

in righteousness, and out of our might in righteousness we would set the world an example. We would become a light, a standard to a misdirected, misled, and faithless world. So in the final analysis of the Lord's plans, he bestowed his name upon the restored Church to identify us from the rest of the world by being called Latter-day Saints.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

It is a far cry from the days of Pontius Pilate when he ordered the name of the Savior nailed to the cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews," to the day when John the Revelator saw in a vision and declared:

And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev. 19:16.)

In his name the Lord promised that he would appear as the Lord of lords and King of kings to all those who live the gospel of Jesus Christ, meriting the title of Latter-day Saints, and they should have this blessing:

They are they who are the church of the Firstborn. They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things—They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; . . . These are they whose names are written in heaven, where God and Christ are the judge of all; These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood. These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical. (D. & C. 76:54-56; 68-70.)

Again the question is submitted: "What is there in a name?" What is there in the name of Jesus Christ?

Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved; Wherefore, all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day. (*Ibid.*, 18:23, 24.)

May God bless you and may he bless me, that we will so revere the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we will keep his commandments and enjoy all the blessings involved therein, I ask in his name. Amen.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I rejoice with you in the return of our Latter-day Saint Servicemen from their many assignments overseas. I am grateful for the strength they will bring to us in our various organizations, in the wards and stakes. I sincerely hope that every returning Latter-day Saint serviceman will resume his activity in the Church without delay.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR SERVICEMEN

These servicemen have accomplished some great things during the last few years. They have rendered great service to the Church and likewise to their country. In the main, they have been true to the standards they have been taught. I am sure they have been loyal and patriotic, fighting in defense of freedom. It has been a great sacrifice for our one hundred thousand servicemen under the Stars and Stripes, to leave their homes and schools, their work, and their families. But it has been a greater sacrifice for those who have borne the brunt of battle, for many of our boys have been wounded, some of them severely. Some of our boys are blind; some have suffered severe nervous and mental injuries; and there are those among them who will never walk again.

Many have died. We at *The Deseret News* have endeavored to determine about how many Latter-day Saint servicemen were killed in the war. Our study is as yet incomplete, but if we were to estimate the total for the whole Church, based upon the figures that have thus far been compiled, the number of Latter-day Saint servicemen who have given their lives in this war would exceed five thousand. Our hearts go out in deepest sympathy to the families thus bereft.

Those boys fought and died that their families at home might enjoy peace and safety. They died, also, in the cause of freedom, in the cause of free agency, freedom of action, free enterprise if you please. In spite of the sacrifices these boys have made, together with the thousands of other Americans who have died in defense of liberty, there are still those in our land to whom freedom means nothing. There are influences and movements and groups and organizations within the borders of the United States which today, if they could, would rob us all of our free agency.

Latter-day Saints, of all people, should stand firm in defense of freedom. Free agency has a special meaning to us. We know that without free agency there would be no progress. We all know that the gospel itself is based upon the principle of free agency. Yet there are some among us who have allowed themselves to slip to one side or the other, and they need to reorient themselves in line with the divine revelations we have received concerning the principle of freedom.

AMERICA, A LAND OF DESTINY

Let us look for a moment at one or two of the phases of freedom that are so important to us. Most of us believe that America is a promised land, a land of destiny, and so it is. But what is that destiny?

Anciently, the Lord made it known that the gospel would be restored in these last days; that it should come forth after a period of apostasy and that it should come forth upon this land of America. It was necessary that the gospel should come forth under a free form

of government in order that the modern people of God could carry on their work without regimentation or restriction, and, therefore, God dedicated America to freedom.

When the Savior was among the Nephites, he predicted the coming forth of the Gentiles upon this land; he told about the coming forth of the gospel itself and said: "For it is wisdom in the Father that they [the Gentiles] should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things"—meaning the gospel principles—"might come forth from them," that is, from the believing of the Gentiles, "unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel." (Book of Mormon, III Nephi 21:4.)

FREEDOM ESSENTIAL FOR RESTORATION OF GOSPEL

Note that language if you will. The Gentiles were to come forth upon this land of America. They were to be set up as a free people. They were to be thus established by the power of the Father, and the purpose of it all was that the gospel might come forth and be preached to the children of men in order that God could fulfill the covenant that he had made "with his people, O house of Israel." And why was freedom so necessary in connection with the restoration of the gospel and its promulgation among the children of men? In order that those to whom the gospel would be restored might have the freedom of speech to preach the gospel; the freedom of the press to publish the gospel; freedom of assembly so they could gather together in congregations and worship the Lord; and religious freedom so that they could worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience.

President Joseph F. Smith discussed this subject in this way:

This great American nation the Almighty raised up by the power of his omnipotent hand, that it might be possible in the latter day for the kingdom of God to be established in the earth. If the Lord had not prepared the way by laying the foundations of this glorious nation, it would have been impossible (under the stringent laws and bigotry of the monarchical governments of the world) to have laid the foundations for the coming of his great kingdom. (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 409.)

And along the same line, President Brigham Young said:

We believe that the Lord has been preparing that when he should bring forth his work, that, when the set time should fully come, there might be a place upon his footstool where sufficient liberty of conscience should exist, that his Saints might dwell in peace under the broad canopy of constitutional law and equal rights. In this view we consider that the men in the Revolution were inspired by the Almighty to throw off the shackles of the mother government, with her established religion. For this cause were Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Washington, and a host of others in-

spired to deeds of resistance to the acts of the King of Great Britain. (*Discourses*, p. 359.)

So Spoke Brigham Young.

Did our American colonist feel that they were assisted by the Almighty in winning independence from their mother country? They certainly did and so expressed themselves. Among them was George Washington who, in the inaugural address he delivered on April 30, 1789, said this:

No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency.

CONSTITUTION WRITTEN UNDER INSPIRATION

But merely to be given their independence did not mean that they were set up as a new nation. A government must be established. Did God follow through and fulfill the prophecy in the Book of Mormon as uttered by his Beloved Son to the Nephites? He did by raising up and inspiring the men who drafted the form of government for this land. He inspired those men to write the Constitution of the United States and that Constitution is the means by which God wrote into the law of this land the principles of free agency. So the Lord said:

... it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another. And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose. (D. & C. 101:79, 80.)

And, furthermore, not only did the Lord raise up these men and inspire them to write free agency into the government of this land, but he declared his intention that the elders of this Church should defend that Constitution and the freedoms and the rights allowed us in that great document. And so he said, "that law of the land, which is constitutional," and I call your attention to the phraseology:

... that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining the rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me. Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land; And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil. (D. & C. 98:5-7.)

In regard to that last sentence, it is my interpretation that laws which are not in harmony with the principle of free agency and therefore not in harmony with the spirit of the Constitution, "cometh of evil."

Then the Lord continues:

I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law—

that is the constitutional law—

also maketh you free. Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn. (D. & C. 98:8,9.)

OUR OBLIGATION TO DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION

And so the Lord seems to teach us that it is a part of our religion to preserve and fight for and defend the Constitution of the United States with all its rights and freedoms as provided therein. It was with this thought in mind that President Heber J. Grant said:

From my childhood days I have understood that we believe absolutely that the Constitution of our country is an inspired instrument, and that God directed those who created it and those who defended the independence of this nation. Concerning this matter it is my frequent pleasure to quote the statement by Joseph Smith, regarding the Constitution: "The Constitution of the United States is a glorious standard; it is founded in the wisdom of God. It is a heavenly banner; it is, to all those who are privileged with the sweets of liberty, like the cooling shades and refreshing waters of a great rock in a weary and thirsty land. It is like a great tree under whose branches men from every clime can be shielded from the burning rays of the sun."

Then, President Grant continues, after quoting the Prophet:

And such the Constitution of the United States must be to every faithful Latter-day Saint who lives under its protection. (*Gospel Standards*, p. 128, 129.)

Brigham Young also believed that it was part of our religion to defend the Constitution of the United States. Said he:

We mean to sustain the Constitution of the United States and all righteous laws. We will cling to the Constitution of our country, and to the government that reveres that sacred charter of freemen's rights; and if necessary, pour out our best blood for the defense of every good and righteous principle.

He continues:

To accuse us of being unfriendly to the Government, is to accuse us of hostility to our religion, for no item of inspiration is held more sacred with us than the Constitution under which she acts. (*Discourses*, pp. 358-359.)

At another time, with this same thought in mind, Brigham Young again spoke and said:

How long will it be before the words of the prophet Joseph will be fulfilled? He said if the Constitution of the United States were saved at all it must be done by this people. It will not be many years before these words come to pass. When the Constitution of the United States hangs, as it were, upon a single thread, they will have to call for the "Mormon" Elders to save it from utter destruction; and they will step forth and do it. . . . if it is sustained on this land of Joseph, it will be done by us and our posterity. (*Ibid.*, pp. 360,361.)

DIVINE PRINCIPLE OF FREE AGENCY

I appeal to every Latter-day Saint to accept the divine principle

of free agency and to adopt it in his life. I appeal to you to remember this principle when you are confronted by organizations and groups and movements in this country, which are now arising and assuming great power. Before you become engulfed in them, measure their practices and their purposes by the measuring rod of free agency, and you remember that God said it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another. Remember, also, what Richard Evans told you yesterday, that it is not right that we should be commanded in all things, and don't you allow yourself to be commanded in all things by any group or agency. You preserve the free agency that God has given to you, because if you don't you will suffer all the days of your life.

You remember that you are to be true to the Constitution of the United States. I appeal to you to accept as the word of God, the declaration that appears in the revelation in section one hundred one of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord says he did raise up men and inspired them to write the Constitution. I appeal to you, every one, to be true to the trust that God has placed in you, to preach the gospel throughout the world, as has been declared here today. But remember that you cannot preach that gospel without freedom of speech, and you cannot publish that gospel without freedom of the press, and you cannot gather together in congregations without freedom of assembly, and you cannot worship the Lord your God according to the dictates of your own conscience without freedom of religion. And remember that every time you give up any of your freedoms, whether it be to some economic or political group, or to any other group, you jeopardize these four freedoms of which I have spoken.

I appeal to you to accept as the word of God that which I have quoted to you which says that you, the elders of Israel, are justified by God in defending your constitutional privileges. I appeal to you to be true to your one hundred thousand sons who have fought for liberty, to the eight thousand of your sons who have been wounded and bled in battle. Do not betray the five thousand Latter-day Saint boys who died that freedom might live. Remember that you have a responsibility to preserve freedom in America. Remember always the glorious prayer that is written into the last stanza of "America" which was sung so beautifully this morning by the Tabernacle choir.

Our father's God! to thee,
 Author of liberty,
 To thee we sing;
 Long may our land be bright
 With freedom's holy light!
 Protect us by thy might
 Great God, our King.

I pray that we may have the courage and the wisdom to accept the truth, that the truth may keep us free, and I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.