

Preparing for the Second Coming of Christ

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More than ever before, we are required to confront the reality that we are getting ever closer to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

As recorded in the Book of Mormon, six years before the birth of Jesus Christ, Samuel, a righteous Lamanite, prophesied to a Nephite people, who by then had become mostly apostate,¹ of the signs that would accompany our Savior's birth. Tragically, most Nephites rejected those signs because it was "not reasonable that such a being as a Christ [should] come."²

Regrettably, according to the scriptural record, many of the Jews, in like manner, could not accept that a man named Jesus, from the little-regarded province of Galilee, was indeed the long-awaited Messiah.³ Jesus, who had indeed come to fulfill the many prophecies made by Hebrew prophets, was rejected and even crucified because, as the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob taught, the Jews were "looking beyond the mark." Consequently, Jacob testified that "God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble."⁴

Strange as it may seem, no teaching, no miracle, and no appearance even of a heavenly angel, as witnessed by Laman and Lemuel,⁵ appears to have the persuasive power to convince some individuals to alter their course, outlook, or belief that something is true. This is especially the case when teachings or miracles do not agree with an individual's preconceived whims, wishes, or ideas.

Please contrast for a moment the following two scriptures, the first from the Apostle Paul speaking of the latter days, describing the ways of man, and the second from Alma the prophet showing how God does His work among mankind. First from Paul:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud

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“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”⁶

And now from Alma, stating a foundational principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ: “Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and small means in many instances doth confound the wise.”⁷

We live in a modern world filled with great knowledge and much prowess. Nonetheless, these things too often camouflage the unsteady foundation upon which they are built. Consequently, they do not lead to real truth and on toward God and the power to receive revelation, acquire spiritual knowledge, and develop faith in Jesus Christ that leads to salvation.⁸

We are profoundly reminded of our Lord’s words to Thomas and the other Apostles on the eve of His atoning sacrifice: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”⁹

For those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to feel, more than ever before we are required to confront the reality that we are getting ever closer to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. True, great difficulties yet await those on the earth at His return, but in this regard, the faithful need not fear.

Now I quote for a moment from the Church’s Gospel Topics under the heading “Second Coming of Jesus Christ”:

“When the Savior comes again, He will come in power and glory to claim the earth as His kingdom. His Second Coming will mark the beginning of the Millennium.

“The Second Coming will be a fearful, mournful time for the wicked, but it will be a day of peace for the righteous. The Lord declared:

““They that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

““And the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation.

““For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver’ (Doctrine and Covenants 45:57–59).”¹⁰

In our preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, I provide a vital, comforting note for the faithful taken from the Old Testament prophet Amos: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, until he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”¹¹

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hope, of healing, and of progress. Thus, the gospel is a message of *joy*! Our spirits rejoice with every small step forward we take.”¹²

I unreservedly testify of and attest to the reality of God and the miracles in the everyday life of countless people from both the low and high stations of life. True, many sacred experiences are rarely spoken of, in part because of their divine origin and the resulting possibility of ridicule by some who do not know better.

In this regard, the last of the Book of Mormon prophets, Moroni, reminds us:

“And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues;

“Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them.

“For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing?”¹³

I conclude my remarks with a truly inspiring prophetic declaration from the Prophet Joseph Smith, given near the end of his ministry as he looked forward to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ: “Shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren [and, may I add, sisters]; and on, on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad.”¹⁴ To which I add my witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. See Helaman 13:12.
2. Helaman 16:18.
3. See John 7:47–52.
4. Jacob 4:14.
5. See 1 Nephi 3:29–31.
6. 2 Timothy 3:1–4, 7.
7. Alma 37:6.
8. See Helaman 5:12.
9. John 14:6.
10. Gospel Topics, “Second Coming of Jesus Christ,”

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14. 14. Doctrine and Covenants 128:22.

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