

Right Before Our Eyes

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Mbele ya Macho Yetu

Na Mzee Ronald A. Rasband
Wa Akidi ya Mitume Kumi na Wawili

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is growing in members and families, missions and missionaries, meetinghouses and temples.

Brothers and sisters, I am so grateful to be with you. We love you, we are grateful for you, and we feel blessed by your prayers.

President Russell M. Nelson said at our last conference: “Do you see what is happening right before our eyes? I pray that we will not miss the majesty of this moment! The Lord is indeed hastening His work.”

Hastening His work. “Hastening” is a word that matters. It suggests moving quickly, accelerating, and even urgency. In the growth of the Church and the plan of Christ, hastening is happening. And we are all a part of it.

In April 1834 in Kirtland, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph Smith gathered all who held the priesthood into a little schoolhouse about 14 feet (4.3 m) square. We could fit dozens of those schoolhouses in this Conference Center, with room to spare. Joseph Smith said, “It is only a little handful of Priesthood you see here tonight, but this Church will fill North and South America—it will fill the world.”

That prophecy is being fulfilled “right before our eyes.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is growing in members and families, missions and missionaries, meetinghouses and temples, and in enrollment in our seminaries, institutes, and universities all around the world.

We are grateful to be on earth when the Church is increasing in numbers and influence,

Kanisa la Yesu Kristo la Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho linakua kwa waumini na familia, misheni na wamisionari, nyumba za mikutano na mahekalu.

Akina kaka na dada, ninashukuru sana kuwa pamoja nanyi. Tunawapenda, tunashukrani kwenu; na tunahisi kubarikiwa kwa sala zenu.

Rais Russell M. Nelson alisema kwenye mkutano wetu uliopita: “Je, mnaona kinachoendelea mbele ya macho yetu sasa? Ninasali kwamba hatutakosa utukufu wa wakati huu! Bwana kwa hakika anaharakisha kazi Yake.”

Kuharakisha kazi Yake. “Kuharakisha” ni neno lenye maana. Linapendekeza kusonga haraka, kutia kasi, na hata uharaka. Katika ukuaji wa Kanisa na mpango wa Kristo, kuharakisha kunatokea. Na sisi sote tu sehemu yake.

Mnamo Aprili 1834 huko Kirtland, Ohio, Nabii Joseph Smith aliwakusanya wote wenye ukuhani katika nyumba ndogo ya shule karibia futi 14 (4.2m) za mraba. Tungeweza kujaza dazani za nyumba zile za shule kwenye ukumbi huu wa mikutano, na kubaki na nafasi. Joseph Smith alisema, “Ni wachache tu wenye Ukuhani mnaoweza kuwaona hapa usiku wa leo, lakini Kanisa hili litaijaza Amerika ya Kaskazini na Kusini—litaijaza dunia.”

Unabii huo unatimizwa “mbele ya macho yetu sasa.” Kanisa la Yesu Kristo la Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho linakua kwa waumini na familia, misheni na wamisionari, nyumba za mikutano na mahekalu, na katika usajili wa seminari zetu, vyuo, na vyuo vikuu kote ulimwenguni.

Tunashukuru kuwepo duniani wakati Kanisa linaongezeka kwa idadi na ushawishi,

but more importantly in the hearts and lives of its members. We are known as disciples of Jesus Christ. We share our testimonies of Him, His Church, His ways, and His covenant path. We are His people, and He is our Savior.

I marvel at what President Nelson calls the “majesty of this moment” and express profound gratitude to the Lord for His work. I encourage us to stand tall as His disciples, eyewitnesses of the fulfillment of prophecy, both ancient and modern.

There are naysayers who shout, “Lo, here!” and ... “Lo, there!” just as they did in the Prophet Joseph Smith’s time. However, they are and will be but mere footnotes in this noble work. Remember the words of Joseph Smith: “No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, ... but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.”

In my assignments this year, I have had a front-row seat to the Lord hastening His work. The Church is building temples at an unprecedented pace, giving more members an opportunity to worship in the house of the Lord. Second, missionary work is gathering record numbers to the fold of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. And third, Church education in many configurations is at a new high in teaching those who “seek this Jesus.”

Today the Church has 367 temples in various stages of design, construction, or operation. And for what purpose? The answer is proclaimed on each temple: “Holiness to the Lord.” The temple opens the way to the highest blessings our Father in Heaven has for each one of us. Brothers and sisters, we are hastening our holiness as we live temple worthy, as we worship in the house of the Lord, and as we make covenants with God for ourselves and on behalf of our ancestors on the other side of the veil.

President Nelson has said: “The assaults of the adversary are increasing exponentially, in intensity and in variety. Our need to be in the temple on a regular basis has never been greater. I plead with you to take a prayerful look at how

lakini muhimu zaidi katika mioyo na maisha ya waumini wake. Sisi tunajulikana kama wanafunzi wa Yesu Kristo. Tunashiriki shuhuda zetu kuhusu Yeye, Kanisa Lake, njia Zake, na njia Yake ya agano. Sisi ni watu Wake, na Yeye ndiye Mwokozi wetu.

Ninastaajabishwa na kile Rais Nelson anakokiita “ukuu wa wakati huu” na kutoa shukrani kubwa kwa Bwana kwa kazi Yake. Ninawahimiza kusimama wima kama wanafunzi Wake, masha-hidi wanaona wa utimilifu wa unabii, wa kale na wa sasa.

Kuna wapinzani ambao wanapiga kelele, “Lo, huku!” na ... “Lo, kule!” kama walivyofanya wakati wa Nabii Joseph Smith. Hata hivyo, wao ni na watakuwa tu tanbihi katika kazi hii nzuri. Kumbuka maneno ya Joseph Smith: “Hakuna mkono usiofaa unaoweza kuzuia kazi kuendelea; Mateso yanaweza kuja kwa ghadhabu ... lakini ukweli wa Mungu utasonga mbele kwa ujasiri, uadilifu, na kwa uhuru, hadi utakapopenya kila bara, kufikia kila tabia nchi, kufagia kila nchi, na kusikika na kila sikio, hadi pale makusudi ya Mungu yatakapokamilishwa, na Yehova mkuu atakaposema kazi imekamilika.”

Katika majukumu yangu mwaka huu, nimekuwa mstari wa mbele kwenye “kuharakisha kazi Yake. Kanisa linajenga mahekalu kwa kasi isiyo na kifani, na kuwapa waumini fursa zaidi ya kuabudu katika nyumba ya Bwana. Pili, kazi ya ummisionari inakusanya idadi kubwa kwenye zizi la Mchungaji Mwema, Yesu Kristo. Na tatu, elimu ya Kanisa katika maumbo mengi na iko katika kiwango cha juu kipya kwa wale ambao “wanamtafuta Yesu huyu.”

Leo Kanisa lina mahekalu 367 katika hatua mbalimbali za usanifu, ujenzi, au utendaji. Na ni kwa lengo gani? Jibu linatangazwa kwenye kila hekalu: “Utakatifu kwa Bwana.” Hekalu linafungua njia ya baraka za juu zaidi ambazo Baba yetu wa Mbinguni anazo kwa kila mmoja wetu. Akina kaka na dada, tunaharakisha “utakatifu” wetu tunapokuwa wastahiki kuingia hekaluni, tunapoabudu katika nyumba ya Bwana, na tunapofanya maagano na Mungu kwa ajili yetu wenyewe na kwa niaba ya mababu zetu upande wa pili wa pazia.

Rais Nelson amesema: “Mashambulizi ya adui yanaongezeka kwa kasi, kwa ukubwa na kwa namna mbalimbali. Hitaji letu la kuwa hekaluni mara kwa mara halijawahi kuwa kubwa kama hivi leo. Ninawasihi mtazame kwa sala jinsi

you spend your time.”In His house we can feel the Lord’s hallowed presence and transcendent peace.

Last year I was privileged to preside at the dedication of the Mendoza Argentina Temple. In my message, I referred to Elder Melvin J. Ballard’s 1926 prophecy that the work of the Lord would grow slowly for a time in South America, “just as an oak grows slowly from an acorn. It will not shoot up in a day,” but thousands would join the Church, and the nations of South America would become “a power in the Church.”I saw that prophecy fulfilled right before my eyes.

Mendoza, once a small acorn, has become a mighty oak. That growth is being repeated across continents and isles of the sea.

We see the Lord hastening His work in missions. In 2024, 80,000 missionaries were serving in 450 missions. Thirty-six of those are new missions. Last year missionary work brought over 308,000 new members into the Church. More than numbers, the spirit of the gathering is bringing souls to Jesus Christ and His gospel.

I think of the Apostles Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, who in 1839 set off as missionaries to the British Isles. They were ill; they left families sick and destitute. Nevertheless, the two climbed into a wagon, and while still in sight of their loved ones, Heber said, “Let’s rise up and give them a cheer.” The two struggled to their feet and shouted, “Hurrah, hurrah for Israel.”

I saw that same enthusiasm for the Lord’s work in Lima, Peru, when I met with missionaries from the missionary training center and missions in Lima. What a sight! I saw the hastening right before my eyes. There are now seven missions in just the city of Lima.

At the end of our meeting, the missionaries had a special surprise for me. They rose up and cheered, “Hurrah for Israel.” I will never forget that moment; I wish all of you could have been there. Right before my eyes were missionaries who had set aside “the things of this world” to serve the Lord and help hasten His coming.

We see the Lord hastening educational opportunities for our members and even those not

mnavyotumia muda wenu.”Katika nyumba Yake, tunaweza kuhisi uwepo mtakatifu wa Bwana na amani ipitayo zote.

Mwaka uliopita nilipewa heshima ya kusimamia uwekaji wakfu Hekalu la Mendoza Argentina. Katika ujumbe wangu, nilirejelea unabii wa Mzee Melvin J. Ballard wa mwaka 1926 kwamba kazi ya Bwana kwa muda ingekua taratibu huko Amerika Kusini, “kama vile mwaloni unavyochipukia taratibu kutoka mbegu. Haitakuwa kubwa kwa,” lakini maelfu wangejiunga na Kanisa, na mataifa ya Amerika Kusini yangekuwa “nguvu katika Kanisa.”Niliona unabii huo unatimizwa mbele ya macho yangu.

Mendoza, awali ikiwa mbegu ndogo, imekuwa mwaloni mkubwa. Ukuaji huo unajirudia ulimwenguni kote na kwenye visiwa vya bahari.

Tunaona Bwana anaharakisha kazi Yake katika misheni. Katika mwaka 2024, wamisionari 80,000 walikuwa wanahudumu katika misheni 450. Thelathini na sita kati ya hizo ni misheni mpya. Mwaka jana huduma ya ummisionari ilileta waumini wapya Kanisani zaidi ya 308,000. Zaidi ya idadi, roho ya kukusanyika analeta nafsi kwa Yesu Kristo na injili Yake.

Ninafikiria juu ya Mitume Brigham Young na Heber C. Kimball, ambao mnamo 1839 walianza safari kama wamisionari kwenda Visiwa vya Uingereza. Walikuwa wagonjwa; waliacha familia zikiwa wagonjwa na maskini. Hata hivyo, wawili hao walipanda kwenye gari, na wakiwa bado mbele ya wapendwa wao, Heber alisema, “Wacha tuinuke na tuwape furaha.” Wawili hao walijitahidi kusimama na kupiga kelele, “Huree, huree kwa Israeli.”

Niliona shauku hiyo hiyo kwenye kazi ya Bwana huko Lima, Peru, nilipokutana na wamisionari kutoka Kituo cha Mafunzo ya Wamisionari na misheni huko Lima. Ni ya kupendeza kiasi gani! Niliona uharakishaji mbele ya macho yangu. Sasa kuna misheni saba katika jiji la Lima pekee.

Mwishoni mwa mkutano wetu, wamisionari walinishangaza. Waliinuka na kushangilia, “Huree kwa Israeli.” Sitaweza kusahau wakati huo; natamani iwapo ninyi nyote mngekuwepo pale. Mbele ya macho yangu walikuwa wamisionari ambao walikuwa wameweka kando “vitu vya ulimwengu huu” ili kumtumikia Bwana na kusaidia kuharakisha ujio Wake.

Tunamwona Bwana akiharakisha fursa za elimu kwa waumini wetu na hata wale wasio

of our faith around the world. One of the things that distinguishes us as a church is our emphasis on education. The Lord commanded in the early days of the Restoration to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith.” That is happening today and is worthy of a resounding “hurrah.”

Currently more than 800,000 students worldwide are enrolled in seminary and institute, the highest enrollment in the history of the Church. Our youth gather in a variety of ways, from early-morning, daytime, and evening classes to online and in-home study. They are a mighty and righteous battalion, gaining strength from each other as they learn of Jesus Christ, follow, and testify of Him as the Son of God.

Last fall I spoke at a devotional to an arena full of seminary and institute students and their parents at the University of Utah. Their attendance said much about their desire to know and follow Jesus Christ. My message to those students was clear: Give the Lord equal time. I counseled them to balance their studies with true higher learning, even a study of “the Son of the living God.”

I ask the same of everyone today: Whatever is on your to-do list, give equal time, not spare time, to the Lord in personal scripture study, family study of Come, Follow Me, prayer, Church callings, ministering, partaking of the sacrament, worshipping in the temple, and pondering the things of God. Our Lord and Savior has said, “Learn of me ... and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Take Him at His word. And give Him equal time.

President Nelson has said: “I plead with you to let God prevail in your life. Give Him a fair share of your time. As you do, notice what happens to your positive spiritual momentum.”

We see that momentum building at seminaries, institutes, and Church universities. In these environments, the Lord is a priority. So should He be in each one of our lives.

Another area that shows the growing reach of education in the Church is BYU–Pathway Worldwide. Across the world, enrollment has reached nearly 75,000 and continues to grow rap-

wa imani yetu ulimwenguni kote. Mojawapo ya vitu ambavyo hututofautisha sisi kama kanisa ni msisitizo wetu wa elimu. Bwana aliamuru katika siku za mwanzo wa Urejesho “kutafuta maarifa, hata kwa kujifunza na pia kwa imani.” Hiyo inatokea leo na inastahili “huree” kubwa.

Hivi sasa zaidi ya wanafunzi 800,000 ulimwenguni kote wameandikishwa katika seminari na chuo, uandikishaji wa juu zaidi katika historia ya Kanisa. Vijana wetu hukusanyika kwa njia mbalimbali, kuanzia madarasa ya asubuhi na mapema, wakati wa mchana, na madarasa ya jioni hadi mtandaoni na masomo ya nyumbani. Wao ni kikosi chenye nguvu na kitakatifu, waki-pata nguvu kutoka kwa kila mmoja wanapojifunza juu ya Yesu Kristo, kumfuata, na kushuhudia kuhusu Yeye kama Mwana wa Mungu.

Msimu uliopita nilizungumza kwenye ibada kwenye uwanja uliojaa wanafunzi wa seminari na chuo na wazazi wao katika Chuo Kikuu cha Utah. Mahudhurio yao yalisema mengi juu ya hamu yao ya kumjua na kumfuata Yesu Kristo. Ujumbe wangu kwa wanafunzi hao ulikuwa wazi: Mpe Bwana muda sawa. Niliwashauri kusawazisha masomo yao na elimu ya kweli mafunzo ya juu, hata mafunzo ya “Mwana wa Mungu aliye hai.”

Ninahimiza vivyo hivyo kwa kila mtu leo: Chochote kilicho kwenye orodha yako ya “kufanya”, toa muda sawa, sio muda wa ziada, kwa Bwana katika kujifunza maandiko kibinafsi, kujifunza Njoo, Unifuata, kama familia, sala, miito ya Kanisa, huduma, kushiriki sakramenti, kuabudu hekaluni, na kutafakari mambo ya Mungu. Bwana na Mwokozi wetu amesema, “Jifunzeni kwangu ... nanyi mtapata pumziko la nafsi zenu.” Muamini Yeye kwa neno Lake. Na Mpeni muda sawa.

Rais Nelson amesema: “Ninawasihi kumwacha Mungu ashinde katika maisha yenu. Mpe sehemu nzuri ya wakati wako. Unapofanya hivyo, tambua kile kinachotokea kwenye kasi yako chanya ya kiroho.”

Tunaona kasi hiyo ikiongezeka katika seminari, vyuo, na vyuo vikuu vya Kanisa. Katika mazingira haya, Bwana ni kipaumbele. Vivyo hivyo Yeye anapaswa kuwa katika maisha ya kila moja.

Eneo lingine ambalo linaonyesha kuongezeka kwa elimu katika Kanisa ni BYU–Pathway Worldwide. Ulimwenguni kote, uandikishaji umefikia karibu 75,000 na unaendelea kukua

idly. Most are members, and more than one-third are in Africa. Pathway is all about access to education. Completing the courses means access to employment, and access to employment means a better life for families and more opportunities to serve the Lord.

When I was meeting with stake leaders in Uganda, I learned that the entire stake presidency was enrolled in BYU-Pathway. The more prepared we are temporally and spiritually, the more we can thwart the adversary's cunning attacks. Remember the words of Peter: "The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

I recognize that in the midst of the good news of the gospel, there are those who struggle, who have faith challenges, doubts, and questions that seem to have no answers. Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is the answer. Start with Him. Look for His hand in your life. Listen to Him. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said in His last hours to His disciples before Gethsemane, before carrying His cross through the streets of Jerusalem, before Golgotha, where He completed His atoning sacrifice—what only He, the Begotten Son of God, could do.

Know that He understands. He took upon Himself all our sins, mistakes, misery, and very bad days that we might live again with our Father in Heaven in eternity. He has said, "Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not." Faith in Jesus Christ can lift you up and heal your wounded soul. Trust Him and you will hasten your return to "the arms of his love."

I emphasize again the words of our living prophet: "Do you see what is happening right before our eyes? I pray that we will not miss the majesty of this moment! The Lord is hastening His work." May we as disciples of our day shout, "Hurrah for Israel" as we prepare for the return of our Lord and Savior. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

haraka. Wengi ni waumini, na zaidi ya thelu-thi-moja wako Afrika. Pathway inahusu upatikanaji wa elimu. Kukamilisha kozi kunamaanisha kupata ajira, na upatikanaji wa ajira unamaanisha maisha bora kwa familia na fursa zaidi za kumtumikia Bwana.

Nilipokuwa nikikutana na viongozi wa kigingi nchini Uganda, nilijifunza kwamba urais mzima wa kigingi ulijiandikisha katika BYU-Pathway. Kadiri tunavyojiandaa kimwili na kiroho, ndivyo tunavyoweza kuzuia mashambulizi ya ujanja ya adui. Kumbuka maneno ya Petro: "Tbilisi, kama simba angurumaye, huzunguka-zunguka, akitafuta mtu ammeze."

Ninatambua kwamba katikati ya habari njema ya injili, kuna wale wanaosumbuka, ambao wana changamoto za imani, mashaka, na maswali ambayo yanaonekana hayana majibu. Akina kaka na dada, Yesu Kristo ni jibu. Anza na Yeye. Tafuta mkono Wake katika maisha yako. Msikilize Yeye. "Mioyo yenu isifadhaikie," Yeye aliwaambia wanafunzi Wake katika saa Yake ya mwisho kabla ya Gethsemane, kabla ya kubeba msalaba Wake katika mitaa ya Yerusalemu, mbele ya Golgota, ambapo Yeye alikamilisha dhambi Yake ya—upatanisho, kile ambacho Yeye tu, Mwana Pekee wa Mungu, angeweza kufanya.

Jua kwamba Yeye anaelewa. Yeye alichukua juu yake dhambi zetu zote, makosa, taabu, na siku mbaya sana ili tuweze kuishi tena na Baba yetu wa Mbinguni milele. Yeye alisema "Nitegemeeni katika kila wazo; msitie shaka, msilogope." Imani katika Yesu Kristo inaweza kukuinua kuponyafsi yako iliyojeruhiwa. Mtumaini Yeyena utaharakisha kurudi kwako kwenye "mikono ya upendo wake."

Ninasisitiza tena maneno ya nabii aliye hai: "Je, mnaona kinachotoke ambale ya macho yetu? Ninasali kwamba hatutakosa utukufu wa wakati huu! Bwana anaharakisha kazi Yake." Sisi kama wanafunzi wa siku zetu tupige kelele, "Huree kwa Israeli" tunapojiandaa kwa ajili ya kurudi kwa Bwana na Mwokozi wetu. Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.