

has offered to the sons and daughters of Zion who keep themselves clean and pure and undefiled, to go into the temples of God to receive a companion for time and eternity, that they may be worthy to pass on, by the angels and the Gods, to their glory and inheritance and attain unto the power of endless increase, is it not inducement enough to call for sacrifices, for cleanliness of life, for purity, so that we may reap these glorious blessings and holy privileges?

A WORTHY EXAMPLE

I believe that the strength and the power is in every boy to be as good as was Joseph our forefather who was sold into Egypt. From the time of my childhood the story of his life has appealed to me. When he, comely and desirable, was sought after by the wife of the ruler, he resisted her again and again; and when she seized upon him he fled from her presence, though he left part of his clothing in her possession. Condemned falsely, he still stood true to his convictions, and God vindicated him.

Let the young men of Israel, the descendants of this Joseph, look upon their ancestor and be inspired to die rather than to be defiled, that they may be worthy to come into the great heritage that God has for his faithful sons and daughters. For if this generation shall keep themselves clean and undefiled they shall reap honors and distinction like unto which their fathers who subdued the deserts and made it blossom never attained. We shall indeed be peculiar.

REQUIREMENTS TO WEATHER THE STORM

I have confidence and a faith that the great majority of this people shall weather the storm, but it will require the closing in of our ranks. It will require closer co-operation between parents and children. It will require every effort and every power that this people can put forth to preserve this generation in purity. God give us the strength and the power to do it, that we may receive the great distinction and blessing and the eternal joy that shall come as a result of achievement and accomplishment, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER REY L. PRATT

Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Mexican Mission

I have been very greatly impressed, my brethren and sisters, by the spirit of the conference so far, and I feel strengthened and built up in my faith by reason of the instructions and admonitions and the testimonies that have been given. I am thankful to my Heavenly Father that I am accounted worthy of membership in the Church; that I have been accounted worthy to labor in the vineyard of the Lord. My missionary labors have been a source of very great joy to me, and they continue to be so.

I rejoice in the opportunity of laboring with the noble young men and women who are called from out the ranks of the Church and who

are now and have been for the past years laboring with me in the mission field. They grow and develop in a degree that is marvelous, in their contact with the world, in their contact with opposition, and even in their contact with the indifference that they encounter in the world. I think someone said yesterday that they are born seemingly with a testimony, and as soon as they begin to labor and to study and to reflect, this testimony springs into real life and activity and they grow and develop in a wonderful way. Their spirit of obedience is very remarkable, my brethren and sisters. Those who have labored with me, in nearly every instance have not hesitated at all to go where they were directed to go, or to stay whatever length of time they were asked to stay. If we had no difficulty about elders going home other than that which we have from the elders in the field our difficulties would be few indeed. We do, I am sorry to say, have some little difficulty in keeping our very fine missionaries in the field, because of the attitude assumed by friends and relatives, and in some instances presiding officers, at home. I wish that it could be understood by the people of the Church generally, as we mission presidents understand it, and we have our understanding from the General Authorities of the Church, that a mission in the world is not for any stipulated length of time. Some may be honorably released at a year's expiration, and others may stay well beyond the two year mark, even in some instances running into three and five years in some missions. It would make it very much easier for your missionary boys and girls if you could maintain them there as long as the Lord requires them to remain; and that duration of time shall be indicated through the servants of the Lord whom he has entrusted to preside over your young men and young women in the missionary field.

In our particular field of labor the work is progressing very satisfactorily, considering conditions and all concerned, even more satisfactorily than one could well hope for. We are thankful to the Lord for this and feel a desire to continue our labors and to work zealously for the redemption of that particular branch of the house of Israel with which we are laboring, namely, the Lamanite people, who are descendants of Joseph and who have resided upon this land of America.

I have been particularly impressed during this conference by the reference that has been made to the Book of Mormon. It has made my heart rejoice to hear the strong testimonies given in favor of its divine authenticity, and it is a source of joy to know that the men of science, archaeologists, who are delving into the ruins of the past, are developing only things that corroborate the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon; for in very deed all that is coming forth is in favor of it. So far as my studies and observations are concerned I have found nothing that in any way controverts the claim that we make for the divinity of the Book of Mormon.

It has been my good pleasure, my brethren and sisters, to travel a very great deal in Book of Mormon lands, and it would have been strange indeed if I had not taken some interest and had I not found some

things that to me are evidences of the divine authenticity of that book. I have not been among those who have tried to place or locate certain cities, or even definitely certain lands; but I have read in the Book of Mormon of a mighty civilization that has existed upon this continent in the remote past—the Jaredite civilization, preceding even the Nephite civilization. I have read in the Book of Mormon of their spreading out upon the face of the whole land. I have read about the wonderful buildings they have left, the wonderful temples that they have erected, the extent of their great cities. I have studied about the materials used in the construction of those cities; and it has been my happy pleasure, my brethren and sisters, to see verily demonstrated before me the fact that there has lived in the remote past upon this continent a civilization that exceeded in every way that found even by the Spanish conquerors in Mexico and by the Spanish conquerors in Peru, who conquered the most highly civilized nations found here by European conquerors.

I have stood in amazement at the immense dimensions of the stones used in the construction of great buildings in Mexico. I have seen juttied together as lintels over three great doorways that led into a great hall from a courtyard, stones that were five by six by twenty-five feet in dimension. Brother Ballard and I, in returning from our missionary sojourn in Buenos Aires, came by the great ruined city of Tiahuanaco, at the extreme southern end of Lake Titicaca, at the great elevation of 12,500 feet above the sea level; where we actually measured stones that were six by eight by twenty-five feet, and they were fitted together in buildings, without mortar, in a system of dry masonry. So well fitted and adjusted were some of these huge stones, that even after all the ages that have passed since they were placed there, you cannot insert a knife blade between the joints.

I have seen many things that demonstrate to me that the Book of Mormon is true. It is not a difficult thing for me to believe in inscriptions on plates of gold. When Brother Ballard and I were returning from South America we had the opportunity of going ashore at Lima, Peru, the capital of the Peruvian government. There we had access to a national museum where a great collection had been made, which was being housed in new quarters that were not open to the public. We secured entrance, through the good offices of our ambassador to that country, and after witnessing many archaeological wonders we came to a glass case that was perfectly filled with gold ornaments. There were cups and candlesticks seemingly, of very curious workmanship. They were wonderful indeed. They were a few of the great things that had been left after the cupidity of the Spanish conquerors had robbed that country of all the gold that could be found, but yet some was left behind. After examining through the glass case many of the objects, our attention was attracted to a pile of gold leaf in one corner. As near as I could calculate its dimensions, it was about the same size as our *Juvenile Instructor*, and the pile was about as high as half a dozen *Juveniles*. The thickness of the leaves, it seemed to me, was similar to

the outside cover of that magazine. They were of pure gold leaf. All you would need to do would be to insert a ring through the edges of them to have a set of plates that would contain at least as much as we have in the abridgment of the Book of Mormon that was brought to us through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

I do not say these things to be sensational or to boast, but I tell you that my eyes have beheld them. I do not doubt the story of the Book of Mormon because of these things. I have delved a very great deal into old Spanish literature during the great number of years I have resided in Latin American countries, and I have been able to search out many curious traditions concerning the belief of the ancient people, as they were recorded by the early chroniclers that came with the conquest of Mexico; things that bespeak the fact that the people must have had a knowledge of the creation and of the flood that was in every particular coincident with or exactly like the account given in the Bible. The story of the creation is not recited very much in detail in the Book of Mormon, but one cannot but understand from that record that the people had a knowledge of it precisely as the Jews had it, because of the fact that the Nephites brought with them the first five books of Moses, upon which plates perhaps, as they were spoken of this morning by Elder Talmage, were contained these writings. They had this record precisely as it is in the Bible.

I have in my possession some pamphlets from which I have made a few extracts that I should like to refer to. One is in regard to the flood. These pamphlets are in Spanish, and I have made a hasty translation of them into English, but I would like to call them to your attention.

You remember that it is recorded in Genesis that the Lord commanded that the waters from above be separated from the waters beneath, and the account goes on to tell how they were arranged in their proper places. There is a tradition that was recorded by Padre Pedro de los Rios (Codice Rios (Vaticano A.), folio 12, anverso) speaking of Quetzalcoatl, a great being traditional among them, to whom they attributed the creation of the world and many other things. And this is said about him by Padre Rios as he recorded the tradition that he found among the Indians:

“This is the image of the first Lord that the world had, who, when it pleased him, breathed and separated the waters of the heavens from those of the earth, the which had before been together, and he it is that arranged them as they now are.”

You will see a close analogy, my brethren and sisters, between this tradition and the account given in Genesis, which account truly must have been had among the people of this land, if it so be that the Book of Mormon is true.

There is a tradition among these people concerning the destruction of the world by the flood; and furthermore, they recount that in the traditions of the native people there was an account of the destruction

of the world at another time. This excited the curiosity of one Diego Munoz Camargo. You will find this account written in his History of Tlaxcala, published in 1892, on pages 153 and 154. He says:

“There being a very great error among these natives, and very general throughout this new Spain, because they said this world had had two endings or two windings up, and that one had been by deluges and tempestuous waters, and that the earth had been turned upside down, and that those who had lived at that time had been giants, whose bones are found in the broken places.

You will recall, my brethren and sisters, that the Genesis account also states that there were giants living in those days. The tradition says:

“And those who lived at that time were giants whose bones are now found in the broken places.”

“They also say that there had been another ending of the world, and that it was caused by winds and hurricanes that were so great that everything in the world was destroyed, even the trees and plants of the mountains; and that the men of that time were taken up from the ground and were lost to sight. And they hold as a certainty, furthermore, that there is to be another ending of the world and it is to be by fire.”

If you will take the pains, my brethren and sisters, to look up these references you will find that my statement in regard to this is true. These things attract my attention very greatly, and there are innumerable things of this kind that could be recited that are just as wonderful as these that I have mentioned.

I would like to recount just one more tradition, which is in regard to the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ or Quetzalcoatl. Our account of the conception and birth of Jesus Christ and that of the conception and birth of Quetzalcoatl, who was their great Deity, are almost the same. You will find this in the *Codice Telleriano Remensis*.

“Quetzalcoatl was born in Chiuenauicatl, which is where the hand is—He it is that was born of the virgin that is called Chimalman in the heavens. This Quetzalcoatl is he of whom it is said, ‘He made the world,’ because they say that this Tonacatecuhtli (the supreme God who resides in the most high heaven) when it pleased him breathed and begot this Quetzalcoatl; and he, (Quetzalcoatl), they say it was that made the first man.”

This is very remarkable, my brethren and sisters, taken in connection with the account given in the New Testament, of the conception of Jesus Christ; and if you will couple that also with the first chapter of John, wherein it says that the Son of the Most High God, who was with the Father from the very beginning, was the Creator of the earth, and that by him and through him and of him all things that were made were made, you will see that we have ample reason to accept, even from these external evidences, the fact that the Book of Mormon is the word of God:

Now to me it is a reality. It is my faith and belief in this Book of Mormon that has kept me going throughout all the dark years of my missionary service in Mexico. For it seems that no more obstacles could

be placed in the way of missionary progress than have been, because of conditions that have reigned in that land. But the Book of Mormon recounts to us that the people of the land, the descendants of those who wrote these great prophecies of the Lord, are a covenant people of the Lord and they are to be redeemed.

I want to read to you something that has given to me a great deal of faith and hope, and if the book is true as we declare it to be, these promises that have not yet had their fulfilment will most surely be fulfilled in behalf of that people. I read to you now from the thirtieth chapter of *Second Nephi*, beginning with the third verse:

“And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many who shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed.

“And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews.

“And the Gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

“And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightful people.”

I believe that prediction. I am working earnestly, my brethren and sisters, for its fulfilment. It would be almost easier, looking at the thing from a natural standpoint, to believe in the extermination of the people rather than that any of them would be spared. But they are to enjoy this great redemption.

I would like to refer to statistics that reveal the fact that since the coming of the Spanish conquerors among the Indian people,—at least speaking of those south of the Rio Grande, clear on through Mexico and down to Central and South America,—nine-tenths of them have succumbed. That is in a period of about four hundred years. Mathematically calculating it would not take long for the other one-tenth to be wiped out, for it seems that the same condition of strife and war and bloodshed prevails among them. Looking at it naturally it almost looks as though not even a remnant of them might be left. But in this respect, and in order that my faith may not falter, I take courage from the word of the Lord as it came to Nephi concerning this very thing; for verily he was shown just what would happen among this people, that his own branch should be destroyed at the hands of their brethren, and that his brethren should dwindle in darkness and unbelief, and that there should be wars and strife among them for generation after generation. But the Lord said to him something that must have been very consoling to him, and indeed, my brethren and sisters, it is very consoling to me. Speaking of the great Gentile nation that should be brought in to bring them down and to inhabit the land, the Lord maintains that it is the land of the inheritance of the sons and

daughters and the descendants of Lehi, to whom he gave this land as a perpetual inheritance. And in this connection the Lord says to Nephi as recorded in the thirteenth chapter of first Nephi:

“Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands, which is the land that the Lord hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren. Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren.”

So I take it, my brethren and sisters, that these prophecies and promises are valid. The Lord intends to redeem that people. He intends to redeem them through those of us who are brought out from among the Gentile nations and who in very deed believe the words of the book that has come to us. I testify to you with those who have testified before me that it is the word of God. It has been revealed through the instrumentality of the greatest prophet that has resided in this world, save it be the Son of God himself; and it will stand the test of time. It will stand the test of any investigation that can be brought to bear and in the end it will triumph. The Lord help us to believe it and help us to act well our part in carrying out the work assigned to us in this great work of the Lord, I humbly ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD R. LYMAN

An ancient prophecy, in the second chapter of Isaiah, contains, in the first four verses, two notable predictions. In the fifth verse the prophet makes this telling appeal to the people of Jacob: “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”—Isaiah 2:5.

WHAT PEOPLE DESIRE TO KNOW

I received a letter the other day from Evanston, Wyoming. The writer said that in recent remarks in this tabernacle I indicated that there are characteristic differences between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and other churches. My correspondent adds that I failed to point out the differences. I attempted then to point out that our missionary system is one of the characteristic features of our Church work. I hope this afternoon briefly to indicate another outstanding feature.

In the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, it is said:

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest.

“And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way”—that is, any who are disciples of the Lord, any of the believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—“men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”