

Christ, and have joined with the Latter-day Saints.

The power and the authority of this kingdom on earth rest upon President Spencer W. Kimball. I bear you this, my solemn witness—Joseph Smith was a prophet. President Kimball is a prophet—in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder John H. Vandenberg, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. Following Elder Vandenberg, Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will be heard.

## Elder John H. Vandenberg

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

A few weeks ago while driving north along the Wasatch Front here in Utah on an early Sunday morning, I was conscious of the sun just rising over the mountains to the east. The valley to the west, was flooded by the rays of the sun, and inspirational music was flowing from the radio. A feeling of well-being prevailed within me. My thoughts dwelt on the goodness of being alive. The music ended in the usual way. It was time for the news. During the next several minutes the announcer commented, as I remember, on a burglary, a shooting, an accident, a hijacking, people being held hostage, and worry over the economic conditions. The news brought to my attention that the world could be full of peace, but that it was not.

Naturally, one fond of peace wonders why this is so, recognizing that if there were no people on earth, all would be quiet and peaceful. But then there would be no purpose in the earth. We know that its purpose is to receive God's children where they may dwell in mortality and prove themselves in the test against the forces of good and evil. In this process there will be strife as well as peace.

There is concern among society for the mounting trouble, the violation, and the turning away from the long-established moral codes. As one has said, "The living faith of the dead has become the dead faith of the living." (John Thompson, "Is There a Prophet

in the Land?" as quoted in *Quote, The Weekly Digest*, 24 July 1966, p. 6.)

Fortunately, there are many who know the value of faith in God and testify to its power to direct their lives, although it is recognized that "truth is forever on the scaffold and wrong is on the throne." (James Russell Lowell, "The Present Crisis.") We join in that knowledge, and it is our purpose to constantly labor for the cause of truth with the assurance and promise that it will emerge victorious in the end.

### Revelation

God has revealed to his prophets his laws and commandments as they are now spread on the pages of religious history. From them we may learn the course which people and nations have followed when those laws and commandments have been violated, and we should not in this day think we can circumvent them. On the contrary, they will help us solve any dilemma in which we personally or nationally may find ourselves.

Jesus rebuked the Jews, who in their dilemma sought to kill him, saying: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39.) He gave us the keys to the fulfillment of life—search and think. Search for ideas. Search for examples. Search for testimony. Then apply the results and implant them into our in-

telleets that they may generate within us a living faith in God, our Eternal Father.

### The testimony of faith

This thought comes to mind and I quote: "Faith is a belief in testimony. It is not a leap in the dark. God does not ask any man to believe without giving him something to believe in. You might as well ask a man to see without eyes, as bid him believe without giving him something to believe." (D.L. Moody, as quoted in *Quote, The Weekly Digest*, 19 July 1964, p. 5.)

Where do we find those testimonies? Our Father in heaven has brought down through the ages the Holy Bible, and in this dispensation of the fulness of times, he has caused other scriptures to be brought forth. One such scripture is the volume known as the Book of Mormon. Its origin begins with the establishment of a new nation spun off from Israel 600 years before Christ, just before the impending destruction of Jerusalem. In the introductory pages of that scripture, the importance of the exercise of faith is highlighted.

### Obtaining Laban's plates

Lehi, a religious leader, being warned in a dream of the coming destruction of Jerusalem because of the wickedness of the people, was directed to take his family into the wilderness. This he did, and while there, received further instruction from the Lord to direct his four sons to return to Jerusalem to obtain a record from one known as Laban. Two attempts to obtain the record were thwarted. Then Nephi, the more spiritual and faithful of the sons, under the power and conviction of his commitment to his Heavenly Father, which was, "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish

the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Ne. 3:7), proceeded to venture again, alone, into the night to obtain the record.

The scriptures state, "I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban. And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. . . . And as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine. And . . . I found that it was Laban.

### The Lord's purposes

"I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof. . . . And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; . . . and I shrunk and would that I might not slay him. . . . And . . . the Spirit said unto me again: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands; behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.

"I remembered the words of the Lord . . . unto me . . . Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the land of promise. . . . And I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. . . .

"I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause." (See 1 Ne. 4:5-17.) Nephi obtained the records and in due course brought them to his father, Lehi.

Lehi and his wife Sariah rejoiced at the return of their sons and gave thanks unto God. Then "Lehi, took the records . . . and he did search them from the beginning. . . . They did contain the five books of Moses, . . . also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to . . . the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; . . . prophecies of the holy prophets,

from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; . . . a genealogy of his [Lehi's] fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of . . . that Joseph who was the son of Jacob." (See 1 Ne. 5:10-14.)

Perhaps Lehi read the blessing of Joseph, received under the hand of Jacob. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall" (Gen. 49:22), and he knew that he was in the process of fulfilling that blessing in establishing a new nation which would "run over the wall" to a new promised land and would bring them to the continents now known as America.

The obtained records were the foundation records they carried with them, to which was added continuous revelation received by Lehi and his posterity.

### Use of scriptures

All scriptures set the moral code for mankind to live by. They are available to all, having been translated into many languages. Those who choose not to use them, not to give heed to the prophets, and cast aside the spiritual benefits, will surely dwindle in unbelief and perish. It has been said, "If we strike from mankind the principle of faith . . . men would have no more history than a flock of sheep." (H. V. Prochnow and H. V. Prochnow, Jr., *The Public Speakers Treasure Chest*, New York: Harper and Row, 1942, p. 383.) On the contrary, those who choose them and live by them will live. "The just shall live by his faith," so Habakkuk tells us. (Hab. 2:4.)

### Example of Esau and Jacob

A confirmation testimony is presented to us in the lives of the twins, Esau and Jacob, born to Isaac and Rebekah. Esau, the elder, despised his birthright and sold it for a mess of pottage, married among the Canaanites, contrary to the desires of his parents,

and sought to kill his brother Jacob, and turned from God's teachings. As one writer put it, "Esau is a *profane person*, [Heb. 12:16.] with no conscience of a birthright, no faith in the future, no capacity for vision; dead to the unseen, and clamoring only for the satisfaction of his appetites." (Sir George Adam Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Dow and Company, Inc., 1929, p. 182.)

Jacob, the younger, honored the birthright which he obtained by bargaining, sought the blessing of God, and desired to serve him. He became the progenitor of the 12 tribes of Israel, and his name is honored to this day. From Jacob came Joseph, from Joseph came Ephraim and Manasseh, and through the lineage of Manasseh came Lehi. And from Lehi came the great posterity and civilization accounted for in the Book of Mormon.

### Daniel's power of faith

This record coincides with the plan of the Lord concerning another prophet, Daniel. Daniel was one who excelled in the use of the power of faith and gives us this testimony:

"In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar . . . Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled." Then the king called all who might recall and interpret the dream with the charge, "If ye will not make known unto me the dream, . . . ye shall be cut in pieces."

Since none could give answer, when Daniel heard of the decree, he "went to his house, and made the thing known to . . . his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret. . . . Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision."

### Daniel interprets the dream

Then he went to the king and made the dream known, reciting in detail what the king had dreamed concerning

the great image, ending with these words: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. . . . Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; . . .

"So the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

"They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. . . .

"The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." (See Dan. 2:1-45.)

It was not a figment of the imagination of Daniel. The king testified, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret." (Dan. 2:47.)

The recalling of this dream and the interpretation thereof were made

possible through the exercise of Daniel's faith. A careful study of history confirms that it is prophecy come to pass.

### The faith of Joseph Smith

By faith, a young man in the year 1820 became an instrument in the hands of the Lord in establishing the kingdom proclaimed by Daniel. Joseph Smith searching scriptures found this truth written by the apostle James:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (James 1:5-6.)

After reading that passage of scripture Joseph Smith sought a grove of trees in which to make inquiry. In response to his supplication to God, a marvelous vision opened up to him wherein he saw and conversed with two personages, God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ. From this personal visitation and ensuing instruction, which included the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon as the keystone, the kingdom as proclaimed by Daniel was established. It is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It began in obscurity, but it is now rolling forth throughout the free world, inviting all to come unto Christ. I bear this witness to this truth in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "The Voice of God Again Is Heard."

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### President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder John H. Vandenberg, Assistant to the Twelve, followed by the Tabernacle Choir sing-