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Delivered at the Sixty-eighth Annual Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, Sunday afternoon, April 10th, 1898, by
PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

The remarks which have been made by Brother Franklin D. Richards concerning the position the inhabitants of the earth are in, and particularly our position, and his reference to the revelation that was read the other day concerning the necessity there would be for those who desired peace to flee to Zion, suggests the reading of some promises and predictions that the Lord has made concerning this land. Lehi, before his death, in speaking about this land to which he and his family had been led, made the following remarks:

"Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve Him according to the commandment which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound, cursed shall be the land for their sakes; but unto the righteous it shall be blessed for ever."

His son Jacob also spoke concerning this land, and those who had charge of the records have left on record something that He has said respecting it:

"But behold, this land, saith God, shall be a land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land."

"And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall rise up unto the Gentiles;

"And I will fortify this land against all other nations."

Here is a promise given to the people of this land, that if we will serve the God of this land no nation shall prevail against us; for the Lord says he will fortify this land against all other nations. Of course, it is understood that to have this we must be a righteous nation.

Other prophets have spoken in similar language. It is recorded by Mormon, in the book of Ether, as follows:

"And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity;

For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God, or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of this land, that they are swept off.

"And this cometh unto you, O ye

Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God, that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you, as the inhabitants of the land hath hitherto done.

"Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written."

These are great promises which the Lord has given unto the inhabitants of this land; not to the Latter-day Saints alone, but to all the people of the land. You remember, no doubt, the effort that was made to establish a king on this land of North America, and the destruction which resulted to many of those who attempted it. The word of God as recorded in this Book of Mormon, which was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, concerning the results of any attempt to set up a king on this land, was literally fulfilled in that instance. Maximilian was destroyed, and the attempt to establish an empire was brought to naught. The Mexican people, inspired with a grand patriotism and an intense love for country, rose up, led by a pure descendant of Lehi—a pure Lamanite—and overthrew the armies of Europe that were brought here to conquer the land and to establish upon this sacred soil—this soil dedicated by the Almighty to liberty and freedom—an empire. The flower of the French army, and most distinguished of her generals, with the Emperor Napoleon himself as the designer of the enterprise, backed and sustained by Austria, were ignominiously overthrown and brought to shame and confusion. The Lord fulfilled His word exactly as it had been predicted long before. Upwards of six hundred years before the birth of the Savior Ether, a Prophet of God, had made predictions concerning this land. Not long after that Lehi made similar predictions. Shortly after that Jacob, a Prophet of God, made predictions concerning the fate of those who should attempt to bring the inhabitants of this land into bondage, and he said that no king should be established upon the land. So that we have on record great predictions by these three men of God concerning the future of America. This is a sacred land. It is a land choice above all other lands upon the face of the earth. It was kept hidden from the nations for long centuries, and the reason for this has been given to us; it was that the land might not be overrun by the nations of the earth, and that it might be reserved for the great drama of the last days.

It is a remarkable thing, and we would be incapable of understanding the reason why this land had been hidden for so many centuries from the knowledge of the nations of the earth, if the Lord had not revealed it. There

is said to be a record among the Scandinavians that some of that race penetrated the western sea and landed on the coast of North America. This may or may not be so. The Welsh also claim that a prince of their blood also reached this land. The Irish also have a tradition that some of their race penetrated the western ocean and reached the land. But whoever did this, if any, left nothing on record to incite the nations of the earth to the belief that there lay hidden, enveloped in the mists of the western sea, a large hemisphere such as the continent of North and South America. The knowledge of it was completely hidden, as completely as if it did not belong to our globe. Navigators sailed to and fro; but through the long centuries that elapsed from the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel, when the inhabitants of the earth were scattered, until the time that Columbus, inspired of God, went from court to court, pleading with the governments of nations to give him the means to penetrate the ocean and find what he supposed was the Indies—during all that time the knowledge of this land was kept from all the nations of the earth. Is not this wonderful? How can we account for it? There is only one way, and that is the way the Lord accounts for it; He tells us through His servant that the knowledge of this land should be kept from all the nations of the earth, because if it were not they would overrun the land. It was a land too choice to be left unoccupied, possessed of too many of those elements that enrich individuals and peoples. The nations of the earth would have swarmed here by the hundreds of thousands, and there would have been no place found upon the land for the great events that are taking place now and for the people who now possess the land. There would have been no room for the Church of Christ, no room for the kingdom of God, no room for the gathering of the millions that will yet come to Zion, to build up the kingdom of God on this land and to prepare the way for the establishment of the New Jerusalem; for this is the favored land upon which the New Jerusalem will be established. We, therefore, can see today how the Lord has prepared the way for the gathering of the people from all the nations of the earth, and how His providence has been over this choice land above all other lands. There is plenty of room here; not crowding upon anybody; not compelled to come as conquerors have in other ages who have overrun other lands and driven out or destroyed the people who occupied the land, in order that they might possess it. No necessity for this; for God has made abundant provisions. He has kept in reserve this glorious land, in order that in the last days His kingdom could be established, and that under the inspiration which He should give, a government might be founded—a government of liberty, a government of freedom, giving to all the utmost