Church, but we don't have voting rights. I see myself the same as when I joined the RLDS Church when I was 8 years old. We are just attempting to stick to the gospel that Jesus gave to us."

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a great storm. I heard the howling and moving of the wind and thunder. Great and terrible was this hour. I trembled as I looked upon it. I knew this was the Third World War. There are dim thoughts and scenes in my mind yet today [1967]. I cannot reveal, neither can I utter [them], for they have been closed up like a book.

Great and terrible was this hour. I feel [it to be] the darkest hour for civilization, this side of the days of

our blessed Lord. As I viewed this hour, I felt that America came very near to being overthrown. I was made to understand that because of the love of God and the building of the Kingdom [Zion], America would be spared.

When the Spirit of the Lord withdrew, I was left weak and trembling. It was about all I could do to stand on my feet. Days and weeks went by before I could get it off of my mind. I wanted to share this experience with my brethren—what the Lord had shown me. To my sorrow I learned that they did not

want to hear it. Neither did they believe it. I received a severe rebuke for trying to share a part of this experience. From this time on, I knew I must keep it to myself and bear the burden of such knowledge [alone].

I was made to know in this experience we would not do much in building the Kingdom until the Third World War was over. Twenty-six years have now passed, and little has been done for the redemption of Zion. May God bless all who believe in the redemption of Zion and minister to that end.