

the Lord, the mind of the Lord, and the purposes of the Lord have been announced through his servants to whom we have listened.

The Lord is with this people. He has not forsaken them because the Prophet Joseph was slain. He has not forsaken this work because the Prophet's successors have passed away. He will not forsake this work, though those who preside now may die; and those who lead Israel today will no doubt pass away in due time when their work is accomplished. But this work will go on and endure; it will increase, as it has done; it will spread over the borders into the states and territories that surround us, and our neighbors will love us and bless us, and will seek after us. They will appreciate the people who belong to this Church; for they are a good people, as a rule. They love righteousness, they are honest, upright and virtuous; they are ready and willing to do what God requires; they are His servants and handmaidens, and are not easily shaken in their faith, thank the Lord! Never mind what occurs; never mind what my weaknesses are, nor what anybody's weaknesses are; do not trouble about any mistakes that may be made. Remember that the Lord makes no mistakes. Men make mistakes, but God never does. He knows what is right and proper. He knows what should be done, and how and when it should be done; and He leads His Church and people gently along, and will lead them unto salvation.

This is my testimony to you, my brethren and sisters, after I have been away from you three years. Oh! how I have rejoiced when I have heard and read of the prosperity of Zion, and felt the spirit of Zion. With all the changes that have been made, I have been able to recognize that the Lord is here. It makes no difference what changes may come, the Lord never changes. He is here, and you are His sons and daughters. He has inspired you, and He would inspire you many times more if you would put yourselves in condition to receive more of His Spirit.

I pray the Lord to bless you. It is hard for me to talk so loud and to such a large congregation, and I shall have to cease; I pray the Lord to bless Israel and the leaders of Israel. I pray the Lord to stay with us by His Spirit and never forsake us; for in Him we have strength and power, wisdom and judgment, and He will control and guide us. He will bless these men who are called to stand at the head of stakes; He will bless our sisters who stand at the head of associations; He will pour out His Spirit on them; He will remember the mothers who take care of the households, and who train their children in the way of life and salvation; and He will bless all the families of the Saints. God will be with us and sustain us. I thank Him for the measure of His Spirit that we enjoy today in this splendid Tabernacle. God bless Israel forever, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir then sang, "Who Are These Arrayed in White," the duet part being rendered by Mrs. Bessie Browning and William Phillips.

ELDER BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS.

Christ a revelation of God to man—Pre-existence and immortality of man.

Very much to my surprise I have been called upon to address this splendid congregation. In my own heart I could wish that the task had been assigned to another; for I do not believe that any man can stand before a congregation of this kind without feeling his own unworthiness and his own limitations, which make him sense the truth that he is not sufficient for the task. So I feel on this occasion that if I can bring my own heart and soul into atune with the Infinite, and can receive the help that comes from the possession of the Spirit of the Lord, then, my brethren and sisters, something of profit, something uplifting in its nature, something that tends to strengthen faith and to increase knowledge, may be brought forth.

As the brethren who have preceded me this day, so I will exalt the Lord

in your presence. When I think of man, of his weaknesses and limitations, I truly feel the need of turning to our Father and bringing Him forth, together with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as the center of our faith and the circumference of our hope. This morning the President and Brother Lund brought forth a beautiful theme suggested by this day, commonly accepted as the anniversary of the Resurrection of the Lord. While it is common to deal with a great variety of subjects in these general conferences—and indeed the necessities of the people require the consideration of a variety of subjects—I think it is well and in harmony with the whole atmosphere of our work, and of this day, to devote thought to the Lord Jesus Christ; to speak of Him and honor Him in our hearts, and be put in remembrance of Him and the great atonement He has wrought out for the children of men. Believing this subject to be worthy of our consideration, it has occurred to me that I could not do better than to read to you some items from His history, as told in that beautiful simple manner in which it is contained in the Scriptures. I read to you from the Gospel of Matthew:

“In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre (in which the Lord had lain).

“And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

“His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow;

“And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.”

These keepers, you will perhaps remember, were appointed to watch the sepulchre at the suggestion of the Jewish Priests, lest the disciples of Jesus should come by night and steal away the body of the Lord, and then report that he had risen from the dead; for they remembered that it had been part of one of his discourses that though he should be crucified he would arise from the dead on the third day. Recalling

this, the Sanhedrin inspired the appointment of certain men to watch the sepulchre, lest his body should be stolen.

“And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

“And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

“And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

“And as they went to tell his disciples behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him.

“Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethern that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

“Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all things that were done.

“And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

“Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.”

It must have been indeed a large reward that these hypocrites and liars gave to the soldiers, for a Roman soldier to go to sleep at his post on duty was a capital offense. But mark this:

“And if this come to the governor’s ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

“So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

“And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

I think that is a beautiful chapter

worthy of all acceptance. Every effort for effect, all the tricks and cunning of so-called skillful writing, are absent, and the truth is stated in that form which best becomes her—in simplicity and modesty. I read this chapter that we may enter into its spirit, and have it recall to our minds the great truths relating to this part of the life of our Savior and Redeemer.

I rejoiced this afternoon in the reading by President Lyman from the words of the Third Nephi, wherein the advent of the Savior into this western world is proclaimed, and where so explicitly and plainly the great truths and ordinances of salvation are set forth. And as he read I recalled the fact that audiences in this city have been listening recently to criticisms of the book in the Book of Mormon known as "Third Nephi," and the question has been discussed whether or not it is entitled to be considered a "fifth gospel." You know we have the history of Messiah's birth, life and ministry in four books in the Jewish scriptures, and this III Nephi gives an account of his ministry on this hemisphere; and as I say, the question has been discussed as to whether it is to be considered a "fifth gospel." By the way, partly in objection, it has been stated that it contains no new truth; that it is unlike the gospels in the Jewish Scriptures in this, that while Mark adds something to what Matthew has said, and Luke adds something to what Mark has said, and the gospel according to St. John is generally considered the supplementary gospel by way of pre-eminence, because it adds so much that the others have omitted; but it is claimed that the Third Book of Nephi or the "fifth gospel," adds nothing to Christian knowledge concerning salvation. They are very much mistaken. The passage which Elder Lyman read here this afternoon would put to silence several very great controversies throughout Christendom if men would but accept that "fifth gospel." This remark, however, is merely by the way.

I come back to the anniversary that

we celebrate on this day—the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am glad that there are so many millions this day rejoicing in this one great truth of the Christian religion—the fact of the resurrection of the dead; the hope of immortality, which it teaches to mankind. The various sects of Christendom may be in error in relation to many things, and in error concerning some matters pertaining to this fact of the resurrection; but I rejoice that through all the apostasy from the true religion of Jesus Christ this one part of the Gospel remains in the minds and hearts of so many people, and is with them a hope and an inspiration to higher and to better living. When the Church as an organization ceased to exist; when, as we may say, that glorious sun set behind the horizon of man's vision, it did leave, at least, some lights in the sky that reflected some portions of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The dispensation of the gospel, which we call the dispensation of the meridian of time, because that dispensation was given about midway between the commencement of the work of the Lord in this world by the creation of Adam, and the final winding up scene which shall complete the salvation of men and the redemption of the world—I say that that dispensation of the Gospel, occurring midway between these two great events, was glorious in many respects. It was glorious in this for one thing—it brought forth a full and complete revelation of God through the person and character of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, in addition to the work of redemption that He wrought out for mankind, Jesus Christ stood forth as the revealed Deity, as God manifested in the flesh, the revelation of God to man; so that henceforth all the mists that befog philosophy, all the errors of science falsely so called, all the mystery that Paganism had interwoven with this theme, might stand remove from the vision of man, and henceforth God should be known not only as to the fact of His being, but also as to the kind of being He is. It was the design

of the Lord that man henceforth should see divinity—God revealed through the person and character of Jesus Christ. And that truth remains in the earth; it is a standard by which we may measure the teachings of any who shall come proclaiming Deity. Does he measure up, and is He identical with Jesus of Nazareth, the revelation of God to man? If not, then we know that teacher who so fails is in error; for as Jesus Christ is in His resurrected immortal body of flesh and bone—as Jesus Christ is in His mental, moral and spiritual nature, so God is.

Now, that truth came forth in its fullness in the dispensation of the meridian of time, and also this splendid truth which is having such an influence in the hearts of men—the resurrection of the dead. The great truth that man must live, and live eternally; that he is and will be, in his resurrected personage, an indestructible being. Running parallel with that great truth is this other truth, that he must school himself to live in harmony with truth as God reveals it. The sooner he learns that lesson the sooner will he be in the way of perpetual and eternal happiness. He must conform to law, for it is universal and infinite. It is everywhere operating. Man cannot escape it. Observance of the law will bring him happiness and peace, and he will find himself in harmony with all the infinities through obedience to law.

These are some of the splendid truths of our common Christian heritage, and I am very happy that there are so many millions who participate with us, in part at least, in a knowledge of these great things.

During the remarks of our President this morning I was reflecting upon the subject of the resurrection of the Savior, and of the many congregations that would assemble to do Him honor this day, and I thought, what is it that we have to offer the world that they do not now possess? For, in their misconception of this latter-day work, men have narrowed it down until they miss the really fundamental truths upon which the Church of Christ in these last days is based, and fail to grasp

the genius of this great work, just as it has been explained to us by Elder Lyman, that they misconceive the bond that unites us, the force that impels us to united action and makes us, by way of pre-eminence the united people. And this thought came to my mind in connection with the resurrection, namely, that we have such a fullness of the truth, that we believe not only in the immortality of man after his resurrection, but we believe in the absolute immortality of the intelligence that is within him. That is to say, we believe in an immortality that has no beginning, just as we believe in an immortality that has no end. Any thing short of this is not immortality. John begins his Gospel with a very beautiful preface, which I will read to you. I think, by the way, that he wrote it because when he composed his gospel pagan ideas had begun to creep into the Church. The philosophy of Plato, which was the rage in that day, had taken possession of the minds of the people. Plato, by the way, had seized upon some great truths, and among others he had grasped, at least in part, the meaning of man's immortality, the pre-existence and the indestructibility of man's spirit. So I think, with this in mind, and in order to state the truth exactly to the followers of Jesus, John started this beautiful preface of his Gospel by saying:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

Later on he said:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

This last verse identifies Jesus Christ with "the Word." "The Word" that was with God, that was God, and that was made flesh, was the Lord Jesus Christ. This statement of John's in the

preface of his gospel, has reference of course to the pre-existent spirit of Jesus and to the estate in which He lived, moved, and had a tangible being with the Father; and so like the Father's spirit that we may say He was of the same substance with the Father. In the Christian world, belief in the eternity of the Lord Jesus Christ is a doctrine quite generally accepted. But "Mormonism" has a word to speak in this connection for all the children of men. For while the pre-existence of the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is a great truth, there is a still greater truth to proclaim, and that greater truth is part of the message that "Mormonism" has to deliver to the world.

In a revelation given in 1833 to the Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord Jesus says:

"And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the first-born;"

Now mark you:

"Ye" [meaning the Elders whom He addressed]—"ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is spirit, even the spirit of truth," . . .

"Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

"All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also, otherwise there is no existence.

"Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man, because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

"And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation.

"For man is spirit."

Man is not so much lime, phosphate, and other gross materials, but man is spirit; and was, like Jesus, in the beginning with the Father. Intelligences are begotten spirits, and they partake of the nature of him who begets them. Paul says: "We have had Fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?" There is this difference, I think, between a

created thing and a begotten personage: A created thing may not partake of the nature of him who creates it; as for instance, the vessel, constructed and put forth into the sea under the cunning hands of the shipwright, does not partake of the nature of its creator; but if the shipwright shall beget a son, he imparts to him of his own nature, and the offspring in a general way is like him who begets it. So when we speak of God creating man we ought to make this distinction. God begets intelligences, spirits, and these spirits, male and female, partake of the nature of God. Intelligence itself is uncreated, self-existent; and these spirits begotten in the world where God dwells are afterwards begotten men and women here in the flesh, to follow still further in the footsteps of their Father.

This is the great truth which I referred to a moment since that Mormonism has to offer to the world. It is a principle that was unknown to men in our generation until it was revealed through God's chosen servant in these last days, the Prophet Joseph Smith. We carry this message in our right hand to the world. We not only tell men of the immortality that shall be after the resurrection, but we tell them of the immortality that existed before their earth-life began. The mists that shroud the origin of man and that perplex the philosophers are pushed away, and behold! we look into a beginningless past, as we look forward into an endless future. Beginnings can only be of a local nature, and this beginning spoken of here when Jesus was "in the beginning with the Father," and when your spirits and mine were "in the beginning with the Father," has reference only to things pertaining to this mortal life of ours, and this earth upon which we live, and does not refer to duration apart from these local events about which we talk; and concerning which, in order to be understood, we have to speak of in terms that are sometimes in themselves paradoxical. As Brother Lyman taught us this afternoon, duration itself is beginningless and endless, just as matter is exhaust-

less, and cannot be created and cannot be annihilated. It can only be changed in form to meet the purposes of God as He designs the development and growth of His universe.

We take then this truth to the world, the truth of the eternal existence of man's intelligence. And what will be the moral effect of the announcement of such a doctrine? A spiritual awakening. We had not known, neither had our fathers known, until it pleased God to reveal it, whence man's origin; but now we begin to recognize man's importance in the world. We begin to realize that his intelligence, the spirit, exists upon the self same principle upon which God exists. We speak of God as a self-existent being, and the doctrine is true. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that man also was a self-existent being, of the same nature as his Father. I say the moral effect of that truth in the world will yet beget a spiritual uplifting the like of which has not been known in the ages that are past.

I was pleased to hear the hopeful notes in the words of our Brother Lyman, whom we are as glad to see among us as he is to see us, and it is with warm hearts and welcome hands that we hail his return. After being faithful, sturdy, and true as he has been while abroad, he now returns to us, and we bid him a hearty welcome in this general conference. Let me be your mouthpiece in saying to him, Welcome, Brother Lyman! I say I am pleased to see the hopeful note in his words concerning the acceptance of this people and their doctrines by the world. Many tens of thousands will yet receive these truths, perhaps not directly from your hands nor from mine; but already, as leaven in measures of meal are these principles working, and light is bursting upon the intelligence of the children of men, and they will yet lay hold of these great fundamental truths of ours; either directly or indirectly, and so shall this work push its way among the nations of the earth, until our Father's children (for all the inhabitants of the earth are His children as well as we are) shall lay hold

of these truths, and ultimately be brought to an acceptance of a fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I love Mormonism. I love it because it is true—because it is the fullness of truth. And then I rejoice in its bigness, in its grandeur. I love its spirit of liberality, as manifested here in the words of the brethren at this conference. I love it because its roots run down deep into the great things of God, and it is as a tree well planted, that the winds which beat upon it shall only help by driving its roots deeper into the soil, spreading further to right and left, establishing itself as a tree of God's planting, under whose friendly branches there is room for all who will come unto it; and whose very leaves are sufficient for the healing of the nations.

Mormonism has a word of hope for scattered Israel; it has a word of hope for the poor, wandering Lamanite, the fallen son of noble sires, the degenerate remnant of a once magnificent people. The Gentiles, in their pride, look upon him and despise him. They see his footsteps hastening towards what they regard as utter extinction. But we arrest their sneers by proclaiming the word of God that there is hope even for this apparently helpless race, and Laman shall yet be remembered by the Lord; He is under covenant to do it. The fathers of old prayed in behalf of their posterity, and God heard and promised, and the children shall yet be blessed.

We have a word of hope also for Judah, the outcast, the one people against whom every man's hand has been raised, and who have been persecuted in ages past and now by those who pretend to be followers of Jesus Christ, who Himself was of this same Jewish race. Does it not seem strange that those who have taken upon them the name of Christ should be the most bitter persecutors of His race! But we have a word of hope for Judah. We are authorized of God to say to our Jewish brethren, that Jerusalem shall be redeemed; that your people shall yet plant their feet in the land of promise; that God will guard your state, and

at the last, in a splendid display of power and glory, will redeem you from the nations that now oppress you.

We have a word of warning to the Gentile races upon this promised land of the western world. Honor the God of this land, says our Book of Mormon. If ye honor Him not, but steel your hearts against Him, however great our love may be for you, the warning word of God is, that if you honor not the God of this land, who is Jesus Christ, you may read your fate in the calamities that have overtaken the former nations, who in pride and worldly glory once occupied this land from north to south as you do. But we will not be doubtful of you, but hopeful, that you will honor the God of the land—Jesus Christ. We will proclaim peace, and the peaceable things of God's kingdom. We invite and exhort all men to accept these principles of divine truth, so burdened with knowledge and with hope-giving life, and so precious in ministering unto man's honor and glory. The Lord bless you in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Singing by the choir.

"The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Benediction by Elder Charles W. Penrose.

OVERFLOW MEETING.

An overflow meeting was held in the Assembly Hall, Sunday, April 3, at 2 p.m. Elder Hyrum M. Smith of the quorum of the Twelve, presided. The Temple choir and congregation joined in singing, "Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation." Prayer was offered by Elder Joseph Christenson. The choir then sang, "Hosanna to the King."

ELDER NEPHI L. PRATT.

(President of Northwestern States Mission.)

I arise to speak to this congregation in fear and trembling. I hope, while we are together this afternoon, that we will be blessed with the Holy Spirit in great abundance, that we may be comforted, and have our faith strengthened, and be instructed as the Lord would

have us, that when we leave this meeting, at its conclusion, we may feel we have been fed with the bread of life.

I do not know of a time when, in the beginning of a conference, I have felt happier or more satisfied in my soul than this morning, in listening to the inspired discourses of the brethren. My heart was made to rejoice exceedingly. I felt that to be with the Lord, to feel His power resting upon us, even for one or two hours, as it did in the meeting in the tabernacle this morning, was better than a life-time spent in gratifying ambition, or having the pleasures that the world can give.

I could not help thinking of the situation of the wicked, those in the world who are without the light and knowledge of the truth. I thought also of the authority and power that rests upon the servants of God, by which this people are led and instructed from time to time. My heart glorifies God that we are so blessed, in the midst of a world of people filled with unbelief, and I wondered why we have been selected out of all the world, and that there are so few of us, fortunate ones chosen to perform the particular work of the Lord in the earth. When President Lund was speaking this morning, he directed our minds to the glorious future in which we hope to obtain life everlasting. I thought, as I looked over the congregation and saw the white-headed men that are among us, how youth is slipping away from me, and from thousands who, a few years ago, had brown or black hair, bright eyes and straight bodies. I looked upon these people today and thought of how mankind, in our present state, in a world of sorrow, sin and death, is subjected to the ordeal of gradually losing brightness of eye, straightness of form, elasticity of step, the dignified carriage of youth or middle age, and becomes old and decrepit; and I thought, where is there an individual among men, in any nation or country, who would not give the crown of a king, if it were his to give, to possess the eternal life and power that was described in this morning's discourse, by our brother who spoke up-