

Preface

This series was given as discussions, not as lectures. There was significant interaction with the audience and as such, there were frequent comments and questions from them, most of which were peripheral to the subject being presented. Effort has been made to focus on the subject so most of the comments have simply been deleted. Same has been the case for many of the questions that resulted in tangential discussion that were not relevant to the subject so they have been deleted as well. In some case, the question and answer, though not directly related to what was being discussed at that point, have been placed at the end of the text for the session. In cases where the question was directly related to the subject both the question and the answer have been incorporated into the text without break. Even with all the distractions, Dr. Andrus was particularly good at always coming back to the flow of the theme he was presenting. Also, we have taken some liberty to help with awkward sentence structure and wording. In no case has the theological content been changed. All of this has been done to help with the flow of the ideas and make it easier for the reader to follow. LWP – editor

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1988

Discussion 1 - The Prophetic Picture

Let me begin by way of introduction with Alma 31:5. I do this for more than one purpose. One purpose being to follow the scriptural admonition to center what we teach in the scriptures. Alma had a problem in his day, and as he contemplated the solution to that problem we have this statement, “now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just – yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them – therefore, Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God.”

In the Prophetic Picture, we want to do that this evening. We want to focus attention on the Book of Mormon. For authority on the Book of Mormon, one of the truly great testimonies is found in Section 17 where the Lord is speaking to those who were to be three witnesses. He makes this statement in verse 5, “... for it is by my power that he Joseph Smith has seen them, and it is because he had faith. he has translated the Book, even that part which I have commended him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true.”

This is a sacred oath on the part of the Lord. “As your Lord and your God liveth it is true.” So if God lives and if God is true, then the Book of Mormon is true. It’s just that simple. On that basis we rest our understanding of the Book of Mormon and what it teaches.

This evening we’re going to focus on the prophetic picture in context. The discussion of the latter day is far too vast to handle in one easy evening’s treatment, so let’s at least set context.

When we talk about the second coming, we need to note that instead of one grand cataclysmic event, the second coming actually is a series of appearances that finally consummate in the great world appearance of Christ as he comes in glory in the clouds of heaven.

Clear back in 1859, Charles W. Penrose, who became a member of the First Presidency and was one of the great scriptural authorities of this dispensation, talked about the subject of the second coming. He began by giving the general picture. He says, “Through the teachings of the gospel as revealed through Joseph Smith, many among all nations will be led to forsake the traditions of their fathers. They will be gathered together to one place.” This one place is the New Jerusalem picture. We haven’t really gotten to that phase of the gathering yet, so we need in seeing this to project our minds forward a little bit.

He says, “These will be gathered to one place to prepare themselves for the appearance of the Savior by learning through his inspired servants the things which he hates and those things which are pleasing to him and purifying themselves from all that which is contrary to the Lord. They will build unto him a holy temple and of necessity

some form of government which will exist among them – political government, as they will exist in a national as well as an ecclesiastical capacity. This government will be a theocracy. Or in other words, the Kingdom of God. Laws, ordinances, regulations, etc., will be under God's priesthood, and the people will progress in arts, sciences and everything that will produce happiness and union, and establish them in strength, righteousness and everlasting peace."

On the other hand, as we see the building of the Lord's work finally consummating in the establishment of the New Jerusalem, he says you will see "an increase of spiritual darkness and a deterioration of the foundations of society. For example, the very elements around will seem to be affected by the national and social convulsions." He says the ties that bind together families and kindreds, "will be disregarded and violated and the passions of human nature be put to their vilest use."

So we see the two directions, the building of the Kingdom and the world picture. Then he comes down closer to the time of the second coming, and note that we say that we're dealing with a series of appearances. He says, "We may consider the inhabitants of the earth at the time immediately preceding the coming of Christ, under three general divisions. First, the Saints of God gathered together in one place upon the western continent, called Zion, busily preparing for his appearing in their midst as their Redeemer, who had shed his blood for their salvation, now coming to reign over them and to reward them for their labors in establishing his government."

We have the idea, and it's a naive one, that when Christ comes he is going to establish his government and his reign. That's not the fact. The fact is that he will come and take possession of an order of things that has been previously established, beginning in Zion among the Saints.

The second group of people consists of the Jewish people "gathered to Jerusalem, also expecting the Messiah, but not believing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, and being in danger of destruction from their gentile enemies."

The third group, he says, "consists of the corrupt nations and kingdoms of man, who, rejecting the light of the gospel, are unprepared for the Lord's reign and are almost ripe for destruction." That's the setting. When we talk about the second coming, he says, "Among the first mentioned of these three classes of men, the Lord will make his appearance first." So it's among the Latter-day Saints, among Ephraim, the birthright tribe, in Zion. It's in these circumstances and in this context that the great appearances of the second coming begin. That appearance will be unknown to the rest of mankind. He says, "He will come to the temple prepared for him," and that's the Malachi 3 prophecy, "and his faithful people will behold his face and hear his voice and gaze upon his glory. From his own lips they will receive further instructions for the development and beautifying of Zion and for the extension and sure stability of his kingdom." So his coming there is purposeful for the building of his order of things preparatory for the Millennial reign.

We could break that down into more than one appearance. Isaiah 59:20 talks about the Lord coming to Zion. We have the great appearance of Christ in his temple and then the Adam-ondi-Ahman picture which is after that. So there's more than one appearance in

relation to the Saints and in relation to the Zion picture. But let's go on.

He says, "His next appearance," after his appearance in Zion, "will be to the distressed and nearly vanquished sons of Judah. At the crisis of their fate when the hostile troops of several nations are ravishing the city and all the horrors of war overwhelming the people of Jerusalem, he will set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which will cleave and part asunder at his touch. Attended by a host from heaven he will overthrow and destroy the combined armies of the gentiles and appear to the worshipping Jews as the mighty Deliverer and Conqueror, so long expected by their race. And while love, gratitude, awe and admiration swell their bosoms, the Deliverer will show them the tokens of his crucifixion and disclose himself as Jesus of Nazareth." Then you'll have belief depart and a nation born in a day. He says, "They shall be baptized for the remission of sins, receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and the government of God as established in Zion will be set up among them, no longer to be thrown down."

So you have the building of the program in Zion and the transmission of it to Jerusalem.

He says, "The great and crowning advent of the Lord will be subsequent to these earlier appearances. But who can describe it in the language of mortals? The tongue of man falters and the pen drops from the hand of the writer as the mind is wrapped in contemplation of the sublime and awful majesty of his coming. He comes, the earth shakes, the tall mountains tremble, the mighty deep rolls back, the earth is cleansed, the wicked are consumed by the power of his glory, the earth is renewed," etc.

As we see this picture, let's take this context and talk about the prophetic picture as given in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon covers a whole gamut of things, but the focus of Book of Mormon prophecy in the latter day centers around the Zion scene. You have references concerning the Jews and of Christ coming in glory, but the focus of the prophetic picture in the Book of Mormon centers around Zion. In order to see this even more specifically and clearly, let me make this clarification. The Book of Mormon deals with the latter day in two respects. One respect is it has some things to say about the restoration period. It identifies the name of the restoration prophet, saying the prophet of the restoration would be named after his father. It talks about the coming forth of the record, and the challenge to the intellectual world to read it, and then the declaration that he is going to perform his own work. It has those things that relate to the Joseph Smith period.

But as you take a view of the Book of Mormon and study it over, you will find that there is another period down the road from that first period, that even today is still future. The main burden of prophetic declarations in the Book of Mormon concern this latter-day period. This latter-day period is the period when the Lord will cleanse America for the establishment of the New Jerusalem. It's the period when he will cleanse his Church and elevate the righteous through tribulation and cleansing to the higher spiritual plane, where they enjoy more fully the gifts and blessings of the spirit. It's the period when he establishes Zion in the sense of the center place, the New Jerusalem. Finally, it's the period of the great gathering of Israel.

The great gathering of Israel has not started; but it has started in the sense that we have Ephraim, but the great gathering of Israel portrayed in the Book of Mormon is the

gathering to Zion, the New Jerusalem. It includes the redemption of the ten tribes and the whole picture. It isn't merely a physical gathering; it's a gathering more specifically and meaningfully to the temple, and ultimately to the Holy of Holies, where people finally come up to the level where they get the blessings of the Second Comforter and truly become Israel, spiritual and divine Israel in reality.

To begin with let's turn to I Nephi as the opening prophetic statement concerning the last days. Nephi's vision is that which his father saw. We know the general story, and we know also that in the vision he was given, he saw the discovery of America and the colonization of America. These are in I Nephi 13. He sees what we call the formation of a great and abominable church, apparently back even before the compilation of the Christian scriptures. It would have power on earth from that day on.

Then in I Nephi 14, the prophetic picture shifts to a period of time that is still future to us. It's this second era in the latter days, the first being the era of restoration, the second being the era of the redemption of Zion and the redemption of Israel era. In I Nephi 14, he is told things concerning the gentiles and the alternatives open to them. Then in verse 5, "And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying: Thou has beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them; and thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel ..." That expression was concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel. That expression and idea is central – the covenants of the Lord concerning the house of Israel.

He says, "Therefore, wo, be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God. For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men ..." Let me pause and parenthetically add a clarification. We sometimes say the great and marvelous works, the Book of Mormon and the coming forth of the gospel. That's the basis of it, true. But the great and marvelous work in the Book of Mormon is that work that involves the redemption of Zion, the gathering of Israel, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom. The Book of Mormon is preparatory to it. Joseph Smith had that point made clear to him by the angel Moroni before he ever got the plates out of the hill, indicating that there was a great and a marvelous work, and it would be subsequent to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. We relate them, and it's not a problem, but for specific clarification the great and marvelous work is where he literally turns things upside down and establishes his kingdom, in place of the kingdoms of the world. That's the great and marvelous work, where he gathers his people and establishes them in his covenants and builds the New Jerusalem and endows his Saints with spiritual power and the glory of God as a cloud of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night over every dwelling place – that is the great and marvelous work that the Book of Mormon is talking about.

He says, speaking of that time and these two alternatives that he is going to present to the world, particularly the Gentiles, "For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other – either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil." If people reject this great and marvelous work, they've had it. They've had it both

spiritually and temporally.

In a general sense, they are confronted with such alternatives now. But as you read the Book of Mormon with this focus, you'll see a lot more meaning into the picture.

This focus is on the latter-days, and the focus in the latter-days is on the redemption of Israel. Let me follow that point through with you. Back again in verse 5, "Thou knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel." Let me turn to I Nephi 15:20, where Nephi is discussing with his brethren his vision. "I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again." So he's talking about a particular focus, and as we've said, the great gathering of Israel is still a great event in the future.

For example, again in III Nephi 20, and this is an important focal point that we need to see and understand, in III Nephi 20 as the Savior talks about the latter-days and about Isaiah, he makes this point of clarification, beginning with verse 12. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled," he is talking about the words of Isaiah, "then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel." The focus is the redemption of Israel, and we'll get to that as we unfold the prophetic picture of the Book of Mormon later. We're talking about this picture down the road from us, rather than just the broad and general picture.

In I Nephi 14, with this context that we're dealing with now of the latter-day period, which is a time of real alternatives to the world, if they accept it, then they have peace and life everlasting. If they reject it, then they are brought to destruction spiritually and temporally. They are cleansed from the earth; they are destroyed in the physical or temporal sense. This is the context.

In order to get into the picture, Nephi is shown that in this latter-day period of time, there would be a polarization of forces in the earth so that there could be only two churches; one is the church of the Lamb, and the other is a composite church. It's a great federation of perversion, the federated church of the adversary. In verse 10, he says, "He," the angel, "said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth."

Who is the church of abominations? It's not a particular ecclesiastical organization. It's anyone who doesn't join and support the church of the Lamb. You finally see a polarization and such a dichotomy that people will be caught up to it so that they go either one way or the other. If they take a position against the church of the Lamb in this day of which he is speaking, then they are in the church of the devil regardless of where they go to church on Sunday.

Verse 11, "I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters ..." The word waters is a scriptural word coming from Isaiah and the Book of Revelation, meaning peoples. It has reference to the church being established among many people.

“...and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.”

This part, this picture, cannot fit into the latter-day scene until after World War II. Why not? We are a Utah church. We are a western church. When I was a kid I belonged to the Boy Trail Builders. “We are the Boy Trail Builders, out west where the sunset glows.” We’ve had to do away with that, because the young people of the church aren’t all out west. We had a regional situation. With President McKay and after World War II, then things opened up in Asia, in Central and South America, and we have become an international church. So this prophecy couldn’t have fulfillment until down into our day and our time.

Elder Maxwell in Conference talked about this. He didn’t come out and identify I Nephi 14, but he was using the text in his last Conference address in what he said, and putting it in the modern context.

Nephi says, “And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles to fight against the Lamb of God.” He is talking about what can properly be called an era of warfare against Zion. If you were to identify one major, prophetic thing in relation to the last days, in the Book of Mormon, it deals with the era of warfare against Zion. It is repeated over and over and over again, and it’s the substance of Nephi’s statements and of Jacob’s and particularly the Savior’s in III Nephi. It’s the era of warfare in Zion.

It goes on and says, “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.” (v. 14) Let me make another clarification. The church of the Lamb is not just the total membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Why not? It’s that church, for example, that’s armed with righteousness and the power of God in great glory. That leaves quite a few of us out. It’s that group that in this period of tension and pressure and challenge that will finally come through and do what the Prophet wants them to do. They’ve been reading the Book of Mormon, they believe in being spiritually born of God, changed, renewed spiritually, and becoming new creatures in Christ, to use Paul’s terminology.

They seek the Lord, and in this time of pressure they will be given the higher blessings of the gospel – including the temple – and as a result of this, they will begin to receive the spiritual endowments that all the prophecies talked about rightfully belonging to Zion, the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night. We’re talking about two kinds of things. We’re talking about warfare and we’re also talking about the cleansing and spiritual endowment of the saints, and under what circumstances this will take place.

Then we're talking about a third thing – the circumstances under which Zion truly becomes an ensign and a standard to the world. Zion is not now, in the Book of Mormon terminology, an ensign and a standard to the world, not fully at least. She will be when this period takes place.

But as you pick up the picture of the Book of Mormon and other scriptures, and the Old Testament is full of this, it is a very literal warfare, including military action of the most literal sense. It will be immediate bombardment, true, it'll be that kind of thing. But it will go far beyond that. The scriptures make that very, very clear.

Verse 15, "I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon the great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth. And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations," and that particularly focuses in the gentile area, the western civilization people, "the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all those things."

Just summarily, two things as this era of warfare takes place. One thing is that the Saints are cleansed and blessed through the gospel and through sacred ordinances of the holy priesthood with the spiritual endowments of Zion. This is where it begins. The second thing is that through the Lord's action and intervention, those who make war will have something more to do than to badger the Saints, because they will begin to fall into the pit which they dug for the people of the Lord. They will begin to turn, one against another, and they will have something to do in regard to the situation among themselves as a result of their opposition to the saints. They will war among themselves. So it's that kind of picture that we're dealing with.

In verse 17 you have one of the most significant clarifications, very vital and very important. It doesn't appear so generally until you study enough of the prophetic picture to pick up what it's talking about. It gives us a point of reference. "And when the day cometh" – that's a point of reference – "When the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose foundation is the devil at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he has made to his people who are of the house of Israel." This is a preparatory work. Note that he doesn't say, "In this day I am going to redeem Israel," he's not saying that when this day of warfare comes and these people who are making war against Zion will turn one against another, that he is then going to redeem Israel. Rather, he is saying that this will be a preparatory work for the time when he is going to redeem Israel. Do you see the point of clarification?

Again, the last phrase, "Then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel." Let me suggest that the preparation consists of a two-fold thing. One thing is the gathering of Israel to the New Jerusalem, it's to the latter-day Zion. The Book of Mormon makes that very clear, and for that to take place there has to be a cleansing of this land. If you read III Nephi 21 about the Lord's alternatives concerning this land, if the people don't repent and they finally ripen in iniquity, then

great judgments come to this land. Out of those judgments the New Jerusalem is finally redeemed and established.

So one phase of this preparation of which he is speaking is the cleansing of the land of Zion preparatory to the establishment of Zion.

The second thing is the cleansing of the saints, of those people who are going to do the job. I'm not talking about the inactive members of the church necessarily, I'm talking about the faithful. Maybe a cleansing of the inactive members will take place too. But I'm talking about the cleansing of the faithful. Why? Because our hearts and our souls aren't stretched enough as of right now, and we haven't developed enough reliance on the Lord to really come up to that spiritual plane where we can get the spiritual endowments of which he is speaking. Preparatory to that, there is going to be tribulation. As Isaiah says, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgments and her converts with righteousness."

So he's talking now about this general period and then about the preparation. At that point in Nephi's record, it breaks off into a separate division, and the scene focuses to a person who Nephi sees. He says, "It came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying, Look! And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me: Behold, one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been." Then Nephi is told that this apostle is the Apostle John. He is also told that he, Nephi, would see the same things that John saw, but that John had been foreordained to write them. Nephi was to stop at this point and let John's record take over. What does that say about the Book of Revelation? If you understand the Book of Revelation, in what context must we place it? You put it into the context of I Nephi 14. In other words, I Nephi 14 is the introduction to the Book of Revelation. Then you go right on through the Book of Revelation and say that the things John talked about there, that Nephi saw.

Let me make a clarification or two in relation to the Book of Revelation. The Prophet Joseph said "The Book of Revelation is one of the plainest Books God ever caused to be written." (*Teachings*, p. 290) That's a puzzling statement. If you're standing with something in front of you here and there's a beautiful scene out there and you are trying to see it and you have an obstruction, and someone says, "That's the most plain and beautiful scene I've ever see," and you say, "I can't see anything," you have to recognize that maybe you have some obstructions. You take away the obstructions and you see the Book of Revelation in the proper light, and let me bear you my testimony in the sacred name of Christ that Joseph Smith's statement is exactly right. There isn't a book in the Bible as plain as the Book of Revelation. But you've got to come at it the right way. You've got to see it in the right context. When you do, zoom! It's one of the most significant scriptural records that we've got.

The Book of Revelation is important enough so that we have a clarification concerning it. I just want to develop one or two ideas; otherwise we'd spend the rest of tonight and all the next time that we get together on the book, and I don't know that that's our purpose, at least for right now.

In Section 77, the Prophet Joseph Smith talks about the Book of Revelation. He

identifies the 4 beasts and the 4 and 20 elders, etc., and the seals and the records and all of that. He focuses attention on Revelation 7, 8, and 9. That's where I'd like to put some attention in order to see how this fits in so we can understand the prophetic picture of the Book of Mormon, and it makes it more meaningful.

In Revelation 7, John sees 4 angels who have the power of judgment and destruction over the face of the earth. Let's turn back to Revelation 7 and read a little on what John says. "After these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

Let me turn to the Prophet Joseph Smith, now. (*TPJS*, 321) "Four destroying angels holding power over the four quarters of the earth until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, which signifies" – here is what John is talking about – "which signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure."

Now a word of explanation. It's not the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, per se, that is going to be caught up to meet Christ in the cloud. If you read Section 78, it's the Church of the Firstborn. What's the difference? There's an outer church, and then there's an inner church. The outer church is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. How do you get into it? By baptism. What's the basic spiritual right and privilege that we have by membership in it? It's the gift of the Holy Ghost, or what we may call the First Comforter. The inner church is the Church of the Firstborn. How do you get into it? Through the sealing powers of the holy priesthood, by making your calling and election sure. What are the spiritual privileges of this church as against the outer Church? The blessings of the Second Comforter. When the righteous are caught up to meet Christ in the clouds, that's going to be a Second Comforter experience if we've ever seen one. It's going to be the inner church.

In that sense John sees these four destroying angels. Then he sees a fifth angel, saying, "We haven't gotten ready for the second coming yet. Let's hold things up until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Then John sees the great ministry of sealing is carried on by 144,000, who are selected from all tribes of Israel, 12,000 from each tribe. Then with them, he says, "I beheld a great multitude, which no man could number."

Now to Section 77 for a clarification or two. As the Prophet Joseph Smith talks about this, he identifies the 144,000. He says, "We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests ..." They are not ordinary high priests like many of us here. There are different kinds of high priests. Without discussing it in detail, read the 1st chapter of the Book of Abraham, where Abraham wanted the rights of the priesthood. He became a high priest, holding the rights belonging to the fathers. This is a high priest in the holy order. A high priest in the holy order is a man who has received fullness of priesthood; he has made his calling and election sure, and he has received the fullness of priesthood. Not only that, not only being a recipient, he also has the power to preside

in that function and administer those sacred and ultimate ordinances to others.

The 144,000 are high priests of the holy order. It is their mission, he says, “to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.” In other words, to bring them into the inner church through the sealing power. They hold the fullness of priesthood and preside in that function, and they minister for a period of time, bringing people into that inner order of things. This is what we call in the latter day, “the time of the harvest,” expressed beautifully in the parable of the wheat and the tares.

In Section 86 we have a clarification concerning the wheat and the tares. It says, for example, explaining about Babylon, the word, etc., and says, “Therefore, let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe ...” The Book of Revelation deals with the time when the harvest is fully ripe. He says, “Then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the tares ...” Who are the instruments of gathering? The answer is the 144,000. When they are gathered, where is the bin? Into what bin do you gather them? The Church of the Firstborn. So you first gather out the wheat from among the tares, and after the gathering of the wheat, “Behold and lo, the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned.”

Back to Section 77. The Book of Revelation deals, and this is part of the prophetic picture, with what Nephi sees as the time of harvest. It begins with the era of warfare against Zion, and that era of warfare isn’t very far down the road in its beginnings, it’s far closer than most of us understand.

So who is the fifth angel? The Prophet gives us a clue in Section 77, verse 8, “What are we to understand by the four angels, spoken of in the 7th chapter and 1st verse of Revelation? We are to understand that they are four angels sent forth from God, to whom is given power over the four parts of the earth, to save life and to destroy; these are they who have the everlasting gospel ...” These are the great priesthood figures that restored the gospel in the beginning of this dispensation. “These are they who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; having power to shut up the heavens, to seal up unto life, or to cast down to the regions of darkness.” So they came in the beginning of the dispensation, and they established it. Then we teach the gospel for a while, and finally we have the harvest period, and then John sees they are about ready to reap down the earth because of the corruption. He says, “Hey, let’s not do that until we’ve gathered the wheat into the bin.”

Another question, “What are we to understand by the angel ascending from the east, Rev. 7:2? We are to understand that the angel ascending from the east is he to whom is given the seal of the living God over the twelve tribes of Israel.” This is the Apostle John; this is what Rev. 10 is all about, the little book that John is given and told to eat. It is his ministry in relation to latter-day Israel. “Wherefore, he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And, if you will receive it, this is Elias,” THIS TITLE GIVEN TO JOHN “which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things.”

Who were the great priesthood figures that restored this dispensation? Let’s name them. Moses, Elijah, Elias or Noah, and the Apostle Peter, holding the keys of the holy

apostleship. John the Baptist came, restoring the Aaronic priesthood, but he acted under Peter's direction. So the four great gospel angels are Peter, Noah who holds the keys of the restoration of all things – read Section 27, then Moses and Elijah. So you have the four of them. They restored the gospel; they hold the power to seal unto everlasting life or to cast down unto destruction. They seal both ways.

We are dealing in this picture, this picture of the warfare against Zion, with the harvest period. This harvest period is the period where the forces of corruption make war against Zion. The end result is that you finally have a sanctified people who are endowed with the spirit of God in great glory, and among this group you select 144,000. That requires the literal restoration of Israel, suggesting the possible return of the ten tribes and that kind of thing prior to it. From that group you gather them into the church of the Firstborn. Then after they are gathered, the great judgments of the Book of Revelation occur. That's what the Prophet is talking about here.

Let me read verse 12 for one of the significant clarifications. Every Gospel Doctrine teacher ought to be aware of what the Prophet is saying and dealing with here. "What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation? We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it ..." He relates this to the picture of creation and the placement of life on earth, "... and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years ..." Is Christ going to come as the opening of the seventh seal? The answer is no, because in the opening of the seventh seal you have the gathering of the righteous into the Church of the Firstborn, and then the judgments, and then the second coming. So there's a preparatory work to the millennial era. He says, "... even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things ..." This is the work of the 144,000 under the direction of the great gospel angels, with John as the 5th angel.

He goes on to say, "... and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years – the preparing of the way before the time of his coming."

We have to have the Book of Revelation out to see this. The Book of Revelation is a series of scenes that deals with this period of time. Chapter 7 deals with the selection of the 144,000. Chapter 8 and 9 deal with the final judgments that are poured out. Chapter 10 is a special focus on the mission of John the Revelator. Chapter 11 is a special focus on the Jews and the two prophets that are raised up. Chapter 12 goes back to pre-earth life and the war in heaven and gives that as a prototype of warfare. Chapter 13 deals with the two major powers that are going to oppose the latter-day work. There's not just one power, not just Babylon, there's two powers. The one power is referred to in Daniel as the "little horn," and the other is Babylon. Chapter 11 – why do we wait until chapter 14 to talk about the restoration of the gospel? We always quote Revelation 14:6-7. In the prophetic picture, why wait till clear down there?

it's Nephi's picture that he brings out here in Nephi, in his writings, that there's going to be a great division among the people, 2 Nephi 30:10: "For the time speedily cometh that

the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.”

John sees that great division. Revelation 14 begins with his vision of the 144,000 standing on Mount Zion and makes some clarifications in relation to them. Then in that context he says, “I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel.” In other words, he is being shown how this great division will be brought to pass. It will be brought to pass by the restoration of the gospel, by the preaching of the gospel program. On one hand, it will bring people to stand with Christ on Mount Zion with the 144,000. On the other hand, after that he sees another angel saying, “Babylon is fallen; Babylon the great.” He sees the destruction.

So the Book of Revelation is a series of focuses dealing with this latter-day period. Let me come back to Nephi’s vision. We are talking about the harvest period. First Nephi 14, just to summarize it, he sees the great alternatives, and if people reject this program, they will be “brought down to destruction, both temporally and spiritually.” Then unfolding this challenge and the marvelous work that is going to take place, then Nephi is shown the two churches and he sees the warfare against Zion, and then he sees the result of sanctifying the Saints. He sees the Lord’s handling of the wicked where they begin to turn one against the other, and there are wars and judgments among them.

Then he says that here is John the Revelator, and he’s going to write the rest of it. That’s I Nephi 14. Then Nephi comes back to that same vision. In I Nephi 22, he comes back and amplifies, he doesn’t explain like John does, but he does nevertheless come back and amplify that prophetic picture of the last days.

In I Nephi 22, he is talking about the latter days and his brethren are asking him questions concerning this latter day period. He talks about the scattering of Israel; let’s begin with verse 6, “Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles, and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard ...” In verse 7, “It meaneth that the time that the lord God will raise up in a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered. And after our seed is scattered, the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders. And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father in heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.”

Note particularly from verse 10 on. Nephi in the context of his vision makes this clarification. He says, “I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth ...,” he’s talking about these kindreds in relation to Abraham and the promises of the Lord to Abraham, “... cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations.” What does it mean to “make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations”? Over and over again, the Savior quotes it in III Nephi 20 and 21. It’s to show his power. Where do we have an example anciently where the Lord made bare his arm

before a nation? Egypt in the Old Testament with miraculous powers, a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

When this era of warfare against Zion takes place and the Saints get sanctified through the pressure and the situation, and by great reliance upon the Lord, and by opening up greater channels of spiritual power to them, then the spirit of God in great glory will rest upon the church of the Lamb throughout the earth. When there is opposition against them, those people will see the delivering power of God. Let me put it this way. There will be little Egypts all over the earth wherever the Saints are gathered. There will be little Egypts where the Lord exhibits his delivery power. The result will be that the Lord will make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations. If under those circumstances they reject the Lord's work and fight against it, they will be brought down to destruction both spiritually and temporally. Because the second coming will finally wipe them off and they will be thrust down to hell. Do you see that picture?

He is saying "I would, my brethren," and this is a point of clarification, "I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations." He has to do it in order to bring things to pass and bring forth his work. He says the Lord will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.

"Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel." They will know it because his power is in their midst.

What happens to those who make war in Zion in that day? The next verse, "the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood. And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it."

Can you see the great prophetic picture as the Book of Mormon opens it up? He says, "Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fullness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire." This is the day of the Lord's power. We're doing a work among the people of the earth now, but not like it will be done then. This is the day when the Lord really comes out in power. 1 Nephi 22 is a followup on this and a clarification.

Let me turn to II Nephi 6. After gathering the wheat, and the tares are destroyed, then he comes in his glory. In the meantime, in this period of cleansing he will come to Zion. Then after the righteous have been gathered into the Church of the Firstborn, he will come to his temple to put the capstone on, which is to make those who have made their calling and election to be kings and priests, to make them in actual fact kings and

priests. That's the capstone of the temple program.

After that, he will come to Adam-ondi-Ahman to tie all dispensations in one and to give judgment to the Saints. Then he is coming in glory. So this is context to the general events of the last days.

In II Nephi 6, this theme is so important to the Nephite prophets that Jacob picks it up. He picks it up because Nephi thinks he hasn't said enough about the matter. Verse 4, "And now, behold, I would speak unto you concerning things which are ..." Remember, last time we talked about the double fulfillment of Isaiah? "... and things which are to come; wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah." Isaiah talks on the two levels – past and present, and the prophecies dealing with the latter day as well as with his own time and other periods in the history of Israel.

He says, "Now the words which I shall read are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel." It's in this day when Israel is going to be gathered. We said that the Lord's covenants will be fulfilled when Zion is established, the New Jerusalem, and the Lord then manifests his power in great glory to bring about his purpose and to bring Israel out of obscurity and to establish them in righteousness.

Back to verse 5, "... wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel. And now these are the words: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me."

He goes on and makes it clear in verse 13, "Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed. For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for they still wait for the coming of the Messiah. And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory ..." What does that word "again" mean? It means to repeat. He is going to set his hand "again" the second time. In other words, there are two second times. The first time he set his hand to redeem Israel was with Moses. He sought to take them to Mount Sinai and make a city of Zion out of them. The second time he set his hand to redeem Israel was with the Prophet Joseph Smith.

If you read the early revelations, the Lord was heading for Zion and he would have established the New Jerusalem, except the Saints backed off. There were too many sleepy ones in their midst. There were too many people who were not ready to really understand. The Prophet talked about the Saints being like glass. You put them up against a little heat and they shatter.

But when he sets his hand again the second time, he comes around and this "again the

second time” is this period when he is going to really do it. This is the era of warfare against Zion, when you finally establish Zion. He says, back to verse 14, “Behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory....” Yes, he manifest himself to the early Latter-day Saints. But he is talking now about the warfare against Zion. He’s talking about the era of warfare against Zion. “... unto the destruction of their enemies ...” He didn’t destroy the enemies of the Saints in Joseph Smith’s day. Their enemies kicked the Saints out of Nauvoo and other places and they came out west. “... when that day cometh when they shall believe him; and none will he destroy that believe in him. And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine. And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel. For shall the prey be taken from the mighty....” Who is the prey? If you read the Isaiah passage in the Book of Mormon, the prey is Zion. In this period of cleansing Zion is going to be brought into bondage, and she is going to need to be delivered.

Like the Lord says in Section 103, beginning with verse 15 through 20, Zion shall be redeemed from bondage. He likens it to the redemption of ancient Israel from the Egyptian bondage and indicates that it will be like that and his power and glory will be made manifest. “... and the lawful captive delivered.” The lawful captive is Zion and the people of the Lord in the earth. He says, “But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people.” His covenant people are prey and they are in bondage. “For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee – and I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

This is when they turn one against another. Can you see that picture, that clarification that Jacob makes?

These explanations that Jacob makes in II Nephi 6 are preliminary to and related to the Isaiah passages in II Nephi 8 and 9. II Nephi 8 is Isaiah 51; II Nephi 9 is Isaiah 52. They both deal with this latter-day period of time, when the Lord is going to bring about his judgments and establish Israel. For example, the first verse of II Nephi 9, “And now, my beloved brethren, I have read these things...” these two chapters, “...that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has made with all the house of Israel....” This is the great gathering period of Israel.

Turn to III Nephi 16. This is the prophetic picture throughout the whole Book of Mormon, and you need to have it in order to see the things the various prophets discuss. As the Savior visits the Nephites, he gives them his gospel, and then he gives them the Sermon on the Mount. Then he explains that this land is their land and they are the descendants of Joseph. He talks a little about the ten tribes, and then in III Nephi 16, he begins to explain Isaiah to them. He says in verse 11, “Then I will remember my covenant which I made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you ...” This is the time when the Gentile culture is destroyed. As of now, the Gentiles have all kinds of power over Israel. But when these judgments come, then the

yoke of the Gentiles will be broken and, as he said, "... but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fullness of my gospel." He says that if they repent, it will be well with them. If they don't repent, then he says, "I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor ..."

That's another aspect of this picture, where the Indian people play instead of cowboys and Indians, they play Indians and cowboys, and the Indian people are in the driver's seat. They go through among the Gentiles when the Gentile culture has been broken. Then in this context, he explains concerning Isaiah, verse 17, "And then the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled, which say: Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." When the Lord brings Zion out of what circumstances? These judgments. He says, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eye of all the nations ..." This is the situation, and the context of that is the two churches with the warfare against Zion and the power of God with great glory being given to the church of the Lamb.

When he gets to that point he says, verse 2 of III Nephi 17, "I perceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words ..." So he breaks off and says to go home and pray about this and fast about it and I'll bring the subject up tomorrow when I visit you again.

This is the last portion that I want to treat this evening. This is III Nephi 20, where Christ having started his explanation concerning these judgments and the redemption of Zion, then sees that the people are not prepared to digest it. They need to get intellectually prepared and go home and get their hearts right. Under those circumstances, they can get enough of the spirit of revelation so that he can talk to them; otherwise he is just saying words they don't understand. So in III Nephi 20:11, "Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled – behold they are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them – verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel. And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, ..." Here now is the great gathering of Israel. It is when these events have taken place.

He says, "... and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them. And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land ..." Then he talks about the remnants among the Gentiles, if they don't repent. Then he talks about this "time of judgment," verse 17 "Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off." These are those who are fighting against Zion, they are going to be cut off. "I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor. For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron," and this comes from Micah, chapter 4, and the horn is a symbol of power, "I will make thy horn iron and thy hoofs brass." You shod your horse with brass and you have something to do a little trampling with.

He says, "Thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it. And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles. And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel." Where is he going to establish them? in Zion and through the Zion program.

"And behold, this people 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." That's when Christ comes to Zion, and that's where the powers of heaven, the power of God in great glory are manifest. Then he goes on and makes further explanation, which I don't have time to get into, but you need to study them thoroughly because they relate to this period and finally lead up to the establishment of the New Jerusalem and the Lord's program concerning the New Jerusalem and the gathering of Israel to it.

In III Nephi 21, having talked about the power of heaven coming down among them, verse 25, "... and I also will be in the midst. And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people ..." This is the great gathering of Israel. Where are they gathered? They are gathered to the New Jerusalem and to Jerusalem in the land of Palestine.

Then the 7th seal is opened, Revelation 8:1. Then is the gathering of the wheat and the half hour of silence, which is in heaven, which makes it about a 21 year period of time. Then after that are the great judgments, the plagues that John talks about, the 6th plague being the gathering of the wicked to Jerusalem, the Jerusalem scene of the two prophets and Christ coming on the Mount of Olives, and the 7th and the events of the second coming in glory. That's the picture of things.

We are confronted with some very, very serious, challenging situations in this country and in the world, situations that will see the destruction of our culture, the financial collapse of our economy and an era of warfare against Zion that will make the Missouri and Illinois scenes seem like a Sunday afternoon picnic. In this period of cleansing, the faithful will be endowed with the power of God in great glory. The great events that deal with the establishment of Zion will take place. That is the prophetic picture, and it's very clear.

Let me conclude with my testimony that the Book of Mormon in more than one way is the keystone of our religion. If you want to know how to get to Christ, get the Book of Mormon. If you want to understand the prophetic picture of the latter day, then you meet the challenge of mastering that book, and make it the focal point. Then the Isaiah prophecies fall into place, then prophecies like Daniel and Zachariah, Ezekiel and others, fall into place. Things begin to open up and you see an entirely different situation than what the Saints in general see. That is as true as God is my witness. I bear you that testimony in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

