

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

(Of the First Council of Seventy)

One week ago today Easter was being observed throughout all of the Christian countries in commemoration of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think, perhaps, this event could not be commemorated at a more appropriate time when all nature is bursting into a newness of life after the deadness of the cold winter months. But I think it would be better if the date were fixed definitely on some particular day, instead of being movable as now, ranging all the way from the 22nd of March to some time in April. I like to think that Christ's resurrection really occurred on the 6th of April. I don't know whether such is the case or not. Christmas is another day that we are pleased to celebrate in commemoration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I do not think that there are any two events that have transpired in the history of this world that ought to be commemorated more than these particular two, and I like to think that both events occurred on the 6th day of April, the very day upon which the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, just ninety-three years ago.

But, be that as it may, it doesn't make so much difference on what day we may choose to commemorate these important events that have taken place in the history of the world, in the coming of our Savior and in his glorious resurrection. But the all-important thing is this, that we do sense the importance of these events themselves, and that we have an abiding faith in their purport and believe with all our souls that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, and is therefore the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is also important to believe that during his lifetime he promulgated the plan of life and salvation, and taught the children of men as no one else has ever taught them the glorious principles of eternal life. It is also important that we should believe with all our souls that he gave his life as a ransom for the sins of the whole world, and that his precious blood was spilled as a means of saving mankind from the fall. It is also important that we shall believe with all our souls that on the third day he rose from the dead and overcame death and the grave, and became the first fruits of the resurrection. These are the important things: The observance of these two holy days in commemoration of our Savior's marvelous birth of the Virgin Mary, and his miraculous resurrection from the dead, is quite general throughout all Christian lands and among the various so-called Christian churches. Is it not, therefore, most remarkable, indeed astonishing, that many adherents of these churches, while celebrating the days with great enthusiasm, are losing their faith in the events themselves, even denying the immaculate conception, the divinity of Christ, and the reality of his glorious resurrection; and that prominent ministers of these churches making such denials should be applauded and permitted to retain their pulpits. Surely the time has come, spoken of by Paul in his epistle to

Timothy, "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears," etc.

What a wonderful thing is life! Things that live are very different from things that are dead, such as rocks, minerals, gold, silver, copper, etc. Things that live, "move and have a being," they take nourishment, they grow and they die. In these characteristics they differ from things that have no life. Biologists in their endeavors to solve the problem of life have put forth many theories that have had a tendency to undermine the faith of some, while strengthening the faith of others, and while many interesting and valuable observations have been made relative to evolution, at the end of all their investigations they find themselves just as far as at the beginning from understanding the real problem of life itself; and in their published works, it is usually admitted that "we do not know the origin of life." What is this thing that they call life? We see it manifest, the world is teeming with life. It is here upon the surface of the earth; we find it in the air only for a few thousand feet up into it, and a few hundred feet down into the interior of the earth and out in the oceans, teeming with life, but beyond these limitations they know of no such thing as life. And this world upon which we live teeming thus with life, at one time we are told was a molten mass, that the heat was so intense that nothing could live on its surface or anywhere about it. All things were dead, could not live. The things that are dead differ from the things that live. Things that live have motion. It may only be a blade of grass moving its little roots down into the soil, or it may be a creeping insect, or the animalculae that we cannot behold with the natural eye, or it may be in the beasts of the field, or it may be man, but life is everywhere apparent in the world. They can not account for it. It is preposterous to suppose that there is such a thing as spontaneous generation.

Then, whence came life? The answer is in the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and all things that in them are. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." I know, as I know that I live, that God lives and that he is my life, for in him I live and move and have my being, and without him I could not live, nor could anyone else live. He, then, is life. Does that correspond with the testimony of the Savior? You will remember when Lazarus died and Jesus heard of it, and came, Martha said to him: "Master, if you had been here he had not died," and the Savior said: "I am the resurrection and the life, and he that believeth on me; though he were dead, yet shall he live. Believeth thou this?" he said to Martha. "Yes, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Do you believe that, Latter-day Saints? That is the faith that we should have. He, then, is the resurrection and the life.

We live because of God, and without him there would be no life. Does that not also correspond with the revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith? I quote from Doctrine & Covenants 88:15, 16, 17: "And the

spirit and the body are the soul of man. And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul. And the redemption of the soul is through him who quickeneth all things." By whom then came this redemption? Not by you or me; oh, no, but through him who quickeneth all things—who causes the grass to grow and everything to bloom, and all this teeming life to be and live. He is the author of life itself; he is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe that? Latter-day Saints believe it. It is inscribed in their own hearts; it is in the faith that we have received through the restoration of the gospel and the witness of the Spirit that we have received by the laying on of hands. Then let us live so that we may enjoy the sweet companionship of God's holy Spirit that bears witness to the truth of what I have said, and God help us to believe it with all our souls, and commemorate these holy days and seasons in the full faith that God lives and that he sent his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but obtain eternal life, which I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER J. GOLDEN KIMBALL

(Of the First Council of Seventy)

To begin with, if the brethren and sisters desire me to run smoothly and make no breaks, it will be advisable to keep awake until I finish my speech, as it requires exceeding great faith to put into practice what you preach, and it calls for much faith to believe what you teach. For me to be my natural self is somewhat dangerous, and to be original would cause the very air to resound with criticism. I fully realize that brevity, and to the point, should be added to the virtues. Horace Greeley used to say that the way to write a good editorial was to write it to the best of your ability, then cut it in two in the middle and print the last half. I am going to follow this suggestion.

Brevity, and to the point has been the instructions given by President Grant. This counsel has been adhered to and is unusual and very gratifying. There have been many speakers and the Spirit of the Lord has been given to men who are not included among the general authorities of the Church, which is very encouraging to the people. I do not think as a people we have any special use for presidents of stakes, or bishops of wards, who are not directed by inspiration. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we cannot fill our appointments.

I have been thinking of a subject for a considerable length of time, and I have the idea fixed and fastened in my mind. If we as Latter-day Saints will do our own thinking and search the revelations of the Lord, it will help us out of many of our difficulties. Therefore, I ask that you give careful consideration to some of the ideas I wish to convey. Elder B. H. Roberts has lately published a tract, for use in the Eastern States mission, entitled: *The Lord Hath Spoken*. The contents of this pamphlet is very interesting and instructive, as I have read it.

Many testimonies have been given during the conference by the