

ELDER MELVIN J. BALLARD

Within the last year a distinguished citizen of this country, prompted, undoubtedly, by his great love for humanity, offered one hundred thousand dollars as a prize to anyone who would submit a plan that would produce world peace.

THE WORLD AND ITS PEACE PROBLEMS

Since that offer was made, I have thought upon it many times, and have asked, What have we to do with a proposition of that character? What have we to do with the world and its peace problems? And there has come to me in the contemplation of this subject the burning conviction that we have much to do with the world and its affairs, not because of ambition which we have to become a world power, but because of the appointment of the Lord unto this people. We cannot separate ourselves from the world and its affairs. I read from the first section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants these words from the Lord himself, to the Church:

"Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

"And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world; and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets—

"The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh—

"But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world;

"That faith also might increase in the earth;

"That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

"That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers.

"Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding."

In this same connection, I wish to read a few verses from the 133rd section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, beginning with the 57th verse:

"And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fulness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity—

"To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord's errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight.

"And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thrash the nations by the power of his Spirit.

"And for this cause these commandments were given; they were commanded to be kept from the world in the day that they were given, but now are to go forth unto all flesh—

"And this according to the mind and will of the Lord, who ruleth over all flesh.

"And unto him that repenteth and sanctifieth himself before the Lord shall be given eternal life.

"And upon them that hearken not to the voice of the Lord shall be fulfilled that which was written by the prophet Moses, that they should be cut off from among the people.

"And also that which was written by the prophet Malachi: For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

"Wherefore, this shall be the answer of the Lord unto them:

"In that day when I came unto mine own, no man among you received me, and you were driven out.

"When I called again there was none of you to answer; yet my arm was not shortened at all that I could not redeem, neither my power to deliver.

"Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea. I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stink, and die for thirst.

"I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering.

"And this shall ye have of my hand—ye shall lie down in sorrow.

"Behold, and lo, there are none to deliver you; for ye obey not my voice when I called to you out of the heavens; ye believed not my servants, and when they were sent unto you ye received them not.

"Wherefore, they sealed up the testimony and bound up the law, and ye were delivered over unto darkness."

THREE SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH

These scriptures leave upon the Church a binding obligation to the world. Ninety-four years ago today there came into existence the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized for three specific purposes.

PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL TO THE WORLD

One to proclaim to the world the restoration of the everlasting gospel, in the hour of God's judgment, referred to in the Scriptures quoted by the brethren today, and that warning was also to be accompanied with the generous offer of our heavenly Father providing means of escape for all men.

THE SALVATION OF THE DEAD

Another great obligation that is upon the Church is to provide, in the way the Lord has given, through his holy temples, in the exercise of the authority of the holy Priesthood, the means, the way, whereby even those who are dead may be with us partakers in these glorious blessings vicariously performed for and in their behalf, by men in the flesh.

PERFECTING THE LIVES OF MEMBERS

Then the other great task is purifying and perfecting the lives of the members of the Church, and building them up in preparation to be the people worthy of the King of kings when he shall come.

AS TO PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL

I wish, with all earnestness, my brethren and sisters to direct your attention to the first obligation, the obligation of carrying the gospel to the world. I conceive our heavenly Father as deeply interested in all these, his children, but it was his way to commune with them through his chosen servant, the Prophet Joseph Smith. Knowing the calamity which was to come, and out of consideration for his children, he sent the warning voice, the message that was to be delivered by the angel whom John saw flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel for Earth's children crying: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That is the message the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is under obligation to carry to all the world. And as I have observed, the Lord gave, in connection with this warning, the fulness of the Everlasting Gospel, as the means of saving the world from the perils that were to come. I rejoice that so far as this obligation is concerned, we have been performing our duty acceptably, I believe, before the Lord, and yet the task is not completed. We have acted as if we were on serious business. We have not been indifferent towards the world, nor the delivery of this message. We believe that we have a vital message for all men. We know it, and we have acted as men who did believe it. From the time the first elders of the Church left their homes to begin this task, when their families and they were outcasts, when chills and fever were raging, the men themselves were sick and had to be lifted up into the wagon, and as they were about to leave their loved ones, who were sick and afflicted and sorrowing, abiding in poor little hovels, temporary quarters, these exiles, gave three cheers for Zion, to raise their drooping spirits, and left, making these sacrifices, to cross the water to carry this message to the peoples of the old world, which the Lord has required of the Church. There have followed in their wake thousands of men and hundreds of women, and never a dearth of missionaries. We have never seen a time when we could not supply, generously, those needed to discharge this obligation to the world.

NOTHING EVER DETERRED THE ELDERS FROM THIS DUTY

In the time when gold was discovered in California, and the whole world was interested and thousands were coming westward to seek their fortunes, I suppose it was a matter of great surprise to the gold seeker to meet companies of "Mormon" missionaries going away from the gold, pushing their little hand-carts, with their few

earthly belongings, to preach the gospel to the peoples of the old world. There has never been anything that has deterred the men of this Church from performing this sacred obligation. When I think of it, however, and recognize the fact that there are yet nations that have not heard the Gospel, and the great war through which we have passed seems to me to have prepared in many places the way for delivering the message, I am concerned that we shall fulfil our obligation before the Lord, within the times he would like to have us do it; and, therefore, we are calling for more help. Great as our sacrifices and service have been, the labor is not yet completed, and it must go forward; we cannot stop now.

MORE EFFORT ASKED IN THIS LINE

We are asking that there shall be more cooperation on the part of the Church members in helping to discharge this obligation. It is not the duty and task of the man who happens to have a son, to pay his way and to bear the whole burden. Of course he will have to make a sacrifice, the sacrifice of his son's time, and means to maintain him, but the burden of keeping these representatives in the field rests upon every members of the Church, and so there has been apportioned among the wards a certain number that each ward should have in the missionary field, and it is every man's duty, in the ward, to see that his representatives are in the field. It ought to be indeed a matter of regret, and I was going to say shame to any ward that would allow the representatives from that ward to come home because perchance their parents have exhausted their means and cannot go any further. The wards should rally to the help of their representatives and keep them in the missionary field, discharging the obligation that rests upon all of us.

HOW FUNDS MAY BE OBTAINED FOR THIS PURPOSE

Again, it is splendid to have missionary farewell parties. Sometimes, however, we have a very successful missionary party, a large sum is realized, but the missionary is to go to some nearby mission.

Then the next missionary farewell party is for one who is going to South Africa, or to Germany or elsewhere at a distance, and if it happens to be an unfavorable night, a small amount of money is contributed, not nearly sufficient to take him to his field of labor. We feel that the practice adopted by some stakes would be splendid if carried out elsewhere. Have your missionary farewell parties contribute liberally. Let the means, however, go into a fund in the ward from which the fare of your missionary to his field of labor, be it long or be it short, shall be paid, as the Church does in returning them, and let that fund be built up by the contributions of those who have never performed missionary service. There are men who could not go because of their own business affairs, or because of physical disabilities. It would be a splendid thing for every such man to give five dollars,

ten dollars, fifteen dollars, or twenty-five dollars or more a month for two years to such a fund, from which these, our representatives, might be sent into the field and assist those in need to remain; for there are hundreds of young men in the Church today anxious to go, but their finances will not enable them to fully take care of themselves.

THE GOSPEL THE WORLD'S HOPE

By a united effort and cooperative spirit we may continue this work acceptably to the Church and before the Lord. I feel earnest about it because I recognize that it is the world's hope. I recognize that there is no salvation for this generation except through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I recognize that the Lord has required it at our hands, and that it has to be done and done speedily. The time may not be so definitely fixed that we know exactly how long it shall be, but it has to be done in the period of time known as the "times of the Gentiles." It will not last forever; the time will come when the Gentiles will close their doors and no longer wish the elders of this Church, when the wheat has been gathered. I expect to see that time, but when it does come I want our missionaries to be there in force, as a witness before God and all men that we have acquitted ourselves honorably and acceptably to the Lord, and that we are free from the responsibility that has been upon us, and that the obligation has been fully discharged. I believe that our heavenly Father is very much like an earthly father in some respects.

HOW CAN THE CHILDREN OF GOD BE SAVED?

What can an earthly father do to save his disobedient boy or girl? He can plead with him, he can point out the way of danger and the path of safety, just as our heavenly Father, seeing the course and the tendency of this generation, leading towards sorrow and distress, wanted to save men, and he gave the warning and the way to save them. So an earthly father can plead with his son or daughter, point out the danger, and the way of safety. He can say: "My boy, the course you are taking is going to lead you to bonds and imprisonment, to sorrow and to distress. Turn away from it. But, here is the path that will lead you to happiness, to success, to virtue, to prosperity. Take this path, my son." When a father has done that, he has nearly reached his limit. If his son takes the wrong course, wilfully disobeying his father and mother, that father cannot save his boy. The boy comes to bonds and imprisonment, as many are today doing, to pay the penalty of their transgressions, with their own lives, or a life sentence. There are those who would give their lives to save these boys, but they cannot veto the sentence, they cannot set it aside; the law must have its way. Our heavenly Father can plead with his sons and his daughters, to abandon the course they are taking. He can point out the dangers, and he has always done that, whether it was in the days of Noah or now, it has been the same,

he has had the same attitude towards his children, pointing out the danger, pleading with them to turn away from that danger, and pointing the path of safety and of success. But if men disregard it, even God cannot save them, because he is limited. He must himself obey law. He cannot save his sons and his daughters, only inasmuch as they repent. We have spoken about the time when Satan shall be bound, and will have no more power over the hearts of the children of men. How will he be bound? When all men turn away from him and cease to follow after him, so far as they are concerned, he will be bound. But do you know that we can bind the Lord also by our wickedness? By our own rebellion, we tie his hands, we make him helpless to save us, and he cannot do it except men will repent. That being true, recognizing that the children of men are in peril and are in danger, and the only hope—is in the hands of this people, and it is that which is known as the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ought we not to be active, ought we not to be anxious to bring to them the glad news that has brought us peace and salvation?

RESULTS OF THE REJECTION OF THE GOSPEL

I bear witness to you that there will be, following the rejection of the testimony of the servants of the Lord, new witnesses raised up by the Lord—he himself has spoken of it—they shall be the thunder, the lightning, the earthquake, the perils by land and by sea, famine, plagues, and distress that shall naturally come. As you sow, so shall you reap. We do not want to have the world reap that kind of harvest. I have no delight in it, for I love the souls of the children of men.

OUR OFFERING TO PREVENT SUCH RESULTS

How can I help it? Thirteen years of my life have been spent in the mission field. How could I give that time for men without loving them? I do love them; yet I recognize that my love for them cannot save them. God's love for them cannot save them except they repent. Jesus himself, with all the love he had for the children of men, upon the Mount of Olives, wept over Jerusalem and said: "Oh, that thou wouldst have received the message. How I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens." But they would not. So, my brethren and sisters, I speak of our offering to the world with some degree of pride. If one hundred thousand dollars has been offered by one of our distinguished citizens in this country to produce a plan for world peace, we have offered the services of more than sixty thousand missionaries, and I have estimated, at a reasonable figure, the probable value of their time, and the money sent to them in the field and to take them there and bring them back, and this little handful of people have contributed, to bring peace to the world, more than two hundred millions of dollars in time, service and money. That is

our offering, and we have not stopped offering yet. We are on serious business. We recognize that this is a stupendous task, for a little handful of people to perform, yet we have given our time and service freely, out of the love we have for the souls of the children of men.

THE GOSPEL IS THE MESSAGE OF PEACE TO THE WORLD

But we know as we know that we live, that this is the message of peace for this world. Measures, such as offered in the plans of men to bring peace to the world, may be good, they are undoubtedly steps toward the end, but I say to you, there is no plan to settle the world's troubles, only as it is found in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; and when men receive it and repent and are baptized and come under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and he becomes the common teacher of all men, he will never teach them to go to war with one another, but he will soften their hearts, take hatred out of their souls, and the spirit of repentance shall come, and love for their fellowmen shall abide. All the plans of men cannot duplicate this system of our God.

OUR MISSION TO WIN THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

I have no fear for schism and division of this Church, over the questions on doctrine that are arising in other churches. Or whether modernism or fundamentalism shall ever be a question among us—fundamental things in this Church have clearly been established from the beginning. And we have continuous revelation that will settle all such questions. We are founded upon the truth, that God lives, a real being, our Father, that Jesus Christ is his Son, the Only Begotten in the flesh, the Firstborn in the spirit, the literal Son of God, and the only Savior of mankind. I know it as well as I know that I live; you know it; and we are to tell the world of it and try to win the world for Christ. Oh, that we could tell all men! Oh, that these amplifiers could carry today the message to the ears of all flesh, that God has spoken, and in an age of the world's dire peril, he has extended his helping hand to save them, and if they will but repent and receive the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, they shall find salvation here and hereafter. May that message be carried forward and reach all flesh, and blessing and honor shall be upon every man and every woman who thus contributes to this noble world cause. May it eventually prevail, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

The choir and congregation sang, "Come, come, ye Saints."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Presented the general authorities and the general officers of the Church, all of whom were sustained in their positions and callings by the unanimous vote of the assembly, as follows: