

This prophecy of Daniel will give a true understanding of the matter to our wise men and statesmen, and all who desire to know the future destiny of the American government, the European governments, and all the kingdoms of the earth. Their destiny is total destruction from our earth, no matter how great or powerful they may become. Though our nation may grasp on the right hand and on the left; though it may annex the British possessions, and extend its dominions to the south and grasp the whole of this great western hemisphere, and although our nation shall become as powerful in population as in extent of territory, its destiny is foretold in the saying of the Prophet Daniel, "They shall become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, the wind shall carry them away and no place shall be found for them." So with the kingdoms of Europe, so with the kingdoms of Western Asia and Eastern Europe.¹

The Coming of the Ancient of Days

At an unidentified time during the period of universal conflict an important council meeting is expected to be held. Latter-day Saints accept Daniel's report of a prophetic vision of this event as an important statement of this great assemblage. Said the Hebrew Prophet:

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

• • • I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.²

Joseph Smith and other prominent "Mormon" leaders spoke

¹Journal of Discourses, XV, 72-73. Author's italics.

²Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14.

repeatedly of this event and its importance to the picture of latter-day events. In identifying the Ancient of days, the Prophet said:

Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family.¹

Joseph Smith said a great deal about Adam and the role he is held to play in the affairs of this earth. On another occasion he made the following statement:

Commencing with Adam, who was the first man, who is spoken of in Daniel as being the "Ancient of Days," or in other words, the first and oldest of all, the great, grand progenitor of whom it is said in another place he is Michael, because he was the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the plan of ordinances for the salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom Christ was first revealed, and through whom Christ has been revealed from heaven, and will continue to be revealed from henceforth. Adam holds the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times; i.e., the dispensation of all the times have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ, and from Christ to the end of all the dispensations that are to be revealed. "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." (Ephesians, 1st chap., 9th and 10 verses).

Now the purpose in Himself in the winding up scene of the last dispensation is that all things pertaining to that dispensation should be conducted precisely in accordance with the preceding dispensations.

¹Documentary History of the Church, III, 386-87.

And again. God purposed in Himself that there should not be an eternal fullness until every dispensation should be fulfilled and gathered together in one, and that all things whatsoever, that should be gathered together in one in those dispensations unto the same fullness and eternal glory, should be in Christ Jesus; therefore He set the ordinances to be the same forever and ever, and set Adam to watch over them, to reveal them from heaven to man, or to send angels to reveal them. "Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews, i, 14).

These angels are under the direction of Michael or Adam, who acts under the direction of the Lord. From the above quotation we learn that Paul perfectly understood the purposes of God in relation to His connection with man, and that glorious and perfect order which He established in Himself, whereby he sent forth power, revelations, and glory.

.....
 This, then, is the nature of the Priesthood; every man holding the Presidency of his dispensation, and one man holding the Presidency of them all, even Adam; and Adam receiving his Presidency and authority from the Lord, but cannot receive a fullness until Christ shall present the Kingdom to the Father, which shall be at the end of the last dispensation.¹

In 1838 the Prophet pointed out that this anticipated assembly will be held at a place known to Latter-day Saints as Adam-ondi-Ahman. Of the location of that place in the state of Missouri and how it was initially designated, Joseph Smith wrote:

This morning we struck our tents and formed a line of march, crossing Grand River at the mouth of Honey Creek and Nelson's Ferry. Grant River is a large, beautiful, deep and rapid stream, during the high waters of Spring, and will undoubtedly admit of navigation by steamboat and other water craft. At the mouth of Honey Creek is a good landing. We pursued our course up the river, mostly through timber, for about eighteen miles, when we arrived at Colonel Lyman Wight's home. He lives at the foot of Tower hill (a name I gave the place in consequence of the remains of an old Nephite altar or tower that stood there), where we camped for the Sabbath.

In the afternoon I went up the river about half a mile to Wight's Ferry, accompanied by President Rigdon, and my clerk, George W. Robinson, for the purpose of selecting

¹Ibid., Iv. 207-09. Author's italics.

and laying claim to a city plat near said ferry in Daviess County, township 60, ranges 27 and 28, and sections 25, 36, 31, and 30, which the brethren called "Spring Hill," but by the mouth of the Lord it was named Adam-ondi-Ahman, because, said He, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the Prophet.¹

Those present in the council of Adam-ondi-Ahman are expected to include all those who, in past ages of the earth's history, have held keys of priesthood and responsibility, with many then living in mortality on the earth. Orson Pratt marvelled at the vast number Daniel reported would be present at that meeting:

How much is ten thousand times ten thousand? Only a hundred millions, but that would make quite a large congregation. All the inhabitants of the United States only number about forty millions, counting men, women and children. If they were assembled in one place, it would present a grand spectacle; but suppose we double that number, making it eighty millions, what a vast congregation that number of people would make, we can hardly grasp in our comprehension its extent; and still we will add to it another twenty millions so as to equal the size of the congregation which the Prophet Daniel saw standing before the Ancient of Days. Such a body of people must extend over a great many miles of country, however closely they may be collected together. I doubt whether the extremes of such a congregation could be seen by the natural eyes of mortals; they would be lost in the distance.²

However, Joseph Fielding Smith says that this meeting, even though it will be gigantic in its scope, will be held in secret:

When this gathering is held, the world will not know of it; the members of the Church at large will not know of it, yet it shall be preparatory to the coming in the clouds of glory of our Savior Jesus Christ as the Prophet Joseph Smith has said. The world cannot know it. The Saints cannot know it--except those who officially shall

¹Ibid., III, 34-35. Cf. Doctrine and Covenants 116.

²Journal of Discourses, XVIII, 338-39. Author's italics.

be called into this council--for it shall precede the coming of Jesus Christ as a thief in the night, unbeknown to all the world.¹

Purposes of the Council

Latter-day Saints hold that the council at Adam-ondi-Ahman will serve several major purposes. Orson Pratt explained certain reasons for the holding of the council in the following words:

Who was this personage called the Ancient of Days? We are told by the Prophet Joseph Smith--the great Prophet of the last days, whom God raised up by his own voice and by the ministration of angels to introduce the great and last dispensation of the fullness of times--the last dispensation on the earth so far as the proclamation of mercy is concerned; I say we are told by this Prophet that the Ancient of days is the most ancient personage that ever had an existence in days here on the earth. And who was he? Why, of course, old Father Adam, he was the most ancient man that ever lived in days that we have any knowledge of. He comes, then, as a great judge, to assemble this innumerable host of which Daniel speaks. He comes in flaming fire. The glory and blessing and greatness of his personage it would be impossible even for a man as great as Daniel fully to describe. He comes as a man inspired from the eternal throne of Jehovah himself. He comes to set in order the councils of the Priesthood pertaining to all dispensations, to arrange the Priesthood and the councils of the Saints of all former dispensations in one grand family and household.

What is all this for? Why all this arrangement? Why all this organization? Why all this judgment and the opening of the books? It is to prepare the way for another august personage whom Daniel saw coming with the clouds of heaven, namely the Son of Man, and these clouds of heaven brought the Son of Man near before the Ancient of days. And when the Son of Man came to the Ancient of days, behold a kingdom was given to the Son of Man, and greatness and glory, that all people, nations and languages should serve him, and his kingdom should be an everlasting kingdom that should never be done away.

This explains the reason why our father Adam comes as the Ancient of days with all these numerous hosts, and organizes them according to the records of the book, every

¹Joseph Fielding Smith, The Way to Perfection (Fifth Edition, Utah: the Genealogical Society, 1943), p. 291.

man in his place, preparatory to the coming of the Son of Man to receive the kingdom. Then every family that is in the order of the Priesthood, and every man and every woman, and every son or daughter whatever their kindred, descent or Priesthood, will know their place.¹

Continuing, Pratt spoke again of the purpose and nature of that meeting:

This man, will sit upon his throne, and ten thousand times ten thousand immortal beings--his children--will stand before him, with all their different grades of Priesthood, according to the order which God has appointed and ordained. Then every quorum of the Priesthood in this Latter-day Saint Church will find its place, and never until then. If we go behind the vail /sic/ we will not see this perfect organization of the Saints of all generations until that period shall arrive. That will be before Jesus comes in his glory. Then we will find that there is a place for the First Presidency of this Church; for the Twelve Apostles called in this dispensation; for the twelve disciples that were called among the remnants of Joseph on this land in ancient times; for the Twelve that were called among the ten tribes of Israel in the north country; for the Twelve that were called in Palestine, who administered in the presence of our Savior; all the various quorums and councils of the Priesthood in every dispensation that has transpired since the days of Adam until the present time will find their places, according to the callings, gifts, blessings, ordinations and keys of Priesthood which the Lord Almighty has conferred upon them in their several generations. This, then, will be one of the grandest meetings that has ever transpired upon the face of our globe. What manner of persons ought you and I, my brethren and sisters, and all the people of God in the latter-days to be, that we may be counted worthy to participate in the august assemblies that are to come from the eternal worlds, whose bodies have burst the tomb and come forth immortalized and eternal in their nature.²

Another purpose of this council is revealed in the original quotation from Daniel which stated that "the judgment was set, and the books were opened." The Prophet made it clear that this meant giving the power of judgment to the Saints.

¹Journal of Discourses Vol. XVII, 185-186. Author's italics.

²Ibid., XVII, 187-88. Author's italics.

In making this point clear he stated that wars, fires, pestilence and earthquakes would continue in succession "until the Ancient of Days comes, then judgment will be given to the Saints."¹ Elder Pratt explained that this would include the power to judge the nations which will then exist:

The records of the nations--their rise and decadence, with everything pertaining to them, in a national capacity, will be written. Then there will be the records of the families and of individuals, even of all people and tongues of the earth. The books will be opened, and the judgment will sit. What Judgment? Not the final judgment, because that is to take place more than a thousand years after this. This judgment refers to the nations that will then exist, and it is out of these records and by this judgment will they be judged. The calamities spoken of will take place in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and of the great purposes of Jehovah.²

Daniel also stated that another purpose of the council was to receive the Son of Man and to give him "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him."³

Thus it is seen that after the Gospel has been taken from the Gentiles and is given to the House of Israel, and they are in the process of gathering to both the New and the old Jerusalem, war and conflict on a world-wide scale is to be waged. This warfare will bring about the destruction of the governments of the Gentile nations, and the governments of the heathen nations will be greatly weakened. Sometime during the universal conflict the Ancient of days will come

¹Documentary History of the Church, III, 391.

²Journal of Discourses, XVIII, 342. Author's italics.

³Daniel 7:14.

to Adam-ondi-Ahman and will hold a great council which will be attended by both mortal and immortal beings. One of the purposes of this council will be to unite the Kingdom of God on earth with the Kingdom of Heaven beyond the veil. From the time of this council the Kingdom of God will begin to be accepted throughout the world that it might hold universal rule on earth. The kingdoms of the earth will be to a large degree destroyed during the conflict, and their destruction will allow God's Kingdom to extend its righteous dominion. Said Orson Pratt of the future state of the Kingdom of God:

The kingdoms of the world have waxed old; and, because of wickedness, they are destined to be speedily broken to pieces; but the kingdom of God will endure forever. It is destined to increase in strength, power, and dominion, and to bear rule over all the earth. Those nations and kingdoms which will not unite themselves with the kingdom of God, and become one with it, honoring its laws and institutions, will utterly perish, and no place will be found for them.¹

¹Millennial Star, Vol. XIX, pp. 680-81, October 24, 1857.