

## ELDER MELVIN J. BALLARD

About one year after the organization of the Church, in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord Jesus Christ said:

"And even so I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me.

"Wherefore, come ye unto it, and with him that cometh I will reason as with men in days of old, and I will show unto you my strong reasoning."

"Wherefore, hearken ye together and let me show unto you even my wisdom—the wisdom of him whom ye say is the God of Enoch, and his brethren."

From the testimonies that have been borne during this conference, ample evidence has been offered to show that the Lord has fulfilled in part at least this promise, that in the establishment of his Church he was establishing a standard for his people to seek unto and that would also attract the attention of the world.

## AN IMPORTANT PERIOD

My soul rejoices with my brethren and sisters who have spoken during this great conference, for this glorious day, and I have lifted up my heart in praise and adoration of the Almighty for his goodness to give me life in this time. Had I been given the privilege to choose any period of all the glorious past I would prefer to be upon the earth today, in the year 1930, rather than any other period the world has ever known, because I believe we are at the dawn of far more glorious things than have ever been known in the history of all the glorious past.

## TESTIMONIES REGARDING OUR STANDARDS

Men are bearing witness to the value of the standards of the Latter-day Saints. Many quotations have been made during this conference from eminent authorities who have been making a study of the lives of the Latter-day Saints. I want to add one from a critic who has already been quoted by one of the brethren, and who, notwithstanding his criticism, acknowledges as he examines the rise of various churches in America that of all of them there is only one that has succeeded. And he asks why has this one succeeded when others have failed? He answers:

"Mormonism is the American mind at last hitting on the solution. The solution is, briefly, a co-operation of energized believers working in the name of God for an earthly kingdom that will persist into eternity. In the half century before the Civil War America was freckled with experimental societies struggling to find this formula. Mormonism found it and has endured."

Testimonies of men who are observing us indicate that not only are our standards appealing to members of the Church, but to those who are not of us. In the establishment of this work the Lord declared that only the truth could survive, and that everything that could be shaken would be shaken.

## CHURCH PROGRESS IN AGE OF GREATEST ENLIGHTENMENT

In looking into some late government statistics I observe that of the twenty-three leading denominations in the United States six of them in the period of the last ten years have shown a loss in membership, and of the twenty-three not one of them shows a greater percentage of growth than the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While it is computed that there are twenty-five thousand vacant Protestant churches in the United States, this Church has been through its greatest building program in the period of the last three years. It is marvelous when we think of it also happening in the age of the world's greatest enlightenment. That inspired document which President Grant read, the utterances of the First Presidency, called our attention to the marvelous changes that have occurred in the period of one hundred years. Man's manner of thought, of travel, every phase of human activity, has been so touched by the inventions of science, that we live in a marvelous age. More light and knowledge has come into the world during this period of one hundred years than all the ages of time combined preceding it. And in the light of all this blaze of knowledge Mormonism thrives and flourishes as never before. The greatest ally the Mormon Church has is modern science.

## GOSPEL TRUTHS HARMONIZE WITH SCIENTIFIC TRUTHS

We have no quarrel with any of the truths of science. We have perhaps still some dispute with some of the theories of men who are attempting to support their theories by the application of scientific truths, but we have no quarrel with the truths of science. They stand in perfect harmony with the truths of this restored Gospel, and all truth naturally will be akin and united. Each truth, whether it comes from science or from religion, will be united harmoniously together. And then when I think of this great flood of light and truth, I ask why did this come into the world in this age? Were there not wise men before 1830? Were there not great characters who have appeared upon the pages of history, and yet they were not able to solve the mysteries, unlock the door, and bring to light the wonderful things that this age has known? Why? I can only answer with simple, trusting, faith and belief, that the reason this flood of light and truth has come into the world in this age is because God willed it so. These great truths were known to him. Not a thing that man knows but was known of God long beforehand. The secret was kept until the day came when the door was opened. The Spirit of God, as was said this morning, has been poured out upon all flesh, and men have seen visions and have dreamed dreams and have unlocked the mysteries of God and have brought to light and knowledge these marvelous truths that are God's means of helping to promote the establishment of his religious truths and to prepare the world for his glorious coming.

God is not only moving among this people, but he is operating among the nations of the earth. I rejoice in the accomplishments of the past. Our fathers and mothers have stood trials, persecutions,

mob violence, and difficulties, the like of which perhaps no other age has known. But they have endured it. They have stood like beaten anvils in all these trials, and remained true, and have given us a Church conceded by men to have the right to exist.

#### THE GLORIOUS FUTURE

Now what shall we do? Our sacred duty is to stand by the fires that have been kindled, keep them ablaze that they shall never die, that they shall never perish. This is the glorious age of truth. There are yet conflicts that will go forward. Battles? Yes, struggles. But in the finality of each struggle there shall come the day of the triumph of truth. For this is the age when truth shall be triumphant and victorious, error, darkness and superstition, whether in the Church or in the state, shall perish, for this is the age for the triumph of truth, and I rejoice in it.

As I look forward to the future, glorious as the past has been, I see more glorious things before us. You sons and daughters of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, driven out from the midst of his brethren—in his isolation God was with him and raised him up to be the Savior of the whole house of Israel—so you children of Israel, you Latter-day Saints, sons of Joseph and of Ephraim, though you too were cast into the wilderness, driven away, in your isolation God has been with you. He is preparing to bring you out of your isolation, even as he did Joseph, to glorify you and to make you the saviors of the whole house of Israel, the light of the world.

#### THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

In the document President Grant read, you listened to the scripture from the forty-fifth section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord Jesus Christ promises that though Israel was widely scattered she should be gathered again. But the statement is made that Israel, so far as the Jews were concerned, were to remain in their scattered condition until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and that the times of the Gentiles began with the dawn of this Gospel dispensation, and that that generation should see the close of the times of the Gentiles. What follows afterwards? I am not able to determine the exact hour or period, but we have concluded from our Book of Mormon method that a generation is approximately one hundred years. It may be more. But we have every reason to believe that we are coming to the close of the period of the times of the Gentiles, and then dawns a new day. It does not imply that the Gospel shall necessarily be taken from the Gentile nations; it may remain there, and shall until all who are among them of Israel shall be gathered up and until our work is accomplished among them. Then cometh the day of Israel.

The Lord said, through Luke, that the Jews should fall by the edge of the sword and should be led away captive into all nations, and that Jerusalem should be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled. Jerusalem was trodden down until General

Allenby's army marched into Jerusalem and broke the power that had ruled over the land and the destinies of that people for ages.

#### THE DAY OF ISRAEL

And I cannot help but believe that God is working with the rulers of nations, even the rulers of Great Britain, for they were inspired to name a Jew, Dr. Samuels, as the first ruler in nearly two thousand years, who has had authority and dominion over the Holy Land, who is a descendant of those to whom God gave the land originally. This all indicates that the time has come for this branch of the house of Israel. Their day is at hand. Many years ago while doing missionary work in Montana I was given to understand by the whispering of the Spirit, as I wondered why the Lamanites had not been brought into the Church at an earlier period—the Lord made known to me that there were many things that he had to do for them before they were prepared to accept the Gospel message. I believe that the things the Lord had in mind are being accomplished and that their day dawns also. I was impressed with it on that memorable Christmas morning in 1925 in South America when Brother Wells, Brother Pratt and I knelt in that beautiful grove of weeping willow trees on the banks of the Rio de la Plata and dedicated the land for the spreading of the Gospel, and the Spirit of the Almighty was upon us. We were made to know that the Gospel message would find thousands who had the blood of Israel in their veins in South America. Then we saw the day when it would go to the fifteen million of Father Lehi's children who are in that land, and that the shackles, politically, would be broken, the day of retribution would come, the day of deliverance, and that they would come into a full realization of the promises of the Almighty. For, for that very purpose, we read in the third section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, was the Book of Mormon given, to bring them, the Lamanites, to a knowledge of the truth.

#### THE LAND OF ZION

I bear witness to you that God is moving in South America, and that the day will come when it will be as the prophet declared, a land of Zion—yes, the land of Zion for this branch of the house of Israel; while North America becomes the land of Zion to Joseph's children of Ephraim. And God will move the leaders of the nations to prepare the way for it all.

#### CHURCH AND STATE

The great struggle for religious liberty that is going on in Mexico is also on in South America. Within the last five years two great nations have established absolute separation of Church and state, and others are struggling to that end. It will come. No power can stay it. The theory that the great dominant church there has, that its head has the right to rule over the Church and state, (and within the last year he has ascended unto that position, wherein he is now king and also the head of the church) is not the spirit of the democracy of South America,

nor is it the spirit of the democracy of North America or Mexico. It may be a lingering symbol of that which was once in Europe, but that order of things cannot live in this land, for this is the age of the separation of the Church and the state. Yes, there will come a time when it shall be united again, but not under any earthly man. I believe that the Lord God Almighty is working not only in this Church but in this nation. Yes, this is the beginning of the realization of Daniel's dream. But I firmly believe too that God, as our scriptures very clearly teach, both the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, raised up this mighty nation of the Gentiles, and that his hand has been in it. He was with the patriot fathers who laid its foundation. He sustained them in their struggles. He was with Lincoln. He has carried the work on by his power, and men have acknowledged God as the King of the land. And so I believe when he comes whose right it is to rule and reign he will come as King of kings, and that is politically, and that he will be Lord of lords, and that is in his Church. I believe that when he comes to rule and reign there will be a union of Church and state under him whose right it is to rule and reign. But never has that right been given to a mortal man.

We are going forward in preparation for that time. This great government is going forward in its holy mission to establish the principles of righteousness in government. It is God's work. It is rolling forth and it is teaching the nations of the earth and preparing them for the order of things when he shall come. It was but a prophecy of that which in time will be, when the Lord Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem as a king. They strewed their palm branches and hailed him king. That is what he shall be when he comes to rule and reign, and the people shall accept him and be glad for his coming.

#### God's Purposes to be Fulfilled in Russia

I am sure also that God is moving in Russia. Much as we are disturbed over the tyranny and the oppression that is waged against religion in that land today, it is not a new thing, for that has been the order for ages. But I can see God moving also in preparing the way for other events that are to come. The field that has gone to wild oats needs to be plowed up and harrowed and prepared for a new seed. So in Russia. It may seem appalling to us, but it is God breaking up and destroying an older order of things, and the process will be the accomplishment of God's purposes within a very short period of time, which normally may have taken generations. But that people will come back, for I bear witness that there are thousands of the blood of Israel in that land, and God is preparing the way for them.

#### Saviors of the House of Israel

Yes, our cousins, the Jews, whom we have sympathized with, whom we have loved from the beginning of this Gospel dispensation—whether you know it or not God is moving in your interest. This work is the hub and the center about which all the great movements are going forward among the nations of the earth. God is in it and it will triumph,

and the Latter-day Saints will come out of their isolation and become the saviors of the whole house of Israel; not so much to feed them bread as Joseph did, but a more precious bread, the bread of life, the spiritual things that are of greater value.

#### THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GOD'S PURPOSES

I bear witness to you Latter-day Saints that all we need to do is to keep the commandments of God. His promise was that if we would listen to his counsels we would never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world were subjugated under the Lord Jesus Christ; and the earth will be given to the saints and those who are worthy of it, to possess it forever and forever. All we need to do is to adhere to our teachings, and these standards of living will solve every problem that now vexes the world. In our making progress let us not lose sight of the goal, neither become discouraged. We are about to enter into a new era, a new period, more glorious, more wonderful. All we need to do is to serve God and we shall see his salvation going forward to the accomplishment of his holy purposes, for Zion shall arise and shine, and the ends of the earth shall come unto her to learn of her ways and walk in her paths, for she is destined to be the light of the world. I know it and bear witness of it, and ask God to send us home rededicating our lives and all that we have to keep the fires burning, to carry on and be prepared when God is ready for the consummation of his holy purposes.

#### DEAD BUT NOT SILENCED

We sorrow at the necessity of the death of the Prophet, but we glory that he was willing to die and did die a martyr and sealed his testimony with his blood. It was undoubtedly essential. As has been said by an eminent authority who has written a life of Christ, "We lend ears only to voices which cry out from the tombs, and reserve our scanty capacity for reverence for those whom we have assassinated. The only truths that remain in the fleeting memory of the human race are those written in blood. All the prophets who have ever spoken upon the earth were insulted by men, and men will insult those who are yet to come. We can recognize prophets by this: that smeared with mud and covered with shame they passed among men, bright-faced, speaking out what was in their hearts. No mud can close the lips of those who must speak, even if the obstinate prophet is killed. They cannot silence him. His voice, multiplied by the echoes of his death, will be heard in all languages and through all the centuries that are to come."

God vindicate his truth, as I am sure he will, and keep us worthy to be in the ranks of the victorious in the greater day that is to come, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.