

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Rob Rolfe • 619 S. State, Lamoni, IA 50140 • 641-784-6030

WHAT YOU WON'T HEAR ON THE EVENING NEWS

Zechariah (14:2) prophesies that a time will come when I (that's God speaking) will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. I have wondered about that prophesy as I thought the United States and Great Britain surely would not abandon Israel.

However, as the events unfold in the Middle East, more and more nations are condemning Israel for defending itself against secret organizations that are spreading terror against women and children. As you won't see this speech on the evening news, I have included it in this month's pastor's article. It is long, but very enlightening for those that believe in the prophets.

To the U.S. Senate by Benjamin Netanyahu, former Prime Minister of Israel, to the United States Senate, Washington D.C., April 10, 2002.

Distinguished Senators,

I have come here to voice what I believe is an urgently needed reminder: that the war on terror can be won with clarity and courage, or lost with confusion and vacillation.

Seven months ago, on a clear day in the capital of freedom, I was given the opportunity to address you, the guardians of liberty. I will never forget that day—a day when words that will echo for ages pierced the conscience of the free world. Words that lifted the spirits of an American nation that had been savagely attacked by evil. Words that looked evil straight in the eye and boldly declared that it would be utterly destroyed. Most important, words that charted a bold course for victory. Those words were the words of the President of the United States.

In an historic speech to the world last September and with determined action in the crucial months that followed,

Continued on page 9

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

Bread From Heaven

"I'd like to talk with us about bread from heaven, which is something we are going to be dealing with as we share in our service this morning," Alan Smith said in beginning his communion talk this month. "Jesus was in Capernaum and some of the people asked, 'Jesus, will you show us a sign that we might believe? Our fathers, when they were in the wilderness, received manna in the desert. What can you do?' This is recorded in the sixth chapter of John. And Jesus answered them saying, 'Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.'

"Just as so many times in the Old Testament people were shown examples of something that was to come, the way that God had helped the people in Moses' time with bread from heaven was just an example - (Suddenly Alan interrupted his sermon to ask a child, 'Did you have something you wanted to say Sam? Sam Jordison answered excitedly, 'I know what that bread was called.' 'What?' Alan asked. "Manna" was the prompt response. "Very good!" Our speaker confirmed Samuel's response, thanked him and resumed his discourse.)

"Just as so many things in the Old Testament were to show of Jesus and His coming, Jesus was saying that Israel's experience with manna was to let the people know of the true bread from heaven that would be coming, and that was Jesus. 'For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.' Jesus told the group.

"The people responded and said, 'Lord, we would like that bread. Give that to us evermore.' And Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.'

"That wasn't exactly what the people had in mind when they said they wanted the bread whenever they could get it. And Jesus said, 'You say you want this bread, but you have seen me and you don't believe.' Jesus went on the say, 'This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'

"Remember back in the beginning of time, there were two different ways for God to receive what He wanted, which was the salvation of all mankind? Satan said he would do it. He would make sure everybody was saved if God would just give him the glory. Jesus said, 'I'll do it Your way.' 'And this is the will if Him that sent

me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the resurrection of the just in the last day.'

"People in Capernaum began to murmur. 'We know Mary and Joseph. You are their son. How can you say you have come down from heaven?' And Jesus said, 'I am that bread of life. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. But I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

"Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.' As we come to the Communion today, some of us who have shared in the fast preparation this weekend may be kind of hungry. Some of us know what it's like to be hungry. Some of us know what it's like to be thirsty. Our bodies tell us when we need to be fed and when we need to drink. But when we come to the Sacrament table for a piece of bread and a sip of wine, they are symbols, not that we will be fed in a physical sense. But what we come to do here this morning is to be fed in a spiritual sense that we may have the promise of eternal life - that we may have the promise of His Spirit to be with us always if we will remember our Savior and if we will leave our old life behind us and go on seeking to sin no more - take up our cross and follow Him.

"Scriptures tell us that we need to do what we do here this morning not as a pot luck dinner. That comes after the service. This is not just an opportunity to eat and drink. In fact, back in the time of the letter to the Corinthians, the people were not understanding what the Sacrament was all about. So Paul wrote, 'Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord'. Corinthians tells us. If we don't take this seriously - if we come just for a pot luck dinner - we need to stop and think seriously because it says that if we don't know what we are doing - if we are not allowing this Sacrament to do what it is supposed to be doing in our lives, we are eating and drinking unworthily and we are guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 'But let a man examine himself and after that eat of the bread and drink of the cup,' the scripture says. Some self examination - some self review is needed when we come to the table of the Lord.

"I don't know whether any of you have a job where you get evaluated. I know Valle does as a teacher. I kind of look at this as maybe a time for a monthly self evaluation. The goal is that we will be able to carry the name of Christ with us, and people will know it by the way we act, the things that we do, and the things that we say. We are asked to examine ourselves to see where we have fallen short of being able to truly carry the name of Christ, as brothers and sisters of Christ and sons and daughters of God. If we take our self-examination and find some spots that we think we need to work on, then we have the promise of the Holy Spirit to help us make those changes - to help us do the things that would make us better people.

"Corinthians goes on the say, 'For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep.' (1 Corinthians 11:28-29). It's important for us to recognize our sin but not to be so bound in it that we feel we can't repent. For when we don't discern what is really going on and where His Spirit can be found, we become spiritually weak, spiritually sickly, even asleep in our relationship with Christ.

"One of the most miraculous examples of the Communion

service that we have recorded in the scripture tells us about an experience of true bread from heaven. I don't know if you have picked that up or not. If I had, I had forgotten it. It comes from the third book of Nephi, Chapter 9, when Jesus was here ministering to the people. It begins as the disciples are teaching the people after some early visits by Christ. The disciples are baptized. As they come out of the water they are encircled by fire as the gift of the Holy Ghost is given to them in power and angels come to minister to them. The multitude watches as this happens to the group of their leaders. And then Jesus appears and asks the multitude to kneel and pray. And so they do.

"As they are kneeling and praying, Jesus goes a little way off and offers up a prayer for them. 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me, that I have chosen them out of the world. Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words. Father, thou has given them the Holy Ghost, because they believe in me, and thou seeest that they believe in me, because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them. And now, Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one.'

"After a little bit, Jesus came back to where he had asked all of the multitudes to pray for him, and unlike the experience in the Garden of Gethsemane where the people went to sleep, He found this people still awake and still praying. 'They did not multiply many words, for it was given to them what they should pray; and they were filled with desire. And it came to pass that Jesus beheld them as they did pray unto him, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and, behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof. And Jesus said, 'Pray on.' And he went apart again and prayed for them again to the Father. As he had thanked the Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit which was with them the first time, He thanked Him for something else the second time.

"Father, I thank thee that thou hast purified these whom I have chosen, because of their faith. And I pray also for them who shall believe on their words, that they may be purified in me, through faith in their words, even as they are purified in me. Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith, that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one, that I may be glorified in them.' He prayed for the gift of the Holy Spirit and thanked the Lord for that. Then he thanked the Lord that that Spirit had purified them as His countenance shone on them and their countenance changed to be as white as His own clothes and His own countenance.

"And when Jesus had spoken these words, He came back again to the Disciples, and what happened? Were they asleep? 'Behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto Him; and he did smile upon them again, and behold, they were white, even a Jesus.' 'And so, Jesus went apart a third time to pray for them, and this is what the Scriptures tell us. 'Tongue cannot speak the words which He prayed, neither can be written by man the words which he prayed. And the multitude did hear and bear record and their hearts were open, and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed. Nevertheless, so great and so marvelous were the words

that he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be uttered by man.'

"When Jesus finished his prayer the third time, he came back to the disciples and the multitudes and he said, 'So great faith have I never seen among all of the Jews; wherefore I could not shew unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief. Verily I say unto you, There are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen; neither have they heard so great things as ye have heard.

"Jesus then commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray out loud, but not cease to pray in their hearts. He commanded them to arise from where they had been kneeling to pray. 'And it came to pass that he break bread and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples to eat. And when they had eaten he commanded that they should break bread, and give it to the multitude. And when they had given it unto the multitude, he also gave them wine to drink, and commanded them that they should give it unto the multitude.

"Here is the part I discovered anew again in preparing for this service. 'Now, there had been no bread neither wine brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude, but he truly gave unto them bread to eat and also wine to drink. And he said unto them, He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul, and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul, and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled. Now when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold they were filled with His Spirit and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus whom they both saw and heard.

"That was true bread from heaven. As we come to our worship this morning, and come to the table, we are going to have an opportunity to prepare in prayer. My prayer this morning is that we truly have a feast from heaven to share together. As Gordon Winkler and Michael Jordison serve you, I want you to be knowing that they are saying a special prayer for each one of you as you reach your hand to partake of the bread of life. May we share in an experience this morning that we go away and never have to be hungry again."

Opportunity was give for prayers, testimonies or confessions to be offered before the serving of the emblems. It is of interest to note that two children led in those offerings.

Mother's Day - A Day to Re-examine Our Goals

In preparation for Mother's Day, Priest Ed Anderson went to the Internet to learn something of it's history. The celebration began about 1915, he reported, and the one who got it instituted by the congress in honor of her mother became disaffected with it. She wanted it undone because she thought it had become too commercialized. She died basically regretting that she had ever worked toward the establishment of that day.

"From our perspective, Mother's Day is part of a divine plan. God putting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the whole plan is divine. Marriage is divine. I think we can overlook the lady who maybe misunderstood and became disaffected with the fact that she got a Mother's Day established.

"On the bright side, I also found on the internet :

When God Made Moms

By the time the Lord made mothers, he was in the sixth day of working overtime. An Angel appeared and said, "Why are you

spending so much time on this one?" And the Lord answered and said, "Have you seen the spec sheet on her? She has to be completely washable, but not plastic; have 200 movable parts, all replaceable; run on black coffee and leftovers; have a lap that can hold three children at one time that disappears when she stands up; have a kiss that can cure anything from a scraped knee to a broken heart, and have six pairs of hands."

The Angel was astounded at the requirements for this one. "Six pairs of hands! No way!" said the Angel.

The Lord replied, "Oh, it's not the hands that are the problem. It's the three pairs of eyes that mothers must have!"

"And that's just on the standard model?" the Angel asked.

The Lord nodded in agreement. "Yes, one pair of eyes are to see through closed doors as she asks her children what they are doing even though she already knows. Another pair in the back of her head, are to see what she needs to know even though no one thinks she can. And the third pair are here in the front of her head. They are for looking at an errant child and saying that she understands and loves him or her without even saying a single word.

The Angel tried to stop the Lord. "This is too much work for one day. Wait until tomorrow to finish."

"But I can't!" the Lord protested. "I am so close to finishing this creation that is so close to my own heart. She already heals herself when she is sick and can feed a family of six on a pound of hamburger and can get a nine year old to stand in the shower."

The Angel moved closer and touched the woman." But you have made her so soft, Lord."

"Yes, she is soft," the Lord agreed, "But I have also made her tough. You have no idea what she can endure or accomplish."

"Will she be able to think?" asked the inquisitive Angel.

The Lord smiled and replied. "Not only will she be able to think. She will be able to reason and negotiate."

The Angel then noticed something and reached out and touched the woman's cheek. "Oops, it looks like you have a leak with this model. I told you that you were trying to put too much into this one."

"That's not a leak." The Lord objected. "That is a tear."

"What's a tear for?" the Angel asked.

The Lord said, "The tear is a way of expressing her joy, her sorrow, her disappointments, her pain, her loneliness, her grief, her pride."

The Angel was impressed. "You are a genius, Lord. You thought of everything! Truly. You do all things well. Moms are truly amazing!"

Happy Mother's Day! .. Erma Bombeck

Our Mothers

Ed recalled times with his mother. "One of her favorite things to do was to take a walk. Being the kids that we were, we followed right long behind and following along behind us were about 5 or 6 cats. If a car had come along, we would have had mashed cats. In the summer time, we spent time with our mother doing that.

"I also remember a game we used to play at night, and I have indoctrinated our children on the game - hide and seek in a dark house. She would turn off all of the lights, close all of the windows so no light could get in, take all of the night lights out, make the whole house totally dark. The whole house was free to go hide in, and you would chase each other in the dark. Mom would participate in that game with us.

"Another thing we did with Mom before we could afford air-conditioning, or before it was in common use, on hot summer days, Mom would take a blanket and lie out in the yard and let the cool

breeze blow. We kids would go out there and lie with her. Being inventive as we were, we would do really imaginative things. Prior to the age when kids went to the mall and watched people, we watched birds. We were so into it that we invented a counter. We would take a strip of paper and run a strip of cardboard with numbers on it through the paper so just the numbers would show. When we counted a bird, we would pull it down and advance to the next number. Those are things we used to do with Mom.”

Our speaker then gave the congregation an opportunity to share some of the things we remembered that made our mothers special to us. A number of persons responded with poignant memories.

The Divine System Points Toward a Goal

Then Ed continued: “One of the things I mentioned before - the system the Lord set up, the mother, the father, the divine system of a family. We point that divine system toward a goal.” Brother Anderson took out a set of binoculars and declared, “Ah! A goal spotter!” After having a child peer through them and tell what they did, Ed declared, “It’s nice to have a pair of binoculars.” He spoke of their use in hunting. “It makes the animals so close to you. You see the goal,” he declared. “How you get there is a different story.”

Brother Anderson then identified the goal of the divine institution of marriage as Zion, declaring that before we get there we must first have a plan. And before we get the plan, we have to have some sort of motivation. “If we are going to talk about the goal of Zion, we have to have some motivation. What’s our motivation, our initial starting point for wanting Zion? Love of God - conversion. We have to start somewhere. We have to have some motivation. If we are going to go to state in track - if we are going to be a fantastic basketball player, we see the goal. We see the picture of ourselves shooting this final shot with time running down, and making a winning basket. Right? Or we see ourselves shooting the fifteen point buck, the highest registered in the state of Iowa. But we have to have some way to get there. With our binoculars we see that goal out there, but we can’t just go out and do that without an effort to get there.

“Before we can have a plan, we have to have a desire. We have to say, “Yes. I am going to respond.” Three letters, YES. We have had our conversion experience. We need to make a definite commitment.

“If I ask you to come over and help me next Saturday afternoon and you respond, ‘I don’t know what I’m going to be doing next Saturday afternoon.’ I have no commitment. I cannot plan on your help. If, on the other hand, you say, ‘Yes’; then I know what you are going to be doing next Saturday afternoon and you know what you are going to be doing next Saturday afternoon. You are going to be over at my house helping me. If you don’t say the ‘Yes’, you can put it off forever, and I don’t know how to plan.

“The next step toward our goal is to plan. When we start a plan, where do we start it, at the finish? How do you suppose a baseball player starts? I’m going to go out and learn to throw and catch so I never miss it. You don’t start on the national baseball league hitting a home run in the last game of the world series to win the series. You start with the throw and the catch out in the front yard. Do you do it just one day? Is that enough? Is one batting practice enough? I don’t think so. You have to persevere. You have to keep going.

“If we are going to talk about Zion, what are the steps? What kind of things do we need to do? Are those steps so obscure to us? Do we have an individual plan? Do we have a Congregational plan? Do we have a church plan? We have somewhat of a plan, but I’m not sure it fills in all of the details for us. It does in a way, but somehow

we need to incorporate it all. But we have got to make plans all the way to get there.

“I’m going back to the family and the divine institution of marriage which usually eventually results in motherhood and fatherhood. We have responsibility as a father, as a mother to plot, to develop activities that are going to progress our lives toward the goal, and that’s not easy. There is that thing called procrastination. ‘I don’t have time to do that tonight’. ‘I can’t get to that’.

“And the normal events of life infringe on your plan, infringe on your plot to get there. How many times have we started to do something and something has interfered? Plenty of times. We don’t get to the event. We don’t get to the reading in the evening. We don’t get to visiting historic sites because we’ve got something else that comes up that day. We don’t get to the family time because something else has budged in the way.”

Last of all, our speaker said, “We have to persevere - to endure to the end. We’ve started on our journey. We have seen our goal. We have put our plan before us, the individual steps, whatever those individual steps are to reach our goal. We have, then, to endure to the end - to follow through and go clear to the end.

“In some respects it goes back to the sower. He sows the seed, and what we do with that seed is really what we are talking about - how we are going to nourish it. Are we going to give it the time of day; or are we going to say, ‘I believe it, but my YES just isn’t there.’ Or are we going to say, “Yes, I’m going to do it’ but be like the son in the scripture who doesn’t follow through - doesn’t make the plan - doesn’t keep the goal in mind?

“When we take those binoculars and walk into our field, we can see the Graceland tower. Once I leave the house and have gone down into the little valley, I no longer see the Graceland tower any more, but I know that tower is out there. If I’m trying to walk to the Graceland tower, I know that goal is out there, but I can’t see it. The longer I walk, the tireder I get. I’m going to sit down, take a drink, take a snooze because I am so tired. Do I lose sight of the goal? I hope not.

“It’s not easy to go through the cares of life and not lose sight of the goal. The seeds that landed among those things that are around us - where the thistles have grown up - does that mean that they (we) have lost sight of the goal? Does it mean they (we) have been so ensnared by the cares of the world that they (we) have lost sight of the goal?

“I would encourage each and every one to take some time to reevaluate where we are, to reevaluate our goals and reevaluate our plan to get there. If we have a plan - if we are going to study every day, what is our plan? Do we have a plan? In the sense of Zion building, in the sense of fulfilling the divine will for each one of us, whether it’s in the realm of motherhood, fatherhood, Priesthood; whatever the realm is, we need to examine ourselves and see if we are fulfilling it.”

Where There Is No Vision the People Perish

Proverbs 29:18 was chosen by Priest Gordon Winkler as the theme of his sermon May 19. “Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.” A short scripture Gordon noted but added, “Without vision we are like a rock that has been skipped on a lake or some pond somewhere. We have no way

of guiding ourselves. We are subject to the strength behind the stone that has been thrown and at the lake's mercy as to where we end up, as to how far we go and as to where we turn or when we stop.

"Helen Keller was asked, 'What would be worse than being born blind?' To which she replied, 'Having sight without a vision.' What a profound statement to come from a girl who was born into the world deaf, dumb and blind!

"By vision, God doesn't mean just a goal, an aim, a purpose or objective. He is not talking about just setting your sights on something and going after it. God is referring to a spiritual manifestation. He is talking about seeing something unveiled by Him. Solomon writes that without such a vision, people would perish. The implication is that people had been, are and will continue to be perishing without having a vision from God.

"Vision is an important topic to me as the CEO for Ringgold County Hospital. Having a vision for the organization is really a large part of my job. I am responsible for a hundred and twenty some people caring for thousands of people each year, and leading an organization that will always be available to meet the community's health care needs. So vision is really important to me, and yet I have to confess that I don't spend enough time on vision. I don't have a time set in my schedule where I sit down at my desk saying, 'Today is vision day. I'm going to think just on vision of the organization.' My day is full of distractions, just as I am sure most of your days are. I have regulatory meetings where we talk about the implications of changes in the medicare program or state and federal regulations. We are regulated by a lot of people - the fire marshal's office, state licensing bureau and all kinds of different people. I have to deal with disgruntled employees. I know you find that hard to believe, but not everybody is happy with their job or the way that people interact with them or the way they perceive they're treated.

"I have to deal with dissatisfied patients and family. Despite our best efforts to take care of people and to provide them the type of care that they need in a timely fashion, not everybody is satisfied. Somethings just don't go right. The lab might have lost the blood sample. The nurse was a little rough with the blood pressure cuff. There are just a lot of things that lead to dissatisfaction among patients and families.

"And I spend a lot of time dealing with operational issues - policies and procedures, making sure things are scheduled appropriately. Making sure that we have the type of capital used in the hospital for technology for testing and the type of care that we provide. Also, I'm dealing with a highly educated and skilled employees. Most of the people that are employed at the hospital have had some kind of an extensive formal education. Whether that be a four year college, a university education with some specified training. Some, including physicians, have four years of college training, four years of medical school, then some form of specialized training after that - some form of a residency or an internship for another 3, maybe 6 years, depending on their specialty. We deal with people that are educated and skilled, and most of them have a very narrow focus, and that becomes the challenge. We are dealing with people that have been trained in radiology in taking X-rays and making sure that a person's position is proper so that they get exposure of the area of anatomy that is being investigated by their physician. It's hard to get people that have a narrow focus in a limited area of expertise all going in the same direction and being able to see the big picture. I once heard it described as trying to herd cats. I don't know whether that's applicable because I have never tried to herd cats, but it seems that may create a visual image of

what's trying to happen. But it's important that everybody that is a part of the organization have a view of what the vision is and how we each fit in. So how do you get people that are narrow focused and highly trained to see the big picture - to have a health care vision? It's difficult. It's hard to get people impassioned or as modern organizational theory discusses, to achieve an engaged employee. And I must confess, I probably spend less time thinking about I'm being engaged in God's vision than I do in thinking about how to get employees engaged and to have a vision.

Becoming Impassioned and Engaged Servants of God

"So this morning, I hope that we can talk about vision and that we can together become impassioned and engaged servants of God." Brother Winkler asked us to close our eyes for a few minutes, if we could do that and stay awake, while he read from first Nephi, the second chapter. "This is kind of a lengthy reading. That's why I suggest you to close your eyes and try and have this come into your mind as it came into Lehi's." Brother Winkler then read the entire story of Lehi's vision of the tree of life, the rod of iron that led to it, the great and spacious building that was destroyed with its people, the filthy water, the mist of darkness, the joyous response of his wife Sariah and sons Nephi and Sam who joined him with joy, the rebellion of Laman and Lemuel that led them away to destruction. To be short in writing, Nephi did not write all of his father's words concerning his vision but did write (verses 68 - 70)

"I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree. And after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree they did cast their eyes about as if they were ashamed." Then Lehi saw the great and spacious building filled with people dressed in fine clothes and making fun of those who had partaken of the fruit. Those who seemed ashamed because of the scoffing "fell away into forbidden paths and were lost." (Verse 76). Still other multitudes (Verses 78-84) "... caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree. ... great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building and after they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me, and those that were partaking of the fruit also, but we heeded them not. ... For as many as heeded them, had fallen away." (Please read 1 Nephi 2:41-84 for yourself.)

"I just wanted to read that to you while you had your eyes closed in hope that you could have, in some manner or fashion, the same type of experience that Lehi would have had to have that image - that scene portrayed to him in a vision from God.

"Lehi said, 'Behold, I have dreamed a dream or in other words, I have seen a vision' - a vision of God's Kingdom and his family's place in it. I think what a horrible thing to have such a wonderful dream or wonderful vision and to know that your family wasn't all going to be with you. I think that had to have been pretty disconcerting for Lehi to have something that was more desirable above anything that he knew and to look down and know that his sons were not all going to be there to share in that with him. I think as a parent how terrible that would be, and I hope for all of you who are parents like me that we don't have to experience that feeling that Lehi had to experience of not having his children with him in that place.

"Over time God has provided His people with opportunities to obtain this same vision. The Kingdom of God and the eternal

benefits of being His people is the same vision that Lehi had. I don't know when God began to bring that vision into the world, but one of the early accounts of His bringing that vision into the world was recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Numbers - the experience of Moses leading the people out of Egypt and trying to deliver them into the promised land - a land described as a land flowing with milk and honey. Moses had his vision at the burning bush.

"I'm going to read a few select verses out of Numbers 13 and 14 just to give you a sense of what was being discussed with this people and their response to a vision that was to involve them in leading them to the promised land. They have crossed the desert and are waiting to enter into the land that has been promised them by God. Numbers 13:17-18 reads, 'And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain; and see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many.' So Moses selected leaders from each of the tribes and they left to go and inspect the land of Canaan to see what was there for them. Upon their return, verse 27 says, 'And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sendest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless, the people are strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there.'

"The children of Anak makes reference to a people that were giants - very big, very strong people. So the people are starting to murmur again. Verse 30 - 33- And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.' But the men that went up said to him, We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. ... , And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.' So even though the land of Canaan is there for them to go into, the people have lost their vision of what the Lord had in store for them - all except for Caleb and Joshua, and this is what they had to say after listening to the murmurs of the people. "(Numbers 13:7-11) 'The land which we passed through to search it is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into his land and give it to us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us; their defense has departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not. And all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of God appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.' And this is what the Lord said - 'The Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them?'

"So the Lord had to intervene again and say, 'I can't believe after all the good things I have done for you. I have led you out of Egypt. I have led you across the dessert. I have showed you the land that you are to inherit that will be meet all your needs, and then you sit here and question me! So Moses made it a matter of prayer trying to bring the people back into favor with God. Finally the Lord's response is (Numbers 14:20): And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word; But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because of those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me

see it but my servant Caleb, because he hath another spirit with him and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went, and his seed shall possess it.'

"That's an Old testament account of a people that were given a vision of God's Kingdom and how they struggled with it. In the end there were just those that were of Caleb's family and had the spirit that Caleb had that were able to enter in. Caleb was rewarded for following his vision and was allowed to enter into the land of Canaan where and his seed possessed it.

Our Opportunity To Obtain A Vision

We have shared in Lehi's vision this morning and we have shared in Moses' vision and how it played out in the lives of Joshua and Caleb. God also shared His vision through the life of His Son Jesus Christ and Jesus' teachings. The books of Matthew and Luke record Jesus' teaching of parables intended to have His people have a vision of the Kingdom of God. The parables are recorded in both Matthew and Luke, more in Matthew than Luke, but if you look in the thirteenth chapter of either of those books, you will find that the scriptures contain six or seven parables, all beginning by saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like'.

In Matthew, the first parable is the parable of the sower. It begins by saying, 'Another parable put he forth unto them saying the Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in a field.' A little further on it says, 'and another parable put he forth unto them saying, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. And another parable spake he unto them, The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.' Verse 46. 'The kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field. And when a man hath found a treasure which is hid, he secureth it and straightway, for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. And again the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchantman ... and again the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea.' "If you were counting, I think that was six different accounts of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. Why do you think Jesus spent so much time and gave so many examples of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like? I think the answer is that Jesus was trying to instill in those people a vision. He was trying to take all of those people who had narrow focuses and trying to give them all a vision.

"Do the scriptures contain enough for you to have a vision of the Kingdom of God? Or are your daily distractions enough to cause you to have that vision fade? William Barclay wrote a book entitled, And Jesus Said. One of the chapters in that book is entitled, 'Founded Upon a Rock'. It is based upon the story in the seventh chapter of Matthew, a parable that Jesus gives about the foundation - the foolish builder building his home -- And in this parable, Jesus is making a staggering claim. In effect He is saying that obedience to His teaching is the only safe foundation for life. He is saying that unless a man takes Him as Master, He cannot look for anything else but ruin of his life.

The only agreement that one can make with Jesus is the agreement of complete submission. We must submit to His vision. The reason we struggle to give submission to Jesus and His vision is our almost chronic inability to take the long view. In Matthew's story, the foolish builder had not the sense to look into the future. All that was in his mind was that the spot where he proposed to build looked at the moment like a pleasant place. If he would have allowed his mind to have a few months look ahead, he would have seen beyond and undoubtedly would not have built where he was

building, for building there was for pleasure but it was also going to be disaster.

All through life, we are constantly confronted with a choice between two goods. We also hear of the choice between two evils, but more difficult for us is the choice between two goods - that which is good for the moment and that for the moment may be difficult and demanding but which is good in the long run. It is doubtless, for example, more pleasant to play games and enjoy amusements, but when the months have passed and the examination has to be faced, it's not so pleasant then. I think that's appropriate since this is graduation time and students have been through their tests. I think that's also a message of encouragement to our students that preparation early on will be beneficial in the end. The world is full of people who regret with all their hearts that they did not bear the yoke when they were young. What is true of practical things is true also of things of the spirit. In the last analysis, there is only one test of any course of action - not, 'How does this look for the moment?' but rather, 'How will this look in the sight of God?'

"There is a phrase, *sub specie aeternitatis*, I think it is Latin, that tells us to look at things as they appear in the life of eternity. It is foolishness to barter the value of eternity for the values of possessing the moment. Yet, if we don't maintain a vision of the Kingdom of God, we are likely to trade the value of eternity for the pleasures of the world.

Love - God's vision of a Changed World

"The Kingdom of God is a vision of a changed world. We need to be able to love to have a vision of God's Kingdom. When asked to identify the one commandment that is greatest of all, Jesus replied by citing two commandments - one from Deuteronomy chapter 6:5 which says, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.' And the other from the 19th chapter of Leviticus 19:18, which says, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'

"There are many many other scriptures in the Bible that talk about love. One of my favorites comes from 1 John which says, 'Beloved, love one another for God is love. He that loveth not, knoweth not God.' Love is a theme that is spoken about, written about and sung about. Jesus was God's love portrayed in the flesh of man, sent into the world to save it. There are lots of other definitions or uses of the word love. We talk of love in terms of just affection. We talk of love in terms of emotion. We say in the same sentence, 'I love my puppy. I love my parents. I love my children, and we all have enough understanding to know what that means although it certainly doesn't mean the same thing to love your puppy as it does to love your children. In a sense, love was sent into the world as a strategy to change the world.

"Diane began this morning by singing a song for us that talks about the dew on the rose. Several years ago Bette Midler performed a song, done in 1979, entitled 'The Rose'. If you weren't around in 1979, you probably will have heard it because it has been sung over and over and seems to have appealed to many subsequent generations. The words to that song are these:

Some say love, it is a river, that drowns the tender reed.
Some say love, it is a razor, that leads your soul to bleed.
Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need.
I say love it is a flower and you it's only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance.
It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes a chance.
It's the one, who won't be taken who cannot seem to give,

And the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live.

When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long,

And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong,
Just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snow

Lies the seed that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.'

In that last line in her song, 'Lies the seed that with the sun's love', she has spelled sun's, s u n s. But this morning, in terms of our time together and our thinking about vision and the Kingdom of God and God's strategy of using love to change the world, I would like you to think of that in terms of Son's - S o n s. Warmed by the Son's love, we can have a vision of the Kingdom, and we can become impassioned and engaged servants for Him.

Memorial Day - Remembering Those Who Gave Their Lives For Us

Reading from Mosiah 1:118-121, Seventy Ronald Smith suggested we should find both bad news and good news in the scripture. "But men drink damnation to their souls, except men humble themselves, and become as little children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent: For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, for ever and ever; But if he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man, and becometh a saint, through the atonement of Christ, the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come, when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue and people."

"This is Memorial Day and on this weekend, we remember those who have gone on before, particularly those who have died in wars, so I thought I would tell you some war stories today. The first one that I am going to tell, I just heard Jimmy Daugherty tell this week at the older youth camp. When I came back, I looked it up on the internet and found a couple of newspaper clippings from Civil War days. The story is the story of W. T. Humphrey and the Palmyra Massacre. Both President Lincoln and President Davis called this particular day, the darkest day of the Civil War.

"It seems that Col. Joseph Porter of the Confederate army came to a little town called Palmyra, Missouri, right near Keokuk, off of the Des Moines River. He abducted a man by the name of Andrew Allsman on Sept. 9, 1862 and tried him as a spy. He was an old gentleman, greatly respected and a Northern sympathizer, so the Confederates didn't like him. He had supplied information about the terrain, etc. to the Northern army. He was acquitted of spying and let go, but never reached home and was never found. Whether he was murdered of what happened to him was never determined.

"On October 8, Provost Marshall William Strachan, under

Brigadier General John McNeil, published a notice to Porter saying, 'You have ten days to return Allsman or we will shoot ten prisoners of war. They rounded up ten of Porter's men who were being kept in Palmyra and read the sentence to them. At the end of the ninth day, no one had shown up.

"One of the prisoners was W.T. Humphrey. His wife and eleven year old daughter came to McNeil and begged him to release Humphrey saying that he was the only breadwinner of the house, and if he wasn't released, they would die. They also said he had been on parole when Porter had been there and had refused to leave with Porter because of his parole. McNeil wrote to Strachan and asked if he would release Humphrey. Strachan said he would release him on condition that someone could be found to take his place. As you can imagine that was not an easy thing to ask.

"But there was a young man by the name of Hiram Smith. He was nineteen years old, and according to one of the stories, volunteered to take the place of W.T. Humphrey. So the next morning, on October 18, 1862, Hiram Smith, along with the other nine prisoners, got onto a wagon with ten coffins on it, each sat on his own coffin. They paraded them around the town, took them to the fair grounds in Palmyra, had them all kneel down beside their coffins where they were shot.

"Do you think the Humphreys remember? To this day, if you go to the cemetery in Palmyra, you will see there are red roses that the Humphrey family still keep on Hiram Smith's grave! You would probably remember.

"Jesus said, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man would lay down his life for a friend.' And yet Jesus did exactly that, didn't he? There was no reason that Jesus should volunteer for this job, but He came because He loved you and me. And He came because He knew that the natural man is an enemy to God. and if we just go our own way, no matter what we try and do, we will not serve God, and we will not have the opportunity to stand in the presence of God. So God sent His only Son. We understand He volunteered to die in our place. Like the Humphreys, we should remember the one who came to give His life for us.

"The good news is that we can repent, and as the scripture that I read says, if we will yield to the enticing of the Holy Spirit and put off the natural man and become a saint through the atonement of Christ, the Lord and become as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all the things which the Lord sees fit to inflict upon use, even as a child does submit to his father, it says, the time will come when the knowledge of that Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue and people. And we can share in that hope, even though we are but men.

A Current Sad War Story

"I've got another one. This is a sad one, too, and I almost hesitate to tell it, but it's applicable to our time because this one happened in our time. A few weeks ago in Newsweek there was a story about a man who went to Sierra Leone, a country in western Africa. They have been engaged in a long civil war. One of the tactics in this war that has been particularly brutal has been that the armies have gone to elementary schools and to homes and have taken young boys from the age of eight to twelve or fourteen and forced them to fight. In this particular article they had the stories of four of these young boys. The reporter had gone to an elementary school and had asked for volunteers who would talk to him about fighting in the war. Twenty eight boys had come to him, and from them he chose four who told their stories.

"These young men" Ron corrected himself - "These young

boys - one told about being in a second grade classroom. Soldiers came, shot the teacher, put a gun in his hand. He didn't want to take it, so they shot between his legs and he took the gun. They used a razor blade to cut the initials RUF into his chest. They would brand them sometimes or cut them and tie them so they couldn't rub the cuts until after they healed so they would have a good scar that could be read. That way, if they ever went home, their families would shoot them because they had fought for this particular side. They would give them a bag and a machete and tell them, 'If you come back with so many arms we will promote you.' The boys did all kinds of atrocious things. I am telling you this story because it really disturbed me, and I hope it doesn't disturb you too much, but this is contemporary. This isn't something that happened back in the Book of Mormon days. This isn't something that happened back in the Bible days. This is something that has happened in the last five years - in our day - and the person on one of the sides who drafted about ten to fifteen thousand young boys this way is now the president of Sierra Leone and is the government there.

"The RUF would cut the boys and put cocaine or heroin into the cut so they would have a direct mainline for the drug, and they would put the drugs in sometimes as many as four times a day. The boys would feel light and invincible and would go around killing people and doing terrible, terrible things! Now that the war is over, these boys are living with the terrible guilt of what they have done. Many of them are afraid to go home. Many of them killed parts of their own families in their villages, and they are afraid to go home and face the people. They only hope that God can forgive them.

"As I was reading that, I thought of the song that we often sing. 'My only hope is you, Jesus. My only hope is you! From early in the morning until late at night, my only hope is you! Folks, there is hope, but the hope lies in Jesus Christ. It doesn't lie in any kind of defensive machines that we have. It doesn't lie in any kind of political system that we might want to impose, but it lies in Jesus Christ; and we have the promise that if we will humble ourselves and become as little children and become meek and submissive and become saints through the power of the atonement and the Holy Spirit, that knowledge of a Savior can go forth to all the world. The scriptures say it will spring forth like a flood and flood the earth.

"We had a flood while we were at camp. Floods are powerful things. The water rose 'til the road was impassable down there at Odessa Hills. I wasn't out there at two thirty in the morning as Rob Bird was, but in the morning I saw that there was a telephone pole and a bunch of stuff stuck around the drain that goes down into the valley where the other cabins are. There is a lot of power in a flood, and it says, the truth will sweep the earth as with a flood! But the only hope is in Jesus Christ and in his atonement. And the only forgiveness is in Jesus Christ and our repentance.

A Bitter Sweet Story of Hope

"The third war story I would like to tell is that of my Uncle Kenneth. This one is kind of bitter sweet. Kenneth was in the communications during World War Two. He was a paratrooper, and it was their job to jump down first and set up communications lines so when the armies came, they could communicate with each other. Kenneth was in a plane that was coming into Sicily from North Africa. They were apparently following a bunch of German planes and the Americans were on the ground shooting down German planes and didn't notice when they started shooting down American planes. (That's called friendly fire!) Kenneth's plane was shot down. All of the jumpers had to jump. Kenneth jumped out, but his parachute didn't open.

"I'm going to leave that story, suspended as it were, for a moment and jump over to a little hillside farm in northwestern Missouri, where my grandfather Alma was out plowing. As he was plowing on this particular day, the Spirit told him that he should pray for Kenneth. He was a pretty sensitive man to the Spirit, and he prayed for Kenneth and kept plowing. And the Spirit came over him again telling him that he needed to pray for Kenneth. Finally it was so strong that he got off the tractor, knelt down in the plowed ground and prayed for Kenneth. That night he wrote a letter to Kenneth and said, when you get home from the war, I would like to know what happened on such and such a day. Well, Kenneth's letter arrived saying, 'When I get home from the war, I want to tell you what happened on such and such a day.

"The story was that as the men jumped and their parachutes would open, the fellows on the ground would pick them off. They made nice, easy targets and were killed. But Kenneth's parachute didn't open until he reached the height of the olive tree, which is not very far off the ground. Then his parachute opened. It was just enough to break his fall, so he lived and survived the fall. Once he was on the ground the guys recognized he was wearing an American uniform, and stopped shooting.

"I tell that story because it has always stayed with me that you don't have to fear. Jesus said, Matthew 10:25, 'Don't fear those who can destroy the body, but are not able to kill the soul.' Most of the things that we fear, if we fear things like September 11, or war, or atomic bombs, or missiles, or terrorists, or anthrax, or whatever it is, most of those things can only affect our bodies. And Jesus says, 'Don't fear those things that only can kill the body. But do fear the one who can destroy both the soul and the body, and that one is not the devil. That one is God. He says we do need to have some fear there.

"That's the good news. He can protect us and He will protect us, and we may see the time when we are in that kind of a situation where the Lord will preserve us. We may see the time when we are in Hiram Smith's situation when the Lord will not preserve us, but we know, whatever happens, if we are willing to give ourselves over to the enticing of the Holy Spirit and put off the natural man, the things that just feel good, and do that which is right, then we need not fear anything that man can do.

"Jesus also said, quoting Isaiah to the people in America in Third Nephi the 10th chapter - and I don't know about you, but I kind of feel like the things that Jesus quoted when He was here. He probably had a reason for doing that and we probably ought to take special heed to those things."

Brother Smith read III Nephi 10:18-26 - 'For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted.' "Does that sound like some people you know?" Ron asked, and then continued to read the Lord's promise to establish them firmly with beautiful accouterments. "And all of thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shall thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather against thee, but not by me; whosoever shall gather against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire; and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue

that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. And now behold I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things.'

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could be convinced that Jesus really was telling the truth? That we don't have to worry about the terror that surrounds us. We don't have to worry about the fighting and the wars because we know they come because the natural man is an enemy to God. But even though we are, in our own selves, enemies to God, if we will yield to the enticing of the Holy Spirit, we can put off that natural man through the atonement of Jesus Christ, and we can have the assurance that nothing that man can do will harm anything but our bodies, and we can have the assurance that we will be with God. And we have the hope that no matter what happens to us, that our children may have a time when righteousness will sweep the earth, and when Jesus will be here, and that no weapon that is formed against us will prosper.

"Let's remember this day, those who have gone before us. And also let us remember Jesus, our Lord!"

From the Pastor's Desk

Continued from front page

President Bush and his administration outlined a vision that had the moral and strategic clarity necessary to win the war on terror. The moral clarity emanated from an ironclad definition of terror and an impregnable moral truth. Terrorism was understood to be the deliberate targeting of civilians in order to achieve political ends. And it was always unjustifiable. With a few powerful words, President Bush said all that needed to be said: "Terrorism is never justified.,,

The strategic clarity emanated from the recognition that international terrorism depends on the support of sovereign states, and that fighting it demands that these regimes be either deterred or dismantled. In one clear sentence, President Bush expressed this principle: "No distinction will be made between the terrorists and the regimes that harbor them.,, This moral and strategic clarity was applied with devastating effect to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that supported Al Qaeda terrorism. No false moral valence was drawn between the thousands of Afghan civilians who were the unintentional casualties of America's just war and the thousands of American civilians deliberately targeted on September 11. No strategic confusion led America to pursue Al Qaeda terrorists while leaving the Taliban regime in place.

Soon after the war began, the American victory over the forces of terror in Afghanistan brought to light the third principle in the war on terror-namely, that the best way to defeat terror is to defeat it. At first, this seemingly trite observation was not fully understood. Contrary to public belief, the motivating force behind terror is neither desperation nor destitution. It is hope-the hope of terrorists systemically brainwashed by the ideologues who manipulate them that their savagery will break the will of their enemies and help them achieve their objectives-political, religious, or otherwise. Defeat this hope and you defeat terrorism. Convince terrorists, their sponsors, and potentially new recruits that terrorism will be thoroughly uprooted and severely punished and you will stop it cold in its tracks.

By adhering to these three principles-moral clarity, strategic clarity and the imperative of victory-the forces of freedom led by America, are well on their way to victory against terror from Afghanistan. But that is only the first step in dismantling the global terrorist network. The other terrorist regimes must now be rapidly dealt with in similar fashion. Yet today, just seven months into the

war, it is far from certain that this will be done. Faced with the quintessential terrorist regime of our time—a regime that both harbors and perpetrates terror on an unimaginable scale—the free world is muddling its principles, losing its nerve, and thereby endangering the successful prosecution of this war. The question many in my country are now asking is this: Will America apply its principles consistently and win this war, or will it selectively abandon those principles and thereby ultimately lose the war?

My countrymen ask this question because they believe that terrorism is an indivisible evil and that the war against terror must be fought indivisibly. They believe that if moral clarity is obfuscated, or if you allow one part of the terror network to survive, much less be rewarded for its crimes, then the forces of terror will regroup and rise again. Until last week, I was certain that the United States would adhere to its principles and lead the free world to a decisive victory. Today, I too have my concerns. I am concerned that when it comes to terror directed against Israel, the moral and strategic clarity that is so crucial for victory is being twisted beyond recognition. I am concerned that the imperative of defeating terror everywhere is being ignored when the main engine of Palestinian terror is allowed to remain intact. I am concerned that the State of Israel, that has for decades bravely manned the front lines against terror, is being pressed to back down just when it is on the verge of uprooting Palestinian terror.

These concerns first surfaced with the appearance of a reprehensible moral symmetry that equates Israel, a democratic government that is defending itself against terror, with the Palestinian dictatorship that is perpetrating it. The deliberate targeting of Israeli civilians is shamefully equated with the unintentional loss of Palestinian life that is the tragic but unavoidable consequence of legitimate warfare. Worse, since Palestinian terrorists both deliberately target civilians and hide behind them, Israel is cast as the guilty party because more Palestinians have been killed in Arafat's terrorist war than Israelis.

No one, of course, would dare suggest that the United States was the guilty party in World War II because German casualties, which included millions of civilians, were twenty times higher than American casualties. So too, only a twisted and corrupt logic would paint America and Britain as the aggressors in the current war because Afghan casualties are reported to have well exceeded the death toll of September 11.

My concern deepened when, incredibly, Israel was asked to stop fighting terror and return to a negotiating table with a regime that is committed to the destruction of the Jewish State and openly embraces terror. Yasser Arafat brazenly pursues an ideology of picide—the destruction of a state—and meticulously promotes a cult of suicide. With total control of the media, the schools and ghoulis kindergarten camps for children that glorifies suicide martyrdom, Arafat's dictatorship has indoctrinated a generation of Palestinians in a culture of death, producing waves of human bombs that massacre Jews in buses, discos, supermarkets, pizza shops, cafes—everywhere and anywhere.

Israel has not experienced a terrorist attack like the one the world witnessed on that horrific day in September. That unprecedented act of barbarism will never be forgotten. But in the last eighteen months, Israelis six million citizens have buried over four hundred victims of terror—a per capita toll equivalent to a half a dozen September 11ths. This daily, hourly carnage is also unprecedented in terrorism's bloody history. Yet at the very moment when support for Israelis war against terror should be stronger than ever, my nation is being asked to stop fighting. Though we are assured by friends that we have the right to defend ourselves, we are effectively asked not to exercise that right.

But our friends should have no illusions. With or without international support, the government of Israel must fight not only to

defend its people, restore a dangerously eroded deterrence and secure the Jewish State, but also to ensure that the free world wins the war against terror in this pivotal arena in the heart of the Middle East.

Israel must now do three things. First, it must dismantle Arafat's terrorist regime and expel Arafat from the region. As long as the engineer of Palestinian terror remains in the territories, terror will never stop and the promise of peace will never be realized. Second, Israel must clean out terrorists, weapons, and explosives from all Palestinian-controlled areas. No place, whether it is a refugee camp in Gaza or an office in Ramallah, can be allowed to remain a haven for terror. Third, Israel must establish physical barriers separating the main Palestinian population centers from Israeli towns and cities. This will prevent any residual terrorists from reaching Israel.

Done together, these three measures will dramatically reduce terrorism, bring security to the people of Israel and restore stability to the region. Last week, the government of Israel began to take the second of these vital steps. Rather than bomb Palestinian populated cities and towns from the air—an operation that would have claimed thousands of civilian casualties—the Israeli army is taking on greater risk by using ground forces that painstakingly make their way through the hornet's nests of Palestinian terror. But instead of praising Israel for seeking to minimize civilian casualties through careful and deliberate action, most of the world's governments shamelessly condemn it. For seven months, many of these governments have rightly supported the war against Afghan terror. Yet after only seven days, their patience for the war against Palestinian terror ran out.

The explanations offered for this double standard are not convincing. First it is said that war on Palestinian terror is different because a political process exists that can restore security and advance peace. This is not so. There can never be a political solution for terror. The grievance of terrorists can never be redressed through diplomacy. That will only encourage more terror. Yasser Arafat's terrorist regime must be toppled, not courted. The Oslo agreements are dead. Yasser Arafat killed them. He tore it to shreds and soaked it in Jewish blood by violating every one of its provisions, including the two core commitments he made at Oslo: to recognize the State of Israel and to permanently renounce terror. With such a regime and such failure of leadership, no political process is possible. In fact, a political process can only begin when this terrorist regime is dismantled.

Second, it is said that waging war on Palestinian terror today will destabilize the region and cripple the imminent war against Sadaam Hussein. This concern is also misplaced. Clearly, the urgent need to topple Sadaam is paramount.

The commitment of America and Britain to dismantle this terrorist dictatorship before it obtains nuclear weapons deserves the unconditional support of all sane governments. But contrary to conventional wisdom, what has destabilized the region is not Israeli action against Palestinian terror, but rather, the constant pressure on Israel to show restraint. It is precisely the exceptional restraint shown by Israel for over a year and a half that has unwittingly emboldened its enemies and inadvertently increased the threat of a wider conflict. If Israeli restraint were to continue, the thousands that are now clamoring for war in Arab capitals will turn into millions, and an avoidable war will become inevitable. Half measures against terrorist will leave their grievances intact, fueled by the hope of future victory. Full measures will not redress those grievances, but it will convince them that pursuing terror is a prescription for certain defeat.

America must show that it will not heed the international call to stop Israel from exercising its right to defend itself. If America compromises its principles and joins in the chorus of those who

demand that Israel disengage, the war on terror will be undermined. For if the world begins to believe that America may deviate from its principles, then terrorist regimes that might have otherwise been deterred will not be deterred. Those that might have crumbled under the weight of American resolve will not crumble. As a result, winning the war will prove far more difficult, perhaps impossible.

But my friends, I must also tell you that the charge that Israel, of all countries, is hindering the war against Sadaam is woefully unjust. For my country has done more than any other to make victory over Sadaam possible. Twenty-one years ago, Prime Minister Begin sent the Israeli air force on a predawn raid hundreds of miles away on one of the most dangerous military missions in our nation's history. When our pilots returned, we had successfully destroyed Sadaam's atomic bomb factory and crippled his capacity to build nuclear weapons. Israel was safer-and so was the world. But rather than thanking us for safeguarding freedom, the entire world condemned us.

Ten years later, when American troops expelled Iraqi forces in the Gulf War, then Secretary of Defense, Richard Cheney expressed a debt of gratitude to Israel for the bold and determined action a decade earlier that had made victory possible. Indeed, I am confident that in time those who would condemn Israel now will understand that rooting out Palestinian terror today will also make both Israel and the world safer tomorrow.

For if we do not immediately shut down the terror factories where Arafat is producing human bombs, it is only a matter of time before suicide bombers will terrorize your cities. If not destroyed, this madness will strike in your buses, in your supermarkets, in your pizza parlors, in your cafes. Eventually, these human bombs will supplement their murderous force with suitcases equipped with devices of mass death that could make the horrors of September 11 pale by comparison.

That is why there is no alternative to winning this war without delay. No part of the terrorist network can be left intact. For if not fully eradicated, like the most malignant cancer, it will regroup and attack again with even greater ferocity. Only by dismantling the entire network will we be assured of victory. But to assure that this evil does not reemerge a decade or two from now, we must not merely uproot terror, but also plant seeds of freedom. Because only under tyranny can a diseased totalitarian mindset be widely cultivated. This totalitarian mindset, which is essential for terrorists to suspend the normal rules that govern a man's conscience and prevents him from committing these grisly acts, does not breed in a climate of democracy and freedom.

The open debate and plurality of ideas that buttress all genuine democracies and the respect for human rights and the sanctity of life that are the shared values of all free societies are a permanent antidote to the poison that the sponsors of terror seek to inject into the minds of their recruits. That is why it is also imperative that once the terrorist regimes in the Middle East are swept away, the free world, led by America, must begin to build democracy in their place. We simply can no longer afford to allow this region to remain cloistered by a fanatic militancy. We must let the winds of freedom and independence finally penetrate the one region in the world that clings to unreformed tyranny.

That in exercising our basic right to defend ourselves Israel is condemned by Arab dictatorships is predictable. That today a Europe which sixty years ago refused to lift a finger to save millions of Jews has turned its collective back on the Jewish State is downright shameful. But my friends, I must admit, I expected no better from them. Yet the America I know has always been different. History has entrusted this nation with carrying the torch of freedom. And time and time again, through both war and peace, America has carried that torch with courage and honor, combining

a might the world has never known with a sense of justice that no power in history has possessed.

I have come before you today to ask you to continue to courageously and honorably carry that torch by standing by an outpost of freedom that is resisting an unprecedented terrorist assault. I ask you to stand by Israel's side in its fight against Arafat's tyranny of terror, and thereby help defeat an evil that threatens all of mankind.

There is a striking parallel in the Book of Helaman regarding secret organizations and their use of terror. The Lamanites hunted these terrorists down and exterminated them. The Nephites built them up and supported them. (Helaman 2:164) The nations of the world are doing the same thing. Some are supporting the terrorists and building them up. Mr. Netanyahu calls to all who "carry the torch of freedom" and are willing to fight to save their liberty. His words bring to mind the words of Moroni in Alma 21:40-60 which were written on his banner: "In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children."

News & Notes

Go Disciples!

June is here. June 23 - June 29 come quickly. Your reservation for the Family Missionary Reunion should be in Valle Smith's hands very soon if it is not already. And if you have not yet invited that friend you had thought about inviting, today is the time to do it. You and they will be glad you did. Join the more than 350 souls who have already reserved a spot at Graceland University for this summer's greatest opportunity to learn more about how to share your Christ and His way to the Kingdom with those who are hurting and fearful of the terrors of which we are being daily warned.

Nauvoo Trip Scheduled

June 15 is the date for which we have tickets to view the newly reconstructed Nauvoo Temple. If you want to join us, let Patty Bolingbroke know today. She will be giving away our extra tickets soon.

Our assigned time is 12:3 p.m.. We will be taking our lunches with us, so come prepared. Some of the congregation will be staying overnight at Farmington to be on hand to assist with the services of the Nauvoo Restoration congregation on Sunday, June 16. If you need a place to stay, speak to Patty immediately.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
Mount Ayr Restoration Branch
607 E. Madison St.
Mount Ayr, IA 50854