

June 13, 2021 Fireside

1. Zion to Suffer Affliction p. 34

I cannot learn from any communication by the Spirit to me, that Zion has forfeited her claim to a celestial crown, notwithstanding the Lord has caused her to be thus afflicted, except it may be some individuals, who have walked in disobedience, and forsaken the new covenant; all such will be made manifest by their works in due time. I have always expected that Zion would suffer some affliction, from what I could learn from the commandments which have been given. But I would remind you of a certain clause in one which says, that after much tribulation cometh the blessing. By this, and also others, and also one received of late, I know that Zion, in the due time of the Lord, will be redeemed; but how many will be the days of her purification, tribulation, and affliction, the Lord has kept hid from my eyes; and when I inquire concerning this subject, the voice of the Lord is: Be still, and know that I am God; all those who suffer for my name shall reign with me, and he that layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again.

Now, there are two things of which I am ignorant; and the Lord will not show them unto me, perhaps for a wise purpose in Himself—I mean in some respects—and they are these: Why God has suffered so great a calamity to come upon Zion, and what the great moving cause of this great affliction is; and again, by what means he will return her back to her inheritance, with songs of everlasting joy upon her head. These two things, brethren, are in part kept back that they are not plainly shown unto me; but there are some things that are plainly manifest which have incurred the displeasure of the Almighty.

Tribulation is essential and will occur PRIOR TO the redemption of Zion

“My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom” (D&C 136:31)

D&C 100:13 And now I give unto you a word concerning *Zion*. Zion shall be redeemed, although *she is chastened for a little season*.

1 Nephi 10:3 That after they should be destroyed, even that great city Jerusalem, and *many be carried away captive into Babylon, according to the own due time of the Lord, they should return again, yea, even be brought back out of captivity; and after they should be brought back out of captivity they should possess again the land of their inheritance.*

-This pattern of bondage, captivity, redemption, and inheritance is all throughout scripture. The Babylonian captivity is one such type for how this pattern will repeat in our day.

D&C 103:13 Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised *after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.*

Do we look at the redemption of Zion as a blessing? If we aren't there yet, then perhaps our tribulation will change how we feel.

How will this tribulation test us?

1 Corinthians 3:13 *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

D&C 101:35 And all they who suffer persecution for my name, and endure in faith, *though they are called to lay down their lives for my sake yet shall they partake of all this glory.*

D&C 103:27 Let no man be afraid to *lay down his life for my sake*; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again.

Revelation 6:9-11 And *when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that *they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

Why God has suffered so great a calamity to come upon Zion?

D&C 101:1-5 Verily I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted, and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance—

2 *I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions;*

3 Yet I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels.

4 Therefore, *they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son.*

5 *For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.*

Elder Neal A. Maxwell-The modern Church even today is instructed to “wait for a little season” to build up central Zion. Why? So that we “may be prepared ... and have experience.”

"The Prophet Joseph was told that if great tribulation should beset him and even “if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.

“The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?”

-The Purpose of Life:To Be Proved

Franklin D. Richards

Could we handle the details of our adversities if we knew them ahead of time?

I would say that in many cases early knowledge may cause premature fear and trepidation that might distract us from current events and matters that require our attention. Therefore the surprise attack of our afflictions and adversity inacts a stronger "fight or flight" reaction which in turn causes us to fight a stronger fight.

- All those who walk after their own ways, eventually will reveal themselves by their works, fruits that are identifiable. A man comes out and says “the Lord has told me to do 10 jumping jacks” and the people say “no, no, don’t do jumping jacks” and then the man returns and says “oh, you’ve talked me into it, I won’t do jumping jacks”. Joseph on a number of occasions taught this doctrine, that those who pursue wickedness or their own devices, you will be able to discern them by their fruits, not by your spirit-o-meter.
- We have some points of reference here that people need to wrap their heads around. Joseph Smith is saying we won’t have Zion until after the redemption and we won’t have the redemption until after the tribulation. We learn further clarification and confirmation of these points of reference by the Lord in D&C 101:

D&C 101: Blake read verse 2-5, I will read 16-21

2 I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions;

3 Yet I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels.

4 Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son.

5 For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.

16 Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

17 Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

18 They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

19 And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

20 And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

21 Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.

According to the Lord we have:

1. Tribulation/chastisement
2. Redemption of Zion
3. Building up of Zion, the centerstake, which shall not be moved
4. Once it is full, stakes of Zion are created

With this understanding we are left to conclude only one of two things- that the early Saints were chastised and after that tribulation SLC became the New Jerusalem and eventually when it became too full stakes were established throughout the world OR that what we currently call stakes are not “stakes of Zion” but are in fact stakes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that after the Church and its members pass through enough suffering and chastisement and tribulation they will redeem Zion and build New Jerusalem and once that is

real “Zion” is formed and is full, new “stakes of Zion” will be formed and spread from the nucleus out.

- Joseph Smith he plainly believed that the Saints’ inheritance i.e., Ephraim’s inheritance was Jackson County and nowhere else. There was never one iota of doubt or change or variance in that doctrine in the mind of Joseph Smith. Nauvoo was not a replacement- it was a stop gap.

2. The Righteous Suffer with the Guilty, p. 34-35

When I contemplate upon all things that have been manifested, I am aware that I ought not to murmur, and do not murmur, only in this, that those who are innocent are compelled to suffer for the iniquities of the guilty; and I cannot account or this, only on this wise, that the saying of the Savior has not been strictly observed: “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; or if thy right arm offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee.”

Now the fact is, if any of the members of our body is disordered, the rest of our body will be affected with it, and then all are brought into bondage together; and yet, notwithstanding all this, it is with difficulty that I can restrain my feelings when I know that you, my brethren, with whom I have had so many happy hours—sitting, as it were, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and also, having the witness which I feel, and ever have felt, of the purity of your motives—are cast out, and are as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, exposed to hunger, cold, nakedness, peril, sword—I say when I contemplate this, it is with difficulty that I can keep from complaining and murmuring against this dispensation; but I am sensible that this is not right, and may God grant that notwithstanding your great afflictions and sufferings, there may not anything separate us from the love of Christ.

Brethren, when we learn your sufferings, it awakens every sympathy of our hearts; it weighs us down; we cannot refrain from tears, yet, we are not able to realize, only in part, your sufferings; and I often hear the brethren saying, they wish they were with you, that they might bear a part of your sufferings; and I myself should have been with you, had not God prevented it in the order of His providence, that the yoke of affliction might be less grievous upon you, God having forewarned me, concerning these things, for your sake; and also, Elder Cowdery could not lighten your afflictions by tarrying longer with you, for his presence would have so much the more enraged your enemies; therefore God hath dealt mercifully with us. O brethren, let us be thankful that it is as well with us as it is, and we are yet alive and peradventure, God hath laid up in store great good for us in this generation, and may grant that we may yet glorify His name.

Joseph Smith is saying part of the tribulation will come because we have not sufficiently followed the Savior’s counsel in Matthew 5:29-30 to pluck out that among us which offends and cast it away. This can be applied both in our own lives and in the Church. Sometimes we may like to hold on to “how the way things used to be” or Babylonian idols. When we can’t let go of these things, they continue to infect and afflict us, but these things ought not to be.

The same principle applies in the Church. Have you noticed just how many members have stepped away or ran away from the Church since COVID-19? The Lord has promised there will come a point where He will “do His own work”. Perhaps what we see as apostasy is the Lord fulfilling the prophesied division among the righteous and the wicked and cleansing of His Church.

Yet another way we will experience tribulation will depend a lot on just how much we choose to follow the Savior's admonition to be "willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort". Joseph is telling us that a great deal of suffering in our day will occur from the righteous from observing others suffering. We may be inclined to think "The man has brought upon himself his misery", but the person who says this "the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God."

A Zion society is of "one heart and one mind". So if one person's heart is aching due to tribulation or the consequences of their actions, then shouldn't our hearts also ache because they suffer? Do we feel the same way that Alma and the sons of Mosiah felt? "For they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble." Or put another way, "When, for the moment, we ourselves are not being stretched on a particular cross, we ought to be at the foot of someone else's—full of empathy and proffering spiritual refreshment."

This last year has been one for the record books. No doubt we have each learned things we did not know previously. Some lessons that I knew before have been written on my heart in new and instructive ways.

For example, I know for sure that the Lord directs the affairs of His Church. He said, "I will show [you] that I am able to do mine own work."

Often, my counselors and I have watched through tear-brimmed eyes as He has interceded in extremely challenging circumstances after we had done our best and could do no more. We do indeed stand all amazed.

I also understand better now what He meant when He said, "Behold, I will hasten my work in its time." Over and over again I have rejoiced as He has directed and executed the hastening of His work—even during a global pandemic.

My dear brothers and sisters, the strength of the Church lies in the efforts and ever-growing testimonies of its members. Testimonies are best cultivated in the home. During this past year, many of you have dramatically increased the study of the gospel in your homes. I thank you, and your children will thank you.

Alma 8:14-15

14 And it came to pass that while he was journeying thither, being weighed down with sorrow, wading through much tribulation and anguish of soul, because of the wickedness of the people who were in the city of Ammonihah, it came to pass while Alma was thus weighed down with sorrow, behold an angel of the Lord appeared unto him, saying:

15 Blessed art thou, Alma; therefore, lift up thy head and rejoice, for thou hast great cause to rejoice; for thou hast been faithful in keeping the commandments of God from the time which thou receivedst thy first message from him. Behold, I am he that delivered it unto you.

D&C 127:12

Behold, my prayer to God is that you all may be saved. And I subscribe myself your servant in the Lord, prophet and seer of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

- Joseph Smith is unraveling here why the building of Zion the first time failed and why it won't play out the same way the second time. The reason why was because the unrighteous elements in the Church were not purged from the Church

Matthew 5:29–30. “Pluck It Out, and Cast It from Thee”

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) taught that the terms “right eye” or “right hand” can mean “close friends or relatives who [endeavor] to lead us from the path of rectitude and humble obedience to the divine commandments we receive from the Lord. If any friend or relative endeavors to lead a person away from the commandments, it is better to dispense with his friendship and association than to follow him in evil practices to destruction” (Answers to Gospel Questions, 5 vols. [1957–66], 5:79).

Joseph Smith knew that the Saints, him specifically had not done this and because of that the whole body, the whole Church, had to suffer. Joseph Smith then goes on to explain in beautiful compassion why this failure happened, he loved the people too much and when he thought of them in their cast out state, all he felt was compassion and mercy. This is why when the Lord redeems Zion and the work commences again the Lord will separate the 5 wise virgins from the 5 foolish virgins per entry to the New Jerusalem. As President Nelson said, “the time is soon coming when those who will not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do”. i.e., the Lord will be doing this separating. President Nelson also said “many things will seem unfair” – if the Lord wasn't the one doing the separating the righteous, the truly righteous would not suffer with he ungodly among them by force, they would suffer with the ungodly among them by choice to lessen their suffering.

HOW ZION MAY ESCAPE THE LORD'S SCOURGE.

“Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire. Nevertheless, let it be read this once to her ears, that I, the Lord, have accepted of her offering; and if she sin no more none of these things shall come upon her.” This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.” (Doctrines of Salvation, Volume 3, p.31-32)

3. The Mission of Elijah p. 323

Salvation could not come to the world without the mediation of Jesus Christ.

How shall God come to the rescue of this generation? He will send Elijah the prophet. The law revealed to Moses in Horeb never was revealed to the children of Israel as a nation. Elijah shall reveal the covenants to seal the hearts of the father to the children, and the children to the fathers

The anointing and sealing is to be called, elected and made sure.

"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right from the eternal God, and not by descent from father and mother; and that priesthood is as eternal as God Himself, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.

The 2nd Priesthood is Patriarchal authority. Go to and finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this priesthood.

The 3rd is what is called the Levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is by an oath and covenant.

The Holy Ghost is God's messenger to administer in all those priesthoods.

Jesus Christ is the heir of this Kingdom--the Only Begotten of the Father according to the flesh, and holds the keys over all this world.

Men have to suffer that they may come upon Mount Zion and be exalted above the heavens.

I know a man that has been caught up to the third heavens, and can say, with Paul, that we have seen and heard things that are not lawful to utter. (Aug. 27, 1843.) DHC 5:554-556.

Isaiah 18:7 In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

According to the points of reference in this verse we learn the follow events will occur:

1. The Nation of the land of shadowing wings (i.e. America) must be meted out and trodden under foot. Meaning civil war and the invasion of the Assyrian.
2. The rivers of the land are spoiled (i.e. famine).
3. A people must be scattered and peeled (gathered).
4. A physical location known as Mount Zion must literally be built.
5. Those in Mount Zion will be presented to the Lord, meaning that Christ will literally appear to those people and accept them as His people.

So in this timeline of events, what is the suffering that allows the Lord's people to come upon Mount Zion? It is the civil war and Assyrian invasion of America as well as the 7 year famine. Now these sufferings actually serve 2 purposes. The first is to prepare the Lord's people to be sanctified, as was mentioned earlier in the fireside. The second purpose is so that a physical location of Mount Zion can be established without the harassment or molestation of the Assyrian or those who ally themselves with him.

In a letter written to a Church member on September 7, 1842, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, "The Missourians, together with some of the principal officers of this state [Illinois] ... are again disgracing themselves by persecution and cruelty. They have so little regard for truth,—the laws of the land,— and constitution of the United States, that they have issued processes for my arrest

as illegal as can be imagined, and they themselves are aware of it. ... Thus you see I am obliged to exile myself to save the lives of the people as well as my own life from day to day” (“Letter to John M. Bernhisel, 7 September 1842,” pages 2–3, josephsmithpapers.org). In spite of the threats to his life, the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote: “As for the perils which I am called to pass through, they seem but a small thing to me. ... And I feel, like Paul, to glory in tribulation; for to this day has the God of my fathers delivered me out of them all, and will deliver me from thenceforth; for behold, and lo, I shall triumph over all my enemies” (D&C 127:2).

- 3 Nephi 25:4

4 Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

What Joseph is quoting here is 3 Nephi 25, including the reference to Horeb, Elijah etc. This has reference to the Holy Order which is a topic for an entire other fireside but what is important to note here is that these people are sealed in actual fact or as Joseph said, to be made sure. When we go to the temple we are anointed to *become*, not anointed in actual fact. Joseph is listing suffering as a requirement for this surety or in actual fact, we refer to this commonly as the Abrahamic sacrifice which definitely ties into the theme of tribulation preparing us for the Holy Order New Jerusalem etc.

4. Saints Come Through Tribulation, p. 261

It is a shame to the Saints to talk of chastisements, and transgressions, when all the Saints before them, prophets and apostles, have had to come up through great tribulation; whether a Herod, a Nero, or a Boggs, causes the affliction, or the blood to be shed, is all the same—these murderers will have their reward! and the saints theirs. How many have had to wander in sheep skins and goat skins, and live in caves and dens of the mountains, because the world was unworthy of their society! And was transgression or chastisement connected with their seclusion from the enjoyment of society? No! But remember, brethren, he that offends one of the least of the Saints, would be better off with a millstone tied to his neck and he and the stone plunged into the depth of the sea! Remember that he that gives a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, to one of the saints in prison, or secluded from friends by reason of vexatious law suits, intended for persecution, shall in no wise lose his reward.

Never, while the spirit of liberty, or the virtue of a saint, hold communion in the flesh, let us hear of those who profess to be governed by the law of God, and make their garments clean in the blood of the Lamb, shrinking from the assistance of those who bear the ark of the Lord--in the hour of danger!

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “Lest Ye be wearied and faint in your minds”, May 1991 Ensign

"Therefore, how can you and I really expect to glide naively through life, as if to say, 'Lord, give me experience, but not grief, not sorrow, not pain, not opposition, not betrayal, and certainly not to be forsaken. Keep from me, Lord, all those experiences which made Thee what Thou art! Then let me come and dwell with Thee and fully share Thy joy!"

Alma 5:19-25 I say unto you, can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands? I say unto you, can you look up, having the image of God engraven upon your countenances?

20 I say unto you, can ye think of being saved when you have yielded yourselves to become subjects to the devil?

21 I say unto you, ye will know at that day that ye cannot be saved; for there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white; yea, *his garments must be purified until they are cleansed from all stain*, through the blood of him of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins.

22 And now I ask of you, my brethren, how will any of you feel, if ye shall stand before the bar of God, having your garments stained with blood and all manner of filthiness? Behold, what will these things testify against you?

23 Behold will they not testify that ye are murderers, yea, and also that ye are guilty of all manner of wickedness?

24 Behold, my brethren, *do ye suppose that such an one can have a place to sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, and also all the holy prophets, whose garments are cleansed and are spotless, pure and white?*

25 I say unto you, Nay; except ye make our Creator a liar from the beginning, or suppose that he is a liar from the beginning, ye cannot suppose that such can have place in the kingdom of heaven; but they shall be cast out for they are the children of the kingdom of the devil.

Having the image of God engraven on our countenance is much more than being Christlike in our words and deeds, it also requires that we be chastened and tried even as Abraham. Think about the example of Abraham being commanded to sacrifice Isaac. As we study this story, don't we see how God the Father was engraving His image upon Abraham? Abraham, the father of Isaac was commanded to sacrifice his only covenant son. God the Father willingly sacrificed his Only Begotten Son.

The reason why the command to offer up Isaac upon the altar was so difficult for Abraham was because he himself had suffered under the hands of a father who had tried to sacrifice him at an altar. John 5:19 teaches "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." Surely the Father allowing His Perfect Son to come to earth and be sacrificed was equally as painful. But why? Joseph Smith in the King Follett discourse taught "yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ Himself did;... Jesus said, as the Father hath power in himself, even so hath the Son power—to do what? Why, what the Father did. The answer is obvious—in a manner to lay down his body and take it up again. Jesus, what are you going to do? To lay down my life as my Father did, and take it up again."

Now while we aren't all called to sacrifice our son on an altar, we are all called to be chastened and tried even as Abraham. It is through our chastening and trying that we "become the sons and daughters of Abraham". Each of us must be chastened until we learn obedience and then we must be tried to see if we will obey ALL things that the Lord commands. The chastening portion of our Abrahamic test is designed to test our commitment to the FIRST great commandment. The trying portion of our Abrahamic test will wrench our very heart strings and demonstrates to the Lord that we are willing to obey both the FIRST and SECOND great commandments. It is through this foreordained pattern that every single person born on this earth can become like the Father and the Son.

Mosiah 2:17-18

17 And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.

18 Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?

D&C 127:2

2 And as for the perils which I am called to pass through, they seem but a small thing to me, as the envy and wrath of man have been my common lot all the days of my life; and for what cause it seems mysterious, unless I was ordained from before the foundation of the world for some good end, or bad, as you may choose to call it. Judge ye for yourselves. God knoweth all these things, whether it be good or bad. But nevertheless, deep water is what I am wont to swim in. It all has become a second nature to me; and I feel, like Paul, to glory in tribulation; for to this day has the God of my fathers delivered me out of them all, and will deliver me from henceforth; for behold, and lo, I shall triumph over all my enemies, for the Lord God hath spoken it.

- This screams Elder Holland's talk, *Waiting on the Lord*. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints who preach a "pre-tribulation rapture" should mark these words carefully. Taking the time to read Alma 5 and answer those questions every once in awhile as a self-evaluation is a good idea.

5. The Value of Tribulation, p. 134

My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; and then if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes; thy friends do stand by thee, and they shall hail thee again, with warm hearts and friendly hands; thou art not yet as Job; thy friends do not contend against thee, neither charge thee with transgression, as they did Job; and they who do charge thee with transgression, their hope shall be blasted and their prospects shall melt away as the hoar frost melteth before the burning rays of the rising sun; and also that God hath set His hand and seal to change the times and seasons, and to blind their minds, that they may not understand His marvelous workings, that He may prove them also and take them in their own craftiness; also because their hearts are corrupted, and the things which they are willing to bring upon others, and love to have others suffer, may come upon themselves to the very uttermost; that they may be disappointed also; and their hopes may be cut off; and not many years hence, that they and their posterity shall be swept from under heaven, saith God, that not one of them is left to stand by the wall. Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them; but those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin and are the children of disobedience themselves; and those who swear falsely against my servants, that they might bring them into bondage and death; wo unto them; because they have offended my little ones; they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house; their basket shall not be full, and their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be

despised by those that flattered them; they shall not have right to the Priesthood, nor their posterity after them, from generation to generation; it had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea.

Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell. Behold mine eyes see and know all their works, and I have in reserve a swift judgment in the season thereof, for them all; for there is a time appointed for every man according as his work shall be.

As I mentioned earlier, tribulation serves two main purposes. The first is to sanctify the Lord's people and prepare them for the blessings that the Father has in store for them. The second purpose is to ensure a righteous judgment upon the wicked and ungodly.

Romans 2:5-9 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:
7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:
8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,
9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil...

Helaman 14:28-29 And the angel said unto me that many shall see greater things than these, to the intent that they might believe that these signs and these wonders should come to pass upon all the face of this land, to the intent that there should be no cause for unbelief among the children of men—
29 And this to the intent that whosoever will believe might be saved, and that whosoever will not believe, a righteous judgment might come upon them; and also if they are condemned they bring upon themselves their own condemnation.

Ether 12:27
27 And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

Psalm 94:12-14
12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;
13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.
14 For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Job 5:17-21
17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:
18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

21 Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

- Note carefully the word choice “cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed” and mark it well against this scripture in Jeremiah 17:5 which saith, “cursed is the man who trusts in mankind, who makes the flesh his strength and turns his heart from the LORD”. This is what I went over in my paper The Arm of Flesh. To put your trust in the arm of flesh and to turn one’s heart from the Lord IS to lift up your heel against the Lord’s anointed. To follow the counsel and commands, the “thou shalt do’s” from the keys is to put your trust in the Lord. To follow your own spirit-o-meter, your own knowledge, your own wisdom etc is to trust in the arm of flesh. Personal revelation does not and will not ever supersede the direction from the keys. Or as Preach My Gospel counsels, “compare your decisions with the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets”- these should never conflict. The Prophet Joseph Smith is making it really clear that the dividing lines will be between following the keys vs following “those that flattered them”. This is the flowery words, the feel-good, the rainbows, unicorns and butterflies vs truth given in love. This is my paper “The Father: Hear Him”, this is simply being obedient. As we identified in a previous fireside with a quote from Joseph Smith that a key to surviving the last days would be understanding and applying “obedience is greater than sacrifice”.

6. A Tried People, p. 135-136

And now, beloved brethren, we say unto you, that inasmuch as God hath said that He would have a tried people, that He would purge them as gold, now we think that this time He has chosen His own crucible, wherein we have been tried; and we think if we get through with any degree of safety, and shall have kept the faith, that it will be a sign to this generation, altogether sufficient to leave them without excuse; and we think also, it will be a trial of our faith equal to that of Abraham, and that the ancients will not have whereof to boast over us in the day of judgment, as being called to pass through heavier afflictions; that we may hold an even weight in the balance with them; but now, after having suffered so great sacrifice and having passed through so great a season of sorrow, we trust that a ram may be caught in the thicket speedily, to relieve the sons and daughters of Abraham from their great anxiety, and to light up the lamp of salvation upon their countenances, that they may hold on now, after having gone so far unto everlasting life.

If you think that merely living and breathing during the times of tribulation are enough, YOU ARE SORELY MISTAKEN. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell so beautifully wrote “Patient endurance is to be distinguished from merely being “acted upon.” Endurance is more than pacing up and down within the cell of our circumstance; it is not only acceptance of the things allotted to us, it is to “act for ourselves” by magnifying what is allotted to us... true enduring represents not merely the passage of time, but the passage of the soul”

Also I hope that we will notice how Joseph in this quote connects the parable of the 10 virgins with this time of tribulation just preceding the Lord’s coming in glory to the New Jerusalem.

The oil is a very significant part of the parable. Olive oil was obtained through crushing and pulverizing olives. This extreme pressure caused the oil to flow freely from the olive. Once extracted, it could be collected and used for food or light.

Both the wise and foolish had a lamp to collect the oil. But, what was the purpose of the lamp? Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “Moreover, we find that sorrow can actually enlarge the mind and heart in order to **“give place,” expanded space** for later joy.” This lamp represents the sorrows we all suffer and which can, if we allow it, give place for the oil.

But, notice how in the parable oil or the lack thereof is what distinguishes wise virgins from foolish virgins.

In a similar manner to an olive, the 5 wise virgins in the parable had themselves endured extreme pressure and had this oil extracted and available to them to light their way on the path to Christ. The oil was something which they had consciously acquired and collected through the suffering they experienced. It was the individual lessons, impressions, insights, comfort, and closeness to the Lord they had received as they looked to the Lord in their suffering. They were given these blessings directly from the Lord, hence why it couldn't be shared with others, for as Elder Maxwell taught “Even the best lectures about the theory of enduring are not enough”.

Isaiah describes this sacred process and the ultimate reward for the wise virgins when he says, “The Lord hath anointed me...**To [endow]** those that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, **the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise** for the spirit of heaviness”.

Or as is stated in Psalms 23 and the hymn “The Lord is my Shepherd”:

The Lord is my Shepherd; no want shall I know. I feed in green pastures; safe-folded I rest. He leadeth my soul where the still waters flow, Restores me when wand'ring, **redeems when oppressed, Thru the valley and shadow of death though I stray**, Since thou art my Guardian, no evil I fear. Thy rod shall defend me, thy staff be my stay. No harm can befall with **my Comforter** near. **In the midst of affliction my table is spread. With blessings unmeasured my cup runneth o'er. With perfume and oil thou anointest my head.** Oh, what shall I ask of thy providence more? Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and **I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**”

The 5 foolish virgins were virgins who had done many good things and endured extreme pressure, but they had not received, collected, or stored oil for themselves. They endured tribulation, but they didn't “endure it well”. They had their lamps (place to store the oil), but with no oil to burn they were unprepared and ill equipped to meet the Bridegroom.

Why did the 5 foolish virgins not have oil? Surely, they had endured many of the same things that the 5 wise virgins did. It is because they did not seek the Lord in their suffering. Their pride prevented them from seeing the true purpose behind the tribulations occurring all around them. Their condition was similar to those in the Book of Mormon who lived during the time of war between the Lamanites and Nephites, “because of the exceedingly great length of the war between the Nephites and the Lamanites many had become hardened”. So they had been chastened, but they had never learned obedience, and because they had not learned obedience,

they failed the real trial or test of their obedience. They were not acquainted with him in [their] extremities, hence why the Lord declares to them “ye knew me not”

The people of the Most High God must be tried. It is written that they will be tried in all things, even as Abraham was tried [see D&C 101:1–4]. If we are called to go upon mount Moriah to sacrifice a few of our Isaacs, it is no matter; we may just as well do that as anything else. I think there is a prospect for the Saints to have all the trials they wish for or can desire. Now if you possess the light of the Holy Spirit, you can see clearly that trials in the flesh are actually necessary (DBY, 346).

-Brigham Young

We are the happiest people when we have what are called trials; for then the Spirit of God is more abundantly bestowed upon the faithful [see 1 Peter 3:14] (DBY, 347). -Brigham Young

As to trials, why bless your hearts, the man or woman who enjoys the spirit of our religion has no trials; but the man or woman who tries to live according to the Gospel of the Son of God, and at the same time clings to the spirit of the world, has trials and sorrows acute and keen, and that, too, continually (DBY, 348).

-Brigham Young

- I'll just close with some of Elder Holland's words as well as President Benson's:

“Faith means trusting God in good times and bad, even if that includes some suffering until we see His arm revealed in our behalf.⁹ That can be difficult in our modern world when many have come to believe that the highest good in life is to avoid all suffering, that no one should ever anguish over anything.¹⁰ But that belief will never lead us to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”¹¹

With apologies to Elder Neal A. Maxwell for daring to modify and enlarge something he once said, I too suggest that “one's life ... cannot be both faith-filled and stress-free.” It simply will not work “to glide naively through life,” saying as we sip another glass of lemonade, “Lord, give me all thy choicest virtues, but be certain not to give me grief, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor opposition. Please do not let anyone dislike me or betray me, and above all, do not ever let me feel forsaken by Thee or those I love. In fact, Lord, be careful to keep me from all the experiences that made Thee divine. And then, when the rough sledding by everyone else is over, please let me come and dwell with Thee, where I can boast about how similar our strengths and our characters are as I float along on my cloud of comfortable Christianity.”¹²

My beloved brothers and sisters, Christianity is comforting, but it is often not comfortable. The path to holiness and happiness here and hereafter is a long and sometimes rocky one. It takes time and tenacity to walk it. But, of course, the reward for doing so is monumental.” (Waiting on the Lord)

“My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith...Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat: Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. God will have a humble people. Either we can choose to be humble or we can be compelled to be humble. Let us choose to be humble. We can do it. I know we can.” (Beware of Pride). In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Come:

Let Israel Build Zion

Elder McConkie:

We are in the midst of a period of change and realignment where one of the basic doctrines of the Restoration is concerned.

We were directed in the day of Joseph Smith to do one thing with reference to the gathering of Israel and the building up of Zion. Today we are counseled to turn away from the past and do something entirely different.

It is somewhat with us as it was with the disciples in the meridian of time—Jesus first commanded them to preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel only; they were forbidden to take the message of salvation to the gentiles. Then he reversed his direction and commanded them to go into all the world and to preach the gospel to every creature, Jew and gentile alike.

As the New Testament account shows, there was a period of a quarter of a century or so in which the early saints—Peter, Paul, James, the Twelve, and all the leading Brethren included—struggled to envision the new decree, the decree that revealed to them that others besides the chosen people of Israel were entitled to the blessings of the gospel and that the gentiles were equal candidates for salvation with them.

Something akin to this is going on in the Church today. Since the coming of Moses to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, on the third day of April, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple, since the conferral upon mortal men, by that holy prophet, of the keys of the gathering of Israel and of the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north, we have been using our talents and means and strength to recover the remnant of that once favored nation.

Some considerable success has attended our labors; we have built the Lord's holy house in the tops of the mountains; and all nations have begun to flow unto it. Swift messengers have gone to nation after nation seeking the lost sheep of Israel and inviting them to come "to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob," so they might be taught in his ways, and walk in his paths, preparatory to the great day when "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." ([Isa. 2:3.](#)) Many of the house of Ephraim have been gathered and in due course those of the other tribes will come to receive their blessings, "and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim." ([D&C 133:32.](#))

Now, if those of us who have been gathered again into the sheepfold of Israel are to play the part assigned us in the Lord's eternal drama concerning his people, we must know that some things relative to the gathering of Israel are past, some are present, and yet others are future. We ought not to struggle through a quarter of a century or so trying to determine, as did the New Testament saints in an analogous situation, what part we should play in the building up of Zion.

The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God, as Paul's expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know

what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.

The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:

Phase I—From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

Phase II—From the creation of stakes of Zion in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950s, to the second coming of the Son of Man, a period of unknown duration.

Phase III—From our Lord's second coming until the kingdom is perfected and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, and from then until the end of the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years.

We live in the age of restoration. Peter calls it "the times of restitution," meaning the period or time in the earth's history when that which once was shall be restored in all its original glory and perfection. He says the things to be restored include "all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." ([Acts 3:21](#).) And there are few things of which Israel's prophets have spoken with more fervor and zeal than the latter-day gathering of the house of Jacob and the part that favored people will play in the building of Zion again on earth.

Many things have already been restored, and many things are yet to be restored. Israel has been gathered in part, but in many respects the greatest part of the gathering of Israel is ahead. The foundations of Zion have been laid, but the promised City of Holiness has yet to be built. We have done some of the things destined to be accomplished in this dispensation; we are now engaged in doing the very things reserved for our time; and there are many things ahead to be done by our children and grandchildren and by all those who shall build on the foundation we are now laying.

In view of these principles, and so that members of the Church who live outside the United States and Canada would know why they are now counseled to remain in their own nations and not gather to an American Zion, I gave the following talk in the Lima Peru Area Conference:

We are grateful beyond any measure of expression for the very excellent work being done in the Church here in South America. We extend our high commendation to the noble men who serve as Regional Representatives of the Twelve, as stake presidents, as bishops, and in other responsible positions in the stakes and wards. We feel that a foundation has been laid for great progress and development. We foresee a day when the Church will be a very substantial influence in all these great nations. It is a matter of great gratification that stakes of Zion have been organized here. We hope to see the stakes increase in number and in effectiveness.

I shall speak of the gathering of Israel and of the building up of Zion in the last days. As we all know, the Lord scattered Israel among all the nations of the earth because they forsook him and broke his commandments. As we also know, he is now gathering in the lost sheep of Israel and laying upon them the obligation to build up his latter-day Zion.

This gathering of Israel and this building of Zion in the last days occurs in stages. The early part of the work, which involved gathering to the United States and building stakes of Zion in North America, has

already been accomplished. We are now engaged in gathering Israel within the various nations of the earth and in establishing stakes of Zion at the ends of the earth. This is the work that is now going forward in all of the nations of South America and of which I shall now speak.

By the mouth of an ancient prophet, and from the lips of one who lived 3,000 years ago, the Lord sent a message to us. The holy man of old who spake as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost said these words: "This shall be written for the generation to come"; it is sent to "the people which shall be created," to a people who "shall praise the Lord." ([Ps. 102:18.](#))

We are that people, a people who once again receive revelation, a people to whom God has given anew the fulness of his everlasting gospel, in consequence of which we praise his holy name forever.

The message which has come to us is that the Lord will "have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." The message is that "when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." ([Ps. 102:13, 16.](#))

Now, if I may be properly guided by the power of the Spirit—a thing which I devoutly desire—I shall speak of the manner in which the Lord will build up Zion, the manner in which the Lord is having mercy upon Zion, and the part we are expected to play in the building of Zion.

As is clear from the inspired account, Zion shall be built up—she shall obtain that perfection and glory which is hers—when the Lord appears in his glory. She shall then become as she once was. This will be during the Millennium when the restoration of all things is completed. Zion shall be perfected after the second coming of Christ.

But in the meantime, and as of now, the Lord has laid upon us the responsibility to lay the foundation for that which is to be. We have been commissioned to prepare a people for the second coming of the Son of Man. We have been called to preach the gospel to every nation and kindred and tongue and people. We have been commanded to lay the foundations of Zion and to get all things ready for the return of Him who shall again crown the Holy City with his presence and glory. Our call to all men everywhere is: "Come to Zion, come to Zion, and within her walls rejoice." (*Hymns*, no. 81.)

Now, what is Zion, and where shall she be established? On what ground shall we build her walls? Where shall we place her gates and strong towers? Who shall dwell within her portals? And what blessings shall rest upon her inhabitants?

Truly the scripture saith, "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. ... And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her." ([Ps. 87:2–3, 5.](#))

Zion has been established many times among men. From the day of Adam to the present moment—whenever the Lord has had a people of his own; whenever there have been those who have hearkened to his voice and kept his commandments; whenever his saints have served him with full purpose of heart—there has been Zion.

Our first scriptural account relative to Zion concerns Enoch and his city. That prophet of transcendent faith and power lived while father Adam yet dwelt in mortality. It was a day of wickedness and evil, a day of darkness and rebellion, a day of war and desolation, a day leading up to the cleansing of the earth by water.

Enoch, however, was faithful. He “saw the Lord,” and talked with him “face to face” as one man speaks with another. ([Moses 7:4.](#)) The Lord sent him to cry repentance to the world, and commissioned him to “baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, which is full of grace and truth, and of the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son.” ([Moses 7:11.](#)) Enoch made converts and assembled a congregation of true believers, all of whom became so faithful that “the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness,” and were blessed from on high. “And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.” ([Moses 7:18.](#))

Please note: Zion is people; Zion is the saints of God; Zion is those who have been baptized; Zion is those who have received the Holy Ghost; Zion is those who keep the commandments; Zion is the righteous; or in other words, as our revelation recites: “This is Zion—the pure in heart.” ([D&C 97:21.](#))

After the Lord called his people Zion, the scripture says that Enoch “built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION”; that Zion “was taken up into heaven” where “God received it up into his own bosom”; and that “from thence went forth the saying, Zion is fled.” ([Moses 7:19, 21, 69.](#))

After the Lord’s people were translated—for it was people who were caught up into heaven, not brick and mortar and stone, for there are better homes already in heaven than men can build on earth—after these righteous saints went to dwell beyond the veil, others, being converted and desiring righteousness, looked for a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God, and they too “were caught up by the powers of heaven into Zion.” ([Moses 7:27.](#))

This same Zion which was taken up into heaven shall return during the Millennium, when the Lord brings again Zion; and its inhabitants shall join with the New Jerusalem which shall then be established. (See [Moses 7:62–63.](#))

That many of these truths about Zion were known and taught in ancient Israel is clear from the many references in Isaiah and the Psalms and elsewhere. Isaiah made particular mention of stakes of Zion which would be established in the day of restoration.

As is well known, ancient Israel was scattered among all the nations of the earth because they forsook the Lord and worshipped false gods. As is also well known, the gathering of Israel consists of receiving the truth, gaining again a true knowledge of the Redeemer, and coming back into the true fold of the Good Shepherd. In the language of the Book of Mormon, it consists of being “restored to the true church and fold of God,” and then being “gathered” and “established” in various “lands of promise.” ([2 Ne. 9:2.](#)) “When they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance.” ([2 Ne. 6:11.](#))

Two things are accomplished by the gathering of Israel: First, those who have thus chosen Christ as their Shepherd; those who have taken upon themselves his name in the waters of baptism; those who are seeking to enjoy his Spirit here and now and to be inheritors of eternal life hereafter—such people need to be gathered together to strengthen each other and to help one another perfect their lives.

And second, those who are seeking the highest rewards in eternity need to be where they can receive the blessings of the house of the Lord, both for themselves and for their ancestors in Israel who died without a knowledge of the gospel, but who would have received it with all their heart had opportunity afforded.

Manifestly in the early days of this dispensation, this meant gathering to the mountain of the Lord's house in the tops of the mountains of North America. There alone were congregations strong enough for the Saints to strengthen each other. There alone were the temples of the Most High where the fulness of the ordinances of exaltation are performed.

However, in the providences of Him who knoweth all things, in the providences of Him who scattered Israel and who is now gathering that favored people again, the day has now come when the fold of Christ is reaching out to the ends of the earth. We are not established in all nations, but we surely shall be before the second coming of the Son of Man.

As the Book of Mormon says, in the last days, "the saints of God" shall be found "upon all the face of the earth." Also: "The saints of the church of the Lamb and ... the covenant people of the Lord"—scattered as they are "upon all the face of the earth"—shall be "armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory." ([1 Ne. 14:12, 14.](#))

We are living in a new day. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is fast becoming a worldwide church. Congregations of Saints are now, or soon will be, strong enough to support and sustain their members no matter where they reside. Temples are being built wherever the need justifies. We can foresee many temples in South America in process of time.

Stakes of Zion are also being organized at the ends of the earth. In this connection, let us ponder these truths: A stake of Zion is a part of Zion. You cannot create a stake of Zion without creating a part of Zion. Zion is the pure in heart; we gain purity of heart by baptism and by obedience. A stake has geographical boundaries. To create a stake is like founding a City of Holiness. Every stake on earth is the gathering place for the lost sheep of Israel who live in its area.

The gathering place for Peruvians is in the stakes of Zion in Peru, or in the places which soon will become stakes. The gathering place for Chileans is in Chile; for Bolivians it is in Bolivia; for Koreans it is in Korea; and so it goes through all the length and breadth of the earth. Scattered Israel in every nation is called to gather to the fold of Christ, to the stakes of Zion, as such are established in their nations.

Isaiah prophesied that the Lord "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The Lord's promise is: "Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." ([Isa. 27:6, 12.](#))

That is to say—Israel shall be gathered one by one, family by family, unto the stakes of Zion established in all parts of the earth so that the whole earth shall be blessed with the fruits of the gospel.

This then is the counsel of the Brethren: Build up Zion, but build it up in the area where God has given you birth and nationality. Build it up where he has given you citizenship, family, and friends. Zion is here in South America and the Saints who comprise this part of Zion are and should be a leavening influence for good in all these nations.

And know this: God will bless that nation which so orders its affairs as to further his work.

His work includes the building up of Zion in the last days. He has commissioned us to do that work for him. The foundations of Zion have already been laid in North America, in South America, in Europe, in Asia, in the South Pacific and in every place where there are stakes of Zion. But Zion is not yet perfected

in any of these places. When she is perfected, it will be as it was with Zion of old—the Lord will come and dwell with his people.

Our tenth Article of Faith says, “We believe in the literal gathering of Israel.” This gathering occurs when the lost sheep of Israel come into the Church. It occurs when their sins are washed away in the waters of baptism, so that once again they have power to become pure in heart; and Zion is the pure in heart.

Our Article of Faith says that “We believe ... in the restoration of the Ten Tribes.” This is in the future. It will occur when the Lord brings again Zion, according to the promises.

Our Article of Faith says “that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon this [the American] continent.” This also is future and will occur after the Lord’s people have gained strength and influence and power in all the nations whither he hath scattered them.

Our Article of Faith says “that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.” This also is future, a day which we devoutly desire and seek. ([A of F 1:10](#))

Each one of us can build up Zion in our own lives by being pure in heart. And the promise is, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” ([Matt. 5:8.](#)) Each one of us can extend the borders of Zion by gathering our friends and neighbors into the fold of Israel.

These things of which we speak are part of a great plan and program of the Lord. He has known the end from the beginning. He has ordained and established the system which is now in operation. He has scattered his chosen people in all the nations of the earth. And now through his goodness and grace in this, our day, by the opening of the heavens, by the ministry of holy angels sent from his presence, by his own voice speaking from heaven, by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost—by all these means—he has once again restored the fulness of his everlasting gospel. He has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ. He has commanded us to build up Zion anew. He has commanded us to overcome the world. He has commanded us to forsake every evil thing. He has made us his agents and representatives. He has commissioned us to go out and find the lost sheep of Israel. He wants us to invite them to gather with the true Church and with the Saints of God.

This is a work of great magnitude and importance. There is no work like it in all the world. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest thing in heaven or on earth. We rejoice in the glorious truths of heaven we have received. We praise the Lord for his goodness and grace. And we know within ourselves of the truth and divinity of these things.

By the revelations of the Holy Spirit to my soul, I know this work in which we are engaged is true. I know the Lord’s hand is in it. I know that success will attend our labors. The day will come when the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. We are the most blessed and favored people on earth. God grant us the wisdom, God grant us the fervor and devotion, God grant us the zeal and good sense to go forth on his errand living the gospel ourselves and saving our own souls, and offering these glorious principles of salvation to his other children. This is the Lord’s work. It is true, and I so testify in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.