

A sacred baritone solo, "The Valley of Shadows," was sung by John Robinson.

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

One theme has stood out very prominently, and properly so, in the remarks of most of the speakers who have addressed this conference. That has been the subject of the great vision given to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The previous speaker stated that this is the day of which the ancient prophets spoke. With this I fully agree.

A SCRIPTURE PASSAGE APPLIED TO JOSEPH THE PROPHET.

There is a passage of scripture recorded in the seventh chapter of St. Luke that I shall apply to my remarks this morning. The occasion referred to in this scripture was one following the manifestation of great power on the part of the Son of God when he raised the widow's son from the dead. St. Luke wrote of the event as follows:

And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

And this rumor of him went forth through all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

With all sincerity and in humility I shall apply this scripture to the Prophet of the nineteenth century and dispensation of the fulness of times. There is nothing sacrilegious or improper in this, for I fully believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and is a prophet of God, who received divine approval from the Lord Jesus Christ. And his fame has gone forth throughout all the land, and many people have said, "A prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited his people."

JOSEPH SMITH, THE MESSENGER TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

But the point I wish to make is here: We are living, as all admit, in the latter days, when many people are looking for the coming of the Savior of the world in the clouds of glory. Of necessity, before that day shall come, there must be one sent into the world clothed with authority from on high, and commissioned to establish anew in the earth the fulness of the everlasting gospel as it was in former days. For Christ cannot come to establish the reign of peace until some such messenger appear with authority to prepare the way before him. Therefore, paraphrasing the nineteenth verse, I will apply it as follows: "Art thou, Joseph Smith, he who should come? or look we for another?"

We read in the third chapter of the prophecy of Malachi, where it is written the Lord will send his messenger, and he shall prepare the way before him, "and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his

temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." This does not refer to the former coming when the Lord was born into this world, for we read further, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like a fuller's soap." Every indication is that this refers to his second coming.

The Lord, in the former dispensation, sent a messenger to prepare the way before him, and in this dispensation it was just as necessary that a messenger be sent to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord and the establishment of the reign of peace. If Joseph Smith was not that man, then we must look for another. Now, I say to you, the issue is clear, the line is sharply drawn and there is no occasion for misunderstanding. Either Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and all that he claimed to be, or he was the greatest impostor this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground. You cannot say he was deceived, that he was mistaken, that he believed that he was called of God and thought that he had seen a vision of the Father and the Son but he was in error. He was all he claimed to be, or else he was a base deceiver. To be consistent, either the one view or the other must be taken, in regard to his mission. I repeat, there is no middle ground. Certain writers have attempted to explain the mission of Joseph Smith in that manner, that he was honestly deceived, but the issue is one that is sharp and clear. There is no possibility of his being deceived, and on this issue we are ready to make our stand. I maintain that Joseph Smith was all that he claimed to be. His statements are too positive and his claims too great to admit of deception on his part. No impostor could have accomplished so great and wonderful a work. Had he been such, he would have been detected and exposed and the plan would have failed and come to naught. In the plan of salvation as it was made known through Joseph Smith to the world, there are no flaws. Each part fits perfectly and makes the whole complete. Attacks have been made from the beginning to the present, and yet every one has failed. The world has been unable to place a finger upon anything that is inconsistent, or out of harmony in the revelations to Joseph Smith, with that which has been revealed before, or predicted by the prophets and the Lord himself.

Oh, it is an astonishing thing to me, a remarkable thing, that there could be a doubt in the mind of any man who has made a study of this situation. I cannot comprehend how he could fail to understand the truth, and be impressed with the fact that Joseph Smith was sent into the world to restore that which was lost, the fulness of the everlasting gospel. Now, I say again, if he is not the man who was to come, then we must look for another, for that man must come, if he has not come, to prepare the way before the Lord. The time is growing short, the signs of the times point to that, and there is much that must be done or the words of the prophets shall not be fulfilled. But he was the man, and as the Savior, on this occasion to which I have made reference, sent those messengers back to John filled with information be-

cause of the mighty works which he performed, so the message delivered by Joseph Smith and his works testify of him to all the world that he was called of God. There is no gainsaying it.

Is it not rather a remarkable thing that in every revelation given to Joseph Smith he has been found absolutely in harmony with the scriptures? The Lord, as I have stated, declared through one of his prophets that before his second coming a messenger should be sent to prepare the way and make it straight. You may apply this to John if you will, and it is true. John, the messenger who came to prepare the way before the Lord in the former dispensation, also came in this dispensation as a messenger to Joseph Smith, so it applies, if you wish to apply it so, to John who came as a messenger to prepare the way before the Lord. But I go further and maintain that Joseph Smith was the messenger whom the Lord sent to prepare the way before him. He came and under direction of holy messengers laid the foundation for the kingdom of God and of this marvelous work and a wonder that the world might be prepared for the coming of the Lord.

JOSEPH SMITH FULFILS THE PREDICTION OF THE PROPHETS AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.

Speaking of the marvelous work. Is it not rather remarkable also that Joseph Smith fulfils the prediction made by Isaiah, as recorded in the twenty-ninth chapter of his book, as follows:

For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed;

And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

Wherefore, the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men:

These are almost the exact words spoken by the Savior to Joseph Smith:

Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

This portrays the condition of the world just one hundred years ago when this prophecy was fulfilled. Now, to continue; if Joseph Smith did not introduce that marvelous work and wonder, some one else must come to do it before the Lord will come. He fulfilled the first part of this quotation which refers to words taken from the record of the Book of Mormon, as all who have read Church history know. If this marvelous work was not established by the Lord, through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, then some one must come to do it. This prophecy, as you discover by reading the whole chapter, was to be

fulfilled in the latter times. The world is not looking for any one to come to establish that work. No one claims to have done it, other than Joseph Smith. He fills the bill.

Again, the gospel was to be restored as it was in primitive times, before the coming of the Lord. All will admit, whether they believe in the mission of Joseph Smith or not, that at least there has been a departure from the teachings and the organization which existed in the days of the Savior's ministry and the ministry of the Apostles. That must be, and is, conceded. You cannot find that organization anywhere in the world, and you cannot find those doctrines anywhere except as they have been given through the agency of Joseph Smith. This gospel was to be declared, so John the Revelator has written in the fourteenth chapter and sixth verse of Revelation, by an angel who was to fly through the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, calling on them to repent for the hour of judgment is come. Nobody else, except Joseph Smith, ever claimed that an angel did fly and did appear to him with this message, and he was commissioned to send it forth to all the world.

Joseph Smith declared that he, with Oliver Cowdery, his companion, received the keys of the gathering of Israel. No one else ever claimed to have had them revealed to him. If Joseph Smith did not receive them, then some one must be empowered with this authority before the coming of the Lord. For Israel is to be gathered, and it must be by authority given to some one. Israel is being gathered, which indicates that Joseph Smith must have held those keys. Malachi has said that the Lord would send Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. The Prophet Joseph Smith said he (Elijah) came to him and Oliver Cowdery with the keys of that power. If he did not, and they have told a falsehood, then Elijah must come before the great day of the Lord, or the earth will be smitten with a curse. No one, save Joseph Smith, has claimed that these keys have been revealed. No one else knew what was meant by this passage of scripture. The hearts of the children are turned to their fathers, as Malachi predicted would be the case, after the coming of Elijah. This indicates that Elijah has come and it must have been to Joseph Smith.

So I might go on with many other predictions in the scriptures. You may search from the beginning to the end, all the revelations given to Joseph Smith in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price, which contain a message to the world from the Lord, and you will find that in every instance they are in harmony and agree with the revelations of other times. You will discover that in all things Joseph Smith fills the bill, he fits into the niche which was to be occupied by the messenger who was to come to prepare the way before the coming of Jesus Christ. No one else has claimed to be that man. Why, then, should we not heed his mission? I say to you, I believe with all my heart, I know it to be true. Two themes stand out uppermost always in my mind. That Jesus Christ is

the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet called and appointed to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times. That is my message to the world, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ANTHONY W. IVINS

My brethren and sisters, I earnestly desire an interest in your faith and prayers during the few moments that I stand before you this morning, for I feel that I need it.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE LAST GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

All during the proceedings of this conference, as I have listened to the remarks of my brethren who have preceded me, I have been thinking of the one outstanding incident of interest to the Church, which has been so often referred to: that one hundred years, approximately, have elapsed since the ushering in of this the greatest, the most important gospel dispensation that the world has ever known. Prophets of old looked forward to it, prayed that they might see it, and participate in its activities. The Apostle Paul said: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, * * * having made known to us the mystery of his will * * * that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."

There have been other dispensations in which the gospel has been brought to earth, all of which have been of great importance to the people: that of the meridian of time, when the Redeemer ministered in person, being, without doubt, of greater fundamental worth than any which came before or will follow after, for the redemption of the human family depended upon the atonement which he made, by which we are redeemed from the fall and made heirs with him to the kingdom of his Father. But the great work which he commenced, the glorious triumph of right over wrong, of light over darkness, the fulfilment of the words of all of the ancient prophets, the consummation of the purposes of the Lord, and the redemption of his covenant people, is left for the dispensation in which we live. Proper conclusions can only be drawn by comparison. If there were no tall people, there would be none short. If there were no short people, there would be none tall. If there were no clouds, as there are today, we would not appreciate the sunshine; and if there were no sunshine we would be happy, I suppose, with the clouds.

THE DISPENSATION OF THE MERIDIAN OF TIME, AND THE FULNESS OF TIME COMPARED.

So, as we contemplate the events of the past century, we naturally compare our experiences, our accomplishments, our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures, with those that others had before us. While