

we must keep his commandments, we must walk righteously before him as we have never done it before, and if we do not, then we shall be cut off from among the people and that would be a calamity. O, I pray that we will hearken, and that we will be true and faithful and stand in holy places, as we have been commanded to do, while the wrath of the Lord our God passes over the nations of the earth, and this I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

August Glismeyer sang a sacred solo: "O Lord, What is man?"

### ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

To obviate unnecessary repetition I venture to say at the outset that I find myself in hearty accord with the utterances made by the First Presidency and by my brethren and associates in the Council of the Twelve,—and this without reservations. I commend to you for remembrance, frequent recollection, practice and application, all that has been said, all that has been set forth before you as the rule and the law of God and of the Church in regard to obedience to law, the instructions and counsel that have been given us concerning our specific duties as individuals, as members of families, as members of the Church, and as citizens of this great nation of promise and destiny.

#### TEMPORARY ISOLATION OF PEOPLES.

As my mind runs back over the dealings of God with his people in different ages, I am struck with the thought that at times he has wisely separated and isolated a part of his family in the flesh for specific purposes.

#### ABRAHAM'S MIGRATION.

You will remember that the word came to Abram, before he had been honored with that title of majesty among men, Abraham, by way of command specific and imperative: Get thee out, get thee out from the land of thy fathers, get thee out from these idolaters, and go into the land that I will show thee. And the Lord made covenant with Abraham that his posterity should be numerous and withal blessed, that they should constitute a chosen and a covenant people. Blessings unnumbered and indescribable in their fulness, so far as man's powers of description go, were listed, if not depicted, all conditioned upon compliance with the terms of their covenant or contract, and, like all other blessings promised of God, strictly predicated upon obedience on their part.

Permit a moment's digression. The test of obedience constitutes the very purpose of our being upon earth—the object in view in the creation of the earth as an abode for man, the great object that the

Lord had in peopling the earth. Do you remember his words to Abraham after the decree had been made plain that there should be formed an earth upon which those then unembodied spirits should dwell? The explanation was in part given: "And we will prove them herewith to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." That is the sum total of the test of the examination under which every mortal has to pass in this great university of life. The Israel of old were required to pass that test, and promises were made unto them provided they passed it successfully.

#### ISRAEL'S ISOLATION IN EGYPT.

After a while the descendants of Abraham were carried down into Egypt, for the Lord turned and over-turned even the unfilial and unbrotherly conduct of Joseph's brethren to that end, and there the people remained segregated and isolated in large part, dwelling in a part of the land by themselves and kept from any widespread intermingling by marriage with the Egyptians because of the caste prejudice against them. They came to be slaves and bondsmen, and when the time came that was found to be right in the unerring mind of God, Israel was led out of the land of Egypt and out from the house of bondage by the outstretched hand of power. But they were even more completely isolated for four decades after that there in the wilderness, wandering back and forth, until the generation that had imbibed the paganism of Egypt had passed away and, with the exception of two individuals, a new generation had arisen and these were led into the land of promise, and specific laws and commandments were given them that they should keep themselves apart from the abominations of the other nations who were idolaters and pagans.

In certain specific respects Israel was distinguished from all other nations of that time. In one matter for example, they were Sabbath observers, and they were the only nation under heaven that recognized the Sabbath; and that observance was a sign of distinction by which they were known. In the next place they were Jehovah worshipers, the only people known who worshiped other than idols. They worshiped the true and the living God and the Lord kept them, I was about to say so far as he was able, for they frustrated his designs and his plans in many respects, but he kept them in a measure apart, isolated, separate from the rest of the nations in order that they might be more fully trained in the ways of God. But mark you, that isolation had an end so far as physical segregation was concerned. As was predicted and foretold, the time of dispersion came when those people were scattered as the dust that is blown before the wind, sifted as corn is sifted in a sieve. It was not the plan of God that they should remain forever isolated, for it was his intent that through them should the name of the living God be made known throughout the world.

## LEHI'S COLONY SEQUESTERED ON THE WESTERN CONTINENT.

Come down a little later in history, six hundred years before the meridian of time, in the reign of Zedekiah, a body of Israelites was led away by the power of God and by direct intervention of divine agency brought across the great waters and established upon this then unknown continent, isolated from the rest of the world. The purpose of that separation, segregation, isolation and hiding was made plain. It provided a means whereby that part of the House of Israel should serve the Lord their God with purity and sincerity, so long as they would remain obedient. They were to be uncontaminated by the fallacies of Scribes and Pharisees, their minds unpoisoned by the false doctrine of academical rabbis; they were led away so that they could be taught by the Teacher of teachers. Here they were kept and their history was a checkered one, but they were held together long enough to become a distinct unit, even as the Jews had been. For in spite of the separation of the Jews, notwithstanding their world-wide dispersion, they do constitute a distinct unit in the family of mankind and they have preserved that segregation, which is other than physical isolation. It is true that the Nephites were exterminated as a nation, but part of the posterity of Lehi has continued down to the present day.

What was the purpose of it all—of that segregation of Lehi and his family and the establishment of those people upon this the western continent? The prime purpose was to provide an independent witness of the Christ. The Father would have more than the testimony of Judea and Galilee and the lands round about concerning his Well Beloved Son, the Savior and Redeemer of the race. Therefore Lehi and his people were brought here, were taught in the ways of the Lord by direct revelation through the mouths of holy prophets. Part of the Lord's dealings has been written, and in a miraculous manner the record has been brought forth and given to the world. A new witness of the Christ! People who knew nothing except as they did read what was then to them ancient history, that of Judea, of Galilee, of Jerusalem, knew nothing, except as they were taught by revelation; and the revelation to them was specific and direct. Through their prophets they learned of the earthly life of Christ, his birth, his ministry during the three short years, and his crucifixion. Later they were blessed by his personal visitation among them, and they have borne witness to him as the Savior, as the Redeemer; and we have an entirely independent body of Scripture which in no respects is at variance with the true part of the record that we find in the Holy Bible.

## THE SEPARATISTS.

Prior to a great event, which had been foretold by ancient prophets—the coming of a man from among the Gentiles across the great waters

and discovering this continent—there was another segregation upon a smaller scale, and this on the Eastern Continent: Many who had suffered because of their religious beliefs separated themselves; some of them fled from England to Holland. They came to be known specifically as Separatists. Then, following that man of God—Columbus—for he was carrying out a divine purpose, the discoverer of the western world, came those other Gentiles of whom we read; and they were brought to this land and here they found the remnant of Lehi's posterity who had formerly been established upon this continent.

#### AMERICAN NATION ONCE ISOLATED NOW THE CHIEF OF MANY NATIONS.

Now, hastening over centuries, we come to the time when an important segregation took place upon this continent. After the Church had been established through the instrumentality of the prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord led his people out, and others came from beyond the seas to join them. Because of persecution they were driven, literally driven, beyond the frontiers of what was then the United States. They came here as a body, settled in this part of the desert, their inspired leader utterly putting aside every suggestion that they should go on to the green pastures and the fat fields about the coast. Can you imagine what the result would be today had Brigham Young listened to the advice of those men, wise in their own knowledge? There never would have been, except the Lord had brought it about in another way, a unit such as this Church presents. Before the pioneers and those who came immediately after them could have been trained in the ways of God, their lands would have been invaded and they would again have become one with the people of the world. But the Lord kept them in this uninviting place, of which other people were mostly afraid until they, with whom were our worthy sires and mothers and grandparents, had been sufficiently trained to know that they had something in common which the rest of the world had not. But that physical segregation, isolation, separation was of comparatively short duration. When the Lord thought that the Latter-day Saints had learned the lesson, then he permitted others to come. It was not his intention to shut his people up within the walls of a building or within these valleys of the eternal hills, keeping them perpetually aloof from all the temptations of the world, for they had to be tried. In due time means of steam transportation were established and multitudes came and have since been coming by the hosts every year, mingling with this people who are the covenant people of the last days. But in spite of this termination of physical separation, the people are a unit wherever you find them throughout the world. They are recognized by their distinctive characteristics.

#### PREDICTIONS CONCERNING AMERICA AND HER PEOPLE.

And now turn to the nation as a whole, the nation which I designated—not by any means a designation original with me—as a nation of promise and destiny. As it grew it was isolated, isolated by the

deep on the east and the deep on the west; and we have boasted of our isolation, but that, like every other instance of segregation brought about by the hand of God, was not intended to be perpetual. As a Church we are sending out, as we have been sending out from the first, men by the hundred as we could, by the thousand when it was possible, by the score when that was the limit of our ability, or by ones and twos, men, and in late years women, sending them out into the world. Does that look like perpetual isolation, physically speaking? And in the unfolding purposes of God the isolation of the nation has been brought to an end. Now no longer does the deep shut us off from other continents as once it did. We can speak on this side and be heard on the other with no appreciable lapse of time. Messages are sent to us from Europe and we read the published account here even, according to our reckoning of time, before the hour at which the events occur. No, no—it was not intended that this nation should be forever shut off from the rest of the world. If we have anything better than the other nations have let us as Americans give it that the world may be made the better for it. That is the spirit of “Mormon” propaganda, that is the spirit of our missionary service, and it will be the spirit of the service that this nation shall render to the rest of the world.

In line with the excellent precedent set by my brethren, who have given you scripture after scripture, I desire to add another and I pray you read it more deliberately and more studiously than you may be able to listen to it in the brief time that I can give to its consideration. You may easily remember it. It is the first chapter of the Second Book of Nephi. Lehi, the prophet, stricken with years, trembling in limb and knowing that his days in the flesh had been numbered and that he was soon to follow the way of his fathers, spoke unto his posterity who had then become numerous, respecting this particular land, the land of promise, the land of Zion, and he said unto them:

Notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children for ever; and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord.

Mark you, I pray, the prophet knew that it was not to be a selfish inheritance, it was not to be kept forever solely for the habitation of his lineal descendants. It was to be for all those who were then to be led out from other countries by the hand of the Lord.

Wherefore, I, Lehi, prophesy according to the workings of the Spirit which is in me, that there shall none come into this land, save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord.

Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because

of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound, cursed shall be the land for their sakes; but unto the righteous it shall be blessed for ever.

And behold, it is wisdom that this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations; for behold, many nations would overrun the land, that there would be no place for an inheritance.

But other nations were to come, not as nations, but as members of nations; and they have come and are coming and shall come, led hither by the hand of the Lord. What, you say, these undesirable elements? Well, they are permitted to be here that the people may be tried and tested and given the experience which is so necessary to make them what the Lord intends that they shall be. And so let us not fear that our nation is going to lose its identity, or is going to lose its sovereignty or is going to be overwhelmed or overpowered by other nations. It can not be so save through iniquity. Well, you may say, are not the people of this nation iniquitous? It is true that sin befools and defiles the land; but in spite of it, I know not where you will find a nation with higher ideals or with plainer purposes to uphold the institutions that God has established for the government and freedom of men. The Constitution of this land is the pattern after which the organic laws of other nations shall be framed, and thus has been already fulfilled in part the prophecy that out of Zion shall go forth the law!

#### LATTER-DAY SAINTS FEW BUT POWERFUL THROUGH DIVINE APPOINTMENT

My brethren and sisters, we are a power in the world. The power of the priesthood is felt. What hath God wrought in his dealings with his people? Do you take time to consider how weak we are numerically speaking and yet how mighty we are in the strength of God. Look at the statistical compilations of churches that are published from time to time, summaries for the entire world or for this nation. Did you ever see there itemized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, even under its nickname, "Mormon Church?" No, we are put in with "other small denominations" and so it is throughout the world. May I take time to relate an incident which has been a means of encouragement to me?

A little over a year ago, I met by invitation in the east the editor of one of the most influential newspapers. Aside from his journalistic career he is known for achievements in literature. I was appointed to deliver an announced address, besides the expectation of speaking at other meetings of our conference in that city, the city of Boston, and the editor of this journal, in speaking with me beforehand, asked me some questions which I was pleased to answer. In an ordinary way he asked: "Will you please tell me what is about the total membership of your great church?"

And I answered him promptly: "Approximately 500,000." "But," he said, "I don't mean here in Massachusetts or in New England; I mean what is the total membership?" "I have told you, Sir, about

half a million." "But, I mean," said he, "all of you throughout the world." "I have the same answer, approximately 500,000." He sat back in his chair and was lost in thought for a moment. He said: "Am I to understand you literally that this church which has made itself so well known," and he made other remarks of a descriptive nature, "numbers not more than a half million souls?" "It is true," said I. And then the Spirit of the Lord rested upon that man so that he had to testify of the miracle that God had wrought. Unconsciously he praised the Lord, for he remarked with all seriousness and sincerity: "The hand of the Lord is in it." Then he added: "You may have all the space you need in our paper to announce your conference and for the publication of the proceedings."

In another city I had an experience very similar in some respects. It was in Baltimore. I arrived a couple of days ahead of the time fixed for our conference and found that I had been advertized to deliver a specific address there. I met the editor of two papers, two papers under one editorial management, and he, like the other journalistic gentleman to whom I referred, asked questions concerning our strength and our numbers. He was a little doubtful as to whether a reporter could be spared to attend our meetings for their force had been cut down by the war demands, but at last he said: "What is the size of your congregation here in Baltimore?" I said: "Twenty-seven." "Twenty-seven what?" "Twenty-seven souls, several of them children." "What, you have only twenty-seven?" "That is all according to the conference president's report, and if it would interest you, Sir, I can furnish you with their names and addresses." "Twenty-seven," he said. Now perhaps you would naturally expect that his next remark would be: Why, we can not spare a reporter to look after a body of twenty-seven; we have no space in our paper for such a little thing as you are. But no, no, with deep seriousness upon his face he said: "We will send a reporter and the paper will give the space you need."

So have I seen it time and time again. We can't boast of our numbers, we can't boast of our own strength, but we know that the strength of the living God is with this people, whether they be gathered or yet scattered, and his purposes concerning the Church established upon this land, the only land whose soil was suitable to the planting of such seed at the time of its establishment, shall not fail. He will see to it, for he has sworn so to do, that the Church shall not be overthrown. And as with the Church so with the nation of which we form a part. Aye, verily is the Lord working outside as well as within the Church, and other men than those who have gone down into the waters of baptism are his servants, working along specific lines. Remember, beside the relative few, shall I say, beside those who shall attain salvation, exaltation in the celestial kingdom of our God, we have to look after those other hosts who shall attain only the terrestrial glory. Their interests we must have at heart, and the interests of others, of all mankind, for our mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ

throughout the world and to warn the world by the authority and power of the holy priesthood which the Lord has laid upon us. I pray for greater effectiveness in this labor and in the discharge of this high commission, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"The Plains of Peace," a solo, was sung by Fern Batley.

### ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

A month ago I was traveling in the green hills of New England. As I rode through that great country I was deeply interested and impressed with the historical scenes and with the points of much interest, to every American.

#### A VISIT TO THE EAST.

I remembered, as I traveled around near Boston, something of the history of the settlement of that country. I recalled that about three hundred years ago the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth, driven there by persecutions, and by intolerance, which they found to exist in the old world. I remembered with what hardship and self-sacrifice they had planted themselves in that part which is now the old part of the new world. There was recalled vividly to my mind and imagination, some of the circumstances attendant upon the colonization of this new world by those who came here to find liberty and freedom. I had the opportunity of passing over the ground that was traversed, not only by the early Pilgrim fathers, but by those who were instrumental in initiating this great government that now prevails among the states of the Union. I stood upon Lexington Green where, I knew, more than a century and a half ago, those Minute Men had stood to defend their rights and to give their lives for the principles of liberty and freedom, which they regarded as so important and so dear to them and to their people. As I stood upon this historic spot I thought something of the conditions which then prevailed as contrasted with the conditions which now prevail.

#### MOMENTOUS PROBLEMS BEFORE THE NATION.

I was in attendance upon the sessions of the American Bar Association in Boston, when there were called to the attention of those present, many of the important problems which now confront the people. Men of prominence, men who have given themselves over to thought and study, admitted the perplexity of the situation. They confessed that the very foundations of civilization were threatened. They were willing to admit that the problems now confronting the nation and the people were well-nigh beyond the power and wisdom of men to solve.

While I was in the New England states the people of Boston