

## PRAYER

Dedicating the Lands of South America to the Preaching of the Gospel

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On December 25, 1925, at 7 o'clock a. m., in a Grove of Weeping Willow-Trees, near the bank of El Rio De La Plata, in the Park 3 De Febrero, Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America. Present were also Elders Rulon S. Wells and Rey L. Pratt of the First Council of Seventy.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. In the name of Jesus Christ, thy well beloved Son, we, thy servants, approach thee on this beautiful Christmas morning in this secluded spot, in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America; in a land far distant from our mountain home, but in a country which thou hast called a part of the land of Zion.

We are very thankful for our safe arrival, after a voyage of twenty-one days on the seas, without a moment's sickness. We do acknowledge that thou didst temper the elements for our good, and that thy protecting care has been over us in our travels, both on the land and on the sea. And for health and strength to labor for thee and thy cause.

We are grateful that we have been chosen by thy servant, President Heber J. Grant, to come to this great land of South America, to unlock the door for the preaching of the gospel to all the peoples of the South American nations; to search out the blood of Israel that has been sifted among the Gentile nations, many of whom, influenced by the spirit of gathering, have assembled in this land.

Put thy Spirit into their hearts, that they may receive us, as true messengers sent of God, for their salvation. Help us to labor for them with the same spirit in us that he had who loved men so that he died for them, that we may effectually "call, persuade and invite" men to come unto Christ. We thank thee for the few who have received us, and for those we had the joy of taking into the waters of baptism in this land. May they be the first fruits of a glorious harvest.

We pray that we may have the opportunity to present to the people, the message which thou hast sent us to deliver, namely: That angels, sent by thee, have visited the earth in this dispensation, bringing to man again the everlasting gospel. That John the Baptist did visit the Prophet Joseph Smith, upon whom he conferred the authority to baptize. That Peter, James and John did ordain him an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, and endow him

with the keys of the holy Priesthood, with authority to baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost, and to organize the Church of Jesus Christ again in the earth. That Moroni, thine ancient prophet of the Americans, did visit Joseph Smith, and delivered into his hands the plates containing a history of the early inhabitants of this land; and by thy power Joseph Smith did translate the characters on the plates, from which he obtained the Book of Mormon. And that he was visited by thee and thy beloved Son, who committed into Joseph's hands a great and new Gospel Dispensation for all flesh. We are thankful that we are the bearers of these glad tidings to the peoples of the South American nations.

And we also pray that we may see the beginning of the fulfilment of thy promises contained in the Book of Mormon to the Indian of this land, who is a descendant of Lehi, millions of whom reside in this country, who have long been downtrodden, and have borne many afflictions and suffered because of sin and transgression, even as the prophets of the Book of Mormon did foretell. But thou didst inspire these prophets to promise their descendants that thou wouldst bring forth, in the latter days, the records of their fathers; and that when these records were presented to their children, they would begin to believe, and when they would do this, thy favor would return to them; and then thou wouldst remember the promises made to their fathers, that if their descendants would repent and receive the gospel, they would begin to be prospered and blessed on the land, and would again become a white and delightsome people. O Father, let thy Spirit work upon them, and manifest the truth of these things unto them, as we, and thy servants who shall follow us, shall bear witness of thy precious promises unto this branch of the house of Israel.

Father, bless thy Church in all the earth; continue to guide those whom thou hast called to lead it with the wisdom and power to direct it forward to fulfil its great mission in the earth. Sustain thy servants who labor as missionaries in all parts of the world, that they may have

the opportunity and power to warn all men that the hour of judgment approaches; and that thou hast offered, through the gospel, a means of escape from the calamities that shall come upon all flesh unless they repent.

Remember in mercy the "hope of Israel," the youth of thy Church, who are to bear the responsibilities of the future, that they may keep themselves clean and undefiled from the sins of the world; that they may be found worthy of their inheritance and come to their glorious destiny. Bless those who are their shepherds, the watchmen upon the towers of Zion, that they may guard well the flock, and be able to feed with the bread of life the sheep and the lambs.

We present for thy kind consideration the members of our own families, from whom we are separated, who, now and in times past, have sacrificed much, that we may carry the gospel to the children of men. May health and life attend each one, and the good cheer thy Spirit brings be with them, and above all keep them from sin, and bless them with faith in thee and thy gospel.

Bless the presidents, governors and leading officials of these South American countries, that they may kindly receive us, and give us permission to open the doors of salvation to the peoples of these lands. May they be

blessed in administering the affairs of their several offices, that great good may come unto the people; that peace may be upon these nations that thou hast made free through thy blessings upon the valiant liberators of these lands; that righteousness may obtain, and full liberty for the preaching of thy gospel prevail. Stay the power of evil that it shall not triumph over thy work, but that all thine enemies shall be subdued and thy truth be triumphant.

And now, O Father, by authority of the blessing and appointment of thy servant, the President of the Church, and by the authority of the Holy Apostleship which I hold, I turn the key, unlock and open the door for the preaching of the gospel in all these South American nations, and rebuke, and command to be stayed, every power that would oppose the preaching of the gospel in these lands. And we do bless and dedicate these nations, and this land for the preaching of the gospel. And we do all this that salvation may come to all men, and that thy name may be honored and glorified in this part of the land of Zion.

Help us to bring men to thee and to thy Son, and speed the day when he shall come to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. And for all thy blessings which shall bring success to our labors, we shall ascribe honor, and power, and glory to thee, forever and ever. Amen.

In connection with the offering of the foregoing prayer, the following hymns were sung: "The morning breaks, the shadows flee," "Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning," "An angel from on high," and "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

President Rey L. Pratt read from the Book of Mormon; I Nephi 13; II Nephi 31, and III Nephi 21; and President Rulon S. Wells read from the Bible, Genesis, 49:22-26.

Each of the brethren spoke briefly concerning their mission here, and of their willingness to do their best to establish this mission; of their perfect love for one another, and for the work of the Lord. They blessed one another, and felt that, as the result of opening this mission, many Europeans in this land would receive the gospel, but that ultimately the great import of the mission would be to the Indians, the descendants of father Lehi, and that this was a momentous day. A wonderful spirit was present, which visibly affected us all, and our joy expressed in tears was manifest. — M. J. B.