

seemed eminent several times during the past century. As iniquity abounds and the prophet's predictions are more obviously fulfilled, the culminating judgment seems ready to finish the Gentile reign at any moment. However, the Lord revealed that wickedness had to reach a predetermined measurement. He said, "Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations, and this I will do when the cup of their iniquity is full" (D&C 98:4d). Since no one knows the amount of iniquity the Lord will tolerate before his judgments destroy all nations, we can not predict when the "cup of iniquity" will be full or when Babylon will fall. As each day reveals greater wickedness, its destruction moves closer, but the exact time of its occurrence remains unknown.

One recent development that shows how close the culminating disasters are is the publicity of secret combinations that threaten our freedom. While writing directly to the Gentiles that would read the *Book of Mormon*, Mormon prophesied, "Wherefore the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things [the secret combinations] come among you, that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you. . . For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up, seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations and countries: and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil" (Eth 3:98-100). Nephi foresaw the infiltration of the apostate church among all the Gentile nations. He wrote, "I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together in multitudes upon the face of the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God" (3 N 3:229). This conspiracy pervades our world, driving democracy and true religion toward the captivity of the devil and the control of the great and abominable church. That effort will not prevail. Through Jacob, God explained, saying, "Wherefore, for this cause, that my covenants may be fulfilled, which I made unto the children of men, that I will do unto them while they are in the flesh, I must needs destroy the secret works of darkness, and of murders, and of abominations" (2 N 7:22). As the strategy of the great and abominable marches toward success, God will intervene to save his people. Nephi elaborated: "The blood of the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be turned 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" (1 N 7:26-30).

### The Condition of the Church

As iniquity spread throughout modern society, it effected the saints. In the first days of the Restoration God called his people to separate themselves from the wickedness of that day. He said, "Save yourselves from this uptoward generation, and come forth out of the fire, hating even the garments spotted with the flesh" (D&C 35:2b). Unfortunately, the saints ignored the divine invitation. Hypocrites came into the church,<sup>15</sup> some of whom were adulterers and adulteresses.<sup>16</sup> These were cut off from the church during the time of its reorganization so that their fornication became publicized around the world. Afterwards, members of the Reorganization refused to separate themselves from worldliness. Today, its members, regardless of what faction they support, are undistinguishable from the rest of society. Our marriages end in divorce at the same rate as the world. Our children rebel from their parents like others. We enjoy the same entertainment, pursue the same goals, employ our energies in the same vocations. In conduct, appearance, and, even conversation, we are very much like the average person of our generation. Zechariah foresaw our worldliness. After prophesying the Restoration, he went on to describe us, saying, "O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of

<sup>15</sup>D&C 50:2

<sup>16</sup>D&C 63:4b

## The Cleansing of the Church

The failure of the church is beyond the power of any people to rectify. Isaiah said, "Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen" (Is 26:17-18). John depicted the church as a woman about to be delivered<sup>18</sup>, whose unborn man-child was the kingdom of God.<sup>19</sup> The Restoration was given the responsibility of bringing forth the kingdom of God on earth. Latter-day revelation said, "The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth. . . Wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come" (D&C 65). However, the Restoration, both in the days of the martyr and during the time of the Reorganization, has been unable to produce the kingdom of God on earth. Neither has it witnessed the fall of Babylon. All that has been done so far, as Isaiah said, is bring forth wind. Isaiah elaborated by saying, "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it" (Is 28:20). The meaning of this Hebrew expression seems to be lost today: However, since it was translated into Greek over a century before Christ, its Greek wording clarifies Isaiah's meaning. It says, "Learn to hear, ye that are distressed; we cannot fight, but we are ourselves too weak to be gathered."<sup>20</sup> The saints, distressed as they are, are too weak to fight the enemy that has fractured the church and are unable to gather to finish their task.

After describing the condition of the saints of the last days, Isaiah immediately extends the Lord's promise to them. He said, "For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Parazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act" (Is 28:21). Since the saints cannot overcome the conditions fragmenting the church, God promised to rescue it. He vowed to overthrow the conspiracy that is trying to pervert it. Isaiah revealed how the covenant with death and hell will be overcome. He said, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation" (Is 28:16). Peter explained that this stone is the Savior, Jesus Christ.<sup>21</sup> The Savior himself will intervene to rescue his church. Zenos revealed that the servants would obey and complete their calling when the Lord of the vineyard — that is, Christ — worked along side them. He said, "And the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, in all things" (Jac 3:140). Zechariah also foresaw the role of the Savior in the cleansing of the church. He saw him, depicted as a stone, brought forth at a time when iniquity was removed from the land of Zion. Zechariah said, "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the gravings thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day" (Zech 3:9). Because the saints are unable to gather and complete their latter-day work, Jesus himself will labor to heal and cleanse his church.

Zechariah revealed that heavenly servants would attend the Savior's effort. Using the symbol of the stone to represent the Redeemer, he said, "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes" (Zech 3:9). Elsewhere he said that the seven "are the servants of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth" (Zech 4:10). Perhaps these are the seven angels of the seven dispensations. Angels are valiant ministers of past generations who appear to earth on heavenly missions. Joseph Smith taught that angels must help in the redemption of Zion. He said, "Those men to whom these keys have been given, will have to be there; and they without us cannot be made perfect. These men are in heaven, but their children are on earth. Their bowels yearn over us.

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<sup>18</sup>Rev 12:4

<sup>19</sup>Rev 12:7

<sup>20</sup>The Septuagint; Is 28:20

<sup>21</sup>1 P 2:5-6

God sends down men for this reason. And the Son of Man shall send forth his angels. All these authoritative characters will come down and join hand in hand in bringing about this work."<sup>22</sup>

One of the tasks given the angels is to remove all offenders from the land of Zion. Jesus taught his disciples: "In that day, before the Son of Man shall come, he shall send forth his angels and messengers of heaven. And they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them out among the wicked" (Matt 13:42-43). As the Restoration gospel gathered believers into the latter-day light, it also attracted the rebellious. Jesus explained it this way: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels; but cast the bad away" (Matt 13:48). Latter-day revelations reveals that "until that hour [the coming of the Son of Man], there will be foolish virgins among the wise" (D&C 63:13g). Because both deceivers and believers populate the church, angels must come to separate them. Again, Jesus said, "The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just and cast them out into the world to be burned" (Matt 13:51). The reason for this separation is that God will not allow his land to be polluted in the day he sets his hand to bring about the holy kingdom. He said, "The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in the last days; and the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and not inherit the land; for verily, I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out" (D&C 64:7).

Zechariah revealed that the appearance of the seven servants with the stone, which represents Christ, happened before a man called "Joshua." Zechariah began this portion of his prophecy with these words: "He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord" (Zech 3:1). The high priest at the time that Zechariah made his prophesy was named Joshua. However, because the events in this part of the revelation occurred after the verses predicting the Restoration, or more specifically the angelic visit to Joseph Smith,<sup>23</sup> Joshua must represent a later high priest, or president, of the Restoration. Zechariah continues his description of this person, saying, "And Satan standing at his right hand to resist him" (Zech 3:1). As the Lord withdrew his Spirit from the prophets of the Reorganization — a judgment caused by the growing rejection of their leadership by the saints — Satan stepped in to resist one of them. Since Wallace B. Smith presented the false revelation that fractured the Reorganization, he is the likely person whom Zechariah saw Satan resist. Zechariah continues his description of the erring prophet, saying, "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments" (Zech 3:3).

Despite this person's transgression, the Lord will intervene to rescue the prophet and pluck him out of the fire?<sup>24</sup> His rescue begins when an angel appears. Zechariah continues his prophecy, saying, "[Joshua] stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments" (Zech 3:3-5). Since the Lord told Joseph Smith, "I have called you to preside over Zion in mine own due time" (D&C 87:8a), it is possible that the angel confronting the transgressing prophet is Joseph, the Palmyra seer. Under this angel's direction the transgression prophet is cleansed and re-commissioned. The mitre that he receives represents authority. Zechariah records the charge that the angel gives the high priest after he is cleansed. He will command him, saying, "If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt also keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by" (Zech 3:7).

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<sup>22</sup>An address by Joseph Smith, June 1839, as quoted by Gomer T. Griffiths; *An Exegesis of the Priesthood*; Savage Press; Cleveland; P 106

<sup>23</sup>Zech 2:3-4

<sup>24</sup>Zech 3:2

After the erring prophet is cleansed and re-authorized, another person called "the Branch" appears. The prophecy says, "Behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH" (Zech 3:8). The typical Christian interpretation of this passage maintains that "the Branch" refers to Christ. However, the stone that attends this event is Christ. Since both images do not represent the same entity, "the Branch" must denote another. Elsewhere, Zechariah reveals that "the Branch" will rule on a throne. He said, "Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech 6:12-13). Jeremiah revealed the same thing when he said, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer 23:5). Lest any suppose that Jeremiah's prophecy was fulfilled during the Savior's first advent, the prophet explains that during the days of "the Branch" Judah will be saved<sup>25</sup> and Israel gathered from the north countries.<sup>26</sup> Since neither occurred when Christ appeared in the flesh, the Branch must represent another.

Both Zechariah and Jeremiah agree that the Branch will rule on a throne. Ezekial agreed that a king would reign on David's throne. After prophesying the restoration of the house of Israel, he revealed, "And David my servant shall be king over them" (Ez 37:24). Lest any still maintain that either David or Christ will rule from this throne, Joseph Smith printed (the author is unidentified) an explanation. It said, "According to the prophets the name of this king shall be David; not the patriarch David who was the son of Jesse; but a literal descendant of his. Some suppose that the Psalmist David will be raised from his tomb, and again reign over Israel; but we consider this one of the most unreasonable ideas that could be advanced. He will no doubt be in the Lord's own due time raised from the dead, but not to act the part of a prince in the midst of Israel who remain in the flesh. Neither will any of the patriarchs act the part of an earthly king; although they will reign with Christ. Indeed, we have no reason to believe that Christ himself will act the part of an earthly king, or priest, to any great extent."<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, another person will rule Israel from David's throne.

Isaiah prophesied about this descendant of David. He said, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Is 11:1). Later, he added, "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek" (Is 11:10). Joseph Smith interpreted these verses under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Their explanation is as follows: "'Who is the stem of Jesse spoken of in the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth verses of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah?' 'Verily thus saith the Lord, It is Christ.' 'What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah that should come of the stem of Jesse?' 'Behold, thus saith the Lord, It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.' 'What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the tenth verse of the eleventh chapter? Behold, thus saith the Lord, It is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belong the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.'"<sup>28</sup>

Joseph Smith's divinely inspired explanation of the eleventh chapter reveals that three characters play an important role in the completion of the work. One is Christ. Another is a descendant of Jesse and Ephraim. The third is a descendant of Jesse and Joseph who stands as an ensign to the world. In revealing the lineage of the second character, the phrase, "or the house of Joseph," is tacked on to the words, "of Ephraim," making it appear that they two phrases are identical expressions within the revelation. When the third character is identified as descending from Joseph, the previous linking implies that he also descends from Ephraim.

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<sup>25</sup>Jer 23:6

<sup>26</sup>Jer 23:7

<sup>27</sup>*Times & Seasons*, Vol, No 8; Feb 15, 1842; P 690

<sup>28</sup>Church History, Vol 2: P 138

Joseph Smith is a descendant of Jesse (through David) as well as the offspring of Ephraim.<sup>29</sup> He serves as an ensign for the latter-day work. Through him the Lord restored the eternal gospel and renewed the everlasting covenant. He said, "I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people and for the Gentiles to seek to it" (D&C 45:2d). Elsewhere, the Lord called the *Book of Mormon* the everlasting covenant.<sup>30</sup> Since Joseph Smith translated and published the *Book of Mormon* and the *Book of Mormon* is a standard to which the Gentiles should seek, he must be the third character mentioned by Isaiah, the root of Jesse. After all, Isaiah said that the root of Jesse was an ensign to which the Gentiles would seek. This interpretation — the root of Jesse is Joseph Smith — is strengthened by latter-day revelation. Joseph explained that the root of Jesse who stands as an ensign was a person "unto whom rightly belong the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom." The Lord told Joseph and the other elders with him, "Thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers, for ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh" (D&C 84:3a). Elsewhere, the Lord told Joseph, "The keys of the kingdom shall never be taken from you" (D&C 87:2a). Joseph Smith had the right to the priesthood and received the keys of the kingdom. He fits the Lord's description of the "root of Jesse."

Isaiah revealed, "A Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Is 11:1). The pronoun "his" refers to Jesse, he being the only person mentioned by name in the verse. The Branch must grow out of the root of Jesse. Since the "root of Jesse" refers to Joseph Smith, the "Branch" must be a descendant of Joseph Smith. This interpretation is greatly strengthened by the meaning of the Hebrew word translated as *Branch*. It means *descendant*. Isaiah prophesied that a descendant of Joseph Smith would appear. As such, he would also be the offspring of both Jesse and Ephraim upon "whom there is laid much power." That power is the authority of priesthood — the same priesthood that "was confirmed to be handed down from father to son" (D&C 104:18). The Branch is a descendant of Joseph Smith who obtains the Presidency, exercising it as "a servant in the hands of Christ." Zechariah said that the Savior, while attended by seven angels, will appear before the Branch at the same time that the transgressing prophet is cleansed. This servant — that is, "the Branch" — is the seventh prophet of the Restoration who will deliver the saints from the assault of the enemy — that great and abominable church. Latter-day revelation reveals how that deliverance will occur. It says, "The Lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants, Go, and gather together the residue of my servants; and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also, among all my servants, who are the strength of my house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard, for it is mine" (D&C 98:7d-e).

The Reorganization lies fragmented, too weak to gather the faithful or deliver Zion from its bondage. Several have claimed the right to lead the scattered saints, attracting many into differing organizations and diluting the strength of the faithful. Such repeated invitations to establish, reorganize, govern, control, or reorder the church or any portion of it has and will continue to gather away those priesthood members who are anxious for position, influence, power, office, or command, until only a residue is left. At that time, Christ will cleanse the erring prophet, call forth the seventh prophet, and command him to gather the residue of his servants. This servant — the Branch, or descendant of Joseph Smith — will gather those who have not supported false claimants and lead them in the redemption of Zion. The Lord told the church, "I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel, for ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham; and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched out arm, and as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be" (D&C 100:3d-e).

The servant who will redeem Zion is also called "one mighty and strong." Joseph Smith revealed, "It shall come to pass that I the Lord God will send one mighty and strong, holding the septre of power in his hand,

<sup>29</sup>Audentia Smith Anderson; *Ancestry and Posterity of Joseph Smith and Emma Hale*; P 664-670

<sup>30</sup>D&C 83:8b

clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the house of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the saints.<sup>31</sup> This revelation is contained in a letter that Joseph wrote to W. W. Phelps on the day that Joseph returned home and first saw his new-born son Joseph III. It was not given to the church, but to the prophet, and, as such revealed to him that the redemption of Zion would come through his seed. Joseph III returned the faithful to the land of Zion. He was "mighty and strong" and a "man like Moses," but he did not fulfill all the prophesy. For instance, he did not "arrange by lot the inheritances of the saints." Joseph III was a shadow of a future seed of Joseph, an unborn son from the loins of his own new-born son, who would "grow up out of his place" (Zech 6:12) to gather the residue of the Lord's servants, break the covenant the church had made with death and hell, build the temple of the lord, and welcome gathered Israel to the holy city, even Zion the beautiful.

Zion's redemption will come only after judgment cleanses the church. Isaiah prophesied, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgement" (Is 1:27). Peter indicated, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 P 4:17). Latter-day revelation said this about the day of judgment: "Upon on my house shall it begin" (D&C 105:10a). When the church fragmented, separate groups presented their own teachings instead of the doctrines of the Reorganization and adorned themselves with their own raiment instead of the vestment of the church. Each claimed authority from Joseph Smith. Isaiah revealed, "In that day seven woman shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach" (Is 3:27). The various Restoration groups have all taken hold of one man — Joseph Smith — and have taken his name to themselves by claiming their authority from him. Some have offered their own teachings and clothed themselves with their own vestments. By placing this verse at the close of the third chapter instead of the beginning of the fourth, the Inspired Version makes it clear that this development culminates the haughtiness of the daughters of Zion and precipitates the cleansing of Zion. Isaiah continues his prophesy, saying, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, they that are left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning" (Is 4:1-3). The judgment that is now upon the church will cleanse it and enable those that remain to complete the work.

### Judgment on the World

The judgment cleanses the church afterwards pour onto the world. Peter prophesied, "Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 P 4:17). Latter-day revelation specified, "Vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth — a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation — and as a whirlwind shall it come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord. And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord" (D&C 105:9b-10a). That judgment comes under the direction of the one mighty and strong. Isaiah revealed, "Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet" (Is 28:2-3). The appearance of the seventh prophet not only judges the church by casting down the deceivers and hypocrites and rescuing the steadfast and deceived, it also brings destruction on the world.

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<sup>31</sup>Church History, Vol 1; P 260

The judgment that will flow from the church unto the world will destroy all nations. Our society will collapse. Babylon will fall. Pestilence, famine, storms, and earthquakes will ravage the earth. The Lord told the elders, "After your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall to the ground, and not be able to stand. And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunders, and the voice of lightenings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea, heaving themselves beyond their bounds" (D&C 85:25a-b). At the same time, people will war against each other. Jesus said, "It shall come to pass, among the wicked, that every man that will not take up his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee unto Zion for safety" (D&C 45:13a). These judgments will end the influence that false religions and despotic states have on people, freeing them to consider and join the kingdom of God.

The culmination of this destruction is a great war. Joel foresaw it, saying, "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up" (Joel 3:9). John added, "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev 16:16). The ensuing battle will be fierce. Joel described it in these words: "A fire dvoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them" (Joel 2:3). The war not only ruins the land but it plagues the survivors. The Lord decreed, "I, the Lord God, will send flies upon the face of the earth, which shall take hold of the inhabitants thereof, and shall eat their flesh, and shall cause maggots to come upon them, and their tongues shall be stayed that they shall not utter against me, and their flesh shall fall off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets; and it shall come to pass that the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air shall devour them up" (D&C 28:5a-c). The increasing iniquity, the multiplying immorality, the deepening doubt, and the soaring slothfulness so prevalent in modern society will eventually move God to cleanse the earth from the wickedness polluting it. The Gentiles, who rejected the restored gospel will feel the brunt of his vengeance. Jesus said, "Wo, be to the Gentiles, except they repent, for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots, and I will cut off thy cities of thy land, and throw down thy strongholds" (3 N 9:101). Our horses have already been removed from the land. As soon as our oil flow is interrupted, we will lose the use of our chariots. The destruction of the Gentile cities and the overthrow of their strong nations will end the time of the Gentiles and leave the world in ruin and anarchy.

The destruction of the Gentiles and the fall of Babylon mark the restoration of the house of Israel. Jesus said, "I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people" (3 N 9:67). Elsewhere Jesus explained, "If they [the Gentiles] shall do these things and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them; and I will remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them; and I will shew unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you, but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel" (3 N 7:35-37). When the Lord judges the Gentiles and breaks their power, he will gather all of his people. Those Israelites who are scattered among the Gentile will prey upon them. Jesus said, "If the Gentiles do not repent, after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people, then shall ye who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them, who shall be many; and ye shall be among them, as a loin among the beasts of the forests, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off" (3 N 9:51-53). As a result, these descendants of Jacob "shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (3 N 10:11). They will gather to Zion.

The land of Zion will be spared much of the destruction that befalls the world. Like the days of Moses when only the first three of the ten plagues that befell the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites, the faithful will escape the more treacherous calamities. In fact, the judgment upon the church that precedes the destruction

of the Gentiles will separate the rebellious from the steadfast. The rebellious will suffer, but the steadfast will be preserved.<sup>32</sup> Jesus said, "The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them out into the world to be burned" (Matt 13:51).

After its cleansing, Zion will not only shine to the world as an example of holiness, but it will invite the honest-hearted to learn the ways of righteousness. Isaiah prophesied, "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Is 2:2). Missionaries will comb the earth, inviting the world to Christ and gathering the obedient into the kingdom. Through Jeremiah the Lord revealed, "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them [the children of Israel]; and after will I send many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" (Jer 16:16). Individual Gentiles, although plagued by the judgments befalling the world, will respond to the gospel invitation at that time. Jesus promised that the repentant will not be trodden down by the Israelites sown among them.<sup>33</sup> Instead, they will be saved in the holy city. Jacob explained, "Blessed are the Gentiles, they of whom the prophet has written; for behold, if it so be that they repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to the great and abominable church, they shall be saved" (2 N 5:30-31). While some Gentiles will be saved in that day, all Israelites will be recovered. The Lord said, "For all Israel shall be saved" (D&C 38:7d), "And in that day, all who are found upon the watchtower, or in other words, all mine Israel shall be saved" (D&C 98:4d).

From the walls of Zion, which encompass the preserved of Israel, the watchmen of Ephraim, which are the priesthood of the church, will call Israel home. Jeremiah prophesied, "For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God. For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; a great company shall return thither" (Jer 31:8). The gathering of Israel will enlarge the holy city. They will bring their treasures and dedicate their efforts to the building of the temple. The Lord promised, "They who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord, and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves, and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence. And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall be a prey unto them, and in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim my servants. And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence" (D&C 108:6a-c). The "mighty and strong" one will allot them an inheritance in Zion and preside over the building of the temple. Zechariah said, "Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech 6:12-13). Eventually, Jesus will descend, receive the holy city, usher in his millennial reign, and raise the righteous from the dead. Then the work of the Restoration will be completed and the last age end.

### Conclusion

The signs of the times can be summarized with the following statements, which are generally numbered in chronological order.

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<sup>32</sup>D&C 36:12e

<sup>33</sup>3 N 7:40



1. Jesus did not restore the kingdom to Israel in his first advent, but commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel until it reached the end of the earth. Meanwhile, Jesus ascended into heaven to reign over the gospel's promulgation until the time of his descent.
2. The gospel was taken from Israel because they rejected the Savior. It was given to the Gentiles, thereby preserving it until the end of the age.
3. The Gentiles perverted the church that Jesus built, allowing the great and abominable church to reign in its stead, and driving the true church into the wilderness.
4. When the time came to complete the purpose of the last age, the Lord enlarged the Gentiles, not only giving them dominion over the world, but enlightening their understanding, particularly through the Reformation.
5. The Reformation invited the Gentile to seek the true church.
6. God led the more righteous among the Gentiles to the New World where he established them in liberty and restored the true church.
7. The purpose of the true church is to cleanse Israel from sin and give them the Lord's spirit so that they have the power to obey all of God's commandments. The ordinances by which this is done are baptism by water and baptism of the Holy Ghost.
8. America provided a refuge from the great and abominable church, which refuge allowed the Restoration to spread the latter-day message to the world.
9. The saints refused to discipline themselves to gospel requirements during the life of the martyred prophet, while the Gentiles rejected its invitation.
10. Eventually, the great and abominable church obtained strength in America and now works for the overthrow of democracy and the subjection of true religion.
11. Because the Gentiles rejected the restored gospel, divine judgement began with the Civil War.
12. During the intervening years iniquity in all its forms has rapidly expanded, while the forces of war have grown to unprecedented power.
13. The culmination of God's judgment is very near. The Gentile reign is almost over.
14. In these last generations the church has forsaken the prophets and seers and wandered into falsehood. It made a covenant with death and hell. As a result the church lies fragmented and the sheep scattered.
15. The culmination of this wickedness in the church is the division of the church into separate organizations, all claiming authority from Joseph Smith, but offering their own teachings and vestments.
16. The Lord will send the rebellious members of his church away into the world where they will endure the judgments about to befall the wicked, but the willing and obedient will remain.
17. The cleansing of the church will occur when an angel (presumably Joseph Smith) appears to a transgressing prophet (presumably Wallace B. Smith) and removes his iniquity. At that time the seventh prophet will be recognized and Jesus, attended by seven angels, will endow him.
18. The seventh prophet, who must be a descendant of Joseph Smith, will gather the residue of the Lord's servants: that is, he will assemble the priesthood that have not followed false organizations. Under his leadership, they will redeem Zion.
19. The judgment that cleanses the church will afterwards flow upon the world. The earth will endure physical calamities and its inhabitants will war, until their battle consumes the earth.
20. While disasters plague the world, the elect will gather to Zion. The cleansed church will send missionaries throughout the earth to gather Israel from every place to which it has been scattered.
21. Repentant Gentiles will gather to Zion as well.
22. All the dispersed of Israel, from the lands of the north to the islands in the sea, will come to Zion, bringing their treasures with them.
23. The temple will be built under the presidency of the seventh prophet, who will reign as king and priest over the only city that will not be at war.
24. When the restored gospel has gathered all the elect into the holy city, Jesus will descend, converting the

Jews with his appearance, and usher in his millennial reign.