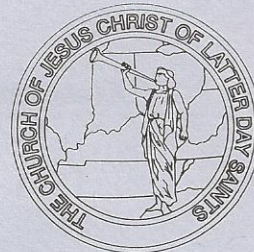




The IRON ROD



OUR CHARGE AS MISSIONARIES IS TO -- TESTIFY OF CHRIST AND THE RESTORATION AND, INVITE ALL TO COME AND BE BAPTIZED UNTO REPENTANCE THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE PARTAKERS OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE. - ALMA 5:62

February 1991

President's Message

Understandably there has been some concern in our mission about the war in the Persian Gulf. Because we have the gospel we are blessed with an knowledge and perspective that is not found anywhere else. This comes to us from latter-day scripture, particularly the Book of Mormon.

The title page of the Book of Mormon gives two primary purposes of the Book of Mormon. The best know purpose is "to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God." The other purpose is "to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord has done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever."

The covenants of the Lord include the covenants made with Abraham and passed on to Isaac, and then to Jacob or Israel. The Abrahamic Covenant is best set forth by the Lord when he said;

"I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, in that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and priesthood unto all nations.... For I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee and in thy seed after thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the gospel which are the blessings of salvation, even life eternal." (See Abraham 2:9-11)

The Covenant to Abraham and his seed (including those adopted into his family when they accept the gospel) is that we have the right to the blessings of the gospel, the priesthood, and eternal life. We are the seed of Abraham and the children of the covenant. Therefore, we must understand that these covenants are also made with us (see D&C 132:30-33).

As Israel was scattered the prophet Daniel was among those who were carried captive into Babylon. It is interesting to note that ancient Babylon was located in the same place as modern day Iraq. Daniel translated a message from God to the king of Babylon from handwriting which miraculously appeared on the wall of the king's palace. Daniel told Belshazzar that the days of Babylon were numbered. In that very night Babylon was destroyed (see Daniel 5).

The Book of Mormon is a message from God for us. It is the "handwriting on the wall" for our day. It too was translated by a great prophet. It is the instrument designed by God to gather scattered Israel out of spiritual Babylon. Then like Babylon of old, modern day Babylon will fall (see D&C 1:16).

Nephi wrote that through the Book of Mormon the remnant of the House of Israel "shall come to the knowledge of their redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved." (1 Nephi 15:14) The following are some of the very points of doctrine taught in the Book of Mormon concerning how Israel will be gathered and how we individually can come unto Christ and be saved:

- 1) When Israel begins to accept the Book of Mormon it is a sign that the work of the Father has already commenced to fulfill the covenants made with the House of Israel (see 3 Nephi 21:7).
- 2) The lost sheep of Israel return when they believe in Christ and accept his gospel and join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then they are gathered into stakes of Zion established in their own land (see 2 Nephi 9:1-2).
- 3) As the gathering takes place there will be gross wickedness and wars in the world (see 1 Nephi 22:13).
- 4) The righteous, those who receive and live the covenant, need not fear (see 1 Nephi 22:16).
- 5) The Kingdom of God will prevail, and the gospel will never again be taken from the earth (see 1 Nephi 15:20).
- 6) We will be blessed if we labor diligently to gather Israel (see Jacob 5:75).

Whatever else may be happening in the world this is a marvelous time to be in the mission field. It is a time that has been foreseen and yearned for by the ancient prophets. We are the servants who for the last time have been called to go forth with power and labor with the Lord in his vineyard. We offer the blessings of the gospel, the priesthood, and eternal life, which is the covenant God made with Abraham, to all who will receive our message.

With Love,

President Lunt
Sister Lunt

President and Sister Lunt