

great revelation given by the Prophet Joseph Smith, is a matter that was gotten up, I understand, some ten years after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, by two of our brethren who put together some broken sentences from the Prophet that they may have heard him utter from time to time, and formulated this so called revelation out of it, and it was never spoken by the prophet in the manner in which they have put it forth. It is simply false; that is all there is to it.

#### HOW THE STRANG REVELATION WAS CONCOCTED.

In 1858, I had the privilege of traveling through California with Charles Wesley Wandell, a former member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and at that time also a member of the Church. He told me himself, in the presence of witnesses, that he wrote the document himself on which the organization of J. J. Strang was founded, and he was never so surprised as when he found that J. J. Strang accepted his vagaries for a revelation from God, and he had only laughed at it and repented of it ever since.

#### HOW MEN MAY KNOW THE TRUTH.

Now, these stories of revelations that are being circulated around are of no consequence except for rumor and silly talk by persons that have no authority. The fact of the matter is simply here and this. No man can enter into God's rest unless he will absorb the truth in so far that all error, all falsehood, all misunderstandings and mis-statements he will be able to sift thoroughly and dissolve, and know that it is error

and not truth. When you know God's truth, when you enter into God's rest, you will not be hunting after revelations from Tom, Dick and Harry all over the world. You will not be following the will of the wisps of the vagaries of men and women who advance nonsense and their own ideas. When you know the truth you will abide in the truth, and the truth will make you free, and it is only the truth that will free you from the errors of men, and from the falsehood and misrepresentations of the evil one who lays in wait to deceive and to mislead the people of God from the paths of righteousness and truth. God bless you. Amen.

A trio, "Loyalty," voices selected from the choir, was sung.

#### ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE.

The comprehensiveness of the gospel  
—Things of men and things of God  
—The one to be rooted up, the other to endure—The present the predicted time of commotion—A day of shaking—The Church of Jesus Christ not sectarian—A reorganized Church of Jesus Christ impossible—A new and an everlasting covenant.

I believe that no person who has followed the addresses at this conference can fail to have reflected upon the comprehensiveness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The truth has been declared unto us in simplicity and plainness. We have not gathered here to listen to fervid oratory, or impassioned speech, but we have heard again and again the eternal truth delivered with that eloquence that appeals to the heart instead of to the ear. We have had instructions given unto us relating to the affairs of every-day life, go-

ing back into the eternities that preceded mortality, and onward into the eternities beyond the grave.

We have learned that the things of man shall endure as man endures, and that the things of God are eternal as He is eternal; that in the things and affairs of man the authority of man is operative, and that, in the affairs of heaven, only the authority of heaven is valid. There is nothing new in this; it was preached in earlier dispensations; and, indeed, has been made known to those who would listen, even from the time of Adam. I remember that on one occasion the Christ was particularly emphatic in elucidation of that eternal truth. There came to Him certain hypercritical Jews who, not being able to answer His doctrine, undertook to find fault with some trifles in the life and conduct of His followers, as you may read for yourselves in the fifteenth chapter of Matthew. They came asking why His disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders, in that they ate without first washing their hands, and the Lord turned upon them, it seems to me—I believe He sometimes became incensed, and if He ever did He was incensed on this occasion, for when they asked Him that question He said unto them:

“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” Mark you, not by the law. It was no part of the law of Moses, the thing that they did, and for which He arraigned them. It was only their rabbinical tradition, and this was it. “For God commanded, saying, honor thy father and thy mother.” And then He went on to explain and bring home to them the fact that they sanctioned dishonor to father and mother: “Ye hypo-

crites,” said He, “well did Esaias prophesy of you saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

Then crying out to the multitude He said unto them: “Hear and understand; not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of a man, this defileth a man.”

And now for the point I would have you specially observe: “Then came his disciples and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

“Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up;” and conversely: Every plant which our heavenly Father hath planted, shall endure. So it is with the institutions on earth. Every one that has not been formed in accordance with the will of God shall be rooted up, overthrown, or brought into the dust. This is the day of commotion. Have you never read that all things should be in commotion in these the last days? This is the day of shaking, when everything that can be shaken shall be shaken, and only those things which are established upon an eternal foundation shall endure. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews understood that principle, as is plainly set forth in his warning to the people: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh” referring to the

Christ, "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

The things of God are not to be shaken by the boom of man's greatest artillery; they shall endure in spite of bomb and shell. But the handiwork of man shall be shattered and crushed. So not only all material things, but all man's theories and conjectures and philosophy, and science falsely so called. One of the results of the great conflict into which the world is plunged shall be the dethronement of German philosophy, as well as the overthrow of German autocracy, for much of it is false and shall not endure. Right glad am I that we stand upon the rock of revelation, and though the rains may beat and the winds may blow, we shall not be moved unless we get frightened and abandon the refuge of safety, and be swept into the whirlpool of man-made doctrine. True it is that kingdoms rise and fall sometimes by direction, sometimes by permission of the Lord, by allowance, because of His respect for higher laws. He will not interfere with the agency of nations or of individuals.

But I do not believe that God ever planted the plant of tyranny or kingly despotism. That is a weed that He has permitted to grow up, and you know how careful He is not to prematurely root up, as evinced

by His own teaching to the people in that wonderful parable of the wheat and the tares. The impetuous disciples would have rushed into the field to pluck up the tares, but He forbade them, saying, "Let both grow together until the harvest," and explained to them that any forceful extirpation of the tares would have imperiled the wheat.

Never before, since the days of the Son of Man in the flesh, has the earth been prepared for the kind of government that shall be established abroad as it has been established here. Fifty years ago, twenty years ago, ten years ago, to have attempted forcibly to extirpate the weeds of autocracy would have imperiled the wheat of real democracy. There is a wonderful element of timeliness in all the doings of God, and He doeth all things well, and in the right season.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is given of God; it is eternal. Have you ever found a single passage in Holy Writ that indicates in the least degree any revision or alteration of the fundamental laws and principles of the gospel? Have you ever found it necessary for God to amend Himself and His words? Men make constitutions and enact laws, and then have to repeal and alter them, but the fundamental laws of truth are eternal; they will never be amended, they will never be changed. As declared to Adam, so is it declared unto the world today: Except ye have faith in God and in His Son Jesus Christ, as the one and only Savior and Redeemer of mankind; except ye repent of your sins with a real and genuine repentance; except ye be baptized by immersion in water, at the hands of one having authority, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the

authorized laying on of hands, there is no possibility of your finding place in the kingdom of God. We look in vain for modification or qualification. The gospel is as simple today as it ever has been, and it will never be less simple. Therefore the Church of Jesus Christ, which is the earthly embodiment of the gospel, the organization through which the gospel is to be declared to the world, is established in this dispensation, for so the Lord hath declared, never more to be thrown down. You have never learned of any revision, amendment to or alteration in the law of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the form of the Church. Like the gospel itself, the Church adapts itself to the necessities of the times, to the conditions of life, but without the alteration of a single vital principle revealed of God.

The world is full of sects and churches, and there is scarcely one that has not a counterpart in the form of a revised or reformed or reorganized sect; but the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is no sect. Even its worst and most unprincipled critics have never ventured upon such a palpable falsehood as would be the declaration that this is a sectarian organization. What was it ever dissected from? From what other organization has it ever been divided? And the thought of division, breaking away from, is essential to the idea of a sect. Now, be it known that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is no sect. It is an original creation with the Lord, and when reestablished upon the earth in this age of the world it was a restoration. Therefore, if I may be permitted the paradoxical expression, I would say that the concept of a re-

organized Church of Jesus Christ is unthinkable. Such a thing cannot be. It would mean that the Lord had changed His word, and that when He said that this, the restored church or kingdom of God should nevermore be thrown down, He spoke falsely; that after all, these are not the last days; that this is not the dispensation of the fulness of times; that there is to be another restoration. Such contradiction in terms my mind is altogether too feeble to comprehend. This Church will never be reorganized. There never will be a reorganized Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. There can be none such, except as man misuses names.

My heart and soul are in this Church for what it is. I cannot be mistaken. I take it to be what the Lord has said it is, and if it be not that, it is but another deception of the devil. But the glorious fact is that its fruits are not the fruits of deception; they are love for humanity, reverence for liberty and the inherent rights of men, tolerance for another's opinions, as long as he does not carry his opinions, if they are wrong, too far, so as to infringe upon the rights of others. I am willing that a man shall believe just what he likes, as long as he does not try to force his belief upon me, if I think he is wrong.

Now, in this day of whirl and swirl, when all things are in commotion, and men's hearts are failing them, is there no sure anchorage for our individual barks? Is there no haven of safety to the great ocean of unrest? Thank God, we find it in His word; for all that the Lord has foretold shall come to pass literally and in fulness. To regulate the things of God, to administer in the ordinances of heaven, requires a

power higher than any that man can originate or arrogate to himself. I doubt if any one would challenge me to serious debate upon that proposition. Let Cæsar regulate the things of Cæsar, if you will; but do not let Cæsar try to administer the things of God, for God's house is not a house of confusion. Reference to this great principle was made yesterday. Men may establish laws, and so far as they are not infringements upon the inherent rights of men they are valid and must be obeyed by all concerned; but no legislature, no parliament, no congress created by man, can legislate with regard to affairs beyond the grave. As illustrated by the instance referred to yesterday—the covenant of marriage—man may establish laws and may perform ceremonies of marriage to be of effect "until death do you part." Those are the very ominous words that occur in many prescribed ceremonies. But we regard marriage as something more than a ceremony. It is an ordinance, and that ordinance can be administered only by those having the authority of God, if it is to be in effect beyond the grave. And so with every other relationship that is established by and among men.

Permit me to read to you from the 132nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord says:

"Behold! mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion.

"Will I accept of an offering, saith the Lord, that is not made in my name!

"Or, will I receive at your hands that which I have not appointed!

"And will I appoint unto you, saith the Lord, except it be by law,

even as I and my Father ordained unto you, before the world was!

"I am the Lord thy God, and I give unto you this commandment, that no man shall come unto the Father but by me, or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord;

"And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me, or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection saith the Lord your God;

"For whatsoever things remain, are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me, shall be shaken and destroyed."

Could it be otherwise? Human institutions, purely human institutions, will end with human life, and in and after the resurrection they will have no place nor name; but the institutions established by the authority of heaven shall endure, and these alone are the things that can endure. In the same revelation we find this doctrine set forth, with which I am sure you are familiar, but on which we may well refresh our minds, relating to what the Lord calls by the comprehensive and significant name of "A new and an everlasting covenant."

"And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made, and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternitv, and that too most holv, by revelation and commandment through the medium of

mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power, (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time, on whom this power and the keys of this Priesthood are conferred,) are of no efficacy, virtue or force, in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end, have an end when men are dead."

Is that not consistent with our conception of the eternal character of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Were the power to direct this authority in operation vested in more than one man upon the earth at a time, there would be introduced at once the possibility of confusion and of a conflict of authority. With respect to the word of the Lord as given unto the people, I do not think that you have found any of the general authorities of the church, of the Council of the Twelve or others, who have independently undertaken to give out to the people any new revelation involving vital principles of doctrine or practice; and no one of them would think of doing it until it had been submitted to the one man who holds the keys of that power and priesthood here upon the earth at this time. God's house is a house of order, I repeat. Let us put ourselves in order, if there be need of such renovation, that we may be fit for an abiding place in the Lord's kingdom; for while the Church shall never be reformed and reorganized, there is need of individual reformation in many cases. I trust that we shall increase in faith and in works, and come to be what the Lord would have us be, and serve Him with full purpose of heart, that we

may be ready to go out when the cry shall be heard, as soon it shall be heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." For such I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

The gospel in application—Necessity of utilizing all existing organizations of the Church—Eminent need of counteracting the influences of the world—Our opportunity and obligation to cultivate the spiritual in man—The high mission of America in the world, to be accomplished largely as the Church fulfills its destiny among God's children.

Great truths have been declared in our hearing at this conference; the eternal principles of the gospel have been pronounced with marked and impressive emphasis. I have been built up in my spirit, and stimulated in my resolution to keep the commandments of God, and to do his will; and I am certain that the feeling that has come to my heart has come to the hearts of all those who have heard the inspired words of this conference.

The excellent themes of the gospel, however, can save the souls of men only as they find application in their lives. The spiritual refreshing that we get from a consideration of these great truths cannot be effectual in bringing the exaltation and the glory that we hope for, unless we incorporate them into our lives. I have been thinking, as I have listened to the exposition of these great principles of truth, how it may be possible for the men and women here gathered to disseminate them in such a manner as to bring them home to those who so sorely need them, and upon whom the Church and the country and all depend for advancement and progress.