



*a FEAST of*  
**FAT THINGS**

*by* SHARON EUBANK



s a young welfare worker in the Church Office Building, I came to know about President J. Reuben Clark, because emblazoned on a wall at the elevators where I read it every day was a statement of his:

*The real long term objective of the Welfare Plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers, rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them, and bringing to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this Church.<sup>1</sup>*

The nature of relief and development work is to be exposed to the unjust and disastrous circumstances that are like a killing frost to the potential “flower and fruitage” in human beings—the “finest down deep inside” people—so that they struggle even for survival.



*This address was given at the Annual JRCLS Fireside on January 24, 2020. Sharon Eubank is first counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency and director of Latter-day Saint Charities.*





THE LORD IS USING **REVOLUTIONS** TO OPEN UP  
LARGER AND WIDER **OPPORTUNITIES** FOR HIS CHILDREN  
TO **CONNECT** BACK TO HIM THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

Some of these things I have witnessed with my own eyes:

- ❁ The tragedy of 10-year-old boys and girls being sent to do menial work instead of to school.
- ❁ The heartbreak of a death when the doctors knew what to do but didn't have the medicine or equipment to do it.
- ❁ The loss of potential when three-year-old children don't get enough nutrition for their brains to develop higher cognitive function.
- ❁ The almost casual violence and abuse against people whose protection under the law is subverted in some way.

President Clark said that the mission, purpose, and reason for being of the Church of Jesus Christ is to build up the character of givers and receivers and, by so doing, rescue the finest parts of each of us. I believe that is part of the genius of the J. Reuben Clark Law Society, named in his honor. It organizes and motivates those who practice law to lend their expertise, faith, and experience to improve society in countless ways.

This year we are beginning two decades of commemorating the 200th anniversary of various events that are part of the Restoration of all things. The dispensation was ushered in dramatically in the spring of 1820 when Joseph Smith saw and spoke with God the Father and His Eternal Son, Jesus Christ. President M. Russell Ballard recently described, in an article printed in the January 2020 *Ensign*, some of the important ways “the Lord prepared the world for the Restoration.”<sup>2</sup> With a great debt to President Ballard, let me build on his thoughts and describe the revolutions and others still to come that are preparing the earth for the Second Coming. I personally resonate with the idea that the Lord is using revolutions to open up larger and wider opportunities for His children to connect back to Him through the gospel.

Before Jesus was born onto the earth, the gospel emphasis was on knowing the only true God and keeping His law; having a correct foreknowledge of the Messiah, who was to come; and protecting the records that taught His doctrine and prophesied of His coming. Once the Atonement was accomplished and the doctrine of Christ was established, then a series of powerful revolutions relentlessly began to open up ways for more and more children of God to hear about His plan and have the freedom to act for themselves in order to live that plan.

#### THE REVOLUTION OF THE DEAD

How many people would you estimate have ever lived on the earth? According to estimates by the Population Reference Bureau, it is approximately 108 billion. If 7.5 billion are alive right now, then somewhere around 100 billion people might be in the spirit world. Jesus's visit to the spirit world immediately after His Crucifixion was the opportunity to organize missionary work for those who had not known His gospel on the earth. It must have been a massive undertaking.

We have President Joseph F. Smith and his revelation in section 138 of the Doctrine and Covenants to thank for much of what we know, including an impressive list of men and

women who were there to greet the Savior when He arrived. From among those just and righteous spirits, He organized a missionary force to preach the gospel.<sup>3</sup>

It is impressed upon me how many more people the spirit world holds than the physical earth and how this stage of development frankly may be much more relevant for the 95 percent of the world's inhabitants who did not hear about Jesus Christ during their mortality. The revolution of the dead learning about Jesus Christ continually uses the exponential talents of all the prophets, apostles, missionaries, ministers, seers, mothers, and fathers in all periods of time. The scope of it is greater than I can imagine. Jesus Christ's atoning mission and that impressive, collective missionary force link the eras and families of Elohim's children, both living and dead, together into one great whole. Moroni and Malachi were right. Without this merciful concept, the whole earth would be "utterly wasted."<sup>4</sup>

### THE MANUSCRIPT REVOLUTION

President Ballard describes that the change from using cumbersome, labor-intensive tablets of stone, clay, or metal to using parchment or papyrus scrolls meant many more people could keep a record. These lighter-weight writing materials made it much easier

*for scribes to record God's words received through inspired prophets and apostles. Using these writing materials, many countless and unknown scribes diligently copied, transmitted, and preserved sacred writings in multiple copies so that the flames of faith were never extinguished.<sup>5</sup>*

The standard works of scripture that sit on our night tables or on our phones represent an untold wealth of sacred riches.

### THE PRINTING REVOLUTION

President Ballard goes on to say:

*Gutenberg was an instrument in the Lord's hand to increase knowledge, understanding, and religious faith in the world. His [press in c. 1440] ignited a printing revolution that changed the world forever by facilitating the wide circulation of ideas and information that became "agents of change."*

*Scholars estimate that about 30,000 books existed in Europe at the time Gutenberg published the Bible on his printing press. Within 50 years after his invention, more than 12 million books were found in Europe.*

*The Protestant Reformation utilized Gutenberg's invention to spread its ideas and to bring the Bible to the common people in ways that no one of an earlier generation ever could have imagined.<sup>6</sup>*

### THE LITERACY AND TRANSLATION REVOLUTION

*The printing revolution fed and was fed by an increase in literacy and a growing thirst among the common people of Europe to read the sacred words of scripture in their own languages.*

*... For centuries many Europeans learned about the Bible mainly through sermons given by priests.*

*But in the 15th and 16th centuries, religious reformers created new Bible translations in the common languages of Europe.*

William Tyndale and others gave their lives in this revolutionary cause. The result was that, by 1800,

*most families, including that of Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith, owned a Bible and read from it on a regular basis. In fact, many people learned to read by hearing it read at home and by studying it themselves.<sup>7</sup>*



*A page of the 42-line Gutenberg Bible printed in 1455.*



## COMMUNICATION INNOVATIONS

TELEVISION, INTERNET, SMARTPHONES,  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE HAVE WORKED TO  
LANGUAGE, AND ACCESS FOR EVEN THE  
OF THE EARTH.

### THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

Many of the earlier revolutions described above

*prepared the way for political and technological revolutions that swept across Europe and the Americas between the 17th and 19th centuries. The changing political climate in Europe and America gave people greater freedom to choose their own religious path.<sup>8</sup>*

Religious freedom and individual rights were protected under law, and this directly prepared the groundwork for the Restoration with Joseph Smith in the United States.

### THE TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION

As the Lord promised in Joel 2:28, as truth began to be restored, He also began to “pour out [His] spirit upon all flesh,” including upon those who were prepared to dream of new transportation, medical, and communication technologies that would move His Restoration forward in dramatic ways.

*As the Lord raised up His Prophet, He inspired men and women to invent technologies, such as canals, telegraphs, railroads, and steam engines, so the gospel could go forth to all the world.*

*In countless other ways, the Lord prepared the world for the Restoration of His gospel to bless individuals, families, communities, nations, and the world.<sup>9</sup>*

Medical advances have eradicated diseases, tamed pain, extended life, and mitigated disabilities. Communication innovations in the form of radio, television, internet, smartphones, machine translation, and artificial intelligence have worked to overcome distance, language, and access for even the most remote and poor people of the earth. All these advancements came so the gospel could go forth to all the world.

### THE TEMPLE REVOLUTION

In 1963, when I was born, there were 12 operating temples. Now there are 187 temples dedicated, being renovated, or under construction. Announced temples bring the number to 225.<sup>10</sup> That means 213 temples have been built or announced since I was born. And 122 of these temples have been established during the last 20 years. The facts surrounding these temples

are astonishing to me: That the Church has the funding to build them. Miracle. That the Church has the people to be the presidents, matrons, recorders, and workers. Miracle. That the world is peaceful and accepting enough to let them be built. Miracle.

Millions of ordinances each year flow from these temples. The work is fed by the genealogy, family history, and a records preservation revolution largely facilitated by nonmembers of the Church who feel the spirit of Elijah. Unprecedented. This is priesthood work being done quietly by priestly people—as Moses once envisioned.<sup>11</sup> I don’t believe the world has ever before had a million men, women, and children who hold active temple recommends. I won’t guess at what the exact number is today, but the standard of sacrifice, consecration, morality, and obedience to God’s laws that this statistic represents is revolutionary in my mind.

President Lorenzo Snow looked into the future and said, “The time will come when there will be temples established over every portion of the land, and we will go into these temples and work for our kindred dead night and day.”<sup>12</sup> Fascinatingly, he said this in 1899, when there were only four temples. We have truly lived through this temple revolution in our own lifetimes.

## THE MAN/WOMAN REVOLUTION

The world has rarely been free from tension, patriarchy, and abuse within the absolutely essential relationship between men and women. There may have been only brief stints of true interdependence between God’s daughters and sons that have occurred during the history of the earth, but it is God’s true pattern, His way, and He is restoring it, too, to the earth so that men and women can finally build Zion together. This is what the temple revolution heralds. The pattern is taught within temples. Zion can be accomplished only by men and women, each with his or her gifts and powers, working cooperatively together.

President Russell M. Nelson made a bold declaration when he said: “The women of this dispensation are distinct . . . because this dispensation is distinct from any other. This distinction brings both privileges and responsibilities.” And then he extended an invitation to the women of this dispensation: “Take your rightful and needful place in your home, in your community, and in the kingdom of God—more than you ever have before.”<sup>13</sup>

In 1842, as Joseph Smith was contemplating the building of the Nauvoo Temple, he knew its function would be different from the Kirtland Temple’s and that he needed to prepare both the brothers and the sisters for the specific ordinances and roles that would be revealed. Joseph, at the founding of Relief Society, “turned the key” to the women and organized the Relief Society under a priesthood pattern to function in concert with the quorums in the work of salvation and exaltation. He said:

*I now turn the key to you in the name of God and this Society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time—this is the beginning of better days, to this Society.*<sup>14</sup>

I wondered if that could be documented. Was the founding of Relief Society really “the beginning of better days”? Without exhaustive research, the following two charts show some events before 1842 and after. The first chart shows some limited legal progress in isolated locations. The second shows the march toward universal suffrage between 1848 and 1920.

### 150 YEARS BEFORE THE FOUNDING OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY IN 1842

1689	Friesland, Netherlands: Female landowners vote in rural elections.
1718	Sweden: Female taxpaying members of city guilds are allowed to vote in local city and national elections.
1734	Sweden: Female taxpaying property owners of legal majority are allowed to vote in local countryside elections.
1755	Corsica: Female suffrage is granted in the independent republic’s diet.
1756	Uxbridge, Massachusetts, USA: One woman is allowed to vote in a town meeting.
1776	New Jersey, USA: Property owners are allowed to vote regardless of race or sex.
1838	Pitcairn Islands (pop. 194): Women are extended the vote.

IN THE FORM OF RADIO,

MACHINE TRANSLATION, AND

OVERCOME DISTANCE,

MOST REMOTE AND POOR PEOPLE

80 YEARS AFTER THE FOUNDING OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY IN 1842

1842	Nauvoo, Illinois, USA: The Relief Society is organized.
1848	Seneca Falls, New York, USA: Susan B. Anthony holds a national convention pushing for suffrage.
1861	South Australia: Property-owning women may vote.
1862	Sweden and Finland: Women may vote in local elections.
1869	United Kingdom: Single women may vote in local elections.
1869	Wyoming, USA: Full suffrage is extended to women.
1870	Incorporated Utah Territory, USA: Full suffrage is extended to women.
1888	United States: A constitutional amendment for suffrage and the right to hold office is proposed.
1893	New Zealand: The first self-governing colony to give all women right to vote, but women could not stand for election.
1894	South Australia and United Kingdom: Suffrage is granted to some women.
1895	South Australia: The first place in the world to allow women to stand for election; none did.
1896	Utah and Idaho, USA: Suffrage is reestablished upon gaining statehood.
1902	Australia (all provinces): Women are given the vote in federal elections, the same as men.
1906	Finland: The first country in Europe to give women the vote and the right to stand for parliament.
1907	Finland: The first female members of parliament in the world are elected.
1908	Denmark: Women may vote in local elections.
1910–15	Western United States, Norway, and Denmark: The franchise is extended to women.
1917	Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania: Women are given the vote.
1918	United Kingdom: All women over 30 may vote.
1919	Sweden and many other countries: Universal franchise is given.
1920	United States: A constitutional amendment allows women full suffrage.

President George Albert Smith confirmed as much when he said:

*When the Prophet Joseph Smith turned the key for the emancipation of womankind, it was turned for all the world, and from generation to generation the number of women who can enjoy the blessings of religious liberty and civil liberty has been increasing.<sup>15</sup>*

The Relief Society’s purpose is to build faith in Jesus Christ, strengthen the resilience of families, and offer relief from illness, poverty, doubt, ignorance, and anything “that hinders the joy and progress of woman.”<sup>16</sup>

I believe the world has not yet seen the full fruition of what can be accomplished when men and women work interdependently and without structural barriers to improve circumstances. The J. Reuben Clark Law Society members have many opportunities—with your unique professional and spiritual expertise—to bring solutions and resources to the circumstances that affect men and women, families, and communities. This revolution is grounded in good secular law and in priesthood power. You play a part in both.

## THE ZION REVOLUTION

Finally, I speak about the revolution that creates Zion. This stage will be difficult and messy because Satan uses all these revolutions for his own twists and misery. Pollution from technologies engulfs the earth. Filth, debasement, and inhuman acts are communicated to every remote corner of the earth. Politics falls into brute violence as human rights are violated for power. As opposition increases toward the end of the earth, the polarization will grow stark. Either you believe in God or you do not. Either you are willing to work in harmony with others or you are not. Either you will keep the rule of law for the good of society or you will not. Zion will be built by those who are willing to unify their hearts and minds for peaceful progress, dwell in obedience to law, and eradicate all kinds of poverty. Everything outside of that will eventually destroy itself.

Latter-day Saint Charities, the collective humanitarian efforts of Latter-day Saints themselves, is striving through both givers and receivers to unify hearts and minds for peaceful progress and to address issues of poverty. Its work, essentially, is to help lay the foundation stones of a Zion society. This would include sharing expertise freely so we can be of “one mind,” working side by side with others very different from us so we can be “of one heart,” keeping the laws of heaven and earth so we can “[dwell] in righteousness,” and building up our characters so there will be “no poor among [us].”<sup>17</sup>

President Nelson describes the work of all of these revolutions in his own vocabulary. He calls it gathering Israel “on both sides of the veil.”<sup>18</sup>

We have been talking about revolutions at the macro level, but let me give two examples of what they might look like at the micro level.

The first story is of the Hernandez family. They had gathered at Griffith Park near Los Angeles on Easter for a picnic. They were enjoying the day, when 13-year-old Jesse and some of his cousins went exploring. They found an unlocked shed, went inside, and—in the way boys sometimes do—began jumping on boards to see if they would break. Suddenly, the boards broke apart, and Jesse disappeared into a hole. The cousins screamed his name, but all they could hear was running water. Jesse had fallen into an open sewer pipe and was being swept along the network of interlinking tunnels underneath Los Angeles.

His parents called 911, and first responders tried to figure out how fast Jesse might be traveling and in which direction he might have gone. They worked for hours with no success. Someone had the idea to tape GoPro cameras onto floats and put them into the tunnels to see if they could see any telltale sign of which way Jesse went. As the hours went by, many despaired that Jesse could still be alive in the stinking water.

*Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti holds a press conference on the rescue of Jesse Hernandez.*



Suddenly, someone thought they could see the barest hint of four finger marks on the side of a pipe wall in one of the tunnels. They did some math to calculate where Jesse might physically be if he had indeed gone down that pipe. They had to shut down the Los Angeles freeway and open up access to the sewer system. They hoped to somehow catch him as he swept by, but when they opened up the cover and shined a powerful light inside, there was Jesse. He had wedged his foot into a seam as the water and sewage flowed up and over him and was praying someone would rescue him. They lowered a rope and pulled him out. They washed him off with a fire hose and handed him a cell phone. He called his mother and said, in the way only a 13-year-old boy can manage, “Mom, I’m alive. Come pick me up.”<sup>19</sup>

The odds of rescue were not in Jesse’s favor, but the dedication, innovation, and refusal to give up of the people who loved and cared about him made all the difference in the end.

All of the revolutions I have been describing are being orchestrated by the One who loves us and will not give up on us. No matter how much sewage we have fallen into, Jesus Christ is there as a first responder to rescue us and pull us back up. And, like Him, we can be enlisted to help pull up others out of the holes they have fallen into. The points of the printing, literacy, technology, temple, and Zion revolutions are all the same: to guide us to Jesus Christ, who can bring us home to our Heavenly Parents.

The second example comes from a video made in Thailand in which a young man goes about living his regular, everyday life.<sup>20</sup> He places a dying plant under a drain spout. He helps lift a heavy burden for a worker. He shares his meal with a dog. He responds to a parent’s desire for her child to go to school. He leaves fruit anonymously for a neighbor who doesn’t get out. He gives up his seat in a hot, crowded bus to a woman who is standing. Imagine that every simple act he performs represents some application of the rule of law.

He personally does not benefit from any of these acts in that he won’t be made partner, his arguments won’t be shown on TV, and he will still be anonymous and not famous. What he does receive are relationships. He is a witness to happiness. He reaches a deeper understanding of the divine. He feels love and receives what money cannot buy. This is revolutionary on the human level—person to person. Following the example of Jesus Christ to serve God and serve others changes everything.

There are literally millions of lawyers in the world. The American Bar Association reports that in the last 10 years, the number of attorneys in the United States has grown by 15.2 percent.<sup>21</sup>

But how many men and women of the law are committed to the revolutions I have described? How many will not bend to personal interest and corruption? How many have made their vows in a holy temple to obey and consecrate so there will be “no poor among [us]”?

The scriptures teach that the great outcome of our mortal experience is to develop a deeper connection to God, our Father, and Jesus Christ and also a deeper connection to each other. Jesus said, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”<sup>22</sup> So the question that was asked in the Grand Council in Heaven is relevant to each one of us: “Whom shall I send?”<sup>23</sup> Every day you see resources that aren’t connected, children who aren’t in school, neighbors who don’t function as they should, and people who are standing who should be sitting. The question whispers, and sometimes rings out, “Whom shall I send?” Let it be you. Let it be me.

I began tonight with a look at two millennia of history to lift our vision to what is going on around us that is truly of lasting importance. President Dallin H. Oaks reinforced this idea when he said in 1991:

*The most important idea for any of us is that this life, with all its advantages and disadvantages, is only temporary. It is part of a larger whole. Our challenge is to develop the perspectives to realize and the strength to act upon the realization that the really important achievements of this life are those that carry enduring, favorable consequences for the eternities to come.*<sup>24</sup>



BRADLEY STADE

THE POINTS OF THE PRINTING, LITERACY,  
TECHNOLOGY, TEMPLE, AND ZION REVOLUTIONS  
ARE ALL THE SAME: TO **GUIDE** US TO  
JESUS CHRIST, WHO CAN BRING US **HOME**  
TO OUR HEAVENLY PARENTS.

Let me close with this passage from Doctrine and Covenants 58. It is my testimony; it is the foundation I have staked all my intellectual, spiritual, and physical desires on. If you have heard me say it before, I hope you will hear it a hundred more times.

*Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.*

*For after much tribulation come the blessings. . . .*

*Remember this, which I tell you before, that you may lay it to heart, and receive that which is to follow.*

*. . . For this cause I have sent you—that you might be obedient, and that your hearts might be prepared to bear testimony of the things which are to come;*

*And also that you might be honored in laying the foundation, and in bearing record of the land upon which the Zion of God shall stand;*

*And also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor; yea, a feast of fat things . . . ;*

*Yea, a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited.*

*First, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble;*

*And after that cometh the day of my power; then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come. . . .*

*And that the testimony might go forth from Zion. . . .*

*Yea, for this cause I have sent you.<sup>25</sup>*

May the revolutionary work of Jesus Christ be in our hearts and minds every day. May the J. Reuben Clark Law Society fulfill its mission to be a light unto the nations. And may the Holy Ghost point clearly to the things each of us can do to prepare “a feast of fat things” for Zion is my prayer. [cm](#)

#### NOTES

1 J. Reuben Clark Jr., “Special Meeting of Stake Presidents,” Oct. 2, 1936.

2 M. Russell Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World for the Restoration,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2020.

3 See Doctrine and Covenants 138:38–47, 49, 53.

4 Doctrine and Covenants 138:48 and JS—H 1:39; see also JS—H 1:36–39.

5 Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World.”

6 Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World.”

7 Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World.”

8 Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World.”

9 Ballard, “How the Lord Prepared the World.”

10 Six additional temples were announced in the October 2020 general conference. See “Temple Statistics,” [churchofjesuschristtemples.org](http://churchofjesuschristtemples.org)

11 See Exodus 19:1–8; Doctrine and Covenants 110:6–11.

12 Lorenzo Snow, “Discourse by President Lorenzo Snow,” *Millennial Star* 35, vol. 61 (Aug. 31, 1899): 546.

13 Russell M. Nelson, “A Plea to My Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015.

14 Joseph Smith, “Discourse, 28 April 1842, as Reported by Eliza R. Snow,” in *Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book*, 40, [josephsmithpapers.org](http://josephsmithpapers.org).

15 George Albert Smith, “Address to the Members of the Relief Society,” *Relief Society Magazine* 32, no. 12 (Dec. 1945): 717; see also Belle S. Spafford,

“Latter-day Saint Women in Today’s Changing World,” in Jennifer Reeder and Kate Holbrook, eds., *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2017), 189.

16 John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations: Aids to Faith in a Modern Day*, vol. 1, arr. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1943), 245.

17 Moses 7:18.

18 Russell M. Nelson, in R. Scott Lloyd, “Book of Mormon: Gathering Israel, Preparing for Second Coming,” *Church News, Ensign*, Apr. 2013.

19 “After 12 Hours in LA Sewer, Teen Calls Mom: ‘I’m Alive. Come Pick Me Up,’” *CBS News*, Apr. 3, 2018, [cbsnews.com/news/jesse-herandez-teen-rescued-los-angeles-sewer-calls-mom-im-alive-come-pick-me-up](http://cbsnews.com/news/jesse-herandez-teen-rescued-los-angeles-sewer-calls-mom-im-alive-come-pick-me-up).

20 “Unsung Hero,” Official TVC 2014: Thai Life Insurance, Apr. 3, 2014, [youtu.be/uaWA2GbcnJU](http://youtu.be/uaWA2GbcnJU).

21 See “New ABA Data Reveals Rise in Number of U.S. Lawyers, 15 Percent Increase Since 2008,” May 11, 2018, *ABA News*, [americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2018/05/new\\_aba\\_data\\_reveals](http://americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2018/05/new_aba_data_reveals).

22 Matthew 22:40.

23 Abraham 3:27.

24 Dallin H. Oaks, “Values,” *Clark Memorandum*, Spring 1991, 15.

25 Doctrine and Covenants 58:3–11, 13–14.

