

A Crucial Time to Ponder Prophecies

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God our Eternal Father lives, is aware of us, and speaks to his prophets (Bible - Amos 3:7). We live in a crucial time to carefully consider those prophecies with an “eye of faith”. (Book of Mormon - Ether 12:18-19)

We are being prepared for events and circumstances even greater than anything that has occurred since the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37-38). As in ages past, the Lord, in his mercy, sent prophets to warn and prepare us for the calamities that have started to befall on the world in unprecedented frequency and intensity (Doctrine and Covenants 1:16-23). Likewise, He also promised many wonderful events for the faithful (D&C 133:16-62).

But often, instead of describing to us every specific future event—which might cause a kind of “paralysis by analysis”—it is clear to those who have that “eye of faith” that the Lord inspired his prophets to prepare his people in advance for a time in which we would have the “church in the home”. Other changes may not be so clear at this point (like those in 2020-2021 involving temples), but in time we will see how inspired and prescient those changes have been.

The worldwide Covid-19 pandemic brought the world to its knees and affected all the operations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the divine work of salvation. I believe the Lord inspired scientists around the world for several years through the Light of Christ to develop the complex techniques that enabled us to obtain effective tools in record time to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. President Brigham Young taught: “*God is the source, the fountain of all intelligence, no matter who possesses it ... All have derived what intelligence, light, power, and existence they have from God ...*” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.28)

Now prophets are “urging” us (i.e. “declaring, or advocating earnestly or pressingly”) to avail ourselves of these tools (First Presidency Message - August 12, 2021). What impressions about the future can we derive from this “urging”—which brings to mind the word “urgency”. To my mind come the words from Captain Moroni: “Or do ye suppose that the Lord will still deliver us, while we sit ... and do not make use of the means which the Lord has provided for us?” (Book of Mormon - Alma 60:21)

Back in 2019, President Russell M. Nelson stated officially something I personally never heard before in a general conference: “*Time is running out*”. He invited those “*who have distanced [themselves] from the Church and [those] who have not yet really sought to know that the Savior’s Church has been restored [to do] the spiritual work to find out for [themselves], and please do it now. Time is running out*” (Conference Report, April 2019 – brackets added). In my mind I can see the application of this counsel and warning to those who are now choosing to distance themselves from the prophets’ counsels and those who may find themselves unsure whether the Savior is really inspiring his prophets and apostles in these troubled times. “Do the spiritual work to find out for yourselves, and please do it now. Time is running out.”

So, who will listen to and follow these prophets, instead of choosing to follow the amalickiahs of the world or from cyberspace? There are political amalickiahs, social amalickiahs, and cultural

amalickiahs. Reading the personal characteristics and modus operandi of the original Amalickiah (Book of Mormon, Alma chapters 46-48) should help us identify and avoid the deadly influence (both temporal and spiritual) of similar characters in our time.

Prophets are “watchmen” on the highest tower, who can see an enemy’s approach long before those of us at street level—although today we can clearly see the cloud of darkness caused by their fast advance towards us. As in ages past, we also see widespread rumors and contentions (Helaman 16:22-23). Will we choose to ignore the signs around us—and put faith in the amalickiahs who promise nothing that might be in their power to grant, and who abandon their followers at the first sign of trouble? (Alma 46:4-7, 33; see also Mosiah 19:7-11)

Prophets are guiding us step by step, making needed changes whenever the time is right. We are the best-prepared generation to tackle these changes. We are prepared for greater things. Like no other generation in recent history we are prepared to bring Jesus Christ’s power of salvation to everyone, regardless of nationality, race, gender, language or culture (D&C 1:1-2; 90:10-11). Prepared to save the planet itself, by laying the groundwork for a paradisiacal glory after the majestic second coming of Jesus Christ (Pearl of Great Price - Articles of Faith 1:10). Many personal and organizational refinements will still be necessary, and some of those will require our obedience in faith and patience, just like were required of our fathers Adam and Abraham, and many others (Moses 5:6; Hebrews 11).

Wonderful things await us before the coming of the Savior Jesus Christ. As Mormon recorded, signs, wonders and ministration of angels preceded the first coming of the Savior (Helaman 16:13-14; 3 Nephi 7:15-20; see also Hebrews 13:2). Back in early days of this dispensation, the Lord stated:

“Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected.

“Let not your minds turn back; and when ye are worthy, in mine own due time, ye shall see and know that which was conferred upon you by the hands of my servant ...” (Doctrine and Covenants 67:13-14)

“Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name’s glory.” (Doctrine and Covenants 21:4-6).

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