

Ir-D&C-21
Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord
(D&C 29; 34; 45; 81; 101; 133)
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(Here is inspirational background and evidences supportive the Restoration)

I. Being a member of “The Church of Jesus Christ of *Latter-day Saints*” keeps us focused on what we are about.

A. While many people are guessing the coming of the Lord is near, **the Lord has *clearly* revealed to His Saints that these are the Latter-days:**

B. “For the hour is nigh... [when] I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof” (D&C 29:10-11).

II. There are no other scriptures which deal with Christ’s Second Coming more thoroughly than these verses in the Doctrine and Covenants.

A. Those who hearken to their teachings and the prophets should not be misled nor deceived by false warnings.

B. Furthermore, those who carefully study these verses in the D&C will be best prepared for His return.

III. These scriptures reveal not just *what* will happen at the Second Coming, but even more importantly, reveal that *we have a great role in preparing for it. They tell us what that role is.*

A. While it is confirmed that “no one knoweth the day or hour” of Christ’s coming, **we are nevertheless commanded to watch for the signs so that we will be as prepared as possible.**

B. The Lord said that he who feareth Him will look forth for the coming of the Son of Man (D&C 45:39).

IV. What is our responsibility? First for ourselves?

A. We should flee out of Babylon (D&C 133:3).

1. This no longer means fleeing foreign lands for the United States, but now means forsaking worldly trends.

2. According to these scriptures, one blessing of doing so is that **the Saints will be among the few people not at war one with another** (D&C 45:68-9).

a. This prophecy has been fulfilled even from the first. Because the early Saints fled to establish Zion in the West, they were not involved in the terrible U.S. Civil War, where brother did take up sword against his brother. (And note that this prophecy occurred just after Joseph prophesied of the U.S. Civil War again in D&C 45:63).

b. This prophecy has been fulfilled in many ways. Some of my own ancestors left South Africa to join the Saints in Utah. I have realized that in doing so, they and their descendants have been saved from conflicts occurring in that nation since then.

c. **Most of us miss the many prophecies in the scriptures that in the last days, false religion will fight against false religion.** But those who have come into the Kingdom of God will for the most part escape those conflicts. (Unless as soldiers they volunteer to get involved).

d. Today there are refugees who flee civil war in their own countries, and find refuge in the Church. (See the story of Mariama Kallon who was caught in a

civil war in Sierra Leone, but found refuge in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [Meridian Magazine's "Missionary Moments" April 15, 2013].

B. Once we have left Babylon, we should not look back, secretly longing for its pleasures (D&C 133:15).

C. We should repent and sanctify ourselves (D&C 133:4, 62).

1. The pioneers took this counsel to heart, and when they reached the valley of Utah, a number of them went through a process of cleansing and rebaptism.

2. Parley P. Pratt recorded that after his arrival and the planting of some potatoes, they went through a process of repenting of their sins and renewing their covenants. "President John Taylor and myself administered the ordinances of baptism, etc., to each other and to our families, according to the example set by the President [Brigham Young] and pioneers who had done the same on entering the valley." (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, p. 331).

D. We should prepare Holy Places, then stand in them and be not moved (D&C 45:32).

1. Note: our first effort should be to help prepare "Holy Places."

2. Sister Elaine S. Dalton told in April 2013 Conference that she and her husband gave of their time to complete the Conference Center. They even saw that a scriptural reference was written on the back of the **final piece of carpet, laid under the podium. It counseled to "Stand in Holy Places."** Sister Dalton had the opportunity at this conference to stand at that very spot and to testify to the world.

Think of how the Saints have been blessed with this expanded facility where so much of the word of God is sent throughout the world.

E. We can help build more "Holy Places" for the Saints in far flung areas in the world by donations through tithes and offerings.

F. We can donate to the "Temple Patron Assistance Fund," which allows those in foreign lands who still must make tremendous sacrifice to attend a temple. I was happy to learn from a young missionary who had served in Indonesia where families have to fly to the Philippines to attend the temple. She confirmed that they were helped in doing so by this fund.

V. **Once we are freed from sin through Christ's atonement, we should not entangle ourselves again** (D&C 81:86).

A. [The Church] calls solemn assemblies as commanded. Members are thus spiritually strengthened through these General Conference. If we hearken to the counsel given there, we will be continually fortified to endure to the end (DC 133:6).

B. We should continue unto the end in faith and hope (D&C 133: 64-74).

VI. *But we also have a great responsibility to try to prepare the world. We should not forget this is our burden. The Lord has told us:*

A. We should sound the warning as a Trump (D&C 34:6).

B. We should lift up our heads and prophesy (D&C 34:10).

C. We should send out the elders [and sisters and seniors] "unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; ... unto foreign lands" (D&C 133:8).

D. We should invite all nations “Go ye forth unto the land of Zion, that the borders of my people may be enlarged and that her stakes may be strengthened, and that Zion may go forth unto the regions around about” (D&C 133:9).

E. We should “let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom.... Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord” (D&C 133:10).

VII. We should be preparing to bear our unhindered witness to the world during the Millennium.

A. Note that during the Millennium the Gospel will be fully taught to every person of every nation (D&C 133:60). For while the Gospel is to be preached in all nations before Christ’s coming, not all will receive it now due to obstacles beyond their control (The power and influence of unrighteous leaders who deny their hearing). However, further preaching will continue throughout the Millennium until everyone has had a full chance to hear and understand, to accept or reject.

B. Who will do that teaching? There is little doubt that Latter-day Saints will be doing it. And those who are the most prepared will likely have the most opportunity.

VIII. We should take seriously the counsel to keep journals.

A. In the 1970’s, President Spencer W. Kimball spoke a lot about keeping journals. I fear I was one who felt this counsel was not the most significant. I felt other counsel he gave was more important and this remained low on my list of things I should do.

When our Stake President was released, he gave the gift of a journal to all the members of the high council and other leaders of the stake. This included me. I was touched. I felt this was a sure witness that I could not ignore President Kimball’s counsel any more. So I began keeping journals and have since even written brief histories to fill in the gaps of those times when I did not keep one.

Later, in assembling histories of my ancestors who lived in the early days of the Church, I saw how important President Kimball’s counsel was. I saw what a tragic void it was that some who lived in terribly trying years in Missouri and Nauvoo left little record of what they experienced.

And I further realized that *some of us are the ones most likely to experience the greatest event in the history of the world --- the Second Coming of Jesus the Christ.*

Are we going to leave our record void? If we begin now to record what we see and experience as the signs grow more exciting *and* ominous, we will be leaving a valuable treasure for future generations.

And more than that, **by our very recording of what events we experience, it will help us pass through those events with greater faith, greater strength and greater courage.**

B. And very likely, we will all look back when all is accomplished, and marvel at the vast numbers of persons who were protected as they passed through the most terrible times of all times.