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Letter VI

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by the power of the Holy Spirit; for the time is near when his sons and daughters will prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions, and those who are thus favoured will be such as embrace the gospel as it was delivered in old times, and they shall be blessed with signs following.

Farther on the subject of the gathering of Israel:—

This was perfectly understood by all ancient prophets. Moses prophesied of the affliction which should come upon that people even after the coming of the Messiah, where he said, and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the works of your hands. Connecting this with a prophecy in the song which follows, which was given to Moses in the tabernacle—remembering the expression, “in the latter days,” where the Lord foretells all their evil, and their being received to mercy, to such as seek the peace of Israel much instruction may be gained. It is as follows:—

“I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling with the man of gray hairs.”

But after all this he will judge their enemies and avenge them of theirs; for he says:—

“If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh.”

After all this—after Israel has been restored and afflicted, and his enemies have also been chastised, the Lord says, “rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people.”

I will give a further detail of the promises to Israel hereafter, as rehearsed by the angel.

Accept assurance of my esteem as ever.

LETTER VI.

DEAR BROTHER,

I gave in my last a few words on the subject of a few items, as spoken by the angel at the time the knowledge of the record of the Nephites was communicated to our brother, and in consequence of the subject of the gospel and that of the gathering of Israel being so connected, I found it difficult to speak of the

one without mentioning the other; and this may not be improper, as it is evident that the Lord has decreed to bring forth the fulness of the gospel in the last days, previous to gathering Jacob, but a preparatory work, and the other is to follow in quick succession.

This being of so much importance, and of so deep interest to the Saints, I have thought best to give a further detail of the heavenly message, and if I do not give it in the precise words, shall strictly confine myself to the facts in substance.

David said (Ps. c.), "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands, that is, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness: Come before his presence with singing." This he said in view of the glorious period for which he often prayed and was anxious to behold, which he knew could not take place until the knowledge of the glory of God covered all lands, or all the earth. Again, he says (Ps. cvii.), "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: For his mercy endureth forever." Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way—they found no city to dwell in: hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses; and led them in the right way that they might go to the city of habitation.

Most clearly was it shown to the prophet that the righteous should be gathered from all the earth: He knew that the children of Israel were led from Egypt by the right hand of the Lord, and permitted to possess the land of Canaan though they were rebellious in the desert; but he further knew, that they were not gathered from the east, the west, the north, and the south at that time, for it was clearly manifested that the Lord himself would prepare a habitation, even as he said, when he would lead them to a city of refuge. In that David saw a promise for the righteous (see Ps. cxliv.), when they should be delivered from those who oppressed them, and from the hand of strange children, or the enemies of the Lord, that their sons should be like plants grown up in their youth, and their daughters like corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a beautiful palace. It is then that the sons and daughters shall prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions. At that time the garners of the righteous will be full, affording all manner of store. It was while contemplating this time, and viewing this happy state of the righteous, that he further says: The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations—praise ye the Lord!

Isaiah, who was on the earth at the time the ten tribes of Israel were led away captive from the land of Canaan, was shown

not only their calamity and affliction, but the time when they were to be delivered. After reproving them for their corruption and blindness, he prophesies of their dispersion. He says, Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire: Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is thus made desolate, being overthrown by strangers. He further says, while speaking of the iniquity of that people, "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loves gifts, and follows after rewards: They judge not the fatherless, neither does the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, "Ah! I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of my enemies." But after this calamity has befallen Israel, and the Lord has poured upon them his afflicting judgments, as he said by the mouth of Moses, "I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them. They shall be afflicted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the earth;" he will also fulfil this further prediction uttered by the mouth of Isaiah, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning—afterward you shall be called the *city of righteousness, the faithful city*. Then will be fulfilled, also, the saying of David, "And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Isaiah continues his prophecy concerning Israel, and tells them what would be done for them in the last days; for thus it is written: The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of his people in Zion, and upon their assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence, or above shall be a covering and a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. And his people shall dwell safely, they

shall possess the land forever, even the land which was promised to their fathers for an everlasting inheritance: for behold, says the Lord by the mouth of the prophet: The day will come that I will sow the house of Israel with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down and destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, says the Lord.

For this happy situation and blessed state of Israel did the prophets look, and obtained a promise, that though the house of Israel and Judah should violate the covenant, the Lord in the last days would make with them a new one; not according to the one which he made with their fathers in the day that he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; which, said the Lord, my covenant they broke, although I was a husband and a father unto them; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

For thus says the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry:—and I will multiply them and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them and they shall not be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them.

At the same time, says the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people; I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth; I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, keep not back:—bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. And in those days, and at that time, says the Lord, though Israel and Judah have been driven and scattered, they shall come together, they shall even come weeping; for with supplications will I lead them: they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, and say, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten; and watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall say, Arise, and let us go up to Zion, unto the holy Mount of the Lord our God; for he will teach us of his ways, and instruct us to walk in his paths. That the way for this to be fully accomplished may be prepared, the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of

the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shake his hand over the river and smite it in its seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be a high-way for the remnant of his people, which shall be from Assyria; like as it was to Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt.

And thus shall Israel come: not a dark corner of the earth shall remain unexplored, nor an island of the seas be left without being visited; for as the Lord has removed them into all corners of the earth, he will cause his mercy to be as abundantly manifested in their gathering as his wrath in their dispersion, until they are gathered according to the covenant. He will, as said by the prophet, send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and after send for many hunters, who shall hunt them; not as their enemies have to afflict, but with glad tidings of great joy, with a message of peace, and a call for their return.

And it will come to pass, that though the house of Israel has forsaken the Lord, and bowed down and worshipping other gods, which were no gods, and been cast out before the face of the world, they will know the voice of the Shepherd when he calls upon them this time; for soon his day of power comes, and in it his people will be willing to hearken to his counsel; and even now are they already beginning to be stirred up in their hearts to search for these things, and are daily reading the ancient prophets, and are marking the times and seasons of their fulfilment. Thus God is preparing the way for their return.

But it is necessary that you should understand, that what is to be fulfilled in the last days, is not only for the benefit of Israel, but the Gentiles, if they will repent and embrace the gospel, for they are to be remembered also in the same covenant, and are to be fellow heirs with the seed of Abraham, inasmuch as they are so by faith—for God is no respecter of persons. This was shown to Moses, when he wrote—Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people!

In consequence of the transgression of the Jews at the coming of the Lord, the Gentiles were called into the kingdom, and for this obedience, are to be favoured with the gospel in its fulness first, in the last days; for it is written—The first shall be last, and the last first. Therefore, when the fulness of the gospel, as was preached by the righteous, upon this land, shall come forth, it shall be declared to the Gentiles first, and whoso will repent shall be delivered, for they shall understand the plan of salvation and restoration for Israel, as the Lord manifested to the ancients. They shall be baptized with water and with the Spirit—they shall lift up their hearts with joy and gladness, for the time of their redemption shall also roll on, and for their obedience to the faith they shall see the house of Jacob come

with great glory, even with songs of everlasting joy, and with him partake of salvation.

Therefore, as the time draws near when the sun is to be darkened, the moon turned to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, the Lord will bring to the knowledge of his people his commandments and statutes, that they may be prepared to stand when the earth shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, earthquakes cause the nations to tremble, and the destroying angel goes forth to waste the inhabitants at noon-day: for so great are to be the calamities which are to come upon the inhabitants of the earth before the coming of the Son of Man the second time, that whoso is not prepared cannot abide; but such as are found faithful, and remain, shall be gathered with his people and be caught up to meet the Lord in the cloud, and so shall they inherit eternal life.

I have now given you a rehearsal of what was communicated to our brother, when he was directed to go and obtain the record of the Nephites. I may have missed in arrangement in some instances, but the principle is preserved, and you will be able to bring forward abundance of corroborating scripture upon the subject of the gospel and of the gathering. You are aware of the fact, that to give a minute rehearsal of a lengthy interview with a heavenly messenger, is very difficult, unless one is assisted immediately with the gift of inspiration. There is another item I wish to notice on the subject of visions. The spirit you know, searches all things, even the deep things of God. When God manifests to his servants those things that are to come, or those which have been, he does it by unfolding them by the power of that Spirit which comprehends all things, always; and so much may be shown and made perfectly plain to the understanding in a short time, that to the world, who are occupied all their life to learn a little, look at the relation of it, and are disposed to call it false. You will understand then, by this, that while those glorious things were being rehearsed, the vision was also opened, so that our brother was permitted to see and understand much more fully and perfect than I am able to communicate in writing. I know much may be conveyed to the understanding in writing, and many marvellous truths be set forth with the pen, but after all it is but a shadow, compared to an open vision of seeing, hearing, and realizing eternal things. And if the fact was known, it would be found, that of all the heavenly communications to the ancients, we have no more in comparison than the alphabet to a quarto vocabulary. It is said, and I believe the account, that the Lord showed the brother of Jared (Moriancumer) all things which were to transpire from that day to the end of the earth as well as those which had taken place. I believe that Moses was permitted to see the same, as the Lord caused them to pass,

in vision before him as he stood upon the mount. I believe that the Lord Jesus told many things to his apostles which are not written, and after his ascension unfolded all things unto them; I believe that Nephi, the son of Lehi, whom the Lord brought out of Jerusalem, saw the same; I believe that the twelve upon this continent, whom the Lord chose to preach his gospel, when he came down to manifest to this branch of the house of Israel, that he had other sheep who should hear his voice, were also permitted to behold the same mighty things transpire in vision before their eyes; and I believe that the angel Moroni, whose words I have been rehearsing, who communicated the knowledge of the same to the Nephites, in this age, saw also, before he hid up the record unto the Lord, great and marvellous things, which were to transpire when the same should come forth; and I also believe, that God will give line upon line, precept upon precept, to his Saints, until all these things will be unfolded unto them, and they be finally sanctified and brought into the celestial glory, where tears will be wiped from all faces, and sighing and sorrowing flee away!

May the Lord preserve you from evil and reward you richly for all your afflictions, and crown you in his kingdom. Amen.

Accept, as ever, assurances of the fellowship and esteem of your unworthy brother in the gospel.

LETTER VII.

DEAR BROTHER,

YOU will remember that in my last I brought my subject down to the evening, or night of the 21st of September, 1823, and gave an outline of the conversation of the angel upon the important facts of the blessings, promises and covenants to Israel, and the great manifestations of favour to the world in the ushering in of the fulness of the gospel, to prepare the way for the second advent of the Messiah, when he comes in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels.

A remarkable fact is to be noticed with regard to this vision. In ancient time the Lord warned some of his servants in dreams: for instance, Joseph, the husband of Mary, was warned in a dream to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt; also the wise men were warned of the Lord in a dream not to return to Herod; and when "out of Egypt the Son was called," the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph again: also he was warned in a dream to turn aside into the parts of Galilee. Such were the manifestations to Joseph, the favoured descendant of the father of the faithful in