



By Elder Alan R. Walker
Of the Seventy

The Gospel Light of Truth and Love

I testify that the gospel light of truth and love shines brightly throughout the earth today.

The beautiful Latter-day Saint hymn “Hark, All Ye Nations!” unmistakably captures the enthusiasm and exhilaration of the fulness of the gospel going to all the world. In this hymn we sing:

*Hark, all ye nations! Hear heaven’s voice
Thru ev’ry land that all may rejoice!
Angels of glory shout the refrain:
Truth is restored again!*¹

Louis F. Mönc, the author of this jubilant text, was a German convert who wrote the inspired words for the hymn while living in Switzerland during his full-time missionary service in Europe.² The joy that springs from witnessing the global impact of the Restoration is clearly articulated in the following words of the hymn:

*Searching in darkness, nations have wept;
Watching for dawn, their vigil they’ve kept.
All now rejoice; the long night is o’er.
Truth is on earth once more!*³

Thanks to the commencing of the ongoing Restoration just over

200 years ago, “the gospel light of truth and love”⁴ now shines brightly throughout the earth. The Prophet Joseph learned in 1820, and millions more have since learned, that God “giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.”⁵

Shortly after the organization of the Church in this last dispensation, the Lord spoke to Joseph Smith and manifested His abounding love for us when He said:

“Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments; . . .

“That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

“That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world.”⁶

Soon after this revelation was received, missionaries began to be called and sent to many nations of the world. Just as the prophet Nephi anticipated, the message of the restored gospel began to be

preached “among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.”⁷

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was formally organized in a small log cabin in upstate New York in 1830.

“It took 117 years—until 1947—for the Church to grow from the initial six members to one million. Missionaries were a feature of the Church from its earliest days, fanning out to Native American lands, to Canada and, in 1837, beyond the North American continent to England. Not long after, missionaries were working on the European continent and as far away as India and the Pacific Islands.

“The two-million-member mark was reached just 16 years later, in 1963, and the three-million mark in eight years more.”⁸

Highlighting the rapid growth of the Church, President Russell M. Nelson recently said: “Today, the Lord’s work in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is moving forward at an accelerated pace. The Church will have an unprecedented, unparalleled future.”⁹

The Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the organization of the Lord’s living Church on the earth again, and its remarkable growth since then have made the blessings of the priesthood available throughout the earth. Sacred ordinances and covenants that bind us to God and set us on the covenant path clearly manifest “the power of godliness.”¹⁰ As we participate in these sacred ordinances for the living and for the dead, we gather Israel on both sides of the veil and prepare the earth for the Second Coming of the Savior.

In April 1973, my parents and I traveled from our native Argentina to be sealed in the temple. Since there were no temples in all of Latin America at the time, we flew more than 6,000 miles (9,700 km) each way to be sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.



Norway

Although I was just two years of age at the time and do not recall the entirety of that special experience, three very distinct images from that trip were fixed in my mind and have remained ever since.

First, I recall being placed close to the airplane's window and seeing the white clouds below.

Those beautiful, bright clouds endure in my mind as if they had been gigantic cotton balls.

Another image that has remained in my mind is that of a few funny-looking characters at an amusement park in the Los Angeles area. Those characters are hard to forget.

But of much greater importance is this brilliant and unforgettable image:

I clearly remember being in a sacred room of the Salt Lake Temple where sealings of couples and of families are performed for time and for all eternity. I remember the beautiful altar of the temple and recall the bright sunlight shining through the room's exterior window. I felt then, and have continued to feel since, the warmth, safety, and solace of the gospel light of truth and love.



Madagascar

Similar feelings were reaffirmed in my heart 20 years later, when I entered the temple to be sealed once again—this time as my fiancée and I were sealed for time and for all eternity. However, on this occasion, we did not need to travel thousands of miles because the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple had since been built and dedicated, and it was just a short drive from our home.

Twenty-two years after our wedding and sealing, we had the blessing of returning to the same temple, but this time with our beautiful daughter, and we were sealed as a family for time and for all eternity.

As I've reflected upon these very sacred moments of my life, I have been overwhelmed with profound, enduring joy. I have felt and continue to feel the love of a compassionate Father in Heaven, who knows our individual needs and our heartfelt desires.

In addressing the gathering of Israel in the last days, the Lord Jehovah said, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."¹¹ I feel eternally grateful that from my young age, the law of the Lord started to be engraved deeply in my heart through sacred ordinances in His holy house. How fundamental it is to know that He is our God, that we are His people, and that whatever circumstances surround us, if we are faithful and obey the covenants we have entered into, we can be "encircled about eternally in the arms of his love."¹²

During the women's session of general conference in October 2019, President Nelson said, "All our efforts to minister to each other, proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead converge in the holy temple."¹³



South Africa

Also, during the same general conference, President Nelson taught: “Of course, the crowning jewel of the Restoration is the holy temple. Its sacred ordinances and covenants are pivotal to preparing a people who are ready to welcome the Savior at His Second Coming.”¹⁴

The ongoing Restoration has been marked by the building and dedication of temples at an augmented pace. As we gather on both sides of the veil, as we make sacrifices to serve and make the temple pivotal in our lives, the Lord is truly building us—He is building His covenant people.

*Oh, how glorious from the throne
above
Shines the gospel light of truth and
love!
Bright as the sun, this heavenly ray
Lights ev’ry land today.*¹⁵

I testify that the gospel light of truth and love shines brightly throughout the earth today. The “marvellous work and a wonder” foretold by the prophet Isaiah¹⁶ and seen by Nephi¹⁷ is taking place at a hastened pace,

even in these challenging times. As Joseph Smith prophetically declared, “The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing . . . till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.”¹⁸

Brothers and sisters, may we be willing and decide today to engage ourselves and our families in hearing heaven’s voice, even the voice of our Savior. May we make and keep covenants with God, which will secure us firmly in the path that leads back to His presence, and may we rejoice in the blessings of the glorious light and truth of His gospel. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. “Hark, All Ye Nations!,” *Hymns*, no. 264.
2. See Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-Day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* (1988), 268–69, 413.
3. “Hark, All Ye Nations!,” *Hymns*, no. 264.
4. “Hark, All Ye Nations!,” *Hymns*, no. 264.
5. James 1:5.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 1:17, 22–23.
7. 2 Nephi 30:8.
8. “Growth of the Church,” newsroom .ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
9. Russell M. Nelson, “The Future of the



Japan

Church: Preparing the World for the Savior’s Second Coming,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2020, 13; *Liahona*, Apr. 2020, 7.

10. Doctrine and Covenants 84:20.
11. Jeremiah 31:33.
12. 2 Nephi 1:15.
13. Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 79.
14. Russell M. Nelson, “Closing Remarks,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 120.
15. “Hark, All Ye Nations!,” *Hymns*, no. 264.
16. Isaiah 29:14.
17. See 2 Nephi 25:17.
18. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 142.