



Type: Magazine Article

The Book of Vital Messages

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Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 66, No. 6 (June 1963)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 490–495

Abstract: This article states that the contents of the Book of Mormon are multifaceted. It contains elements pertaining to drama, archaeology, exploration, travel, anthropology, astronomy, geology, psychology, political science, scientists, military strategy, and many other subjects. The major value of the book is its religious influence upon individuals.

A similar wake of destruction follows the careless rampage of tobacco among men, women, and children. Would you believe that tobacco costs the American people over 3 billion, 600 million dollars a year? Do you know that the purchase of cigarets last year in the United States increased about four percent? This means that the vast majority of smokers are ignoring the overwhelming evidence of competent medical authority now available concerning the lethal effect of tobacco on the human anatomy.

The American Cancer Society reports that lung cancer is ninety-five percent fatal, and then the report goes on to say that evidence proves that three-fourths of all lung cancer cases can be traced to the use of tobacco.

The American Public Health Association, based on its findings, estimates that one million American children now in school will die of lung cancer before they reach their God-granted life expectancy. Now, in a sense, this is a form of national suicide, and we do not have the right to shorten human life; and now this, perhaps the saddest of all commentary—a staff of experts studying the tobacco problem have concluded that the upward trend in the use of tobacco among the children can be traced directly to a more permissive attitude on the part of parents. Perhaps we shouldn't talk so much about what the schools aren't doing as we should

talk about what parents should be doing; and this is as it should be. Our children should be taught in the home. I would like to make an appeal to every parent who loves his children; why not start today and set the proper example for those we love?

Now, time will not permit us to go into the cases of coffee and tea, but suffice it to say that the Lord has recognized these stimulants as habit-forming and contrary to the freedom he wants so much for all of his children.

Now, if you really knew that your child was in danger, if you were told that conspiring men were meeting your children on their way home from school, going all out to attract their attention and condition their minds toward the acceptance of a bad habit, wouldn't you feel compelled to do something about it? Why, of course you would—you would do something that very day. But why let the conspiring men stand on a cold corner? We are allowing them to accomplish the same evil practice in the comfort and convenience of our homes every day. Now here's a challenge for us. Let's do something about it, parents.

Let me read a letter from a confused youngster. I think this has real merit. This young man was a typical TV fan. He is writing to his favorite baseball player:

"You are my favorite baseball player. I saw a TV ad where you say you

smoke cigarets and that you like them. I guess they help you. My mother says cigarets are bad and good players don't use them. I want to be a good player. Can you tell me? Are they good for you? Would you please tell me?" Signed, "Hector. P. S. I am ten years old."

Well, the answer was slow in coming, but after a few weeks:

"Dear Hector: Yes, I was in a cigaret advertisement on television. I would not recommend for anyone to ever start smoking. It does not help one in athletics. I hope that you will take your parents' advice not to smoke."

Now, as these young minds are being conditioned by conspiring men, we see history repeating itself. This is the same technique that took eleven years back in the late 20's and early 30's, some of you might remember, to make it appear smart, modern, and acceptable for a woman to be seen in public with a cigaret. This all started back in 1927 when the first billboard ad appeared, showing a man and woman relaxing on a beautiful hilltop. He was smoking, and her comment was simply this: "Please blow some my way." Rather harmless—"Please blow some my way." From this subtle beginning, the well-planned campaign took eleven years before the billboard dared to show a woman with a cigaret in her hand or mouth. Had the latter billboard been shown at first, we would have been up

*Saturday Afternoon Session,
April 6, 1963*

THE BOOK OF VITAL MESSAGES

Spencer W. Kimball

of the Council of the Twelve

My Brothers and Sisters, and especially my friends of the radio and television audience:

May I tell you of a great adventure? As I traveled to a weekend assignment, I took with me an unusual book which was my constant companion. I could lay it down only to sleep, eat, and change trains. It fascinated me, captivated me, and held me spellbound with its irresistible charm and engaging interest. I have read it many times.

As I finished it, I closed the book and sat back, absorbed as I relived its contents. Its pages held me, bound me, and my eyes were riveted to them. I knew the book was factual, but as has been said, "Truth is stranger than fiction."

I am constrained to speak to you of it today. It is a story of courage, faith, and fortitude, of perseverance, sacrifice, and super-human accomplishments, of intrigue, of revenge, of disaster, of war, murder, and rapine, of idolatry, and of cannibalism, of miracles, visions, and

manifestations, of prophecies and their fulfillment.

I found in it life at its best and at its worst, in ever-changing patterns. I hardly recovered from one great crisis until another engulfed me.

Across the stage of this drama of life through the ages, marched actors in exotic, colorful costumes from the blood-painted nudity of the warrior to the lavish, ornamented pageantry of royal courts—some actors loathsome and degraded, others so near perfection that they conversed with angels and with God. There are the sowers and reapers, the artisans, the engineers, the traders, and the toilers, the rake in his debauchery, the alcoholic with his liquor, the pervert rotting in his sex, the warrior in his armor, the missionary on his knees.

This dramatic story is one of the greatest ever played by man. The noted tragedians fumble their lines. It is played "on location" with no false fronts for scenery. It is a fast-moving

story of total life, of opposing ideologies, of monarchies and judgeships and mobocracies. Its scenes carry the reader across oceans and continents. It promises to tell of the "last days of God," but instead records the "last days of populous peoples" and the triumph of God. Class distinction is there with its ugliness, race prejudice with its hatefulness, multiplicity of creeds with their bitter conflicts.

Since this book, a "best seller" left its first press, it is printed in more than two dozen languages, more than a half million copies a year, and millions of copies are in libraries, public and private, and in numerous hotels and motels along with the Gideon Bible. Even the blind may read it in three thick books of Braille. Can anyone be considered to be well-read who has not perused this pretentious volume which makes such bold claims?

Its story has a vital message to all people. The gentiles will find the history of their past and the potential of

in arms, and something would have been done about it in a hurry. And now, unfortunately, in this campaign for the approval of our children's minds, there is hardly a TV commercial or a tobacco billboard that does not include a child admiring a bribed athlete who is making a statement that he probably doesn't believe in. Or perhaps we see a family situation, apparently a wholesome family situation, Dad rollicking with the children but with a cigaret in his hand. Yes! Trying to start the same type of campaign all over again, this time aimed at children.

Now, all of this talk is not designed to show how foolish we are. We're just being victimized. The Lord understood all of this well in advance, and he told us that the very elect would be deceived by the "evils and designs . . . of conspiring men." I am sure he had this in mind. So we condemn no one at this point, but, forewarned is forearmed.

May we not stand idly by and allow the cream of the nation, our hope for tomorrow, the finest youth in all history to be quietly and softly led away to habits of bondage and unhappiness! Their only hope is a parent who cares enough.

Incidentally, would you like to be a better citizen? Would you like to contribute the maximum effort to your nation and community? Only those who are physically fit can expect to

make the maximum contribution and fulfil his obligation to society as he should.

Now, much is being said about national fitness in all countries. Let us join with other clear-thinking citizens who are not adverse to happiness and joy. Let's prove that it's smart to do what is right. There is no doubt at this point what the instructions from the Lord are.

Now, one country in a recent national survey found that nine percent of its national income was being spent for liquor and tobacco. Assuming that many of this nation were abstainers, certainly more than ten percent of the income of those indulging was being spent to satisfy their poor habits.

It is interesting to note that the Lord has promised to open the "windows of heaven" (Mal. 3:10) to those willing to impart ten percent of their income to the upbuilding of his kingdom. This is perhaps the most gracious, the most promising, the most generous of all contracts offered by the Lord to those he loves; and yet, there are millions who are spending more than ten percent to an enslaving habit, and instead of opening the "windows of heaven," they are slamming the door on a promise of happiness and joy that no man, in my opinion, has the right to deny himself.

And so I conclude this plea by turning back to the 89th section of the Doctrine

and Covenants, and here is the promise the Lord concludes with, the most stimulating promise of all holy writ concerning the day-to-day welfare of his children.

"And all . . . who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." (D&C 89:18-21.)

And so, when we obtain any blessing from God it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated. Let's heed Elijah's challenge. ". . . How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. . . ." (1 Kings 18:21.)

And so I say in conclusion, again from the Doctrine and Covenants: "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.) May we be obedient to law that we may have true joy, eternal happiness, and peace of mind is my prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

their destiny; and the Jewish people, the blueprint of their future. The covenants of God to them are unfolded, as are the promises regarding Jerusalem, their ancient city, and their lands. And it is revealed how the Jews, so long persecuted, scattered and tortured since their dispersion, may come into their own. And the gentiles are warned that they must ". . . no longer hiss, nor spurn nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the House of Israel" for the Lord will remember his covenant to them when they respond. It is the life story of the ancestors of the Indians and accounts for their dark skins.

Archaeologists may be excited as they read of ruins of ancient cities, highways, and buildings; and there may yet be hidden buried gold and priceless records. Locations may be approximated, for instance the narrow neck of land which was fortified from the "East sea to the West sea" was but a "day's journey for a Nephite."

Journalists will find in this book crisis after crisis, presenting rich material for limitless climactic stories, articles, plays, and operas. A struggling movie industry might here find material which could increase box office receipts.

This unparalleled book should intrigue navigators: unprecedented land treks near-unbelievable in length, scope, and hazard are chronicled and ocean crossings, and the circling of the world centuries before the Vikings—crossings fraught with all the dangers imaginable, including storms, hidden reefs, hurricanes, and even mutiny. This first recorded ocean crossing was about forty centuries ago, of seaworthy, ocean-going vessels without known sails, engines, oars, or rudders—eight barges like and near contemporary with Noah's ark, long as a tree, tight as a dish, peaked at the end like a gravy boat, (see Ether 2:17) corked at top and bottom, illuminated by molten stones (see *ibid.*, 2:20, 3:1 ff.), perhaps with radium or some other substance not yet

rediscovered by our scientists. Light and like a fowl upon the water, this fleet of barges was driven by winds and ocean currents, landing at a common point in North America probably on the west shores.

The reader may follow with wonder another crossing of the ocean which was made by a Jewish group led by a prince, the son of Jerusalem's king, and of a third migration and voyage, perhaps the greatest in all of history, dimming even that of the Saints from Illinois to the Salt Lake Valley, and even of Moses' Israel from Egypt to their promised land. These people abandoned Jerusalem on the eve of its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar and probably landed on the west coast of South America where the ocean currents drove them later to meet and combine with remnants of the earlier migrants; this greatest movement was made in a ship constructed by a young builder who may never have seen an ocean-going vessel. If the party of the

prince sailed west and the prophets east they would have circumnavigated the world from Jerusalem, their people finally meeting in this western world. The vessels were sufficiently large to carry food and seeds.

There was no welcoming committee to meet these adventurers as there was to meet Columbus and the pilgrims.

This remarkable book tells again of movements of great bodies of people—5,400 in one group, sailing northward on the Pacific side in very large ships, seeking for new worlds to conquer, some of whom likely drawn into the strong westward ocean currents to find the “isles of the sea” and to become the progenitors of the Polynesians.

The people in Jerusalem knew nothing of the whereabouts of these fellow

bauchery, comparable to that in Babylon, Jerusalem, and Rome.

He will see people thriving in communal living, and taxed from fifty percent, and then to totalness, to slavery, and to bondage. He will see power-greedy paternalistic, centralized governments move toward the inevitable revolution which finally impoverishes but frees the people to begin again from ashes.

The astronomer and geologist here may see signs in the heavens and new stars come into focus, three days without sun or any reflected light, and nights without darkness, bright “as the midday sun” (see 3 Ne. 1:19) and a vapor of darkness so impenetrable that no glimmer, nor candles, nor torches, nor fire could give any light. A great storm

erected buildings, temples, and highways with cement, and paved roads connected city to city and land to land, and when forests had been denuded, a reforestation program was initiated for the future.

The psychologists may find studies in human behavior and the workings of the human mind and the rationalizing processes where men convince themselves that “good is bad, and that bad is good.” Here they will watch history unfold for thousands of years and see not only episodes in the lives of individuals but causes and effects in a total history of races.

The educator will find treasures of literature and poetry. He will see how language used to log their day-to-day experiences can be corrupted when not properly written, from an expressive tongue of the educated to numerous, corrupted dialects of degenerated peoples, proving that to survive, people must be educated on every front—physical, mental, spiritual, moral—and that anything short of that will bring ultimate disaster.

This comprehensive book should be studied by politicians, government leaders, kings, presidents, and premiers to see the rise and fall of empires, and the difference between statesmanship and demagoguery. They will see nations born in war, live in war, deteriorate in war, and die in war through the centuries. They may find answers to problems of capital and labor, of dishonesty, graft and fraud, of dissensions, internal rupture, and civil wars.

In this uncommon book is seen that chief judges, frustrated by growing corruption, resign from judgment seats to proselyte for righteousness; that princes prefer to teach men rather than to rule over them; that kings have tilled the earth providing their own living to serve the people rather than to become burdensome to them and levy upon them confiscatory taxes; that rulers are loved and not feared.

Scientists will read of unusual instruments never patented or remade or duplicated, of elements which, without recharging, illuminate dark spaces indefinitely, that at least fifteen hundred years before Columbus these Westerners knew that the earth is round and revolved about the sun, and of a special instrument, not yet equaled even in our own day with all of our laboratories and knowledge, like a round ball, made of brass, curious in workmanship, with two spindles, so sensitive that it was not limited to the cardinal points of the compass but would actually give guidance regardless of direction, recording the feelings, emotions, and inner rebellions of men and would function properly only where there was not human, mental, and moral discord. This instru-



Israelites in the western world, but those here knew of the happenings in Palestine such as the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity under Nebuchadnezzar and when the Christ was born in Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary, and when he ascended from the Mount of Olives, yet no ships were carrying mail; no telephone wires were humming; no radio sets were operating; no cables yet snaked across ocean floors.

The student of economics will find in this unusual book the disintegration of nations through pride, soft living, and luxuries, terminating finally in hunger and fetters. He will see unified peoples fighting for liberty and then class wars destroying those freedoms. One will see the land waving with ripening grain, the silkworm spinning, flocks and herds grazing, vineyards and orchards bearing, and a richly adorned and bejeweled people. He will see stone quarries and lumber mills and mines and craftshops, and then devastated landscapes, burned homes, parched earth, warring antagonists, and deserted lands. He will see towers and temples and kingly courts and palaces of the rich and their luxury, and dissipation, immorality, and de-

struction “such an one as never had been known in all the land” (see *ibid.*, 8:5), certainly since Noah’s forty-day pouring, and perhaps drowning more people than since the deluge, and terrible tempests, thunder, and sharp lightnings, and whirlwinds of tornadic and hurricane proportions, swift enough to carry away people never to be heard of again—twistings, foldings, whirlings, slidings, faultings, and tremblings of hours of duration to cause landslides burying great cities perhaps more extensive than the Bali’s, Iran’s, Assam’s, and Chile’s, perhaps interring in a few hours more people than ever in the history of the world. Tidal waves swallowed entire communities, and fire consumed many cities and human bodies. The labors of centuries were embalmed in ashes to a greater degree than Pompeii and Herculaneum; and earth convulsions of such intensity and prolongation that “the face of the whole earth was deformed” (see *ibid.*, 8:17), these earth spasms being a revolt by the created earth against the crucifixion of its Creator.

Engineers will learn from this great book that those centuries ago, men

ment would point the way to the prevalence of animals to be hunted for food and was operated by faith rather than by electricity or other natural elements—an instrument on which would be writing changed from time to time, plain to read, increasing the understanding of those who read it.

Military men may learn much in strategy, intrigue, in movements, in morale. They may learn that centuries before the discovery of America, the ancients had cement buildings, temples, and highways connecting cities and lands, and metal tools for tilling ground, and munitions factories for making weapons of war, and forges to beat “plow-shares into swords, and pruning-hooks into spears.” (See 2 Ne. 12:4.) They may learn how cold war can be kept in deep freeze.

Guerrilla warfare, sieges, and the scorched-earth policy were not originated in Civil War days nor in Russia but were programs of survival, initiated long centuries before Columbus, Pizarro, and Cortez.

They may learn that wars of aggression with soldiers, idolatrous and adulterous, who leave God out of their lives, will in the end be futile and disastrous.

They will learn that great cultures stagnate in war shadows and cease to survive when continuous wars make people migrants, when fields are abandoned, livestock appropriated for nonproducing soldiers, forests destroyed without replanting, and when farmers and builders become warriors, and businessmen shoulder arms and teachers mobilize. Men cannot plant, cultivate, and harvest when in camps, nor build when on the run. Long and bloody wars mean sacked, burned, ruined cities, confiscatory taxes, degenerated peoples, and decayed cultures.

Victory and defeat alike leave countries devastated and the conqueror and the conquered reduced. Wickedness brings war, and war vomits destruction and suffering, hate and bloodshed upon the guilty and the innocent.

This impressive book should convince all living souls of the futility of war and the hazards of unrighteousness. A few prophets, swimming in a sea of barbarism, find it difficult to prevent the crumbling and final collapse of corrupt peoples.

To you of the Americas, who are terrified by the daily papers, who tremble at “The sound of a shaken leaf,” who build shelters in fear of guided missiles, hydrogen bombs, and biological warfare—to you, there is this conditional promise coming from this book of truth:

“. . . this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land. . . .

“And I will fortify this land against all other nations.

“. . . I, the Lord, the king of heaven will be their king, and I will be a light unto them forever, *that hear my words.*” (*Ibid.*, 10:11-12, 14. Italics added.)

This single volume records for historians about twenty-six centuries of stirring life, not generally known even to the most highly trained professors of history. It tells of the ancestries of those whose spectacular monuments are now observed in South and Central America and in the Mexican jungles.

In this wondrous book, ministers and priests can find texts for sermons, and men generally can find final and authoritative answers to difficult questions: Is there life after death? Will the body be literally resurrected? Where do the spirits of men go between death and the resurrection? Can one be saved in unchastity? What is the correct organization of Christ’s Church? Can one be saved without baptism? Why is it wrong to baptize infants? Is specific authority essential to administer ordinances? Is continuous revelation necessary and a reality? Is Jesus the actual Son of God?

Here is recorded the glorious coming of the Savior to his temple in America. He blessed the little children and wept as angels descended out of heaven and encircled them. He organized his Church with twelve apostles called disciples to whom were given the same priesthood, authority, and keys which their contemporaries, Peter, James, and John held in the other land.

The coming of the Resurrected Redeemer to this land was spectacular—the small piercing voice from heaven heard at Jordan and Transfiguration’s Mount awed them as it announced:

“Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.” (3 Nephi 11:7.)

And then they saw a *man* descending out of heaven in white robes, and he stood in their midst saying: “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, . . . I am the God of Israel and the God of the whole earth and have been slain for the sins of the world.” (See *ibid.*, 11:10, 14.) And the multitude thrust their hands into his side and felt the prints of the nails and knew of a surety that this was the very Christ so recently crucified across the sea, and so recently ascended into heaven, and now among them to teach them his saving gospel.

This historical book tells of three men, who, like John the Revelator, are still on earth though it is nearly two thousand years since their mortal birth—men who have not suffered the pains of death, but who have control over the elements and who make themselves known at will and go anywhere on the

globe when needed and who cannot be imprisoned, burned in the furnace, nor buried in pits, nor held in prison, nor destroyed by beasts; for, like the three Hebrews, superhuman power and protection have been given them.

This narrative tells of people with such faith that they buried their weapons to die victims of enemies rather than take lives; of boys who had inherited great faith from their mothers who had trained them to trust in God and they would be protected. It tells of the fulfilment when 2,060 of them were saved though they fought in many battles in which men all around them died, but because of the faith of their mothers and the sons, not one of the 2,060 suffered death. In this battle of defense, not one boy lost his life.

But after all, it is not the book’s dramatic crises, its history, its narrative that are so important, but its power to transform men into Christlike beings worthy of exaltation.

It is the word of God. It is a powerful second witness of Christ. And, certainly, all true believers who love the Redeemer will welcome additional evidence of his divinity.

This inspiring book was never tampered with by unauthorized translators or biased theologians but comes to the world pure and directly from the historians and abridgers. The book is not on trial—its readers are.

Here is a scripture as old as creation and as new and vibrant as tomorrow, bridging time and eternity; it is a book of revelations and is a companion to the Bible brought from Europe by immigrants and agrees in surprising harmony with that Bible in tradition, history, doctrine, and prophecy; and the two were written simultaneously on two hemispheres under diverse conditions. It records the very words people would say when this hidden record should be presented to them.

“. . . A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.

“But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, . . .

“Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. . . .

“. . . I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth?

“Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? . . .

“And I do this that I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; . . . And because

that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; . . .

"Wherefore, *because* that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written.

"For I command all men, both in the east and the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the

sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written.

"For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house

of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; . . ." (2 Nephi 29:3-12. *Italics added.*)

Then he says he will gather the three folds into one fold, and he will be their shepherd. And the records of the ten tribes are still to be recovered. "And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews

THE SAINTS MUST STAND FIRM

ElRay L. Christiansen

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My beloved brethren and sisters, with you I have been edified by all that has taken place in the various sessions of this great conference—the music, the wonderful discourses, the prayers, and your presence here. I think I have never been so pleased and thrilled to see the great sea of hands raised in unanimously sustaining those whose names were presented a few minutes ago, indicating that there is unity in the Church.

I come to you in humility this afternoon and with a firm conviction that God lives; that this is not just another Church which we represent, but it is The Church of Jesus Christ; that sitting on this rostrum is the prophet of this day, surrounded by just and wholesome men who are each endowed with the authority and the power to act in the name of God and direct the work of the Lord in all the world in preparation for his coming to receive his kingdom.

I come to you with the assurance that this Church was established, not to fail, but to continue, never to be destroyed nor left to another people; for the Lord has said:

"The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught.

"Remember, remember that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men"; (D&C 3:1, 3.)

I have no doubt that his promises to all people will be fulfilled in his own due time and in his own way, both to the righteous and to the wicked. We are living in a day foretold by the Savior as a time of wars and rumors of wars, of famines and of pestilences and of earthquakes. A day when, in a supposedly cultured society, greed and lust for power, subterfuge and cruelty are seen at their worst. This day was described by Paul in these words:

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"Without natural affection, truce-

breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, "Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"; (2 Tim. 3:2-4.)

Now, thank goodness, that doesn't include everybody, but there are many I am sure who fit into some of those categories. If there are any into which we fit, or if any of us have these blemishes upon us, I hope that we will go from these meetings with the determination to throw them off.

Now, despite these conditions that Paul described, this is a favored time and a favored day of the Lord. We ought to be thankful that we live in this particular day, notwithstanding all the fears and the troubles and the anxieties which come upon us because of unsettled conditions that prevail in the world. Our gratitude comes mainly because we are the glad recipients of the restored gospel brought back to earth in the fulfilment of prophecy, in its fulness as a prescription for successful living and for salvation. There is no need to walk in darkness or in uncertainty. In our day the Church has the vision and the inspiration and the word of the Lord to give to the people to keep them from the pitfalls of life, from sorrow, regret, and failure. In this day of the Church there has been a great expanse of the Church itself. The gospel is being widely preached; buildings are being constructed; temples have been and are being erected; work for the dead is increasing; and people are accepting the gospel, all of these in an unprecedented way.

Now, while we see the Church moving on unfalteringly toward its decreed destiny, we must remember that salvation for each of us must be worked out on an individual basis. For a few moments let us draw our world into the range of my voice while we consider two or three principles which are indispensable to individual and even collective salvation.

How about the Sabbath day, which

was discussed so eloquently by President Joseph Fielding Smith yesterday? Is it observed as the Lord's day? Are you and your family found where you ought to be and doing what you ought to be doing on that day? I recently learned of a father who habitually took his wife and children to the mountains or to various other places on the Sabbath day rather than taking them to church where they belonged. As he was hurrying them to get ready one Sunday morning, his smallest boy said, "Daddy, why can't we stay home and go to church like the other kids do?" "Oh, come along," said the father, "we can sing and pray together in the mountains." The little boy said rather sadly, "I know we can, but we won't, will we, Daddy?"

"And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day"; (D&C 59:9.)

To me that makes it clear and understandable as to where I ought to be and what I ought to do among other things that are approved of the Lord on that holy day.

Another matter: How completely do you love your neighbor? The Savior has said that not only should we love our neighbors as ourselves, but that we should also even love our enemies. One man said, "It's a difficult enough thing to love a neighbor whom he likes to be classed as his neighbor, but to reach out and love his enemy is almost beyond reasonable expectation." Nevertheless, it is a method which the Lord has of preparing, of sanctifying, and of perfecting those whom he has called his Saints. Further than that, he requires that we bless those that curse us, and that we do good unto them that hate us, and that we pray for them who despitefully use us and persecute us. How can we love our neighbor? I think one of the best ways would be to help him to learn the truth, to accept the restored gospel and to find in it the

shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.

"And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be gathered into one." (*Ibid.*, 29:13-14.)

We seem to hear the Almighty warn:

power of God unto salvation for them and their families, and by defending him against danger or slander or mistreatment by others. I think we could show a love of our neighbors on the highways and in traffic congestions by being courteous and by giving them the right of way once in a while even though we may have rightful claim to it. There are innumerable ways in which love may be extended to one's neighbor.

It was James Russell Lowell who said, "They who love the Lord and their neighbors are but one step from heaven."

I'd like to include with these neighbors, whom we must love and for whom we must be concerned, those who have passed on, especially our own progenitors to whom we have the inescapable obligation to bring salvation and exaltation through vicarious service. What are we doing about them on an individual family basis?

How about tithing? Are we as individuals placing ourselves in a position to receive the glorious promises given of the Lord for those who consistently observe this law? He offered a challenge to be proved if he would not open the windows of heaven and pour out upon us a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive, and then he said:

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." (*Mal.* 3:11.)

What a promise that is to those of us who are willing to keep the law! Can any of us justify withholding or skimping on that which really belongs to the Lord?

The voice of President Heber C. Kimball (I was pleased to hear this beautiful exposition by Spencer W. Kimball on the Book of Mormon making it so vivid before us) rang out in this very building concerning the matter of tithing when he said:

"You have nothing except what you

"Fools mock, and they shall mourn," and, "Woe be unto him that rejecteth the word of God." One prophet wrote: ". . . And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 33:10.)

In the final chapter of the book is the never-failing promise that every person who will read the book with a sincere, prayerful desire to know of its divinity shall have the assurance.

have received from the Almighty. Where do you get your water, your meat, your bread and the luxuries of life? Did he not create them? Were not the elements thereof placed upon the earth before you came here? If you do not pay one dime in tithing, it will not impoverish the Lord, but I tell you where the effect will lie. It will affect yourselves, your own salvation."

And I should like to add and that of your children most likely for "like father, like son" is an old but true adage.

My brothers and sisters, the commandments of the Lord are not dictums, they are principles given by a Merciful Father to keep us and all mankind who will follow him from sin, sorrow, and regret. We talk a good deal these days about security. One of the best formulas of security that I have ever known is given in the words of Helaman in the Book of Mormon:

"And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of

The book of which I speak is the keystone of true religion, the ladder by which one may get near to God by abiding its precepts. It has been named, "The most correct of any book on earth."

My beloved friends, I give to you the Book of Mormon. May you read it prayerfully, study it carefully, and receive for yourselves the testimony of its divinity. This, I pray in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall." (*Hel.* 5:12.)

I like that, and I have taken it to heart. I advocate it to the young and to the old and to all of us, in fact, to all mankind, for it is true as true can be.

May we, my brothers and sisters, stand firm upon this sure foundation and thereby contribute to the progress of the Church as it moves on to the completion of its divine destiny, and at the same time secure our individual and collective salvation and perhaps exaltation, I pray, testifying again that the Savior lives and that this is his work, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Master. Amen.

