



# *Stand Ye In Holy Places*

by  
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**Y**ours is the honor and blessing of being students at a wonderful institution directly affiliated with a highly interesting and distinct Church, the restored Church of Jesus Christ. The graduates and faculty of this college have accomplished remarkable things. Karl G. Maeser was your first principal in 1886-87, and James E. Talmage presided here for four years. Most of you are members of the Church with which the college is affiliated. The men, for the most part, also hold the holy priesthood of God. Those attending who are not members have committed themselves to live the high and distinctive standards of this college. This is a great blessing and benefit, but at the same time gives you the challenge of being a distinctive people with a great birthright.

Recently another distinctive group of people, the Jews, analyzed what they believe today and discussed their challenges in today's secular America. I believe our challenges are somewhat similar to those of the Jews and at the same time vastly different. I will draw occasionally from the 47 essays written by American Jewish leaders in America about what they believe today. These essays are published in the August 1996 issue of *Commentary*. For the most part, however, I will concentrate on the challenges and opportunities awaiting you in this unique hour of the earth's existence. You stand in the Saturday evening of the earth's present status. More about that later, but what does living in this unique era of the world's history mean to you and me? Does your generation have a long-term future? If so, what is our counsel for you?

If I were your age, seeking training and education and just beginning my career, I would try always to remember and keep in the back of my mind the Lord's admonition to **STAND IN HOLY PLACES AND NOT BE MOVED FROM THEM**. I don't know the day or hour the Son of Man will appear, but I believe it is coming soon. I also believe we will receive warnings and signs ahead of that day and when

the hour seems very near, I would try to heed the admonition "to gather together, and stand in holy places." (D&C 101:22) I would try to keep the frame of mind that the Lord is coming quickly, as he has said so many times, and "stand...in holy places, and not be moved, until the day of the Lord come." (D&C 87:8)

Today I propose to stimulate your thoughts about these things and share counsel from my perspective. In doing so I have the advantage of raising questions I anticipate might occur to you and responding briefly to them. Let me try a few to show you what we believe about the days ahead and your part in them.

Question One: Isn't invoking the second coming of Christ a scare tactic, and an old and tired one at that? Doesn't that just use the discredited tactic of motivating through fear?

Yes, that is one way of looking at it, but it is a method the Lord uses over and over in dealing with humankind. For instance in Section 64 of the Doctrine and Covenants he calls the period starting then, 1831, until the coming of the Son of Man "today." (D&C 64:25) Then he motivates us by promising "he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming." (vs. 23)

The Lord has used a similar motivational tool with the Jews for millennia. The coming of the Messiah has motivated believing Jews throughout their history. This belief still forms enough of the fabric of their beliefs or folklore that Jewish leaders in *Commentary* were asked specifically to state their beliefs on the Jewish Messiah. Himmelfarb, one of the Jewish essayists, warned Jews that when the Messiah comes they "must examine his credentials," having suffered the arrival of many false messiahs. Many modern Jewish leaders no longer believe in a personal Messiah who will come and save the Jews, but rather believe in a messianic or golden age of great progress to come in the future.

Latter-day Saints, in contrast, believe Christ is the Mes-

siah, that he came to earth once as a baby born to Mary in Bethlehem, and that he will come again as promised. In a revelation given 165 years ago, the Lord told this dispensation that his coming would be soon (D&C 87:8) and in the Meridian of Time, Peter said he would come again during the “times of restitution of all things.” There is value to Latter-day Saints in so living that if he came tonight we would be found in holy places. Holy places include any places where we are living righteously, prepared to see his face, and accept him. Holy places include any place where we are associating with righteous and wholesome people or where we are sharing the gospel and our love with those who need it. It would especially include our sincere presence in a temple room performing sacred ordinances, worshiping in a sacrament meeting, or at home with our families or friends doing righteous things.

Our presence in a bar room or in a movie house watching an x-rated movie would hardly qualify as being in a holy place. Caught in an immoral or unclean situation, for example viewing pornographic or suggestive pictures and books, would clearly find us in a precarious and dangerous situation, akin to the predicament the Savior describe the five foolish virgins as being in—without oil for their lamps when the bridegroom arrived.

Question Two: Doesn't this put negative pressure on us? Couldn't you motivate us better with positive reinforcement such as trusting us and sharing your testimony of the Savior's love?

My answer to question one might have put some tension and pressure on some of us. Its purpose was to motivate us to keep in the right way. Although I don't apologize for it I see your point. I could have started with the less dramatic but positive aspects of the Lord's motivating principles. He is a God of love. It is true that he rules with justice and cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, but he is also merciful. His arm is stretched out to save us. All men and women to whom we may go for counsel and assistance in time of need are susceptible, in one degree or another, to sin and self-centeredness since they are mortal. People may fail us, but he is perfect and will never fail us. His purposes fail not. Neither are there any that can stay his hand.

When I have been in serious trouble about anything during my life and when it seems I am destined for some awful or horrible fate, the Lord has ever been there for me. I know he will likewise never fail you. In Gethsemane and on the cross he suffered “pains and afflictions, and temptations of every kind.” (Alma 7:11) He did this for us, taking on himself our sins and even our sicknesses if we would repent. (Alma 7:12-13) He died that we might not have to fear the long-term consequences of death, and he gave us a great plan of salvation that would assure us of triumph over all our enemies and thus qualify for eternal life and everlasting joy. Some have called this the plan of happiness. That is an apt

label. All our infirmities and all our enemies will melt before his great love and atoning sacrifice. He is our advocate with the just Father in Heaven. What more could any of us ask!

And all he asks is that we humble ourselves, overcome the hardness of our hearts and our pride, and seek his help. He will point the way for us to gain faith, repent of our sins, and get onto that strait and narrow path. When we have found the way, we need to continue and endure to the end.

Question Three: Living so close to the end of time—perhaps in the Saturday night of time—we sometimes wonder if we have a future. Are we destined to be a generation without a normal and stable existence?

I will not sugar-coat my answer. Many of you will face difficult times and situations. But, so what? All ages about which I know anything, with the possible exception of the centuries immediately following Jesus's visit to America, have been filled with trials and challenges. My father and mother, for example, raised their children in a withering and desperate time of economic chaos and downturn. I was born in 1931, my sister in 1929. Dad lost the building he had used for his business. He continued his labors as an automobile mechanic on a vacant lot. He never thought of stopping. He had a wife and five children to house and feed. Then World War II came just as he was gaining economic success. The war made it impossible to get new automobiles or even parts for the agency he had acquired. These circumstances caused him to close his business and move to California to find employment. Through all of those trials we never went without food and clothing. We always felt secure and blessed. That move proved to be a great help to him financially, even as he assisted in the war effort.

Many died in that great worldwide struggle. Many others were preserved to carry on. The priesthood of God operated on both sides of the battle lines. I missed fighting in that war and then barely missed the Korean conflict. I arrived in Korea as a soldier just after the war, but was there to meet the first Latter-day Saint missionaries ever to serve in Korea. We helped them keep the work of establishing the Church moving. LDS soldiers had begun to share the gospel during the desperate war years. Now we have some 60,000 members and a temple in Korea.

Others got caught in the Vietnam conflict. During that conflict LDS soldiers sowed the seeds of the gospel in South Vietnam. One day that country will reap greater benefits of the restored gospel. I accompanied the first humanitarian missionaries into Hanoi just after New Years in 1993. “So amidst the conflict, whether great or small, do not be discouraged, God is over all.”

I suggest you consider taking the attitude—I will live the gospel and not fear any future conditions that may come. I will trust the Lord and glory in assisting in difficult situations and trials. Let them come! I love the spirit of the great prophet Isaiah in chapter 40.

“Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

“Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.

“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:15, 28-31)

We needn't fear or faint. I promise you that your generation will live to see marvelous things. You can count on the Lord's protection if you need it. If necessary the Lord will intervene in your behalf.

Has he not promised that “the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.” (1 Nephi 22:19) “Wherefore the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.” (vs. 17)

Question Four: Is our generation deteriorating as compared with yours? What do you observe in conditions faced by our generation?

I do see rising use of drugs and alcohol in your generation. I see more heterosexual and homosexual immorality and more sexual abuse such as rape, child abuse, sexual perversions, and abuse of women in both of our generations. I resonated to the rebuke President Hinckley issued at General Conference in October to men who abuse their wives and children. I see the results of our generation's family failures leading to many of the conditions and aberrations mentioned as associated with your generation.

But I have also toured scores of missions and have met our youth all over the world. I see greater numbers of committed young people than ever before, better educated, better prepared, and more Christ-centered. In testimony meeting after testimony meeting I have asked young people what they are most grateful for in their lives. An astonishing and encouraging number of them say that they are most grateful for the Savior.

In a general way I believe in the Saturday warrior concept popularized in the LDS musical. The youth of the Church today, taken as a whole, are distinct, chosen, and special. They, including some of you, may well play a role testing and requiring that specialness in the days and years ahead. I believe also that the gulf between good and evil is widening. Many people, however, who have lived in harm's way during their youth have found the plan of life and the Savior to help pull them through.

A friend stayed with us during the last General Conference. It was her first such opportunity to attend such a conference in person. I asked her what impressed her. Aside from the fact that she thought almost every speaker had spoken directly to her own family problems and concerns, she was amazed at the number of wholesome and good-looking young people who crowded Temple Square and waited in line with the hope of finding a seat.

These great young people come from all of the corners of the earth. When the latest group of missionaries from the isolated nation of Mongolia enter the MTC this year, Mongolia will have 27 missionaries serving from that land including such missions as Salt Lake Temple Square, Utah South, Russia, and Alaska to name a few. All of this has happened since September of 1992 when a former president of this institution and his wife, Kenneth and Donna Beesley, opened the work in Mongolia for the first time in Church history. A year later other missionary couples entered Cambodia for the first time. Hundreds of young people, thirsting for the gospel, have joined the Church there.

Truly yours is a chosen generation and a royal priesthood. The work you will accomplish in the years ahead will amaze us all. Your generation's young people have greater potential by far than those of our generation. We have tried and will continue to do our part. But soon we will have to leave it to you, including the national deficit, governmental mess, and all else, as our fathers and mothers left for us to confront. Population is exploding as we lead up to the winding up scenes of the earth's present existence. Soon India will reach a billion as China already has. Our first full mission in the great country of India, a modest beginning effort, was only established in January 1993. You, the Saturday night children are coming into influence fast. We have great confidence in you and your future.

Question Five: From the perspective of a General Authority who has been engaged world-wide in the work, what advice and direction do you have for us?

You probably feel that we have worn you out by sharing advice throughout your years, but we dare not do for you what others have done for us.

Our central advice is to stand in holy places and do not move from them. Do you notice how President Hinckley has staked out his ground publicly, despite the risks? He has not apologized for our stand on any righteous or moral principle. You can, if you will, take your cue from him and do the same. Holy places and only holy places should be your habitat. Avoid pollutions such as drugs, immorality including homosexual actions, pornography, fraudulent or questionable business schemes, dishonesty in any form, and the seductive practice of intellectualizing the gospel, forgetting that the gospel is the way to live and not a game of amusement. Don't get involved in activities that in any way compromise the gospel, the Church, or that belittle the prophets. Stand on

holy righteous ground, but do so humbly and without self-righteousness, arrogance, or intolerance of any kind.

Next, prepare yourselves educationally for the future. Gain the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the world, such as computer literacy, the will to work hard, and a broad understanding of the world sufficient to give you an overview by which you can make good decisions. Your education at the LDS Business College is a wonderful start for you. Don't think defensively. For example, don't think that the troubles of the last days that loom ahead will render you useless or irrelevant and thus give up on your future. The Lord and the world will need capable and skillful people with creativity and a good work ethic.

Third, wherever you are, share the gospel with friends and less active and committed members. Let your gospel light so shine before men that they will see your good works. Avoid the evil and designing wiles of men who would lead you into tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and get-rich schemes. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. And be distinct and different in a gospel way by avoiding the secularism so pervasive today as people pursue self-centered hedonism. As one of the Jewish writers, Mr. Lapin, observed, "if a nation's trend-setters are hedonistic, the people will be depraved. If the trend-setters are only decent, the people will be hedonistic. For the people to be decent, the trend-setters must be holy." Shouldn't we stand in holy places and strive to be distinct and holy as a people? The Savior said, "Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt..." (Matthew 6:19)

Our Jewish friends, at least many of them, are very concerned that the Jews are becoming a non-distinct part of secular-godless America, rather than playing their historical role as a distinct religious minority exercising a disproportionate moral influence on those around them. Great numbers of them are intermarrying outside of Judaism and raising their families in materialistic and prideful ways. Fewer and fewer truly study and know their Torah and the distinctive ways that have helped them survive for thousands of years despite all manner of persecution and genocide. This sense of community has greatly declined. What about our sense of community? Are we fostering for you what we had in our day? Do we really know our scriptures? Are we prayerful in our marriage and family decisions? Are our goals righteous and not based on materialistic desires? What good is it to merely survive and become a part of the me-centered generation. The manifestations of such lives include men and women living together without even a marriage ceremony and commitment. Too many of our generation are dedicated to themselves as if they, not God, were the center of the universe. One Jewish leader complained about Jewish youth. Said he, even if they decide to marry, they often set aside the sacred and beautiful ceremonies of their religion, writing their own marriage ceremonies on the theory that their ideas are superior to

ceremonies having the force and authority of God's commandments and tested through their long religious history. Are we so self-centered that we are anxious to substitute our ideas for God's doctrines?

The lesson we can learn from this example is to remain the Lord's people, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Most of us learn through our patriarchal blessings that we are descended from or adopted into the tribes of Ephraim or Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph. We need to be distinctive, moral, God-fearing and God-knowing people. Our young people need to be honest, hard-working, practicing Latter-day Saints. We owe that duty to ourselves. We have a wonderful legacy in the gospel that others, including our families and pioneer forefathers, have sacrificed their lives to vouchsafe for us. Our Heavenly Father is counting on us to live honorably and decently.

Most of you are on the right track in these things. Keep trusting in God and living the gospel. If you are not on the right track, you know it and need to decide right now to repent.

Question Six: The final question I ask on your behalf is what do we have to be thankful for during this Thanksgiving season?

This is easy to answer. Paul answered by saying, "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18) And in our day the Lord counseled us to do all things "with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance." (D&C 59:15) Remember Corrie Ten Boom who with her sister did her best to practice that thanksgiving principle during her years in the Nazi concentration camp, even giving thanks for the fleas that made life so miserable, but kept the guards away from their bunk bed where they hid their scriptures.

Be thankful that you are the lawful successors to and heirs of the promises given to Israel. Remember that Jacob conferred the birthright on "Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren." (Genesis 49:26) No matter which tribe of Israel you are attached to for your heritage and blessings, give thanks for those who went before. Many noble people sacrificed to bring us the great heritage we enjoy.

Be thankful for God our Father, for Jesus the Christ, and for the Holy Ghost. They will lead you to the highways of truth and salvation. As Psalms 100 urges, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name." (Psalms 100:4)

Be thankful for the Book of Mormon through which we learn of our birthright and which warns and prepares us for the trials in the winding up scenes of life. It also, as we noted earlier, promises protection from the terrors of the last days. And it is true, a second witness for the divinity of the gospel and the mission of the Savior.

Be thankful for the Jews. They preserved the Bible for

themselves and us. They also miraculously kept themselves as a distinct people from ancient times, thus preserving their special religious vales and knowledge of God.

Be thankful you live in the last days. No other age is as exciting. All other ages looked with awe at ours. You are in a period the Lord referred to as "today." Find motivation to so live that you will help prepare the world for the coming of Christ, because that is the great duty of those who live in the era designated as "today."

Be thankful for knowledge and skills so inexpensively and readily available to you. Read, practice, know, and keep up.

Be thankful for our great prophet Joseph Smith, the instrument in the Lord's hands in restoring all of the authority, keys, and knowledge necessary in the restoration of all things. And be thankful for President Gordon B. Hinckley, a living Prophet.

"Oh give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth forever." (Psalms 136:26)

Count your blessings; Name them one by one.

Count your blessings; See what God hath done.

Count your blessings; Name them one by one.

Count your many blessings; See what God hath done.

Yes, you may face trials and tribulations associated with the coming of the Lord, who will reign personally on the earth and usher in a thousand years of rest for the earth and peace for those who live during those blessed years. Thrill to the prospect of living in this time. Be thankful that you are a part of this generation and are Saturday night children. Live today. Be faithful. Focus on what you can contribute and retain your distinctiveness.

On Wednesday after General Conference, President Hinckley invited all General Authorities and their wives for a farewell sacrament meeting before those present dispersed to provide leadership throughout the world. He asked us to:

Keep the doctrine pure;

Enjoy our callings, no matter how hard;

And to eat it up!

We say to you:

Go and do likewise.

Today. And while you are finding your destiny and roles in life, **STAND IN HOLY PLACES, AND BE NOT MOVED FROM THEM.**