



The Divine Commission of The Church of Jesus Christ

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

The *Great Commission* was given by Christ in Matthew 28 to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” We are endeavoring to fulfill this commandment and have established *The Church* in nearly 30 countries. However, we believe that *The Church of Jesus Christ* has also been given a *Divine Commission* to take the *Gospel* specifically to the *Seed of Joseph*, the Native Peoples of the Americas, who will in turn take the message to the remaining *Tribes of Israel*. Why was additional responsibility given only to *The Church of Jesus Christ*? The answer is that *The Church* set up by Christ became so corrupted after His crucifixion that God removed the *Gospel Authority* from the earth. He then performed a “Marvelous Work and a Wonder” to restore the *Gospel Authority*, establish *The Church of Jesus Christ*, and bring forth the *Book of Mormon*. He could not use any other church for the great work of the latter days.

Let us look to the *Bible* and *Book of Mormon* to understand what is required of us to fulfill the *Divine Commission*. The *House of Israel* is compared to an olive tree in Romans 11 and Jacob 5. In 1 Nephi 15:12-14, Nephi explains how *The Church* will take the *Gospel* to the *Seed of Joseph* in the Americas:

“Behold, I say unto you, that the house of Israel was compared unto an olive tree, by the Spirit of the Lord which was in our father; and behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel?”

“And now, the thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years, and many generations after the Messiah shall be manifested in body unto the children of men, then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed--”

“And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.”

It is clear that our mission is to take God’s promises in the *Book of Mormon* to the *Seed of Joseph* and to proclaim the *Gospel* message. Another scripture confirming our mission is found in 2 Nephi 3:11 regarding how we are to work in advance of the coming of the *Choice Seer*:

*“But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins--and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, **which shall have already gone forth among them.**”* (emphasis added).

Taking the Gospel to the *Seed of Joseph* precedes the *Gathering of Israel* as noted in Isaiah 49 and 3 Nephi 21. The text in 3 Nephi also documents that *The Church* shall assist the *Seed of Joseph* in building a *New Jerusalem* upon the land of America and shall assist them with the gathering of all of the *Tribes of Israel*. Other scriptures speak of a peaceful condition that shall take place when the gathering begins, a time that *The Church* refers to as *The Peaceful Reign*: Isaiah 2:1-5; Isaiah 11; Isaiah 66:8; Micah 4; and 1 Nephi 22.

The Church has a glorious part to play in the Gathering of Israel! In 1976 *The Church* recognized its responsibility to fulfill the *Divine Commission* and passed a comprehensive resolution to prioritize missionary goals. Portions of the resolution follow:

The Church recognized that in our day the Gospel has been restored, first to the Gentiles, and that we must continue to preach it to all who will listen and accept it.

Based on the accepted doctrine of The Church, the restoration of Israel, commencing with the Seed of Joseph, has the highest priority and should be reflected in the missionary plans and programs of The Church. This does not preclude the continuation of our foreign missionary programs. This work must continue to be implemented in as fine a manner as we know how.

Furthermore, the work among our branches and missions must not be diminished, but rather this effort must be accelerated and enlarged.

Let's consider our possibilities. Can you find more time to pray for the work of *The Church*, for the missionaries, for the *Seed of Joseph*? Can you back up your prayers with greater involvement in your own branches and missions? Have you considered getting involved in *The Church's* outreach to the *Seed of Joseph*? The *Quorum of Seventy Evangelists* has restructured their operations to better support these missionary priorities. Last month we confirmed that *Now is Our Time to Do the Work!* Let us be ready to assist the Evangelists, our Regions, Branches and Missions as we accelerate our efforts. Let us be encouraged by these promises from Isaiah's prophecies:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.
Isaiah 52:7-10

This is the second of a series of messages to *The Church* to reinforce various topics of our *Faith and Doctrine and Vision for the Future*. For more understanding of *What We Believe* please visit our web site to obtain resource and contact information: www.thechurchofjesuschrist.com.