

PRESIDENT JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I consider this a great honor and a privilege to stand before this vast body, mostly of men holding the priesthood, to bear testimony unto them of my faith. I seek the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord in what I have to say.

During the past week or two I have received a number of letters from different parts of the United States written by people, some of whom at least are a little concerned because they have been approached by enemies of the Church and enemies of the Book of Mormon, who had made the statement that there have been one or two or more thousand changes in the Book of Mormon since the first edition was published. Well, of course, there is no truth in that statement.

It is true that when the Book of Mormon was printed the printer was a man who was unfriendly. The publication of the book was done under adverse circumstances, and there were a few errors, mostly typographical—conditions that arise in most any book that is being published—but there was not one thing in the Book of Mormon or in the second edition or any other edition since that in any way contradicts the first edition, and such changes as were made, were made by the Prophet Joseph Smith because under those adverse conditions the Book of Mormon was published. But there was no change of doctrine.

Now, these sons of Belial who circulate these reports evidently know better. I will not use the word that is in my mind. I started to read the Book of Mormon before I was old enough to be a deacon, and I have been reading it ever since, and I know that it is true. Every member of the Church ought to know that it is true, and we ought to be prepared with an answer to all of these critics who condemn it. They are laying themselves open to punishment when they come to the judgment, and the Lord has said that such characters would arise. Moroni wrote about them, and the Lord answered him in regard to the critics that "fools mock, but they shall mourn." (Ether 12:26.)

We have been trying this year to get every man holding the priesthood, and our sisters too, to read the Book of Mormon during the year 1961—no matter how many times they may have read it before. It seems to me that any member of this Church would never be satisfied until he or she had read the Book of Mormon time and time again, and thoroughly considered it so that he or she could bear witness that it is in very deed a record with the inspiration of the Almighty upon it, and that its history is true.

I can testify of that, for I know the Book of Mormon is true just as well as I know I am standing here in this building facing you.

So much for that. I want to address myself to the men holding the priesthood, particularly, and to their wives and to all other members of the Church. No member of this Church can stand approved in the presence of God who has not seriously and carefully read the Book of Mormon, and I think I could add to that also, as far as our brethren are concerned, the Doctrine and Covenants.

We have besides the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, another record which is priceless, as these records are, that every member of this Church ought to have read, and which I fear many have not read. I have reference to the Pearl of Great Price. It seems to me that a member of this Church would not be able to rest in peace and comfort and have a clear conscience without having knowledge by study and by faith of the standard works of the Church. These records are priceless. The world mocks at them, but through their teachings we are permitted to come nearer unto God, get a better understanding of our Heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ, become closer acquainted with them and to know more in regard to the wonderful plan of salvation which they have given unto us and unto the world if it will receive the plan that will exalt us in the kingdom of God to

become his sons and his daughters, receiving the fulness of that kingdom.

In closing this record, Moroni wrote these words: "And I exhort you to remember these things; for the time speedily cometh that ye shall know that I lie not, for ye shall see me at the bar of God; and the Lord God will say unto you: Did I not declare my words unto you, which were written by this man, like as one crying from the dead, yea, even as one speaking out of the dust?"

"I declare these things unto the fulfilling of the prophecies. And behold, they shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the everlasting God; and his word shall hiss forth from generation to generation.

"And God shall show unto you, that that which I have written is true.

"And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing." (Moroni 10:27-30.)

That is the counsel of Moroni as he closed his record, not only to the members of the Church, but to every soul unto whom this record comes. I want to bear testimony to you, my good brethren here, and our sisters and to the members of the Church who listen in and to everyone else, that I know that the Book of Mormon is true; that Joseph Smith received it from the hand of God through an angel that was sent to reveal it, the same angel who, while living in this world, finished the record and sealed it up to come forth in this Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.

I would like to call your attention to one thing in the Book of Mormon. The Lord has promised us greater knowledge, greater understanding than we find in the Book of Mormon, when we are prepared to receive it. When the brother of Jared went upon the mount to have the Lord touch stones to give them light to light their way across the great ocean, the Lord revealed to him the history of this world from the beginning of it to the end. We do not have it.

I am going to read one or two passages of scripture from the Book of Mormon in relation to that matter.

"And he" (that is, Christ) "did expound all things, even from the beginning until the time that he should

come in his glory—yea, even all things which should come upon the face of the earth, even until the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth should be wrapt together as a scroll, and the heavens and the earth should pass away; . . ." (3 Nephi 26:3.)

All of that was written and given to the Nephites. We do not have that record, and the Lord said this—which is concerning us particularly—and Mormon wrote it:

"And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

"And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

"And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation." (*Ibid.*, 26:8-10.)

I say that when the brother of Jared went on the mount, the Lord revealed the history of this earth to him from the beginning to the end thereof, but we do not have it. But when the Nephites became righteous, after the visit of the Son of God, the Lord revealed that record to them, and then when they began to fall away, he took the record away again and hid it up. Here is what the Lord says about it.

"And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people, he commanded that they should be made manifest." (That is, the full record.)

"And now, after that, they have all dwindled in unbelief; and there is none save it be the Lamanites, and they have rejected the gospel of Christ; therefore I am commanded that I should hide them up again in the earth." (Ether 4:2-3.)

For the sake of time I will skip a little and say that the Lord has promised that we can have that hidden record when we are prepared to receive it. I will read it.

"For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

"And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are." (*Ibid.*, 4:6-7.)

Now the Lord has placed us on probation as members of the Church. He has given us the Book of Mormon, which is the lesser part, to build up our faith through our obedience to the counsels which it contains, and when we ourselves, members of the Church, are willing to keep the commandments as they have been given to us and show our faith as the Nephites did for a short period of time, then the Lord is ready to bring forth the other record and give it to us, but we are not ready now to receive it. Why? Because we have not lived up to the requirements in this probationary state in the reading of the record which had been given to us and in following its counsels.

ELDER DELBERT L. STAPLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, I trust the talk I have prepared will not depart from the excellent and very choice theme introduced this morning by our beloved President, David O. McKay.

I have thought much about the Lord's warning given in this last dispensation against the evils and designs of conspiring men in the last days. When calling our attention to man's crafty schemes and artful intrigues, the Lord did not confine the warning, as I understand it, to the forbidden items which are specifically mentioned in the revelation on the Word of Wisdom or which have been interpreted as belonging to this divine law of health. May I read

Brethren, teach the men who hold the priesthood in their quorums. Teach the members of the Church in their meetings, and also when you visit them in their homes as ward teachers. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, teach them to read and study in faith and prayer the revelations the Lord has given us that we may not be deceived and led astray by false teachers.

We have false teachers among us. We have apostates among us who are endeavoring to tear down and destroy the kingdom of God, and they are disturbing a great many members of the Church. Why? Because they haven't the faith nor the background in knowledge to resist these false teachers and their false doctrines.

Let me plead with the membership of this Church for humility, for faith, for more prayer, more study, more love in their hearts for God their Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just heard from President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve.

to you this admonition and warning:

"Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—" (D&C 89:4.)

The Word of Wisdom is a well selected and timely example chosen by the Lord for the Saints' understanding of this warning against the evils and designs of conspiring men.

The Lord foresaw the evils of our day and the designs of cunning and deceiving men who operate under the influence of Satan and his satanic hosts.