

Fulfillment of Prophecy

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The prophecies that have been fulfilled by the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ are many.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am honored to speak at this historic general conference commemorating Joseph Smith's First Vision of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in what is, without question, a Sacred Grove. That vision was a magnificent beginning to the Restoration of the gospel and all that unfolded, from the Book of Mormon to the return of priesthood authority and keys, the organization of the Lord's true Church, temples of God, and prophets and apostles who lead the work in these latter days.

By divine design, ancient prophets of God, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, prophesied of the Restoration and what was to come in our day, the last dispensation and the fulness of times. The very work "fired the souls" of the early seers.¹ Through generations of time, they foretold, dreamed, envisioned, and prophesied of the future of God's kingdom on earth, what Isaiah called "a marvellous work and a wonder."²

The prophecies that have been fulfilled by the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are many. Today, however, I will highlight only a few of my favorites. These were taught to me by my dear Primary teachers and at the knee of my angel mother.

Daniel, who staved off lions by his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the intercession of God's ministering angels, was one who saw our day in vision. Interpreting a dream for Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel prophesied the Lord's Church would rise in the last days as a small stone "cut out of the mountain without hands."³ "Without hands," meaning by divine intervention, the Lord's Church would increase in magnitude until it fills the whole earth, "never [to] be destroyed ... [but to] stand for ever."⁴

It is a profound witness that Daniel's words are being fulfilled as members of the Church, from all over the world, are watching and listening to the conference today.

The devoted Apostle Peter described "times of restitution of all things ... since the world began."⁵ The Apostle Paul wrote that in the fulness of times, God would "gather ... in one all things in Christ,"⁶ "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."⁷ I felt those prophecies so strongly when I participated in the dedication of the Rome Italy Temple. All of the prophets and apostles were there bearing testimony of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, as had Peter and Paul. The

Church is a living example of that restitution, brothers and sisters, and our members are witnesses of those divine prophecies long ago.

Joseph of Egypt prophesied that in the latter days “a seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins.”⁸ “For he shall do [the Lord’s] work.”⁹ Joseph Smith, the prophet of the Restoration, was that seer.

John the Revelator prophesied of an angel of the Almighty bringing together important elements of the Restoration with these words: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”¹⁰ Moroni was that angel. He saw our day as recorded in the Book of Mormon. In repeated appearances, he prepared Joseph Smith for his ministry, including the translation of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

Other prophets foretold of our day. Malachi spoke of Elijah turning “the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.”¹¹ Elijah has come, and as a result, today we have 168 temples dotting the earth. Each temple serves worthy members making sacred covenants and receiving blessed ordinances on behalf of themselves and their deceased ancestors. This sacred work described by Malachi is “central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”¹²

We live in that time prophesied; we are the people charged with ushering in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ; we are to gather God’s children, those who will hear and embrace the truths, covenants, and promises of the everlasting gospel. President Nelson calls it “*the greatest* challenge, *the greatest* cause, and *the greatest* work on [the] earth today.”¹³ Of that miracle I bear my witness.

By assignment from President Russell M. Nelson, in February of this year I dedicated the Durban South Africa Temple. It was a day I will remember all my life. I was with members who have come to the gospel as Jeremiah prophesied long ago—“one of a city, and two of a family.”¹⁴ The doctrine of Jesus Christ unites all of us—around the world—as sons and daughters of God, as brothers and sisters in the gospel. Regardless of how we look or dress, we are one people with a Father in Heaven whose plan from the beginning was and is for His family to be reunited by making and keeping sacred temple covenants.

To a small gathering of priesthood holders in a schoolhouse in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1834, the Prophet Joseph prophesied, “It is only a little handfull of Priesthood you see here tonight, but this Church will fill North and South America—it will fill the world.”¹⁵

In recent years I have traveled throughout the world to meet the members of the Church. My Brethren of the Quorum of the Twelve have had similar assignments. Still, who can keep up with the schedule of our dear prophet, President Nelson, whose travel in his first two years as President of the Church has taken him to meet with the Saints in 32 countries and U.S. territories¹⁶ to witness of the living Christ.

I remember when I received my mission call as a young man. I wanted to serve in Germany, like my father, brother, and brother-in-law. Not waiting for anyone to get home, I rushed to the mailbox and opened the call. I read that I had been called to the Eastern States Mission, headquartered in New York City. I was disappointed, so I went inside and opened my scriptures for comfort. I began to read in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Behold, and lo, I have much people in this place, in the regions round about; and an effectual door shall be opened in the regions round about in this eastern land.”¹⁷ That prophecy, given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833, was a revelation to me. I knew then I had been called to the exact mission the Lord wanted me to serve in. I taught the Restoration and its dramatic beginning when our Father in Heaven spoke to Joseph Smith and said, “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”¹⁸

Of great significance for the whole Church is the prophecy of Isaiah, given more than 700 years before the birth of Jesus Christ: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, ... and all nations shall flow unto it.”¹⁹

In my mind today, I picture millions of our members and friends connected to these proceedings electronically by television, internet, or other means. We are sitting down as if together “in the top of the mountains.”²⁰ It was Brigham Young who spoke the prophetic words “This is the right place.”²¹ The Saints, some of them my own pioneer ancestors, worked to establish Zion in the Rocky Mountains “through the will and pleasure of him who dictates the nations of the earth.”²²

I stand today on the sacred ground that has drawn millions of visitors. In 2002, Salt Lake City hosted the Winter Olympic Games. The Tabernacle Choir sang at the opening ceremonies, and the Church offered concerts and programs for guests and participants from many, many nations. I will always remember seeing the temple in the background of the nightly news broadcasts worldwide.

Over the years, presidents of the United States, kings, judges, prime ministers, ambassadors, and officials from many lands have come to Salt Lake City and met with our leaders. President Nelson hosted leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a United States organization committed to equal rights without discrimination based on race. I remember standing shoulder to shoulder with these friends and leaders as President Nelson joined them in calling for greater civility and racial harmony in the world.²³

Many more have come to Temple Square and met in council with Church leaders. For example, this past year, to name just a few, we welcomed the United Nations 68th Civil Society Conference, a global gathering and the first of its kind outside of New York City. We have met with Vietnam’s Committee for Religious Affairs and ambassadors from Cuba, the Philippines, Argentina, Romania, Sudan, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. We also welcomed the secretary general of the Muslim World League.

What I am describing is a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy that in the last days, nations shall flow unto “the mountain of the Lord’s house.”²⁴ The great Salt Lake

Temple stands in the center of that majesty and glory.

It is not the landscape that has drawn people, though our setting is magnificent; it is the essence of pure religion exhibited in the spirit, growth, goodness, and generosity of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its people; our love as God loves; our commitment to a higher cause, what Joseph Smith called “the cause of Christ.”²⁵

We do not know when the Savior will return, but this we do know. We must be prepared in heart and mind, worthy to receive Him, and honored to be part of all that was prophesied so long ago.

I testify that President Russell M. Nelson is the Lord’s prophet on the earth, and at his side are Apostles called of God, sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators. And, my dear brothers and sisters, the Restoration continues.

I close with the prophecy of Joseph Smith, words that I testify are true: “No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.”²⁶ I so testify that these prophecies of Joseph Smith are being fulfilled.

I promise as you follow the inspired counsel of our dear prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, his counselors, the Apostles, and other Church leaders, and as you pay heed to the ancient prophets who foretold of our day, you will be filled, deep in your heart and soul, with the spirit and the work of the Restoration. I promise you will see the hand of God in your lives, hear His promptings, and feel His love. In the name of Jesus Christ, with gratitude for the Restoration of His gospel and His Church, in evidence of His matchless love, amen.