

weaknesses, and we make our little mistakes; but the heavy burdens of crime and evil will not rest upon our shoulders. When the time shall come, we will stand accepted of our God, because we have been true to Him; we have been true to one another; we have been true to the obligations into which we have entered. We have been true to the requirement given of the Lord, and with which we have had much to do and say in the times past, obeying the laws of our country, which have been decided constitutional by the courts of our country, and doing that, there will be no regrets upon our part. None of our friends will feel that we have trampled upon them, if we have walked in this right and true path.

May heaven bless every man, woman, and child of our land. May the Lord bless the citizenship of our state, men of every creed and of every faith, if they obey the requirements of that faith in honor and in truth. May He bless the sons of the soil of the United States, and her daughters, that this land may present a people to the world, that shall be unequalled among mankind in the future; men and women who shall be unequalled in their equipment for the duties of life, unequalled in their generosity, in their bravery, in their love of virtue, in their honor of truth, and in their sustaining of all things that mean, in manhood and womanhood, all that is noble and good. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

Guide us, O Thou great Jehovah,
Lead us to the promised land,
We are weak, but Thou art able—
Hold us with Thy powerful hand.
Holy Spirit,
Feed us till the Savior comes.

Benediction was pronounced by Elder Samuel O. Bennion.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference was resumed at 2 p. m.

President Joseph F. Smith called the meeting to order.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

Redeemer of Israel, our only delight,
On whom for a blessing we call,
Our shadow by day, and our pillar by
night,
Our King, our Deliv'rer, our all!

Prayer was offered by Elder Rey L. Pratt.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

ELDER CHARLES H. HART.

(Of First Council of Seventy.)

I am sure we were all very much delighted, this morning, to have with us the president of our Church, to listen to the strong testimony that he bore and to the good instructions we received from the presidency of the Church. I rejoice in seeing so many faithful Latter-day Saints present here this afternoon, many that I have had the opportunity of meeting in the various stakes of Zion. I rejoice in the attendance of these my brethren, the presidents of the various stakes of Zion.

and so many bishops and workers in various capacities in the Church. I know of their labors and their devotion; I know of the time they are spending, the efforts they are devoting to the growth and upbuilding of the Church in the various stakes and wards and fields where they are laboring.

We have ample evidence of the divinity of this latter-day work. Our attention is sometimes called to the weight of testimony that exists in the world in behalf of Christianity, and it is asserted that the evidence itself is sufficient to convince men of the divinity of Christianity aside from the matter of faith or the whispering to them of the still small voice. The same may be said of the evidence in support of the divinity of Mormonism. The Lord was very careful in laying the foundation for the coming forth of Mormonism, to have the testimony so clear and explicit that the understanding and reason of men might be appealed to. In addition to the appeals to faith, it was a part of the program that three men should be selected and called as special witnesses to the divinity of the Book of Mormon and its divine translation. That was thought of, centuries before the book was translated, and, of course, care was exercised by the Father in the selection of men who would be true to that testimony, men who would never falter, men who would not betray the trust that was reposed in them by the Father, of bearing the great honor of being witnesses of the divine translation of the Book of Mormon. They were true to that trust. Men examining, from the outside, the evidences upon which Mormonism rests, are convinced more and more of the fact that these men were sin-

cere. There was no motive for falsehood upon their part. There was not the hope of financial reward, or anything of that sort, that would induce them to state that which was false. The very fact that each of the three was not able to live according to the strict discipline of the Church, and the Prophet disciplined them the same as he would other members of the Church, is an evidence to all mankind that there was no collusion or corrupt connivance between the Prophet and these witnesses to the divine translation of the Book of Mormon. The fact that two of them came back into the Church, sued humbly to again become members of the Church, is an evidence that they were convinced to the last that the work was of God. The other witness who did not come back into the Church was, nevertheless, as strong in his testimony, as printed in the Book of Mormon, to the day of his death, as he ever was. One of our elders visited David Whitmer a few years before his death, and put in verse the substance of an interview with him. The lines were afterwards read to David Whitmer, and he agreed that it was a correct statement of the interview. That part of the verses bearing upon his testimony printed in the Book of Mormon, is as follows. When asked if it was true that he had seen a heavenly messenger who showed him the sacred record upon plates of gold,

“He lifted up his voice, and thus replied:

My written statement I have ne'er denied;

I saw the angel, and I heard his voice,
And wond'rous things, that made my heart rejoice.

“This interview was sought with earnest prayer,

The Prophet and three witnesses were
there;
But Martin, conscience-struck, de-
clined to stay,
And wandered off alone, to watch and
pray.

"I do not know the angel's rank, or
name,
Who on this great and glorious mis-
sion came;
I know that he was clothed with pow-
er and might,
And was surrounded with effulgent
light.

"No tongue can tell the glory and the
power
That was revealed to us in that blest
hour;
The plates of brass and gold the angel
took,
And placed before us like an open
book.

"We saw the fine engravings on them,
too,
And heard the voice declare the book
is true;
No power on earth could from our
minds efface
The glorious visions of this trysting-
place.

"We've done, as then commanded we
should do,
And testified the 'Mormon Book' is
true;
And was translated by the power
given
The Prophet Joseph by the God of
Heaven.

"Thousands of people have been here
to see
The 'copy' Oliver has left with me;
The characters, moreover, Martin took
Professor Anthon—words of sacred
book.

"Some visit me who Mormonism hate,
Some ranking low, and some of high
estate;
I tell them all, as now I say to you,
The Book of Mormon is of God, and
true.

"In yonder room I have preserved
with care
The printer's copy, and the words so
rare,

The very words from Nephi's sacred
book,
That Martin to Professor Anthon took.

"If this be not the truth, there is no
truth,
And I have been mistaken from my
youth;
If I'm mistaken, you may know from
thence
That there's no God, no law, no life,
no sense.

"I know there is a God—I've heard
His voice,
And in His power and truth do still
rejoice;
Though fools may ridicule and laugh
today
They yet shall know the truth of what
I say.

"I've suffered persecution at the hands
Of hireling preachers, and their Chris-
tian bands;
I've braved their hatred and have them
withstood,
While thirsting for the youthful
Prophet's blood.

"They came, four hundred strong, with
visage bold,
And said, 'Deny this story you have
told;
And by our sacred honor, we'll en-
gage
To save you from the mob's infuriate
rage.'

"A mighty power came on me, and I
soak
In words that made the guilty mob-
bers quake;
And trembling seized the surging
crowd, and fear,
But left unharmed, I felt that God was
near."*

The other witnesses, like David,
remained true to the last. One of
them, before re-joining the Church,
in bearing a very strong testimony
to the words he had first given, said
that by the help of God it should be
his dying testimony; and, strangely

*An interview with David Whitmer,
in August, 1883, by James H. Hart, of
Bloomington, Idaho.

enough, the same elder who heard him make that declaration was present at his deathbed, and the last distinguishable words that he uttered were in confirmation and support of the testimony as printed on the fly leaf of the Book of Mormon.

And with the eight, also, who testified that they saw the plates, handled them, and lifted them; although three of them sidestepped and were not able to endure the hardships that bore upon the followers of the Church at that time, nor to live according to the strict requirements and discipline of the Church, yet those three of the eight witnesses never denied the testimony that they gave.

Men are inclined to say that these were subjective experiences—these so-called miracles; but that cannot be true; that is not true. If the angel spoke to the Prophet Joseph of golden plates, there were the golden plates in confirmation of the information received, demonstrating beyond all question that it was not a mere matter of the mental condition or the subjective state of mind of the prophet.

Men realizing that there is no ground for questioning the sincerity of these witnesses, are inclined now to concede their sincerity, but to question the accuracy of their observation. That position is as weak as to question the sincerity of the witnesses. It is a possibility for one individual to have a delusion of a single sense. That is within the experience of, perhaps, most of us, the possibility of having deluded, temporarily, a particular sense, particularly the sense of sight. Many of us may have had the experience of looking out over an alkali plain and having it appear to us to be a lake of water; or of seeing small shrubs

at a distance which under the operation of a mirage, appear to be tall trees; just as shrubs growing at or near the northern part of the Great Salt Lake appeared to Colonel John C. Fremont and his explorers to be trees. But when we have the sense of sight verified by the sense of touch, or the sense of hearing, then we may know of a surety whether or not there has been any delusion of the sense of sight. It would be a very singular thing for two men, or more, to have the sense of hearing, or the sense of touch, or any other sense deluded in exactly the same way at the same time. It is unthinkable to suppose that the three witnesses had a delusion of the sense of sight and of the sense of hearing at the same time, exactly in the same way; or that the three witnesses had their senses impaired so that they experienced a delusion not only of the sense of sight but of the sense of touch also—because they handled the plates. They saw the fine engravings upon the golden plates, and observed the curious workmanship, the ancient appearance of the plates; and, in addition to that, they tested the matter with the physical sense by “hefting” the plates, as they expressed it. So that when we have all those various senses of the witnesses conjoin in bearing to them the same percepts, we cannot reasonably explain away their testimony by supposing that it was a delusion upon their part.

The modern theory of psychologists who attempt an explanation of Mormonism, is based very largely upon the sincerity of the prophet, Joseph Smith, and the sincerity of the witnesses, but that they were deluded. But, Mormonism cannot be explained away on the ground of some psychological misinterpreta-

tion or delusion. The gospel is impregnable against scrutiny from a psychological standpoint, as well as from any other standpoint that we may view it from. I think there was a purpose in having those various senses appealed to, just as I think there was a purpose in the manifestation of our Lord and Savior to His disciples, after His resurrection. You will remember that He was not content to give them a mere view, a mere vision of His person, but that they might be assured, and that the children of men to the latest generations might be assured that it was no delusion of the sense of sight, that those disciples witnessed in the appearance of the Savior to them, He said, "Handle me, and see." They were asked to thrust their hands in His side, and feel the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet, to know that it was a bodily presence, and not a mere apparition, or a mere vision, as the atheist has tried to claim, and, perhaps, would have successfully maintained with a good many persons, had it not been for the additional evidence that was presented by the sense of touch.

Neither can objection be made to these circumstances that are testified to, on the ground of the miraculous. Of course, the atheist states the question in such a form that there can scarcely be proof of such a thing as a miracle. He says: "There must be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit the appellation." He thus places the miraculous outside of experience, so that the moment you establish the fact of the existence of the so-called miraculous, it then enters the realm of that which is based upon testimony or experience. There

is this weakness to be noted in the strength of what is supposed to be according to uniform experience, and that is that it rests upon negative testimony, very largely, while a miracle, so-called—that which is miraculous to us—when properly supported by testimony, has the weight of affirmative proof. Where a fact is properly verified, although not within the realm of that which ordinarily occurs, yet if it is properly attested by the affirmative proof it is entitled to great weight as against the negative statements of those who have not been privileged to witness any such manifestations.

The poet Tennyson, tells us that "faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers," that "unfaith in aught is lack of faith in all." The extent to which that may be true I shall not discuss, except to point out the application of it to lack of faith in these fundamentals that were discussed by President Smith this morning; for if we have unfaith in the existence of God, that in itself is far-reaching and amounts to lack of faith in all. This is true, also, to a very large extent, in reference to the foundation principles upon which Mormonism rests. A want of faith in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the divine establishment of Mormonism, and the prophetic mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, would be all-pervading in its consequences, so far as belief in Mormonism is concerned.

I rejoice, my brethren and sisters, in the fact that in the establishment of Mormonism, so-called, and the enunciation of its principles, reason is appealed to, as well as faith. Some one has asserted that "faith is a higher faculty than reason." I rejoice in the fact that our gospel appeals not only to faith but also to

the reason. That is true of the doctrines given us in this book that came to us in such a marvelous manner, the Book of Mormon. The principles announced there are reasonable, and are based on reason, and the same is true in reference to the glorious doctrines contained in that other product of nineteenth century inspiration, the Doctrine and Covenants. I do not feel to enter upon a discussion of that field, of the beauties of the principles contained and announced in those books, of the way in which they are supported by the writings of the philosophers, nor of the way in which they appeal to our reason.

May the Lord bless us, my brethren and sisters, and enable us to realize, deep down in our heart of hearts, the truths of Mormonism, its divine founding, that it is God's work, that He has guided it in the past and will continue to guide it in the future. May we be faithful and true to the trusts reposed in us, and do our part in helping to establish this great work in the earth, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

(Of First Council of Seventy.)

I attended a fast meeting last Sunday afternoon, my brethren and sisters, and immediately after the bishop of the ward had made the announcement that the time would be given to the people of the ward, one of the sisters instantly arose to her feet. She made the statement that she had frequently sat through the entire time of a testimony meeting, in uneasiness and anxiety, with the feeling that she ought to bear

her testimony, but frequently she had sat and listened and suffered until the opportunity had passed by. The sister to whom I refer expressed the feeling that by taking advantage of the opportunity of speaking at the very commencement she would be able to sit in peace, and enjoy the balance of the meeting. My brethren and sisters, it was very much of a surprise to me to be called upon to address this great gathering this afternoon. I have the satisfaction, however, of feeling somewhat as the sister I have referred to; that is, that through my turn to speak coming so early in the services, I will be able to enjoy more completely all the balance of the meetings, as there will be no reason for me having any further feeling of anxiety as to the part I am to play in the conference. I frequently have a very great deal of anxiety in regard to this responsibility, and often hear other brethren express similar thoughts relative to this duty. Yesterday I heard a prominent brother say he would prefer going anywhere, to any of the stake conferences, even where long, hard journeys had to be made rather than stand up in this great building, in a general conference, and undertake to instruct the people.

When a man occupies this position, he certainly feels that he is dependent upon the help and inspiration of the Lord, it is out of the question for any man, of his own ability, to speak words that will be for the encouragement and the edification of the great number who gather together upon these occasions. Men also know, notwithstanding their weaknesses, that by the blessing, and help, and inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord, they