

ZION

1 All my life I have shied away from these disturbing and highly unpopular—even offensive—
 1 themes. But I cannot do so any longer, because in my old age I have taken to reading the
 scriptures and there have had it forced upon my reluctant attention that, from the time of Adam
 to the present day, Zion has been pitted against Babylon, and the name of the game has always
 been money: “power and gain.”
 Hugh Nibley, “What is Zion?” p. 20

2 Zion is a constant in time and place. It belongs to the order of the eternities. We’re not
 2 making Zion here, but we’re preparing the ground to receive it. As the Lord says, “My people
 must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory of Zion; and he that
 will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom” (D&C 136:31). We must be prepared
 to receive this glory; we don’t produce it ourselves. We must be ready, so that we won’t die of
 shock when we get it.
 Hugh Nibley, “Our Glory or Our Condemnation,” p.3.

3 What makes Zion? God has given us the perfect definition: Zion is the pure in heart. The
 3 pure in heart, not merely the pure in appearance.

It is not a society or religion of forms and observances, of pious gestures and precious
 mannerisms. It is strictly a condition of the heart. Above all, Zion is pure, which means “not
 mixed with any impurities, unalloyed.” It is all Zion and nothing else. It is not achieved
 wherever a heart is pure or where two or three are pure, because it is all pure. It is a society, a
 community, and an environment into which no unclean thing can enter...

It is not even pure people in a dirty environment, or pure people with a few impure ones
 among them. It is the perfectly pure in a perfectly pure environment.
 Hugh Nibley, “What is Zion?” pp.1-2

4 The treasures of the earth are merely to provide us with room and board while we are here at
 4 school. [They are] “made for the comfort of the creature, not for his adoration,” [says Brigham
 Young]. “They are made to sustain and preserve the body while procuring the knowledge and
 wisdom that pertain to God and his kingdom, in order that we may preserve ourselves and live
 forever in his presence.”
 Hugh Nibley, “Educating the Saints,” p.65.

5 When we are swallowed up in the will of Him who has called us; when we enjoy the peace
 5 and the smiles of our Father in Heaven, the things of His Spirit, and all the blessings we are
 capacitated to receive and improve upon, then are we in Zion, *that is Zion*.
 Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:3.

D&C 105:4-5

6 D&C 82:14-21

Moses 7:18-21

7 The Scriptural phrase “they had all things common” (Acts 4:32; see also Acts 2:44; 3 Nephi 26:19; 4 Nephi 1:3) is used to characterize those who lived the law of consecration in ancient times. Some have speculated that the term *common* suggests a type of communalism or “Christian Communism.” This interpretation is in error. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught clearly the true nature of having all things common: “I preached on the stand about one hour on the 2nd chapter of Acts, designing to show the folly of common stock (holding property in common). In Nauvoo every one is steward over his own (property).”

Each stewardship is considered private property, and the residues and surpluses consecrated for the storehouse became the “common property of the whole church” (D&C 82:18). It is referred to as the “wants” and “needs,” including the need to improve his stewardship. D&C Student Manual, Religion 324-325 p.425.

8 Full implementation of the united order must, according to the revelation, await the redemption of Zion (See D&C 105:34). In the meantime—while we are being more perfectly taught and are gaining experience—we should be strictly living the principles of the united order insofar as they are embodied in present Church requirements, such as tithing, fast offerings, welfare projects, storehouses, and other principles and practices. Through these programs we should, as individuals, implement in our own lives the basis of the united order. Marion G. Romney, “The Purpose of Church Welfare Services”, *Ensign*, (CR) May 1977, p. 92.

9 Zion is the name given by the Lord to his saints; it is the name by which the Lord’s people are always identified. Of the saints in Enoch’s day the record says: “And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.” (Moses 7:18.) “This is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART,” he said in this day. (D&C 97:21.) Thus the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is ZION. Joining the Church is becoming a citizen of Zion.

Many revelations speak of Zion in this sense. Before the organization of the Church, the command was given to a number of brethren, “Seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.” (D&C 6:6; 11:6; 12:6; 14:6.) On the day of its organization, the Lord commended The Prophet for his diligence, prayers, and labors in bringing forth Zion. (D&C 21:7-8.) After its organization various brethren were commanded to labor in Zion with all their power and strength. (D&C 24:7; 30:11; 93:53.)

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 854.

10 However, when the Lord appeared, he established one unified society in which there was no sin, no crime, and no wars... [4 Nephi 1:15-16]. What would one not give to live in a society like that? But how are those races able to live as a celestial society for so long? We might ask, “How will it be possible during the Millennium for the people to remain righteous for almost a

thousand years?” The answer seems to be the same in both cases, and I believe that it consists in this: Parents teaching their children the gospel, and doing so especially during that early period of their lives when they cannot be tempted.”

H. Verlan Andersen, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1991, pp. 110-111.

11 The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. The world would take people out of the slums. Christ takes the slums out of people, and then they take themselves out of the slums. The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature.

Ezra Taft Benson, *Born of God*, p. 6.

12 The redemption of Zion is more than the purchase or recovery of lands, the building of cities, or even the founding of nations. It is the conquest of the heart, the subjugation of the soul, the sanctifying of the flesh, the purifying and ennobling of the passions.

Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 65-66.

13 Zion can be built up only among those who are the pure in heart—not a people torn by covetousness or greed, but a pure and selfless people, not a people who are pure in appearance, rather a people who are pure in heart. Zion is to be in the world and not of the world, not dulled by a sense of carnal security, nor paralyzed by materialism... We must sacrifice whatever is required by the Lord. We begin by offering a “broken heart and a contrite spirit.” We follow this by giving our best effort in our assigned fields of labor and in our callings. We learn our duty and execute it fully. Finally we consecrate our time, talents, and means as called upon by our file leaders and as prompted by the whisperings of the Spirit.

President Spencer W. Kimball, “Becoming the Pure in Heart,” *Ensign* (CR), May 1978, p. 79.

14 Zion is “every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God.” (D&C 82:19.) As I understand these matters, Zion can be established only by those who are pure in heart, and who labor for Zion, for “the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.” (2 Ne. 26:31.)

As important as it is to have this vision in mind, defining and describing Zion will not bring it about. That can only be done through consistent and concerted daily effort by every single of the Church. No matter what the cost in toil or sacrifice, we must “do it.” That is one of my favorite phrases: “do it.” May I suggest three fundamental things we must do if we are to “bring again Zion,” three things for which we who labor for Zion must commit ourselves.

First, we must eliminate the individual tendency to selfishness that snares the soul, shrinks the heart, and darkens the mind. President Romney recently referred to the tragic cycle of civilization, a cycle propelled by anyone who seeks for power and gain. Was it not this that led Cain to commit the first murder “for the sake of getting gain”? (Moses 5:50.) Is not this the spirit of the anti-Christ in which “every man prospered according to his genius, and... every man conquered according to his strength.

Second, we must cooperate completely and work in harmony one with the other. There must be unanimity in our decisions and unity in our actions. After pleading with the Saints to “let every man esteem his brother as himself” (D&C 38:24), the Lord concludes his instructions on cooperation to a conference of the membership in these powerful words:

“Behold, this I have given unto you as a parable, and it is even as I am. I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.” (D&C 38:27.)

If the Spirit of the Lord is to magnify our labors, then this spirit of oneness and cooperation must be the prevailing spirit in all that we do. Moreover, when we do so, we are told by the Prophet Joseph Smith that “the greatest temporal and spiritual blessings which always come from faithfulness and concentrated efforts, never attended individual exertion or enterprise.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 183.)...

Third, we must lay on the altar and sacrifice whatever is required by the Lord. We begin by offering a “broken heart and a contrite spirit.” We follow this by giving our best effort in our assigned fields of labor and callings. We learn our duty and execute it fully. Finally we consecrate our time, talents, and means as called upon by our file leaders and as prompted by the whisperings of the Spirit. In the Church, as in the Welfare system also, we can give expression to every ability, every righteous desire, every thoughtful impulse. Whether a volunteer, father, home teacher, bishop, or neighbor, whether a visiting teacher, mother, homemaker, or friend—there is ample opportunity to give our all. And as we give, we find that “sacrifice brings forth blessings of heaven!” (Hymns, no. 147.) And in the end, we learn it was no sacrifice at all. President Spencer W. Kimball, “Becoming the Pure in Heart, *Ensign (CR)*, May 1978, p. 79

Zion requires purity, unity, equality.