

Peter Whitmer, jun., into the wilderness among the Lamanites."

I think it is a beautiful thing that today his grandson is permitted to stand in our midst and testify of the hope that he has of the fulfilment of the promise of our Father to our Indian brethren and sisters who are dear to him, who live in this and the adjacent nation. I am sure you have been glad to hear from Brother Pratt and that the mission still goes on notwithstanding the difficulty they are having in that unhappy land.

Let us each pray to the Lord that His promises may be fulfilled in the interests of these our brethren and sisters, let each of us live so that if we should be called, that the Lord may be able to work through us for the amelioration of the condition of millions of His children who know not the Gospel of our Lord as we have received it. Let us go to our homes each with the determination that, the Lord helping us, we will serve Him and keep His commandments and fulfil the obligations resulting from receiving His word.

May you, my brethren and sisters, carry the spirit of this great gathering to your homes. May you have the desire to disseminate the truth taught among your associates, that your experience here may thereby be more profitable. May this conference be treasured in your memories as a time of refreshing from the Lord. And that each of us may magnify our opportunities and be worthy of the blessings of our Father in heaven, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Elder Benjamin Goddard offered the closing prayer.

CLOSING SESSION.

In the Tabernacle, at 2 p. m.

President Joseph F. Smith called the meeting to order.

The choir sang Evan Stephens' hymn, "Loyal to the True and the Right."

The invocation was offered by Elder Brigham F. Grant.

A chorus, entitled "The Snow," was rendered by the choir.

ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE.

A marvelous work and a wonder—
The "Mormon Church"—Characteristic teachings of the Church concerning Jesus the Christ—The Lord's second advent—Near at hand—Today and tomorrow—The Church and the Kingdom.

The presence of these multitudes at each recurring conference of the Church, and particularly the spirit of earnestness and devotion which the people manifest, appeal to me as striking evidences of the marvelous work and the wonder which the God of Israel has accomplished and is accomplishing in these, the last days. That great work, of which the prophets in the ages past have predicted to be characteristic of the day toward which they looked with anxious and eager anticipation, is the establishment of the Church and the development and growth thereof in the dispensation of fulness.

The kingdom of God has been set up upon the earth. In ancient writ, scriptural and otherwise, the expressions "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven" were often used interchangeably; or at least our modern translation of those writings present to us interchangeable usages of these names and titles of the great institutions; but

in this, as in many other instances, we find the light of modern revelation illumining and making plain what may otherwise be dark and in part unintelligible. Through the revelations given in this day and age, we recognize the fact that there is a distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven. The Church established in the present age, embodying the restored Gospel, is the Kingdom of God, it is the Church of Jesus Christ.

The members of that Church are often spoken of as "Mormons," and the Church has come to be known more generally as the "Mormon Church" than by its proper name and distinguishing title, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We as a people do not maintain any strong protest against the application of the term "Mormon" and its several derivatives; though we deplore the fact that misunderstanding may arise in the minds of inquirers and investigators respecting the significance of that name, which originally was used as a nickname in its application to the Church. You may call us Mormons if you will; remember, however, as you must—must, if you will have respect unto the truth—that this is not the church of Mormon. Mormon was a man, a very worthy man and a very great man in his day when he lived in the flesh, and a very great personage since that time; but he was a man among men, and while his name is very properly applied to the abridgement of certain early records, which abridgement he made and supplemented by many writings of his own, now published under the name of the Book of Mormon, the Church is not his

church, nor is it the church of Peter or James or John, nor is it the church of Joseph Smith, nor of Brigham Young, nor of Joseph F. Smith, nor the church of the present authorities of the body. It is the Church of Jesus Christ and it is the only Church upon the face of the earth affirming divine authorization for the use of the name of the Savior of mankind as part of its distinctive designation.

It is very proper that we inquire as to what particular message the Church thus distinguished has to give to the world respecting its Master, its divine Head, the Son of the living God, in vindication of its claims to so honorable a title as that which it bears. In the first place, it reiterates all the truth that has been given in former ages and earlier dispensations regarding Jesus Christ and His ministry, and it sets forth in plainness, together with other matters of the greatest worth, knowledge beyond all price, which has been given unto the Church as new revelation in the day and age in which we live. Among the distinguishing features of the teachings of the Church concerning the Savior and Redeemer of the race are these:

First, the Church affirms the unity and continuity of the mission of the Christ in all ages. This, of necessity, involves the actuality, the verity, of His pre-existence and pre-ordination or foreordination in the spirit state.

Second, the fact of His ante-mortal Godship.

Third, the actuality of His birth in the flesh as the natural issue of divine and mortal parentage.

Fourth, the reality of His death and physical resurrection, as a result of which the power of death

over mankind shall be eventually overcome.

Fifth, the literalness of the atonement wrought by Him, and the absolute requirement of individual compliance with the laws and requirements of His Gospel as the only means by which salvation may be attained.

Sixth, the restoration of His Priesthood and the re-establishment of His Church in the current age, which is verily the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Seventh, the certainty of His return to earth in the near future with power and great glory to reign in person and in bodily presence as Lord and King.

In the interest of conciseness I have read these several specifications as they have been summarized and will appear in the forthcoming edition of a work now published by the Church to its members and to the world respecting the life and mission of Jesus the Christ. I invite your attention to the last of these specified points, the certainty of the return of Jesus Christ to earth in the near future, to reign upon the earth in person by bodily presence as the rightful King of earth. You have read, I am sure, of the wondrous incidents connected with the association of the resurrected Christ with the apostles and others between the time of His resurrection and that of His ascension from Mount Olivet, and when, on that eventful day, He led the Eleven who were still faithful to Him, and whom He had ordained to the holy apostleship, out toward Bethany. As He was conversing with them and giving them final instruction and doubtless encouragement, He rose from their midst and they saw Him ascend until He was

hidden from their sight. In worshipful wonder they became aware of the presence of personages other than themselves—white-robed messengers from heaven who, remarking their wonder and astonishment, addressed them in these words: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." From that day the apostles preached the return of the Christ to earth, even as prophets before their time had predicted the great event. By the second advent of Christ we do not mean His manifestation to chosen prophets, to individuals or to a few, such as His ministrations to Saul of Tarsus or His appearance to Joseph Smith in 1820 and again in the Kirtland temple after the organization of the Church, but a return in glory of which all the world shall know. His coming shall be like unto the lightning that flashes from the east to the west, to be seen of all men.

This Church proclaims the doctrine of the impending return of the Christ to earth in literal simplicity, without mental or other reservation in our interpretation of the scriptural predictions. He will come with the body of flesh and bones in which His Spirit was tabernacled when He ascended from Mount Olivet. One of the characteristic features of the Church concerning that great, and in the language of the scripture, both glorious and terrible event, is its nearness. It is close at hand. The mission of the Church is to prepare the earth for the coming of its Lord. Biblical prophecies are numerous; the Book of Mormon prophecies are

abundant, respecting the return of the Christ. His own words, both before and after His crucifixion and resurrection are unambiguous, definite, convincing, and convicting unto those who do not close their ears wilfully against the truth. Referring to Himself the Savior said: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Read the context in the 16th chapter of Matthew. The prophets who lived before the meridian of time said comparatively little, though their testimony is abundant and all sufficient, concerning the return of the Christ; for they were devoted to the teaching of the doctrine of His first coming in the flesh, to live among men, to suffer and to die and to be resurrected from the dead. But after His resurrection and ascension the words of inspired teachers were definite in fore-telling the certainty of His return; and in this day and age of the world He has spoken with His own voice unto His prophets, impressing upon them the fact that the time of His coming in judgment is near at hand. Thus, within a few months after the Church was organized, in the year 1830, as recorded in the 29th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord Jesus Christ said unto His Prophet Joseph Smith:

"For the hour is nigh and the day soon at hand when the earth is ripe; and all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and I will burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that wickedness shall not be upon the earth;

"For the hour is nigh, and that which was spoken by mine apostles must be fulfilled; for as they spoke so shall it come to pass;

"For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof and dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years, and the wicked shall not stand."

A month later, or at least in the month following, He spake again admonishing His servants to diligence:

"Wherefore," said He, "be faithful, praying always, having your lamps trimmed and burning, and oil with you, that you may be ready at the coming of the Bridegroom; for behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that I come quickly. Even so. Amen."

Referring to the teachings of the apostles of old, and particularly to His own instructions unto them, and employing the same figure by which He had made plain unto them that men may know of the imminence of His coming, by the signs which He specified, He said in March, 1831, again speaking through His Prophet Joseph:

"Ye look and behold the fig trees and ye see them with your eyes and ye say that when they begin to shoot forth and their leaves are yet tender that summer is now nigh at hand.

"Even so it shall be in that day when they shall see all these things, then shall they know that the hour is nigh.

"And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of man:

"And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath;

"And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke;

"And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and stars fall from heaven;

"And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place,

"And then they shall look for me, and, behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory, with all the holy angels; and he that watches not for me shall be cut off."

Still further impressing upon the Church in the early days of its history the fact that there was no time to be lost in preparation, for the time was all too short, He made plain the fact that His coming was so near that the intervening time is properly to be spoken of as today. "Behold, now it is called today," said He, "until the coming of the Son of man; and verily it is a day of sacrifice and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming, for after today cometh the burning. This is speaking after the manner of the Lord; for verily I say, tomorrow all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble; and I will burn them up, for I am the Lord of hosts; and I will not spare any that remain in Babylon. Wherefore, if ye believe me, ye will labor while it is called today."

The scriptures abound in declarations and reiterations, in repeated and solemn affirmations of the great fact that the day of the Lord's coming will be a day of glory and a day of terror—of glory and recompense unto those who are living righteously, and a day of terror unto the proud and unto all who do wickedly. Now, many have asked, do we interpret that scripture as meaning that in the day of the Lord's coming, all who are not members of the Church shall be burned, or otherwise destroyed, and only this little body of men and women, very small compared with the uncounted hosts of men now

living, shall be spared the burning and shall escape destruction? I think not so. I do not think we are justified in putting that interpretation upon the Lord's word, for He recognizes every man according to the integrity of his heart, and men who have not been able to understand the Gospel or who have not had opportunity of learning it and knowing of it will not be counted as the wilfully sinful who are fit only to be burned as stubble; but the proud, who lift themselves in the pride of their hearts and rise above the word of God and become a law unto themselves and who wilfully and with knowledge deny the saving virtues of the atonement of Christ, and who are seeking to lead others away from the truth will be dealt with by Him according to both justice and mercy.

A word concerning the distinction between the Kingdom and the Church. As already stated, the expression "Kingdom of God" is used synonymously with the term "Church of Christ"; but the Lord had made plain that He sometimes used the term "Kingdom of Heaven" in a distinctive sense. In 1832 He called attention to that in these words, addressing Himself to the elders of the Church:

"Hearken, and lo, a voice as of one from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

"The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the Gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth until it has filled the whole earth;

"Yea, a voice crying—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the

supper of the Lamb, make ready for the bridegroom;

"Pray unto the Lord, call upon his holy name, make known his wonderful works among the people;

"Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth;

"Wherefore may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come, that Thou, O God, mayest be glorified in heaven, so on earth, that thy enemies may be subdued, for Thine is the honor, power and glory, forever and ever. Amen."

Such was the prayer, such is the prayer, prescribed for this people to pray, not to utter in words only, not to say only, but to pray—that the Kingdom of God may roll forth in the earth to prepare the earth for the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. That provision in the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" has not been abrogated. We are praying for the Kingdom of Heaven to come, and are endeavoring to prepare the earth for its coming. The Kingdom of God, already set up upon the earth, does not aspire to temporal domination among the nations. It seeks not to overthrow any existing forms of government; it does not profess to exercise control in matters that pertain to the governments of the earth, except by teaching correct principles and trying to get men to live according to the principles of true government, before the Kingdom of Heaven shall come and be established upon the earth with a King at the head. But when He comes, He shall rule and reign, for it is His right.

Many of us are prone to think that the day of His coming, the day of the setting up of the Kingdom of Heaven in its power and glory is yet far distant. I take it that that assumption is based, perhaps, upon our wish, none the less real, because we hesitate to frame it in words. How would you feel if authoritative proclamation were made here today that on the literal morrow, when the sun shall rise again in the east, the Lord would appear in His glory to take vengeance upon the wicked, and to establish His Kingdom upon the earth? Who amongst you would rejoice? The pure in heart would, the righteous in soul would, but many of us would wish to have the event put off. We are very much in the frame of mind, or we may allow ourselves to fall in the frame of mind of the rule bound Pharisees and the casuistical Sadducees in the days of the Christ in the flesh. They were intent upon keeping the people's interest alive in a future Messiah, in a Christ who was to come, but not one who was amongst them. We are very loath to accept and believe that which we do not want to believe, and the world today does not wish to believe that the coming of the Christ is near at hand, and consequently all kinds of subterfuges are invented for explaining away the plain words of scripture. We rejoice in simplicity. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is wonderfully simple. We as a people value, I believe, scholastic attainments at their full worth. While we foster and encourage the training and development of the mind, I was about to say to the full limit, certainly almost to the limit, of our material ability, as witness the unceasing effort and continuous ex-

penditure of vast sums in the maintenance of church schools, and the willingness with which the Latter-day Saints as members of the community impose upon themselves, in common with their fellow citizens, taxes for the support of schools under state control and direction, we nevertheless hold that scholastic attainments are not essential to a full understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We do not believe that a diploma from a theological seminary is an essential part of the credentials of a teacher or preacher of the word of God. Nevertheless we endeavor to encourage and aid in a material way the training of the mind and the development of all the faculties that shall be conducive to educational advancement in the truest sense of the term, but we hold the Gospel is simple that all may understand it who will. It is the proud and they who do wickedly who close their eyes and their ears and their hearts to the signs of the times, to the word of the Gospel and to the testimony of the Christ. It has long been a favorite excuse of men who were not ready for the advent of the Lord, to say, "The Lord delayeth His coming." Don't attach too much importance to the fact that He has thus far delayed His coming, for He has repeatedly told us that the day of His coming is very, very near, even at our doors. There is a tendency among men to explain away what they don't wish to understand in literal simplicity, and we, as Latter-day Saints are not entirely free from the taint of that tendency. Prophecies that have not yet been fulfilled are by many of us made the subjects of hypothesis and theory and strained interpretation. We read that one of the

characteristic signs to precede the second advent of Christ shall be the bringing forth of the tribes that have been lost to history, led away where men have not yet found them, and we are told that they shall be brought forth with a strong hand by the power of God and shall come unto Zion and receive their blessings at the hands of Ephraim. But some people say that prediction is to be explained in this way: A gathering is in progress, and has been in progress from the early days of this Church; and thus the "Lost Tribes" are now being gathered; but that we are not to look for the return of any body of people now unknown as to their whereabouts. True, the gathering is in progress, this is a gathering dispensation; but the prophecy stands that the tribes shall be brought forth from their hiding place bringing their scriptures with them, which scriptures shall become one with the scriptures of the Jews, the holy Bible, and with the scriptures of the Nephites, the Book of Mormon, and with the scriptures of the Latter-day Saints as embodied in the volumes of modern revelation.

The Lord has said it. I am just simple-minded enough, my brethren and sisters, to stand upon the rock of assurance that not one jot or tittle of the word of the Lord shall fail. Do not allow yourselves to think that the coming of the Christ means merely the spread of different or more advanced ideas among men, or simply the progress and advancement of society as an institution. These shall be but incidents of the great consummation, the consummation of this particular stage or epoch of the Lord's work. The Lord Jesus Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven, ac-

accompanied by the heavenly hosts, and His advent shall be marked by a great extension of the resurrection of the just, which has been in progress since that resurrection Sunday on which He came forth from the tomb and took up the wounded, pierced body which He had laid down; and those who are not able to bear the glory of His coming because of their wickedness, their foulness, and wilful state of sin, shall, by natural means, perish. A strong current of electricity passes safely through a pure conductor, but where resistance is encountered it becomes a destructive power. It was necessary that the work for the dead be undertaken by the living, that temples be reared and this vicarious labor be performed, that the hearts of the departed fathers might be turned toward their yet mortal descendants, and the hearts of mortal children be turned to their dead ancestors, lest the earth be smitten with a curse at the time of the Lord's coming.

The Bible is very simple to those who read it with earnest and honest intent, as are all the scriptures, but it is very puzzling to the theologians, very puzzling, sometimes to Biblical scholars and interpreters who seek to apply to it only those tests that are common among men. I rejoice in the testimony of the Savior that He is verily the Christ and we proclaim Him as such. Great interest is manifest at this time in the work and ministry of Jesus Christ, not only among the Latter-day Saints but in the world in general; and He has been analyzed and measured and written about from many points of view, and as viewed from many different angles. There are volumes of recent publication dealing with the

Christ of literature, the Christ of history, the Christ of reason, the Christ of experience. Never lived a man of whom more has been said or sung; and there is none to whom is devoted a greater share of the world's literature. But the tendency is to view Him from this angle or that and not to look with direct vision. I am thankful that the Church to which I belong preaches Christ and Him crucified, and resurrected, the Christ that ascended into heaven, the Christ that shall come again, the Christ that was the offspring in the flesh, as well as in the spirit, of the very Eternal Father, the Christ who is the Savior and Redeemer of mankind, beside whom there is none, beside whose name there is no name under heaven, whereby mankind may be saved. May His Spirit be ever with us, and may we be prepared for His coming, I humbly ask, in His name. Amen.

"A Temple in Hawaii," words by Ruth May Fox, and music by Orson Clark, was sung by Ethelyn Walker, Hazel B. Neilson, James H. Neilson, and Almy C. Clayton.

BISHOP CHARLES W. NIBLEY.

Loyalty, a doctrine of the L. D. S. Church—God the only King on this land of Liberty—"Mormonism" makes for good citizenship"—No "hyphenated" Americans in "Mormon" Church, all are true Americans—Admirable characteristics in people of other countries.

It comes as a surprise to me, my brethren and sisters, to be asked to occupy this position this afternoon. I respond cheerfully, however, and even gladly, to testify to you of my faith and confidence in this work of the Lord and of the blessing that