

time. Therefore, away with all attempts to fix times for the Lord. But he has told us that the time of his advent is near; and it is over a hundred years nearer than it was when he spake first to his prophet in this dispensation. I pray that we be prepared, and that we be found ready for the consummation of the ages, the coming of the Lord in his might and majesty to rule and reign. I ask this in his name, Amen.

### ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

I feel dependent this morning upon the Spirit of the Lord to guide me, in what I shall say. Nor is this an uncommon feeling, for when I stand before the people I have a spirit of timidity and feel my weakness.

#### EVENTS OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

A number of the speakers have referred to topics in relation to those most important events which occurred one hundred years ago, and I desire to add one or two thoughts in this direction. In the year 1820, when the declaration was made to Joseph Smith by the Father and the Son that the truth was about to be restored, that youth was fourteen years of age. Nevertheless his story created a good deal of consternation and ridicule in the world, and brought upon him much criticism, and even persecution. It seems to the world a strange thing, and an impossible thing, that the Lord would call upon a youth, inexperienced, untrained, lacking in the education of the world, to stand at the head of any great marvelous work; and also a very strange thing that any one with such a common name as Joseph Smith should be called. When the elders go forth to preach the Gospel, and bear witness and testimony to the truth of his words, the people, in ridicule, state: "Surely the Lord would not call upon anyone by that name. It is so common." It did not have even the aristocratic "y" in it. (Smyth). I suppose the Lord desired to try the faith of the people, at any rate we do know that his ways are not the ways of men. Perhaps, if Joseph Smith had been named Martin Luther, or John Calvin, or John Knox, or John Wesley, or some other John, it might have had more weight with the disbelieving world. But to be an ordinary, common, every-day Smith was more than they could stand. And yet this is the way the Lord works. The world, I suppose, has an idea that anyone with such a name, if he has any qualifications whatever, those qualifications would be what the name might suggest—the qualifications of brawn and muscle, and not of spirituality and intelligence.

#### JOSEPH SMITH'S CONTRIBUTION TO SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

It has been stated here this morning that Joseph Smith gave to the world the greatest contribution in civil government that the world has ever known since the days of our Redeemer, and I can

testify that likewise he has added, or given a contribution to the world in spiritual thought, and religious government, that is greater than anything that has been given to the world since the days of our Redeemer.

No matter if his name is common, the youth, young and uneducated, and untrained in the things of the world, I am fully in accord with the expressions and sentiment, recorded in that beautiful hymn by President John Taylor, one verse of which I shall read because it appeals to me, and we so seldom hear it sung.

"Of noble seed, of heavenly birth,  
He came to bless the sons of earth;  
With keys by the Almighty given,  
He opened the full rich stores of heaven;  
O'er the world that was wrapped in sable night,  
Like the sun, he spread his golden light;  
He strove, O, how he strove to stay  
The stream of crime in its reckless way;  
With a mighty mind and a noble aim,  
He urged the wayward to reclaim:  
'Mid foaming billows of angry strife,  
He stood at the helm of the ship of life."

And so I recognize him as the one who stood by appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ at the helm of the ship of life, possessed of the Priesthood, clothed in power and authority to establish the work of the Lord for the last time, that men might be brought to repentance, might have the opportunity, the privilege of embracing righteousness and truth and finding salvation in the kingdom of God.

#### WITNESSES TESTIFY TO JOSEPH'S WONDERFUL MANIFESTATIONS

Now just one other thought: If this young man had come before the world declaring his testimony, bearing witness to the wonderful manifestations of the power of the Lord as made known to him in marvelous vision, and had stood alone, then there might be some question raised in regard to that statement or testimony; but in keeping with the work of the Lord and the promises that he has made from the beginning that all things shall be established by witnesses, others were called to testify, to bear witness with Joseph Smith that the things of which he spoke and of which they spoke were true.

#### ANCIENT PROPHECY FULFILLED

In the revelations given anciently by a prophet of the Lord who lived upon this continent, the promise was made that the word of the Lord, as recorded in that early day, should be preserved to come forth in this age of the world's history as a testimony unto the world that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ. Nephi says of that which he wrote and that which should be written by the prophet succeeding him:

"Wherefore, these things shall go from generation to generation as long as the earth shall stand; and they shall go according to the will and

pleasure of God; and the nations who shall possess them shall be judged of them according to the words which are written.

"For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved after all we can do.

"And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins."

And then still prophesying in relation to these things which are written Nephi says:

"Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!"

Again, in relation to this record, he says:

"And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.

"And behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

"Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them."

And we may judge that we are still living in the days of wickedness and abomination, because the things which were sealed have not yet been delivered to the world, nor have they been delivered to the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In relation to this matter, Mormon writes, as we find it in the 26th Chapter of the Third Book of Nephi, as follows:

"And when they," that is, the people who live now, "shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

"And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation."

#### ARE WE PREPARED FOR NEW REVELATION?

We have not prepared ourselves yet to receive the things which were sealed, and which the prophet was not privileged to interpret and to publish—to our condemnation, to our shame, and to the condemnation of all the world. To our shame, I say, because we have not learned through our study, our faith and our perseverance, these lesser things which have been given and have been revealed, contained in the record now made manifest to us, known as the Book of Mormon, and it behooves us as Latter-day Saints to follow the counsels, the advice, and the teachings of the gospel as revealed in this record and in other records. These letters referred to by President Grant, given through the Prophet Joseph Smith from the Lord, contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, we must study, master that which they con-

tain; that is, make it a part of our lives, and keep the commandments, and live in accord with every word that has been revealed from the mouth of God, and if we will not do it, those other things cannot be given unto us—to our condemnation.

Oh my brethren and sisters, let us keep the commandments of the Lord, honor him and his word, be faithful and endure in all things to the end, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER CHARLES W. NIBLEY

*(Presiding Bishop of the Church.)*

I have been attending conference in this tabernacle pretty regularly since the year 1867. That is fifty-six years. I can say with entire sincerity that, during all those years I never attended a better opening service of the conference than we had yesterday forenoon, which was the opening session of this conference. Never was the power of presidency, the power and spirit of the Holy Ghost, the power of God, made more plainly manifest to the congregation of the Saints than in that meeting yesterday morning. So, also, in each of our meetings we have had a rich outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord.

As Latter-day Saints, we are not by any means what we ought to be in respect to living our religion, and keeping the commandments of God; and yet, I believe that, in the main the Lord approves of the work and labors of his faithful Saints. I am glad to report that the tithes of the people have increased a little over what they were a year ago at this time, and that the people seem to be more faithful in observing that law and paying their tithes while they have the means to pay, monthly, or at any season, whenever the means comes into their hands. They seem to be more faithful in honoring the Lord by contributing to this work in the payment of their tithes.

This work is growing and it is a power in the land; a power for good and not for evil. It is an agency of peace and good will. It labors with me and with you through the teachers of the wards and in other ways, to have peace in our homes; peace in the family. And that, I say, is a good thing, for, after all, the home is the foundation of civil society; of civilization itself; and there is no organization in the world, that I know of, that so labors with humankind, with its membership individually and collectively, so that we may have peace and good will and good order and good government, as this organization does. It is quite true, as Elder Stephen L. Richards has stated to us this morning, that this organization called "Mormonism," is a distinct and an added contribution to the stability and permanency of our civil government. It is not an organization in opposition to any government, or to any church, for that matter, for we are commanded here in the book of revelations which were given through the prophet Joseph Smith, to contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil, which means that we should contend against