

"These sayings are true and faithful; wherefore, transgress them not, neither take therefrom.

"Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, and I come quickly. Amen."

TAKE TO HEART THE DUTY OF TEACHING FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

I pray that the parents who are within the sound of my voice, and those who may read in the conference reports, or in our papers, what I say, may take to heart the duty that devolves upon them under a commandment from the Lord Almighty to teach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to their children, that they shall pray and walk uprightly. That the Lord may help us to rear our beloved children in the nurture and admonition of the gospel, and in a love of God and of our Redeemer, and that each and every soul who has a testimony of the divinity of this work may live the gospel in uprightness, in virtue, and in truth, that their lives may preach the truth to those with whom they come in contact, is my prayer, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. PENROSE

This is not the first time in my life that I have been taken by surprise. I felt quite content to sit on the stand here this morning and listen to the words of inspiration that have fallen from the lips of President Heber J. Grant, feeling that he would occupy most, if not all, of the time. I take great pleasure in bearing testimony to the truth of the things that he has uttered. Perhaps there is no need for that. I believe that that testimony is in the hearts of this vast congregation this morning. I enjoyed every word the President has uttered. I know that what he has said and read and testified of is true, and it came to us this morning in the life and power and spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed to us in these last days. I enjoy meetings of this kind and teachings of this kind. They are more to my heart and soul than learned disquisitions of any kind.

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL TO THE NATIONS

I rejoice in this gospel which the Lord has revealed for the salvation of the human family. I have labored in this Church for a good many years, and feel very thankful in my soul this morning that the Lord has preserved me to the extent that I have been able to labor up to the present time, notwithstanding the weaknesses and frailties of human nature, and the burdens, so to speak, of old age. God be praised for all his goodness to me, and to this people who are gathered here from many lands. What a great thing it is to look upon this congregation this morning and consider what God has already wrought; then to lift up the curtain and look to that which is coming and see something of that which will be in the future. This congregation is representative of the Church which is now occupying many lands.

When the angel that John the Revelator saw in the vision was to come to the earth bearing the everlasting gospel, it was to be preached to "every nation and kindered and tongue and people," and they were to be called with a loud voice to "fear God and keep his commandments, for the hour of his judgment has come," and to "worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters." That is a commandment to us. John heard the voice in the vision, and it has been echoed again in the last days, for the Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith that this was the work of his servants. That which the Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith stands to-day as the duty of this people, gathering from afar in fulfilment of what Isaiah and Micah, the prophets of old, saw in their visions. They saw that the people of this Church would come from all parts of the earth into the tops of the mountains, and that here should be "the mountain of the Lord's house," and the people would say: "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; And the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many nations, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and the time shall come when the sword shall not be lifted up any more; but the people will serve the Lord and walk in his ways, and prepare for the coming of their King; even Jesus the Christ."

THE COMING OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

What a blessing it is to be privileged to look upon this body of people this morning gathered in from the various nations of the earth who have come up here, not merely to better their temporal condition, but to learn the ways of God and walk in his paths, and to prepare the way for the coming of the great King, Jesus of Nazareth—once of humble birth, but who now will come in glory to the earth. This is our work, my brethren and sisters, to serve the Lord, to learn his ways, to walk in his paths, that the law may go forth from Zion, and that nations afar off may be so influenced that they will cast away their weapons of war, and turn them into weapons of peace, and prepare for the coming of the great King who is the Prince of Peace.

WE ARE HERE TO SERVE THE LORD

I have had the privilege and joy and duty, for several years, of laboring in this cause, at home and abroad, and for this great honor I do thank and praise the Lord this morning. When I think of how the Lord has blessed and sustained me at home and abroad, and lifted up the veil from my eyes, and given me to see the things of his Kingdom, I praise him with all my heart. I rejoice in knowing that there are so many good men and women gathered from afar, and their children coming up after them, who are here for that great purpose; not merely to gather riches, not merely to make the desert blossom like

the rose, not merely to subdue the elements and bring them into subjection, but to serve the Lord, to learn what he wants done, and then to do it with all their might and mind and strength. This is what the Lord said he wanted the people to do when they gathered into Jackson county, in Missouri, to endeavor to prepare the way for the coming of the great King and to fulfil the predictions of the Prophets and perform the great work of redemption for the living and the dead, which God had marked out for this great dispensation. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy might, and with all thy strength, and in the name of Jesus Christ, thou shalt serve him." That was the first great commandment to the people gathered, to the spot designed for Zion. The Lord made some great predictions there to the people, and that were contingent upon their doing this. The President has read some things that the Lord revealed at that time, which the people were to do. Go up unto the house of prayer on this my holy day. That was one of the things that we were to do. The rest of the commandments there and the blessings that he said should come upon the people were predicated upon their doing these things; and here is a truth that should be always present and clear to the minds of the Latter-day Saints: that the blessings which are promised them, whether it be in holy ordinances or in the words of the servants of God, or in the revelations direct from the Most High, they are all predicated upon this great thing; that we shall do the things which are commanded.

BLESSINGS PREDICATED UPON SERVING THE LORD

Every blessing that is pronounced upon us, whether in the temples of the Lord or elsewhere, is predicated upon our obedience to the commandments. Even in the Word of Wisdom, we are told there that we shall receive certain blessings if we observe certain rules, if we abstain from certain things that are not good for us. And then it says: And they shall receive these promises, if they also "keep the commandments." These are to be learned and obeyed, and it is our duty to teach them to our children as we have heard this morning. Now, do not forget this: A great many promises have been made concerning things to be done in Zion, but unless we keep the commandments of God and perform the duties God has placed upon our shoulders, we cannot claim the blessings. The Lord says he promises, and people do not obey, and then he revokes, and they receive not the blessings. What? Is it possible that God revokes? Yes; he says so. Commandments are given and revoked—what for? Because the people who were to observe the commandments do not observe them, and are not worthy or prepared to receive the blessings.

In the 34th section of the Doctrine and Covenants we read of some things the Lord commanded to the people at that time, in that place. They have not yet come to pass. He has stated there, these things shall be done in that "generation."

THE LENGTH OF A GENERATION

Speaking of the word generation, I may make a remark or two that perhaps, will be timely because of some notions some of our brethren entertain in regard to this point. What do you mean when you speak of a generation? Do you mean some particular period of time? Not generally, the word does not mean that. You do not find it to mean that, if you search the dictionary. What do you mean by generation? Well, you take the Bible and you can begin by reading: These are the generations of Adam; these are the generations of Seth; and these are the generations of Noah after the flood. Does that refer to some particular period of time—one hundred years, as some of our brethren interpret it? No, it means the posterity, the generations, the families, the children that were to come. The generations of Adam, some of them, lived hundreds of years, not merely one hundred years.

I remember that in the old Doctrine and Covenants, the edition with which I was most familiar, Elder Orson Pratt, of the council of the Twelve Apostles, who separated the book into verses, and made a great many footnotes, had one footnote which said most positively that a generation did not expire in one hundred years. Well, a notion has got into the heads of some of our brethren that it does mean just one hundred years, because, in the Book of Mormon we read of certain events that were to occur within four hundred years, and then, in another place, that they were to be in the fourth generation. Well, Brother Pratt said, it does not expire in a hundred years, and he had studied the matter from a philological standpoint. Now what I am referring to is this: a few of our brethren, some of them men of importance, declare that one hundred years from the date of that revelation, which is in the 84th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, all those things that are there spoken of must be fulfilled. Well now, the Lord in that revelation sometimes says a thing shall be, when he is giving it by way of commandment. Sometimes the word is used in the way of a prediction, but in this very matter that I am referring to, we read in the 124th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants that God gave it by way of commandment—"I gave a commandment to my people that they should build a house unto me," building it in that generation in a certain place, pointed out by the finger of God to the Prophet Joseph who dedicated it. Now in the 124th Section the Lord declares that that was a commandment, the people were to build the house at that place in that generation. If you will read carefully the revelations I speak of now, you will find that the Lord refers particularly to this very requirement in regard to Jackson county, Missouri, and he declares that the people there were commanded to build a house to him at that time, and on that spot. But their enemies came upon them and prevented them from doing that which the Lord commanded them, and therefore the Lord accepted their offering. The Lord lays down there a principle which it is well for us to understand. The Lord says that

whenever he gives a commandment, no matter what it is about, to the children of men, and they go to with their might and endeavor to fulfil his commandment, and do that which is required of them, and they are prevented by their enemies, or by any other means, from accomplishing it, he does not require it any more at their hands. He accepts of their offering. That has applied in the past, and will apply in the future, and we should remember it. If God gives a commandment, and we do not obey it, why he revokes it, and he revokes the blessings. If he gives us a commandment to do certain things, and we find ourselves unable to do them, either by restricted laws or any other obstacles in the way of physical force, the Lord requires them no more but accepts our offering, and he will visit his wrath and indignation upon those who prevent his people from accomplishing that which he required at their hands.

NO DATE SET FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

Now that is worth understanding, so that the idea that is prevailing, or that some have endeavored to establish, that in about six or seven years what they call the "winding up scene" will take place; that everything will take place to finish up the work in that time. That is a mistake; that is all there is to it. And so we need not be deceived at any time by the notions and opinions of men in regard to times and dates of things that are to occur.

There are a quite a number of people, who set the date to the time of the coming of the Savior. Only recently I have heard of such testimonies being borne in some of our fast meetings. That is all wrong; that should not be done. The Lord has not, at any time, so far as I am aware, in all my searchings in the revelations that have come to the earth, set a date for the coming of the Savior to reign on the earth. He said when he was upon the earth that he did not know, and even the angels of heaven did not know. When Joseph the Prophet tried to find out the Lord did not answer his question directly, but told him if he lived to a certain time he should behold the face of his Redeemer. So my brethren and sisters, do not be deceived by any means in regard to this setting of dates for the fulfilment of certain predictions. The Apostle Paul had to say to the Saints in his day that they were not to be deceived by any means as to the day of the coming of the Son of man, "for," said he, "let no man deceive you by word or by speech or by letter as from us; as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first."

Do you see that the people were led away then, as sometimes now, by these ideas and notions that prevailed for a while?

LET US PERFORM OUR DUTY AND THE BLESSINGS ARE SURE

Now what we need to do, my brethren and sisters, is to do the work that we are gathered here for. God has brought us from many

lands. There are people in this congregation that I have known in foreign countries, where I have labored, and I rejoice that they are here. I rejoice with all my heart. I rejoice that God is doing this grand work of gathering his Israel from the nations of the earth, bringing them to Zion and clothing them with the power of his Holy Priesthood. It is with us today, that power and influence and spirit of this gospel. It is with our President. It does my heart good to hear the sound of his voice, knowing that it penetrates throughout this congregation, and that it finds an echo in the souls of the Latter-day Saints. I am glad that my brethren laboring in the various missions can come here and hear the sound of his voice and feel the ardor and strength of his presence and carry it away with them to their respective fields of labor. And so with the presidents of stakes, the bishops of wards; it is a splendid thing to come here and have our souls refreshed in this way. The Lord's spirit is here, and his power is here, and the authority and keys of the Holy Priesthood, revealed in former times to Peter James and John, and brought to the earth in latter days to the Prophet Joseph and to Oliver Cowdery; those keys are with us today and that is the point that we should understand; that today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, receive the word today, find out the duties of today through the living oracles, perform these duties, the blessings are sure to come. "Search these things," the Lord said, as the President read them. They are true and faithful and they will be fulfilled. I know that they have been fulfilled hitherto in my own experience. God has been with me wherever I have been sent to labor in his cause, and wherever I have done my duty, and I have tried to do it, for a good many years, with all my might and soul and strength, his power has been upon me, the light of the Lord has shone upon my understanding, and I have seen the things of the kingdom afar off.

A REMINISCENCE AND A TESTIMONY

Years and years ago, laboring and traveling without purse or scrip, in poverty so to speak, in weariness and labor, without a place to lay my head—that I very seldom refer to, because they were times of very great trial—in those days the Lord was with me, and the song of Zion was in my heart; his strength, his salvation, was my daily portion. I have had pointed out to me, during the last few weeks, an article that I wrote for the *Millennial Star* about sixty-five years ago. It was published in the *Millennial Star* on Sept. 10, 1859, and in that I was able to portray, as I saw, the things that were coming upon this generation, this wicked and perverse generation of people, and I have looked up the *Star* and read the article, and it has done me good to be able to see the fulfilment of the things that God made plain to my soul those many years ago; that when I was laboring in the mission field at different periods his spirit and his power have been upon me, and the testimony of Zion has been in my heart, and I rejoice and praise the Lord this morning that I am still able to bear testimony that God, the

great Creator, is our Father, the Father of our spirits, and that he has sent us on the earth at the right time, in the right place; and upon many of us he has given authority and the Holy Priesthood to minister for him. I know that is true, I know that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Son of the Eternal Father. He himself has declared that he was the First-born. How long ago that took place I do not know. I do not think anybody does know. We haven't heard the story, fully, of the early existence, the pre-existence of our Savior, nor of our own. We imagine a great many things concerning what we were and what we agreed to do and what we promised, but they only amount to our thoughts and ideas. One certain thing is this: that we are here, born on the earth in the latter days for the purposes of God; and he has led our footsteps here to these mountain valleys, and he has made our feet fast around about these hills, and the things that he has promised us will all be fulfilled if we will do our duty, if we will learn his word today and keep his commandments now, and teach them to our children, our generations will rise up and call us blessed.

HANG ON AND KEEP FAST HOLD OF THE TRUTH

I am glad to meet with you, my brethren and sisters, today in this great congregation, and I am proud to know that you were my brothers and sisters in the spirit world, and in the gospel kingdom on the earth in the latter days, and that we are bound together by sacred covenants which we should observe always and remember what we are. I meet with a good many of our young boys and girls when they come back from serving as missionaries. I am always glad to meet them, and I advise them to hang on, and keep fast hold of the truth, and advise them to be sure and work today, not to leave what they have done in the past and then go astray, but to continue in the way of righteousness and always be ministers, missionaries, at home and abroad; for they are called by the Almighty to help in this great Latter-day work which will go on to a glorious consummation.

GOD BE WITH YOU

I thank God for this privilege of bearing this humble testimony today, and praise him with all my soul for all his goodness and kindness and protecting care to me, and for all his providences and manifestations of his power to me. I praise him with all my heart, and in the midst of the congregation I say: Blessed be his name, forever. It always will be, no matter what I say or do, and his blessings will be ours, and upon you, my brethren, laboring in the ministry at home, or sent to minister abroad. God will be with you, and therein will be your strength. It will not be in worldly learning nor worldly riches, it will be in the revelations of the Holy Ghost to your souls, the power of your ministry, in the spirit of it. And in that you shall have joy in that you shall have success, and God will open up your way and

the increases that we have heard about this morning will continue and go on and be augmented.

THIS WORK ONWARD AND UPWARD FOREVER

This work is onward and upward, and it will be forever and ever. It will not be taken away from the earth again, it is here to stay. It will abide. It will prevail. It will overcome all its foes, all its obstacles, all its difficulties, and the Lord will inspire his servants, as he raises them up for the peculiar and special work in which they are to be engaged, and he will give them success therein as he has done with our brethren who have passed away, and our brother who has spoken to us this morning. He is our President and leader and the man holding the keys of the sealing ordinances in the last days, and he is our President in very deed. He stands at the head, and if God has anything to reveal to the Church, as a Church, it will be revealed to him as long as he remains on the earth. God be with him. I sustain him with all my heart and soul as the President and leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are witnesses to the truth of all that he has said to us this morning, and to the divine Spirit which has rested upon him.

Now may God's Spirit abide with you, my brethren holding the Priesthood, that you may be able to perform your duties successfully, that you may go forth from this conference, renewed and refreshed and invigorated, to stir up the people to righteousness, to encourage them to be faithful and true and to perform the work for which they have come on the earth. God bless you with all the blessings that your hearts can righteously desire, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN WELLS

(Of the Presiding Bishopric)

It is a great privilege to meet, on occasions like this to hear the word of the Lord from his servants, and to be inspired with new resolves and desires. It gives us all an opportunity to examine ourselves, and to measure our standing in the Church, to see whether we are reaching the ideals the Lord designed us to reach. It enables us to go home with renewed determination to keep his commandments and to honor his name. I am satisfied this is the wish and desire of all who are here to-day.

I thank the Lord with all my heart for the gospel, for the testimonies he has given me, for the privilege of gathering among his people and laboring in his ministry. I desire to serve the Lord, keep his commandments and honor his presiding brethren, and abide by their counsel and advice.

The Lord has called us to labor in his ministry for the establishment of his mighty purposes on the earth, to build up his Church;