

FINDING HOPE IN THE FUTURE

By Stan Pugsley

On September 12, 2001, my wife and I were pacing the floor of a hospital in Tucson, Arizona, USA, passing anxious hours as we waited for our son to be born. From our television and from every television in the building, we were barraged by footage from the day before in New York City—images of the two towers that had once anchored the skyline of that city, falling into rubble and dust. The images, broadcast for hours, left us with a sense of despair. It seemed the worst possible time to bring a baby into the world—a world that seemed so dark and threatening.

Early the next morning our infant son was born. As I held our tiny child, I considered the devastating events of the last few days, events that made me think back to the fires in Yellowstone National Park in 1988. The flames had consumed nearly 800,000 acres (323,750 ha) of forest. The park's devastation seemed absolute. News images showed only scorched earth and thick black smoke in the sky. No amount of human effort could quickly bring back what was lost. It seemed as if even the tireless regeneration and vigor of nature was no match for the destructive power of fire.

Yet the next spring a quiet miracle occurred—small plants and flowers began



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to push through the charred soil. Gradually, more and more flowers and shrubs and trees bloomed from the earth. The rebirth of the park was slow and filled with tiny, glorious details, and over time the results were dramatic.

In moments of fear that seem to consume us like the blazing fires of Yellowstone, when our faith and hope are at their limits, we must remember that there is one quiet, immovable foundation beneath us, much more powerful than any evil force we will encounter. Helaman explains that this foundation is “the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God.” If we anchor ourselves to Him, then “when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).

When faced with the frenzied forces of evil and temptation in the world, we may think that the small and simple influence of the gospel is outmatched and overwhelmed. We may feel doubt and despair as we wait in vain for wrongs to be righted, pain to be relieved, and questions to be resolved. Those very winds that buffet us, however, sow seeds of change and growth, and the immense power of the gospel quietly works under the soil of earthly existence, preparing a thousand small seeds of hope and life. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.