

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Prophets, Seers, and Revelators

By Elder S. Gifford Nielsen

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Elder S. Gifford
Nielsen

What a blessing it is to live during a time when the Lord's prophets, seers and revelators shed light throughout a darkening world. In just a few weeks we have an opportunity in general conference to once again learn from inspired men and women more about God's great plan of happiness and how to deal more effectively with the issues of our day.

As we listen to the plain and simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can deepen our understanding and apply extra meaning to our own lives as we diligently search, ponder and pray about each message. I had a wonderful experience with this concept during the Saturday morning session of the 2010 October general conference.

President Thomas S. Monson gave his customary welcome, mentioned the building of five new temples and then threw out a zinger that caught my attention: "Now, before we hear from our speakers this morning, may I mention a matter close to my heart and which deserves our serious attention. I speak of missionary work" ("As We Meet Together Again," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5).

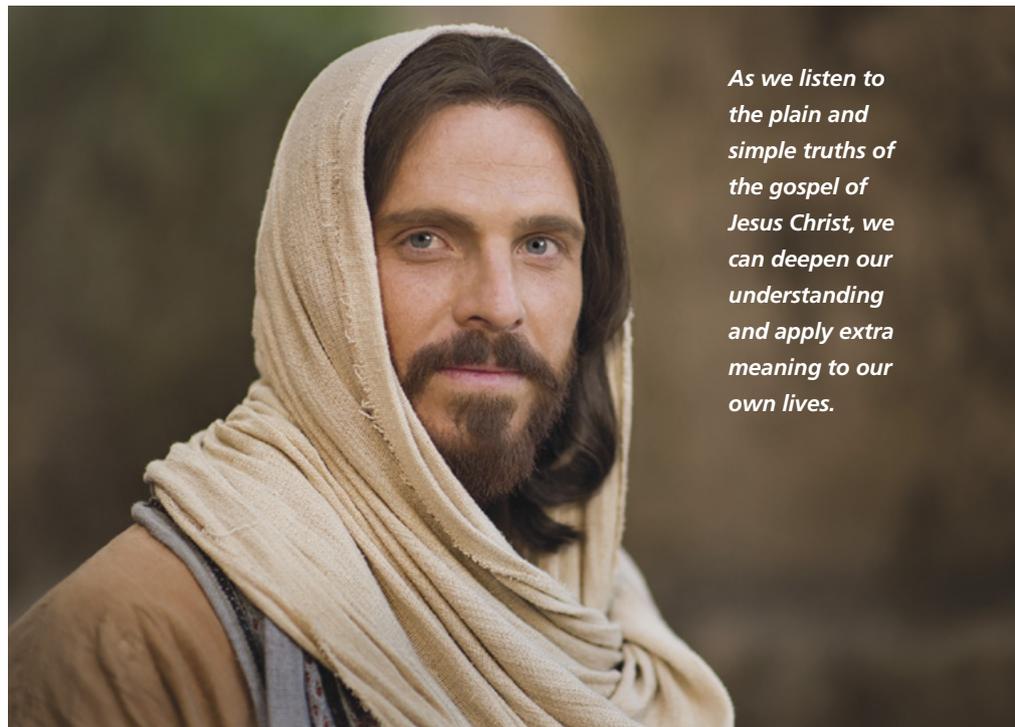
I was intrigued by this particular wording. No doubt missionary work had been on his mind. I found myself wondering exactly why the subject was so personal and so serious to him.

The Apostle Paul taught that we "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple

in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:20–21).

My greatest desire at that moment was to be linked with President Monson, "fitly framed together." I felt that understanding what was in his heart regarding missionary work would make me a better man. I began a quest to find the answer and I knew just where to begin. The Savior taught, "Therefore, ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for he that asketh,



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receiveth; and unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened” (3 Nephi 27:29).

About three months into the process, Sister Nielsen and I were invited by a stake president to attend a training meeting for bishops and their wives at his home.

During the training our host started speaking about how he was helping the young men in his stake prepare to be missionaries. He told us that he printed a list of every young man in his stake, retired to his bedroom, knelt and prayed for each one of the 207 young men by name! He pleaded with the Lord to help each of these sons to serve a mission and to reach his spiritual potential.

As I listened to this poignant story, the Lord chose to bless me with the long-awaited answer to my question. With great clarity and power it came into my mind that the reason President Monson had felt that missionary work was “close to my heart and [deserving] serious attention” was because that somewhere in the world Heavenly Father had 207 pure daughters preparing themselves for temple marriage and that the 207 young men the good president had prayed for so fervently needed to be honourable, clean, diligent returned missionaries to take them to a temple to be sealed for time and all eternity and together build 207 eternal families.

Brothers and sisters, our daughters, granddaughters and all of the young women we know and love dream about kneeling across the altar, looking into the eyes of a worthy priesthood holder and being sealed for time and all eternity. They have prayed for that blessing and the Lord has heard those prayers. That is serious spiritual business!

The Spirit had clearly spoken and rewarded me with an answer. About one year to the date of that message I was in a training meeting with President Monson when he taught that every young man needs to serve a mission in preparation to take a worthy young woman to the temple to create an eternal family. It was confirmed!

How grateful I am for apostles and prophets on the earth today to show us the way back home.

I promise that the Lord will bless us abundantly as we pay close attention to the words of our apostles and prophets during general conference and then sincerely seek to understand what the messages meant specifically for us. May we listen with ears to hear and hearts to understand, and may the Holy Ghost witness to each of us the truth and meaning of each message is my prayer for all of us in the Pacific Area. ■

LOCAL NEWS

Australian Author Receives Award for “Mormon and Maori”

By Mormon Newsroom



IMAGE COURTESY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIBRARY

Marjorie Newton, author of *Mormon and Maori*

Hobart, Australia—Australian Latter-day Saint historian Marjorie Newton was awarded the Best International Book Award at the Mormon History Association conference in June for her book *Mormon and Maori*.

This is the second time Marjorie has won this award. Her chronological history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New Zealand, *Tiki and Temple: The Mormon*

Mission in New Zealand, won the Best International Book Award two years ago.

After her youngest child started school, Marjorie completed her high school education by correspondence and won a mature-age scholarship to the University of Sydney in 1967. She subsequently earned her BA (1976), MA Honours (1988) and PhD (1998). Both her MA and PhD theses won the Reese Award from the Mormon History Association for the best thesis or dissertation on Mormon history, making her the only historian to win the Reese Award twice.

Her MA Honours thesis was published by the Institute for Polynesian Studies at BYU–Hawaii as *Southern Cross Saints: The Mormons in Australia* in 1991. Her doctoral dissertation (updated) provided the subject matter for her two most recent books. She has also published articles in scholarly journals and Church publications.

Marjorie's interest in Latter-day Saint history in New Zealand was influenced by stories she heard as a young teenager when Church leader Matthew Cowley visited Australia. However, it didn't occur to her to write about it until after her MA thesis was published and she was told there was a need for a more detailed account of the history of Mormonism in New Zealand.

Tiki and Temple recounts the success of Mormon missionaries proselytising among the Maori in the 1880s, leading to the dedication of the Hamilton New Zealand Temple and the opening of the Church College of New Zealand in 1958.

Mormon and Maori discusses several topics illustrating the impact of both Mormon doctrine and American culture on the Maori Latter-day Saints from the 1880s to the present day. The book deals with cultural/national accommodation, resistance, assimilation and compromise.

She said, "In many ways, Maori culture resonated with the teachings

of the Mormon missionaries, which is why so many of them accepted Mormonism in the 1880s. However, some aspects didn't match and some American mission presidents and Maori Saints struggled with these. *Mormon and Maori* recognises that our national culture is such an integral part of us that it takes time and cooperation, understanding and goodwill between leaders and members to achieve a truly gospel culture."

Marjorie is an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She currently serves as family history consultant at the Hobart Family History Centre. ■

US Navy Medical Ship Treats Hundreds in Papua New Guinea: Military and Church Combine Efforts to Help Those in Need

Rabual, Papua New Guinea—The US military hospital ship *Mercy* docked at Rabual near the village of Rabaon in Papua New Guinea on the 5th of July.

A military helicopter off-loaded 12 pallets of medical supplies and other equipment donated by The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through its affiliate LDS Charities.

Chris Adam, hospital administrator for St. Mary's (one of the hospitals to receive the supplies), said, "I am really touched by your generosity. Your dedication is very much appreciated."

The US military hospital ship Mercy visited several locations in the Pacific area as it treated individuals for all types of medical needs.



◀ *Holding a box of supplies donated from LDS Charities are (from left) Chris Adam, hospital administrator for St. Mary's; Eddie Alembo, country welfare manager for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and Theodore Rau, director of corporate services for Nonga General Hospital.*

Theodore Rau, director of corporate services for Nonga General Hospital, said, “We are looking forward to having this partnership (with the Church) and will store these pallets until they can be delivered to clinics in rural areas.”

The USNS *Mercy* personnel and

volunteers set up a separate clinic to diagnose and treat local Papua New Guineans, who came by the hundreds throughout the week. Nonga and St. Mary's Vunapope also had volunteer clinics for the week.

Patients with a variety of ailments

were treated by volunteer medical, dental and optometry teams from the ship.

While parents and family members waited to be screened and treated, ship personnel played games with the children to keep them entertained.

Some patients received dental



▲ *Theonila Wat, director of nursing services at Nonga General Hospital (left) and Chris Adam, administrator for St. Mary's Hospital (right), review medical supplies donated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*

USNS Mercy personnel play games with Papua New Guinea youth.



care, eye evaluation, medical treatment, glasses or prescriptions on-site while others were transported to the ship for treatment or surgery. All procedures are free.

The USNS *Mercy* is “a floating city,” complete with a fully functioning hospital, including a CAT scan machine and 6 surgery rooms.

The medical personnel worked side by side with eight PNG surgeons and 15 surgical nurses to perform 130 surgical procedures aboard the ship while in Bougainville and East New Britain.

They also dispensed a total of 5,604 prescriptions at community health engagements and donated a total of 14,923 units of pharmaceuticals to the local hospitals in these two locations.

There are over 900 military personnel, staff and volunteers on the ship, including from the army, navy, air force, and merchant marines of the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

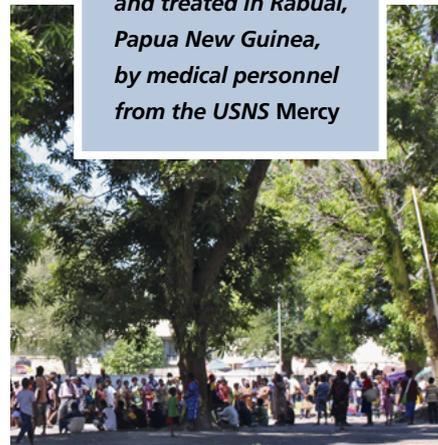
Mike Hughes, a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from San Diego, California, is the coordinator for Church distribution of these medical donations. “This is an opportunity to share with those who don’t have the same economic abilities as we do,” Mr. Hughes said. “We want to follow the example of Jesus Christ, which is to help our brothers and sisters who are less fortunate.” ■



▲ *Claire Falaiau, a member of the Church, and her son, Moyab, were present at medical ship patient screenings.*



Patients waiting in line to be screened and treated in Rabual, Papua New Guinea, by medical personnel from the USNS Mercy



New Mission Leaders Arrive in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu

Sydney, Australia—New leaders of five missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu this week.



President Max L. Checketts and his wife, Sister Donna H. Checketts,

will lead, train and support the missionaries serving in the Australia Sydney North Mission. The couple have six children and come from Laie, Hawaii, USA. They succeed President Philip F. Howes and Sister Judith L. Howes, who have served in the Australia Sydney North Mission for the last three years.



The new president of the Australia Perth Mission is Walter S. Fife. He and his wife, Sister

Dana L. Fife, have seven children and come from Manti, Utah, USA. The Fifes succeed President Richard B. Lindsay and Sister Sharlene Lindsay.



Paul W. and Gayle A. Granger have eight children and come from Adelaide, Australia. They

are taking on leadership positions in the Vanuatu Port Vila Mission, succeeding President Larry E. Brewer and Sister Maryanne Brewer.



Lisa A. and R. Jeffrey Parker have four children and come from Las Vegas, Nevada,

USA. They will lead the missionaries in the Australia Adelaide Mission, succeeding President Bradley D. Carter and Sister Donalynn Carter.



Succeeding President Pita F. Hopoate and Sister Lani A. Hopoate in the Papua New Guinea Port

Moresby Mission are President Voi R. and Sister Ronette K. Taoalii. The new mission leaders have four children and come from Makakilo, Hawaii, USA.



All five couples have served in various lay leadership positions in their homelands throughout their lives. In answer to calls from the President of the Church, Thomas S. Monson, they have left their homes and families for three years to dedicate their daily lives to leading missionary efforts in teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and serving communities in other ways.

The Church has 406 missions worldwide, with missionaries numbering over 80,000 around the globe. ■

Canberra Latter-day Saint Turns 35, Does 35 Acts of Random Kindness

Canberra, Australia—Canberra mother of five Elizabeth Kikkert was featured in several newspapers recently, due to her birthday tradition of giving kind acts of service to people in her community instead of waiting for gifts from others.

According to an article in *The Age* newspaper, “the euphoria she feels by making someone else’s day beats a pile of presents every time.”

Elizabeth said of her birthday experience, “It’s exhilarating giving

gifts and time to people. Seeing their reactions was my birthday present. Those reactions continued throughout the day and the happy faces of strangers are implanted in my mind.”

“As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints we are taught to love our neighbours and be anxiously engaged in doing good. When I am in moments of showing tender compassion to a stranger who needs a lift, my life is so full and joyous.” ■



“Seeing their reactions was my birthday present.”



Ronald “Tex” Davis of Charnwood was delighted to receive a balloon from Elizabeth Kikkert as she celebrated her 35th birthday.



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Elder Kevin W. Pearson addresses youth regarding religious education.

Elder Kevin W. Pearson Urges Youth to Embark on “Quest for Education and Learning”

Auckland, New Zealand—

Speaking recently at the New Zealand Auckland Harbour Stake conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Elder Kevin W. Pearson told teenagers to “be active in secular and religious education.”

Elder Pearson counselled the young people:

“Everybody wants to follow what’s ‘trending,’ what others are ‘following’ or ‘liking.’ Everybody wants to fit in.

“It’s time to stop fitting in and start standing up and standing out.”

Elder Pearson also talked with the young people about the opportunity they have to learn who they are, in

particular their divine heritage as a son or daughter of God.

“As you learn who you really are, your divine identity will influence your beliefs and values, which will inform your attitudes and behaviours, which will lead you to act in certain ways,” he said. “This is how you shape your reality and your destiny. It all begins by learning your divine identity from your Father in Heaven by the power of the Holy Ghost.”

“Happiness is a decision, not your circumstances,” he said. “Ask, seek and knock, as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ invited us all to do. Ask your Father in Heaven for the revelation you need to know

who you are and what He wants you to do and be.”

Elder Pearson urged the youth to work hard in their religious and school studies. “You get what you focus on consistently,” he said. “Hard work reveals capacity. Your decisions about education and learning will determine your destiny.”

He continued: “We need educated leaders. Great leaders are great learners. It’s time to become a great learner.”

Elder Pearson spoke to around 200 teenagers at this meeting for youth as part of the two-day semi-annual conference for members and guests of the Church living in the northern suburbs of Auckland. ■