

“Go ye out from Babylon. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. Call your solemn assemblies, and speak often one to another. . . . The time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from among the nations, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Doctrine and Covenants 108:2b-c).

No “Normal” for the Saints

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Brothers and Sisters, we stand at the conclusion of a great and eternal struggle between God and Satan that has been going on since the beginning of time. Each has his emissaries; each has his missionaries; each has a city which represents all that he is. We know that the city of God is called Zion, and the city where Satan rules is called Babylon. My prayer is that our hearts might be softened, that our minds might be opened, that God’s Spirit might fill us with the gift of inspiration, and that we might clearly hear the call that God has for us today.

From the very beginning, the battles have taken place. God moved in creating Adam and Eve. He walked and talked with them in the garden of Eden. He desired this creation to be His dwelling place. But as God moved, so did Satan. He tempted Eve, and God removed Adam and Eve from the garden.

God instructed Adam, who tried to teach his children God’s way. Abel understood the concept of sacrifice, but Cain was tempted by the adversary and blinded, even to kill Abel. Satan also moved in Lamech’s life, and the people began to have secret oaths and combinations. Then God raised up Seth in a perfect likeness to Adam. From that day, they kept a book of remembrance, which stood in stark contrast to the secret oaths. But Satan had great hold upon the people, and wickedness prevailed. Because of that, God called upon Enoch to establish a city of righteousness—the city that we know as Zion.

Satan still had a great hold upon the hearts of the people who hadn’t been converted. So God called upon Noah to preach righteousness and to build an ark for safety. God’s answer to Satan’s wickedness was judgment in the form of a literal flood to cleanse the earth. Then God started anew to people the earth. But Satan had an answer to God’s plan in the form of Nimrod; many people believe he founded the city of Babel. He and his people were building a tower nigh unto heaven. They said, “We would make a name for ourselves” (see Genesis 11:3). God then confounded the languages of the people at Babel. He also chose Jared and the Brother of Jared and brought them to the promised land. I hope that we can get a sense of this grand struggle, which is like a chess game that has been taking place from the very beginning of time. God moves and then Satan moves. God answers and then Satan answers. We find ourselves in the midst of that great struggle, and we are at the very end of the time period of the game.

Chapter 47 of Isaiah seems to deal with our day and time. It tells of the virgin daughter of Babylon, which is a spiritual or political force that uses the same methods as Babylon. The Lord said through Isaiah that a day would be coming when this Babylonian system would still be on the earth.

Brothers and Sisters, there is no name that is more powerful than the name of Jesus Christ. And yet the people of Babylon think that their own name and system is greater than Jesus. God Almighty has prophesied what will come to Babylon—it shall fall! (see Revelation 14:8; Doctrine and Covenants 1:3e). The fall of Babylon will come in one hour; then all the merchants

of the world will mourn and weep at the great destruction (see Revelation 18:10-11). Every day we hear prognosticators, who tell what is going to come in the financial world, in the political world, in the weather, etc. They have all set themselves up to be the future tellers; and all of them will be wrong!

Sometimes we hear a sermon that has ideas which we think are fantastic or wonderful. But we leave that sermon saying, "I don't know what to do!" The thing to do is turn off the media because it is full of lies!

It is common knowledge that six corporations control 90% of the media in America. They control what we hear and see today, and they own everything that gets filtered to us, through movies, television shows, radio programs, and Internet access. They provide what they want us to see and believe. They have a predetermined agenda, and that agenda is the Babylonian system. What do we see in that system? We see confusion, we see pride, and we see covetousness. We also see Babylon as an oppressor. And Babylon is an extractor of wealth, a seeker of gold. What does Babylon represent to the children of God? It represents the things of this world, the beauty that this world has to offer, the pleasantries, the niceties, and the things that we claim we can't live without.

Do we see those five things in our world today? The answer is an emphatic "Yes!" We see covetousness, pride, oppression, seeking of wealth, and confusion. Confusion reigns, and we are living with it. We're in the midst of it—so much so that many of our young boys and girls don't even know whether they are male or female any more.

"In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;" (Micah 4:6). From the foregoing we learn that God chooses to afflict people; and He chooses the affliction because—like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego found out—in the fire of affliction we meet the Savior. With affliction, everything else is stripped away from us. Then we have only Jesus Christ left—but that is more than enough. It is God's design that America would have no king. Our only king should be King Jesus. The daughter of Zion, the Church, like a woman in travail, is to give birth to a man-child, the Kingdom of God (see Revelation 12:3, 7).

Brothers and Sisters, in preparation for this message, in the night watches, the Lord came to me and gave me a message to share. Relating to everything that we see going on in the world around us right now, He said, "Tell them that this is My passionate love, and it's coming to purify you." Isaiah 54:16-17 says, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn."

The fiery trial that is upon us now is under the authority of God. He is allowing it, and He is using it for His purposes. He is the smith that blows the coals. He sits as the refiner's fire and the fuller's soap. He needs a purified people and priesthood. We wouldn't choose this on our own because we have become too accustomed to Babylon and her ways. But God is stripping us of these things so that His Kingdom can come more fully.

We have not been left without warning.

- We were spoken to at a reunion of the Central Missouri branches around 2014 or 2015. We were told that we should be taking advantage of the opportunity of gathering together as Saints because there would come a day in which we would not have that chance.
- In 2016 in Oak Grove, an elder told the congregation that we live in the day of the fulfillment of the parable of the ten virgins. Another elder had an experience in which he was told to replace the words “Jesus is calling” in the hymn with “Jesus is coming.” “Jesus is coming; Jesus is coming for you!”

• In June, 2018, again at the Central Missouri Restoration Branches Reunion, this message was given and confirmed by multiple people that it was from the Lord: “The day will come when many will cry after Me, not realizing that I have been speaking all along. But they were too engaged in other activities to hear me, so the noise and distraction of electrical and man-made devices will soon be silent. Then My people will begin to listen in earnest.”

The Lord is calling for us to listen *now!* We still have access to those electronic and man-made devices. They have not yet been taken away from us, but the day is coming when they will. Will we listen now to the voice of God in our lives?

• In August or September, 2018, another message was given in Oak Grove and was confirmed: “The day soon comes that for many the time for preparation would have ended. That will be a time of great tribulation, and only those who have heeded instruction will be able to succor others in need. But the moment of decision is set before the Church. Follow Me and embrace the cause of Zion, or be lost in the changes soon to occur. It is up to the individuals to decide. My ministry offers eternal life freely to all who will abide the hour and who choose to follow the Messiah, even if the path leads to Calvary. Make preparation, My people, for events that are unfolding will overtake the hesitant; and they will not be able to escape the judgment soon to come.”

• At the end of 2018 or early 2019, another message was given. We were told that there are three kingdoms in this world—the kingdom of men, the kingdom of Satan, and the Kingdom of God—and that very soon we would see all the kingdoms of men crumble and fall. At that time, we would start to see the kingdom of Satan usurp its power and authority over the world. *But the Kingdom of God will prevail in the end!*

• Just this year, the Lord showed an elder a ship, a great ship. The Lord told him to “batten down the hatches.” “Batten down the hatches” was the last command that the ship’s captain would give before the crew turned a ship over to the storm. The crew would place large tarps over the openings in the deck and then nail long boards (the battens) down on all four sides to help prevent water from going down below deck. The Lord has spoken to His Church, and He has told us to batten down the hatches.

• Almost the same week, a priest in Nepal had a dream and was told that the people of Nepal and India needed the message and hope of Zion—and they needed it urgently! Before the great and terrible day of the Lord, they needed to have a hope in Zion when they saw the world collapsing around them.

- Now I would offer this testimony: About a month ago, I was awakened three times in three nights. Each time when I rolled over, I looked at my digital clock. Each time, it read 11:59; then I saw it change to midnight. The first night that happened, I didn't think anything of it. The following night, it happened again; and I thought it was kind of odd. But two or three nights later when it happened for the third time, I knew that the Lord was speaking to me. Midnight is about to occur!

Do we know what happens at midnight? Jesus comes to His people at midnight! The parable of the ten virgins says a cry went forth. When? At midnight! That is when we, too, shall meet our Savior. But the days ahead will be perilous; and for those that do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ, it will be beyond difficult.

Several years ago, I went through an extremely hard time in my life. I just wanted to go back to the way things had been. I wanted my old life back. But God was trying to get me to see that I needed to be a different person. He didn't want me to have my old life back. He was taking me through the fire so I could have a new life on the other side. I couldn't visualize it, so I had to trust Him. Later, I understood that it was what was right.

What has happened since 1984 in the Church? Group after group, priesthood member after priesthood member, and member after member have clamored for the Church of the 1950's. They have wanted to go back and set up that organization and recreate that structure. They wanted to go back to what they felt was normal. But, Brothers and Sisters, "normal" isn't God's answer to the problem. He has allowed the trial in the Church so that we can come out a different people, a perfected people, a people who will rely wholly upon the Lord Jesus.

Look at today. What is the most common thing that we hear on social media? "When is our life going to return to normal?" "When are we going to stop the quarantine so that we can get back to our normal lives?" Bothers and Sisters, God doesn't want "normal" for us. He's allowing the fire, and it's going to get worse. There might be a time when it appears that things are getting better, but it will be short-lived. The fire is going to be turned up, and things are going to get bad. God doesn't want us to go back to normal because when things are normal, we cling to Babylon. He needs us free from that system. All the evil in this world is telling us that we can soon be back to normal. They are also telling us, "You've got to follow all these new rules." "You've got to do it our way." But even they can't agree on what their way is. So there is more confusion! God is calling us higher. There is no turning back! We will never again have the life we used to have, and that's a good thing. Things are now in motion that cannot be undone! We're in bondage to work to feed our families. We're in bondage to pay our mortgages, our insurance, and our health bills. We have more debt, which is just another word for bondage, and it's encouraged from all the corners of our society.

We are oppressed by a myriad of laws. Even right now, more-so than ever, our freedoms have been eroded. We see pride and covetousness on every street corner and in every heart. We see confusion. Oh, how we are confused as a people! The principles of Babylon are alive and well today, right here in America and all over the world. And so, the final moves have been put into place. God and Satan are gathering their armies together, preparing them for the conclusion of this great battle.

The climax of the ancient battle—that's where we are. Will Babylon prevail or will Zion? It will appear to many that Babylon is going to prevail. But we know that Babylon will be brought to naught by the wisdom and power of God. He will use the weak things of this world to thresh and destroy the mighty.

God is asking us to make the appropriate sacrifice that Lecture 6 in *Lectures on Faith* speaks of—the sacrifice of all those things that we hold higher than God and anything that we claim we are afraid of which takes God's rightful place on our throne.

The judgment which is upon this land and the whole world now will only increase in the days to come. Everything must be shaken. Only that which is of Christ will remain, the solid foundation, the sure hope of our redemption.

Where we are is not right. But where we are going—if we listen to the voice of God—is altogether true and right. We must press forward, for the King is coming! He's riding on His horse, and He will bathe the world in blood for those that oppose Him. He comes back as the conquering King, a Lion—not as the Lamb as He came the first time.

All that we understand and know of will be shaken. We must trust in the divine will of the Father and trust that He has a plan for us. We must get on our knees and listen carefully for the voice of the Lord God Almighty.

Today we're getting a small taste of what will come. We're still fortunate that we have the use of technology so we can gather together. But what will happen in the days to come when that technology is taken away? Then it will be us and God—and if we don't have God, we won't have anything. Guns won't save us if we don't have God. Storehouses won't save us if we don't have God. But if we have God, all things are possible.

Brothers and Sisters, we cannot go back. *We must not go back!* We must move forward—forward in faith and forward in trust, with an eye single to the glory of God. And if we do these things, God shall be for us. And if God shall be for us, who shall stand against us? "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

God's promises are sure. The Scriptures speak of our day and our time. And they tell about the preservation of His people. Will we be part of His people, or are we going to cling to Babylon and its system? We might have to sacrifice our jobs. We might have to sacrifice our family. We might have to sacrifice our retirement. We might have to sacrifice running water.

I don't know what it is that God will ask of us as a people in the coming days. But I do know this: The sacrifice will be worth it because on the other side we will meet Jesus. When He walks beside us—even though a storm is raging all around us—we will have peace. Whether we lose our lives in this world, it does not matter because we should not be living for this world. We are called to be living for the new world, the new heaven, the new earth, the New Jerusalem—heaven on earth with God and His Christ.

May the Lord bless His people today. May He bless us in the days to come. May our homes be filled with peace. May the angels of God work their work and fight our unseen battles. May the Spirit reside with us, impress us heavily, and get us to wake up if asleep. And for those who are awake, may we sound the alarm. May we help other people realize that we must not return to Egypt, we must not turn back to Babylon. We have been set free. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego entered into the fire, they were bound hand and foot. The only thing that fire did to them was to consume their bindings. The purpose of the fire is to release us. Embrace the fire. Embrace the tribulation that's to come because, embracing it, we are embracing the affliction that God is laying upon us. God will be pleased with our response when we embrace the affliction and acknowledge His hand in all things.