



Type: Magazine Article

"And the Lamanites Shall Blossom as the Rose"

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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): 498–501

Abstract: The Lamanites are promised that the covenants made to their fathers will be fulfilled, that a remnant would receive the Book of Mormon, and would associate with other members of the house of Israel in the building of their inheritance in the land of America.

“YE HAVE HEARD MY VOICE”

S. Dilworth Young

of the First Council of the Seventy

About a year ago I was reading in the Doctrine and Covenants and came upon a verse of one of the sections. I suppose everybody has an experience of the type I had as I read. I think the Prophet had such an experience the day he read, “If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God” (See James 1:5), for that scripture leaped at him; and so this one leaped at me. For a year or so I have been reading it off and on, contemplating it. Now I should like to read it to you, but first I should like to give

it its framework.

Back in 1829 the Lord, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, said there would be appointed twelve disciples, which of course we know as apostles, and he appointed two of the three witnesses to choose them. And then he did a thing which to me is remarkable. He began to instruct the Twelve before they were chosen, and after having instructed them he then gave them this verse. In 1835 the Twelve were chosen, as you know, and on one occasion they were

called together and given their instructions. Oliver Cowdery was the spokesman; and after having given them some very powerful and heartwarming instruction, so moved was he, himself, that he had to stop two or three times to weep. He finally read the revelation to which I refer and this verse.

Brigham Young was so impressed by it that he copied it in his laborious handwriting into his diary. I am impressed by it likewise. These are the words:

“AND THE LAMANITES SHALL BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE”

Marion G. Romney

of the Council of the Twelve

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas de los países donde se habla Español. Me da mucho gusto a veros aquí con nosotros esta día. Con todo corazón, muy bienvenidos.

To you who wonder, I have just greeted and welcomed our people from Latin America. My Spanish may not have been such as they could understand, but you are in no position to challenge my interpretation of it.

I love these, my brothers and sisters. To me they are white and delightful. And of course I love you, too.

Pursuant to assignment from the First Presidency of the Church, I have for the past two years been supervising the Latin American missions. It may not, therefore, be wholly inappropriate for me to say something about the Lamanites, many of whom live in these missions. With this intent, I take for my text the following statement made by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith in March 1831.

“. . . before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose.” (D&C 49:24.)

The word, “Lamanites,” denotes, of course, the descendants of rebellious Laman and Lemuel. It also denotes all other descendants of Lehi who defected to them. As used in our text, I think it includes all descendants of Book of Mormon peoples frequently referred to as the remnant of the people of Lehi. The Lord identifies them in the Doctrine and Covenants as “. . . the Nephites, . . . Jacobites, . . . Josephites, . . . Zoramites, . . .

“. . . Lamanites, . . . Lemuelites, and . . . Ishmaelites, . . .” (*Ibid.*, 3:17-18.) “The great day of the Lord” will, of course, be the day when the Savior comes in his power and glory to in-

augurate a reign of righteousness and peace.

The background of our text is most interesting and significant. At that time there was much interest and considerable misunderstanding concerning the “great day of the Lord.” The Shakers, for example, had the mistaken notion that the Savior might come as a woman. To dispel this error, the Lord said:

“. . . verily I say unto you, that the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, neither of a man traveling on the earth.

“Wherefore, be not deceived, but continue in steadfastness, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth—and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet.

“But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose.” (*Ibid.* 49:22-24.)

The relationship here revealed between the redemption of the Lamanites and the coming of “the great day of the Lord” is frequently implied in the scriptures. Enoch, for example, the great antediluvian prophet, witnessing in vision the corruption of mankind, after the ascension of the Son of Man, . . . cried unto his God: “Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? . . .

“And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days. . . .

“And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the

earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;

“And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; . . .” (Moses 7:59-62.) “The Latter-day Saints regard the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, . . . as a fulfilment of this prophecy, . . .” (See James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, p. 275.)

One of the two purposes of the Book of Mormon as expressed on its title page is “to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever.” “The remnant of the House of Israel” here referred to includes, of course, the Lamanites. It is concerning the covenants the Lord made with their fathers which run in favor of the Lamanites and culminate in their blossoming as the rose that I wish to speak.

One of these covenants was that a record of their fathers would be preserved and brought forth unto the remnant. Concerning this covenant, Enos said: “. . . after I had prayed and labored with all diligence, the Lord said unto me: I will grant unto thee according to thy desires, . . .

“And . . . this was the desire which I desired . . . that if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed, and the Lamanites should not be destroyed, that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people, . . . that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, they might be brought unto salvation—

“. . . and he covenanted with me that

"These words are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man; "For it is my voice which speaketh them unto you; (now this is six years later that they are hearing it) for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power you can read them one to another; and save it were by my power you could not have them"; And this is the verse—"Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words."

(D&C 18:34-36.)

The thing that impresses me about this is, and I have never thought of it before, when I read a verse in the Doctrine and Covenants I am hearing the voice of the Lord as well as reading his words, if I hear by the Spirit.

Now I have heard it said many times by men that they have often asked the Lord for a special testimony and oftentimes haven't had it. They seem to want to hear the voice of the Lord. I confess I have often wanted to hear

the voice of the Lord, without knowing that all these years I have been hearing it with deaf ears. This woke me up.

I can testify that, having read, I hear the voice of the Lord. I also testify to you that when you hear the Prophet, here sitting on the stand, speak by the voice of prophecy and by the spirit of the inspiration which possesses him, you also hear, through him, the voice of the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

he would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time." (Enos 12-13, 16. Italics added.)

The Lord had made this same covenant with Nephi some fifty years earlier (See 1 Nephi 13:35), and he renewed it with Mormon nearly a thousand years later. (See Mormon 5:8-9, 12-13.)

Moroni, preparing to deposit the record in Cumorah, predicted that "... it shall be brought out of darkness unto light, according to the word of God; yea, it shall be brought out of the earth, and it shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people; and it shall be done by the power of God." (Mormon 8:16.) In Mormon, chapter eight, from which this prophecy of Moroni is taken, and in chapter nine is to be found a clear and accurate description of the world in which we now live—a word picture written by a prophet, who by the power of God saw in open vision and made record of us, our times and doings, and of the chastening which awaits us, the inhabitants of this land, if we do not repent and heed the teachings of the restored gospel.

Concluding the account of the covenant concerning the record to be preserved and brought forth, the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1828: "Behold, there are many things engraven upon the plates of Nephi (speaking of the small plates being substituted for the 116 pages of manuscript lost by Martin Harris) which do throw greater views upon my gospel; . . .

"And, behold, all the remainder of this work does contain all those parts of my gospel which my holy prophets, yea, and also my disciples, desired in their prayers should come forth unto this people.

"And I said unto them, that it should

be granted unto them according to their faith in their prayers"; (D&C 10:45-47.)

Other covenants which the Lord made with their fathers were to the effect that the remnant would accept the gospel, regain their inheritance and former blessings and take part in the latter-day redemption of Zion.

Nephi, explaining to his brethren the words their father Lehi had "... spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive-tree, . . ." said, "... in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, . . . for the space of . . . many generations . . . then shall the fulness of the gospel . . . come unto [them] . . . from the Gentiles, . . .

"And at that day shall the remnant of our seed. . .

". . . be remembered again among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted . . . into the true olive-tree." (1 Nephi 15:7, 13-14, 16.)

"And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews.

"And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

"And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightful people." (2 Nephi 30:4-6.)

The chief witness to the blessings awaiting the Lamanites was the resurrected Jesus. As he ministered to the survivors of the cataclysm which attended his crucifixion, he said unto

them, ". . . my joy is great, even unto fulness, because of you, and also this generation; yea, and even the Father rejoiceth, and also all the holy angels, . . . for none of them (this generation—that is, those who were then alive) are lost. . . .

"But . . ." he continued, "it sorroweth me because of the fourth generation from this generation, for they are led away captive by him even as was the son of perdition; for they will sell me for silver and for gold, . . . And in that day will I visit them, even in turning their works upon their own heads." (3 Nephi 27:30, 32.) Mormon, of course, records the literal fulfillment of this sad prediction.

But Jesus did not conclude his prophecy about the Lamanites here. Notwithstanding their foreseen apostasy and degradation, he repeatedly affirmed the fact that the Father had given them this land as a permanent inheritance. (See *ibid.*, 15:13; 16:16; 20:14; 21:22.) He assured them that a remnant would survive to enjoy their inheritance although, by reason of their iniquity, they would forfeit it to the gentiles for a season.

He told of the coming of the gentiles. "For," said he, "it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 21:4.)

". . . because of their belief in me, . . .

". . . and because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day . . . the fulness of these things shall be made known unto them." (*Ibid.*, 16:6-7.)

". . . that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 21:4.)

Speaking of the role the remnant would play in this last gospel dispensation, Jesus assured them that they would be associated with other faithful members of the house of Israel in establishing in this, the land of their inheritance, a New Jerusalem. "And behold," said he, "this people"—remember, he was speaking in America—"will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you." (*Ibid.*, 20:22.)

*Saturday Evening Session,
April 6, 1963*

THE CORRELATION PROGRAM

Harold B. Lee

of the Council of the Twelve

The subject I am to discuss tonight is not of my own choosing but by assignment from the Presidency of the Church. Therefore I feel a tremendous responsibility, particularly that I stay within the bounds of what I have understood their wishes to be with regard to this presentation. To that end I seek most humbly for an interest in your faith and prayers that I might be so guided as to attempt tonight to portray something that will help you to understand the developments of what the President has called "The Correlation Program" as it has now been developed.

Prefacing that presentation in some detail, part of it by review and some by way of extension, I would like to make a few introductory remarks. I attended a fast and testimony meeting a few months ago where Dr. Harvey Fletcher bore a remarkable testimony. He told about the experience of his father being called on a mission when Dr. Fletcher was just a lad. There were five or six children, as I remember it, in the family, and the father was called to go out with not much support from home. He hadn't been out long when he was called to come home on account of the death of a member of the family. While he was home and preparing to go back to his mission, he was stricken with deafness, some disease which left him with total deafness, which, of course, made necessary the cancellation of his mission.

It was a disturbing thing to the family, and while the father did not allow himself to become bitter, there were some who tried their best to feel sorry for him or make him feel sorry for himself. About this time the Godbeites, who the older ones here will remember were a splinter group trying to confuse the Church, were quite active, and in the ward where they lived one of these, a member of the bishopric of the ward,

Concerning the timetable for the fulfilment of these tremendous prophecies, Jesus said: ". . . I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place— . . .

" . . . when these things which I declare unto you, . . . shall be made known unto the Gentiles . . .

" . . . and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto . . .

" . . . your seed . . .

"And . . . thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already com-

menced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel." (*Ibid.*, 21:1-3, 5, 7.)

Now, with this foreknowledge as an interpretative guide to the signs of the times, all who have seeing eyes and understanding hearts may rest assured that the fulfilment of the promises to the Lamanites is at hand. Most of the foregoing prophecies have already been fulfilled, and others are now in course of fulfilment. The apostasy and fourth generation destruction, the degeneration of the remnant, the coming of the gentiles, their establishment by the power

had tried to influence the father and had succeeded with some confusion.

The father, with thoughts of this confusion on his mind, walking down the road one day, heard distinctly a voice behind him, which said to him: "Stick with the old ship. It will lead you safely home." He turned to look because he had not been hearing audible voices, and he saw no speaker, but the message that came to him is the message with which I should like to commence—that we should remember that ours is the responsibility to "stick with the old ship" if we want to be brought safely back home.

I should like to bring to you a statement from three former leaders of the Church as to the fundamentals of what this speaker called "the old ship," meaning the kingdom of God, which must be kept in mind always as to the essentials in the building of the kingdom.

Parley P. Pratt, in what was called a "declaration" or a "proclamation," under the subject heading, "Order of Government," had made this very clear statement:

"The legislative, judicial, and executive power is vested in him (meaning the President of the Church); he reveals the law, he elects, chooses, and appoints the officers and holds the right to reprove, correct, or even to remove them at pleasure. Hence the necessity of a constant intercourse by direct revelation between the Lord and his Church. As a precedence for the foregoing facts, we refer to the examples of all ages as recorded in the Scriptures.

"This order of government began in Eden—God appointed Adam to govern the earth, and gave him laws.

"It was perpetuated in a regular succession from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, the Prophets,

John, Jesus and his apostles. All, and each of which, were chosen by the Lord, and not by the people.

"It is true the people have a voice in the government of the kingdom of God, . . .

"But they do not confer the authority in the first place, nor can they take it away; for instance, the people did not elect the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, nor could they by popular vote deprive them of their apostleship. As the government of the kingdom anciently existed, so it is now restored." (*Millennial Star*, 5:150; March 1845.)

The responsibility resting upon every holder of the priesthood is set forth in another very clear and plain declaration by President Wilford Woodruff, and this is what he said:

"Every leader in his place is accountable for his stewardship. These disciples of Christ received the Holy Priesthood, the gospel of Christ, and the keys of the Kingdom of God, and Jesus held them responsible until the day of their death for the course they pursued. However, they were despised by the world, they were held responsible for bearing a faithful and true testimony to the Jew and gentile, of Jesus Christ being the true shepherd and Savior of the world. He gave him, Joseph Smith, the Priesthood under the hands of Peter, James and John. The Lord Almighty held him responsible unto the day that he sealed his testimony with his blood for the course that he pursued with these things. And he bore his testimony, left his record, and sealed it with his blood and laid down his life and that testimony is in force today upon all the world, and will remain so until the end. When I say this of Joseph Smith, I say it of every other man (and this now is the point I want you to note particularly). President Young has led this Church for many years, and the Lord has held him

of God as a free people in this land, their harassment of the remnant, the preservation of the promised record, and its coming forth by way of the gentiles are now all documented history.

For more than a hundred years the record of their fathers, the Book of Mormon, has been going to the Lamanites by way of the gentiles. And it is now being carried to them with increased tempo.

Today the Church has in operation in lands inhabited, at least in part, by the remnant, twenty-one missions. Others are being organized. Working in these missions during 1962 were, on an

average, 2,424 missionaries a month. These missionaries brought into the Church 22,909 people in 1962, an average of 9.45 a missionary. This is well above the average of other foreign missions of the Church. So you see, my brethren and sisters, the Lord is pouring out his spirit upon the Lamanites. They are accepting the record of their fathers and are coming to a knowledge of the "things" referred to by Jesus. It is true that they are poor; they are downtrodden; they are in large part uneducated. In these and many other respects they still suffer under the curse brought upon them by their apostasy

from the gospel once so richly enjoyed and strictly obeyed by their fathers. But they are now accepting the gospel. And they will continue to accept it in ever-increasing numbers. As they receive and live it, they are certain to regain their favored status in the house of Israel and participate in the redemption of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem here in America. Jacob, even now, flourishes in the wilderness, and shortly the "Lamanites shall blossom as the rose," heralding "the great day of the Lord," which God grant may not be long delayed, I humbly pray.

responsible and will hold him so until the day of his death for the course pursued by him while conducting the affairs of His Church and Kingdom. And also for the use he makes of the Holy Priesthood and the Kingdom of God.

"So with all his counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and everyone of us, we shall all be held accountable until the day of our death. We shall have to give an account before the God of heaven when we go into the spirit world and meet Him there for the use of this Priesthood and the keys of the kingdom which have been established on the earth for the last time, have been committed unto the hands of this people, and God will hold us responsible for the use we make of these blessings, privileges and powers which we enjoy in connection therewith. The eyes of God and his angels, and of every man who dwells in the Celestial World are watching us and the courses we pursue."

President Joseph F. Smith defines the relationship of each order of priesthood to all others, in contrast, may I say, with that concept of having one minister for a congregation who practically directs the entire activity of the congregation. President Smith said:

"The Lord never did intend that one man should have all the power, and for that reason he has placed in His Church, the presidents, apostles, high priests, seventies, elders, and the various officers of the lesser priesthood, all of which are essential in their order and place according to the authority bestowed upon them. The Lord never did anything that was not essential or that was superfluous. There is a use for every branch of the priesthood, and he has established it in his Church. We want every man to learn his duty, and we expect that every man will do his duty as faithfully as he knows how and

carry off his portion of the responsibility of building up Zion in the latter days."

The summary of these statements is set forth in one or two incidents that I should like now to mention and to digress for a moment, and then to summarize by reading from one of our Melchizedek Priesthood study courses. The story is told in the early days of the Church—particularly, I think, at Kirtland—where some of the leading brethren in the presiding councils of the Church met secretly and tried to scheme as to how they could get rid of the Prophet Joseph's leadership. They made the mistake of inviting Brigham Young to one of these secret meetings. He rebuked them, after he had heard the purpose of their meeting. This is part of what he said: "You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of God, but you can cut the thread that binds you to the prophet of God, and sink yourselves to hell."

In that same vein, I heard President Clark, shortly after he came into the First Presidency, make an interesting public statement. He said that when President Grant called him to be a Counselor in the First Presidency, he was worried. He had always thought of the President of the Church as the "mouthpiece" of the Lord, and he wondered how much counseling he ought to give the "mouthpiece" of the Lord. But he hadn't been long in the Presidency until he discovered his place.

President Grant would say to each of his Counselors, when they were discussing a serious matter, "What do you think about it?" and "What do you think about it?" And the Counselors would respond. Sometimes their opinions were in contradiction or in conflict with what the President had thought. There was then the business of resolving the different points of view, but there would always come a time after a

sufficient discussion when the President would say: "Now brethren, I feel that this is the thing we ought to do." Then President Clark remarked, "When he said that, I quit counseling because, to me, that was the prophet of the Lord speaking, and I felt I should not try to dissuade him."

In the history of the Church there have been times or instances where Counselors in the First Presidency and others in high station have sought to overturn the decision or to persuade the President contrary to his inspired judgment, and always, if you will read carefully the history of the Church, such oppositions brought not only disastrous results to those who resisted the decision of the President, but almost always such temporary persuasions were called back for reconsideration, or a reversal of hasty action not in accordance with the feelings, the inspired feelings, of the President of the Church. And that, I submit, is one of the fundamental things that we must never lose sight of in the building of the kingdom of God.

Now then, the summary I would like you to get in order to bring all these statements together as an introduction:

"A significant and basic idea in the meaning of Priesthood is made clear, that is, that although the President of the Church may hold and dispense the powers and administrative responsibilities of that office, the power of the Priesthood is decentralized, first, according to the offices and jurisdiction of those respective offices. Secondly, according to the individual Priesthood bearers. This means that while the Church as a whole is delicately responsible to central authority for Church-wide purposes, the central local relationships in the organizations do not restrict full initiative and free development of either territorial division of the Church, individual quorums, groups of