



A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

LATTER DAY JOURNEY

Reflecting on the messages and encouragement we have shared with the Church over the past several years, the theme of our latter day journey has been reinforced many times. Articles such as **It Is Always Good To Know The Way** (Dec 2020), and **The Ark Of Safety** (June 2021), have incorporated the vision we have of a spiritual kingdom on the earth and the encouragement from the Lord that we are on His journey to realize the fulfillment of this vision. The scriptures, with many confirmations in experiences and gifts from God, have given us confidence that The Church of Jesus Christ is more directly and actively engaged on the latter day journey today, than ever before.

Unique and Special Journey

God determined, in His perfect wisdom and timing, to begin a different era (or dispensation) of time in the early 1800's. This era of time ushered in the Lord's church and priesthood authority once again upon the earth and eventually will culminate in the fulfillment of Jesus's prayer, wherein He stated, "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*" (Matthew 6:10). Our restoration message is unique, with a common thread of beliefs that include the personal journey of salvation for believers in the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, but also that our heavenly Father has initiated a special journey of restoration and salvation for ALL people of the world. We anticipate this journey will include a future complete revelation of God's Word throughout history resulting in God's Kingdom of Peace on earth. If you truly believe in the Restoration, then you know that this fabulous journey that was initiated in 1829, is the vision we see today. The vision: a promised land (in the flesh), unlike any promised land the world has ever seen. A promised land that is so unique, even the created elements will be peaceful and exclaim the Love of God.

Past Can Reveal Future

Since we have embraced God's latter day promise and the journey toward our promised land, a detailed examination of the scriptures helps us understand the past so that we can see a glimpse of the future. There are many parallels when we consider the past scriptural examples of God's people being directed on a journey to a promised future. Consider for a moment the Jaredite story and how God directed a people to the promised land of America. Remember the House of Israel, and how the hand of God moved in mighty ways to eventually allow them to live in the land promised to the patriarch Abraham. Later in time, the Book of Mormon records the fantastic deliverance of the Lehi/Nephi family from the destruction of Jerusalem and their journey to America.

In each of these examples, we can notice common threads or parallels in the process of change from crisis to deliverance to fulfillment.

Journey: Spiritual Crisis

In the Lord's infinite and matchless wisdom, there is perfect timing when the scales of justice must be balanced; the love and mercies of the Lord for His creation versus allowing sin to utterly destroy the people of God. In these times of spiritual crisis, known ultimately by God, the Lord has chosen special divine intervention to sustain a group of people who would perpetuate the Love of God. Using just one of our previous examples, the family of Lehi was living during the time period when the scales had to be balanced against the House of Israel and their failure to serve God in complete obedience. Lehi was given divine knowledge and inspiration to begin a journey. He and his family were obedient, eventually resulting in a righteous people living in the promised land of America.

Today, we understand the plan of God is to restore the House of Israel back to a full and true worship of Jesus Christ and into the lands promised to their ancestors. The House of Israel and all mankind is in a spiritual crisis of great magnitude. Refer to the writings of Moroni in the Book of Mormon (Mormon 8:26-41). We cannot deny the fact that our world today is in great sin and confusion. Do not be deceived, for God will not allow this sinful condition to remain unchecked without intervention. Clearly the scriptures declare that creation will not end in sin, but in glory. We know the word of God proclaims the Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached to all nations before the end of the world comes. Also, the day is sure to be fulfilled wherein, *"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."* (Habakkuk 2:14).

Journey: Spiritual Leader

The Brother of Jared, Moses, Lehi and Nephi were all tasked with a great responsibility. Listen to the Lord. Trust in the Lord. Communicate the vision of the Lord. Direct the family of God to the Lord. Follow the journey as the Lord leads.

In a macro sense, The Church of Jesus Christ is today's spiritual leader for the nation and for the world. As an organization, we are certainly not the biggest, strongest, or most wealthy. We simply hold the truth through the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. We have the vision. God has given us the priesthood authority of Jesus Christ. We must remain humble and follow the journey as the Lord leads us to the promised land.

In a practical sense, there will be men, as there were in the past journeys, that are tasked with the great responsibility to lead. The Book of Mormon calls out leaders in the latter days. *"...the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord commanded him, and brought other servants,..."* (Jacob 5:70). *"...the life of my servant shall be in my hand,..."* (3 Nephi 21:10). *"...A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer..."* (2 Nephi 3:6).

As the Lord directs The Church of Jesus Christ throughout the journey to our promised land, He will use spiritual leaders to help us follow His will and lead the way, naturally and spiritually.

Journey: Judgement and Destruction

In all periods of time, God affirms His ultimate hatred of sin and wickedness, and at times does so with great fury. The scripture tells us that the Lord God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11), but when a spiritual crisis threatens the total welfare of the people of God, the Almighty intervenes. The confounding of the language, the flood, the plagues upon Egypt, cities of Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed, and the siege and captivity of Jerusalem in 600 BC, are all examples of the wrath of God upon wicked and unbelieving people.

Are we any different today? Can our nation be spared the displeasure and judgement of God if sin continues? The Book of Mormon answers clearly. *“And if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgements of God will come upon you;...”* (Mosiah 29:27). Also, Moroni records a warning concerning the land of America. *“And now, we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them.”* (Ether 2:9).

The Church of Jesus Christ has been warned. God is not pleased with the wickedness upon the promised land of America. We as a nation have an opportunity to change, to repent. However, the judgement of God awaits if we will not. Do not be deceived with the cultural norms being embraced today in our society. What was sin to God in the past, is sin to God today. What God has promised for mankind from the beginning of time, will be everlasting.

Journey: Safety / Travel / Protection

The Brother of Jared and his group were led into the wilderness. The Lord directed Moses and the House of Israel through the desert by His mighty hand; a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Lehi and his family were directed to leave Jerusalem and the Lord provided the Liahona, a compass, to lead them in the proper direction toward the promised land. *“And it did work for them according to their faith in God; therefore, if they had faith to believe that God could cause those spindles should point the way they should go, behold it was done;...”* (Alma 37:40).

The word of God reveals that a separation will occur between the sincere believers and the wicked. This may be a ‘wilderness’ type of experience for the people of God as we see what God has provided in the past to sustain, protect, and prove the faithful. The prophet Joel declares, *“...and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them:...Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith;...”* (Joel 2:17-19) Nephi also speaks of our day. *“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,...” (2 Nephi 30:10).

How will God preserve and protect The Church of Jesus Christ, along with all sincere believers? We must wait faithfully and with great confidence to see how the Lord will act. What the steps on the journey will be for us, we do not completely know. However, we do know that like with the Liahona, we must be willing to see God work. We must be faithful. We must trust in God, not trusting in our own natural comforts or wealth for assurance. There may be a wilderness experience for us as the people of God, since the Lord has frequently led His people in miraculous ways from crisis to deliverance. Please anticipate this part of the journey with joy, not dread. Our Lord delivers His people.

Journey: Miracles

Manna, Water from a Rock, Walking on Dusty Ground at the Bottom of the Red Sea, ...
 Moving a Mountain, Illuminating Rocks for Light, Sophisticated Ships to Cross an Ocean,
 ...

Providing the Brass Plates, Liahona, Angels Appearing, ...

And it is recorded of the Nephites journey, *“...therefore they had this miracle, and also many other miracles wrought by the power of God, **day by day.**”* (Alma 37:40).

Oh, we have glorious miracles provided by the Lord today. The Church of Jesus Christ incorporates ‘testimony time’ in many of our formal worship services on a weekly basis. The blessings and miracles of the Lord are abundant. However, there is a day before us the prophets say - *“...the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land...”* Jeremiah 16:14-16). So glorious and so miraculous will be the works of the Lord for the people of God, that the former miracles and the former blessings will not be spoken of any more. There will be in that day, the days of our journey, miracles and blessings that our current imagination cannot fathom.

Journey: Expanded Knowledge

In the account of the Jaredite journey, the brother of Jared received such a perfect knowledge of God that the spiritual veil was removed and he was able to see Jesus Christ (Ether 3). The Lord spoke to the brother of Jared and stated, *“...for never has man believed in me as thou hast.”* (Ether 3:15). With such accurate knowledge concerning God and great belief, all the revelations of Jesus Christ were revealed unto this man.

The House of Israel journey from Egypt was a similar experience. The Lord spoke to Moses and detailed knowledge of God was once again delivered during their experience toward the promised land. The commandments of God were brought forth, written by the finger of God. (Exodus 31:18).

The family of Lehi received commandment to return to Jerusalem and obtain “...*the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of thy forefathers...*” (1 Nephi 3:3). Lehi and the Nephite civilization were spiritually preserved through this knowledge of God which was contained in the brass plates. Nephi states, “...*they were desirable; yea, and even of great worth to us...*” (1 Nephi 5:21).

The latter day journey we are on as a people, will also include expanding our knowledge of God and His glorious revelations. The record which the Lord instructed the brother of Jared to write will be given to The Church of Jesus Christ: (Ether 4:5-7). The full knowledge and witness of God in the brass plates will be given: (1 Nephi 5:18). The complete records of Nephi along with many other records that the Lord God has commanded to be written will be revealed to the world: (2 Nephi 29:10-13). Oh how glorious will be our rejoicing, how amazed we will be as we read and know the marvelous works of God done among the nations. Our minds will truly be expanded with the knowledge of God.

Journey: Promised Land - America

- * a land that is choice above all the lands of the earth
- * a land of promise
- * he that doth possess it (land) shall serve God
- * the place of the New Jerusalem which should be built, unto the remnant of Joseph
- * the place of the New Jerusalem, which should come down out of heaven

America, the land where the Kingdom of God will be established, as it is in heaven. The journey however, is not for a land. The journey culminates in a time, and a place, and a condition of ultimate love and peace while in mortal life. None of us have ever experienced such joy and contentment. The report given in the Book of Mormon concerning The Church of Jesus Christ on the land of America after Jesus had resurrected, includes these descriptions:

“...there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.”

“...no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness...”

“...surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.”

“...but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God.”

“And how blessed were they!” (4 Nephi v. 15-18)

The Church of Jesus Christ - this is our vision, our hope, our promise. The latter day journey is before us, and the more righteous in Jesus Christ. We pray all will listen and obey the instruction given to Joshua: *“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”* (Joshua 1:9).

In the love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

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To learn more about *The Church of Jesus Christ*, with Headquarters in Monongahela, PA, please visit our web site. The World Operations Center for world-wide missionary efforts is in Greensburg, PA.

www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org