

I have been just near enough to "the other side" to sense it most thoroughly, and my one desire is to live to bear testimony of the Truth. I do not testify that the Gospel is true; that would be superfluous—a mere truism. One might as well say that truth is true, or that white is white, as to say that the Gospel is true. Of course it's true, or it wouldn't be the Gospel, which is Truth itself. But I do testify that what is called "Mormonism" is the Gospel—the Everlasting Gospel; that Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior, and that Joseph Smith was and is his prophet, standing at the head of the last and greatest of the gospel dispensations, the mission of which is to gather together all things in Christ and prepare the way before His glorious second coming. I know that this work will go on conquering and to conquer—not with worldly but with spiritual weapons; that nothing can stand against it to impede its progress; and that it never will be smaller or weaker than it is today. Like the little snowball from the mountain-top, gathering as it goes, it will yet become a mighty avalanche, sweeping all evil before it, and fulfilling what the Prophet Daniel spoke concerning it. For it is "the stone cut out without hands" which is destined to grow into "a great mountain" and "fill the whole earth." God speed it on its way! Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

My brethren and sisters, I am sure that the people here assembled, and throughout the stakes of Zion, are rejoicing in the remarkable recovery that has come to Elder Orson F. Whitney. The hand of the Lord has been made manifest in his restoration to health.

This afternoon I need your faith and prayers to assist me in the remarks that I shall make.

WE STAND AS WITNESSES FOR CHRIST

We are living in perilous times, in a day when the mission of the Church is perhaps more pronounced, and our message to the world more clearly defined, than ever before. As a people we stand as witnesses for Christ in a day when the world has turned from him, when they are teaching the doctrines of men and discarding the fundamental truths of the Christian faith.

I have been reflecting, as I have listened to the remarks that were made this morning and this afternoon, and desire to present some of my thoughts, and some thoughts of others uttered by prophecy in ancient times, which are very important to us and which concern very seriously the world and the conditions therein. My thoughts dwelt upon this passage of scripture which was uttered by Nephi almost six hundred years before the birth of Christ, wherein he was speaking of the latter days:

TESTIMONY OF AN ANCIENT PROPHET

"O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and

they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

"But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God.

"But wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world. For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures; wherefore, their treasure is their god. And behold, their treasure shall perish with them also.

"And wo unto the deaf that will not hear; for they shall perish.

"Wo unto the blind that will not see; for they shall perish also."

And then again in one of his discourses in which he spoke by prophecy, he also referred to our day and the conditions that would prevail in the world preceding the coming of Christ.

"For it shall come to pass in that day that the churches which are built up, and not unto the Lord, when the one shall say unto the other: Behold, I, I am the Lord's; and the others shall say: I, I am the Lord's; and thus shall every one say that hath built up churches, and not unto the Lord—

"And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another, and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance.

"And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men."

VIEW OF THE SO-CALLED MODERNISTS

President Clawson this afternoon read to us some views that are expressed today by certain ministers, religionists who call themselves modernists, and they appear to be in the ascendancy; their doctrines are growing, and are finding place in the hearts of the people, and the true doctrines of Christ, and the testimony that Jesus is the Son of God, is diminishing, is dying out in the world. It may be true, as one divine stated, that the Christian Era is at an end, and the Church is in the course of dissolution, if he had reference to the so-called Christian churches of the day; because their doctrine is spurious, it is not the gospel of Jesus Christ, but a man-made system. But Christianity, pure and undefiled, is not in the course of dissolution; it is not dying out, it is becoming more firmly rooted in the earth, and must do so, and shall continue until it shall fill the earth, for so it has been predicted.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY

However, true Christianity, so far as the latter days are concerned, is very young, less than one hundred years of age, for it has only been since the year 1830 that the Church of Jesus Christ has been organized in the earth, and the gospel restored, containing the gifts and the blessings and the graces that existed in the Church in primitive days, and that Church with its doctrines of the gospel of Christ, shall grow.

We are the people who have made covenant with the Lord to

serve him and keep his commandments, and we have received through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that he is indeed the Only Begotten Son of the Father, and that through his blood, which was shed, all men are redeemed from death, all men shall come forth in the resurrection from the dead and live again. In other words, immortality shall come to every soul, for, as Paul has stated it, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "And," said he, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," and so long as there is still in the grave one soul who has tabernacled in the flesh, death has not been conquered. Death shall be conquered, Christ shall gain the victory, and immortality shall come to every soul that has lived upon the earth. And the reason for this is that we were not responsible for death; we did not bring death into the world, and so we are redeemed through the blood of Christ, from that condition, and immortality shall come to us, both the unrighteous as well as the righteous, and all men shall stand again in the flesh to be judged according to their works. But in addition to all this, through the blood of Christ, men are also redeemed from their own sins; but on condition of their repentance and their acceptance of the principles of the gospel. They must believe in him, they must accept him as the Son of God, they must set themselves in harmony with the truth which we call the gospel. They must accept these principles and walk in accordance with them in order that they may be redeemed from their own sins, and thus be prepared to receive something greater than immortality, even eternal life. Eternal life is that kind of life which our Father in heaven possesses. For he who has eternal life must have the kind of life that God has, for he is eternal. And so those who will repent, who will receive the gospel, walking righteously before the Father, shall receive this great reward, and shall have the privilege of entering into his presence and dwelling with him and with his Son, Jesus Christ, where they shall receive a fulness, if they are faithful and true in all things, even unto the end.

OUR MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

Now, I say we are witnesses of the truth. It is the mission of every man holding the priesthood in this Church to preach Christ and him crucified. That is our message to the world; and the message is sorely needed in the face of these false doctrines taught by the power of men. When men are turning from the Lord and seeking to find everlasting truth without his aid, our mission becomes all the more urgent in calling men to repentance and to a belief in the redemption brought to pass through the atonement of the Son of God, whose blood was shed for the sins of the world.

WE BELIEVE IN A LITERAL RESURRECTION

We believe in the literal resurrection of the children of men. President Ruder Clawson read to us the statement that was made by

Matthew, an eye witness of the resurrection of Christ, and many of the Saints who lived before that day, who came forth from the dead after the resurrection of the Son of God. Matthew stated that "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the Saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." This was as literal as Ezekiel said it would be, so far as the resurrection of the bodies from the graves was concerned, there can be no mistake about that. Christ was the first fruits, and afterwards those who believed on him, and eventually all men shall come forth.

It is our message and our mission to the world, to preach this truth, and to establish faith in the hearts of the people, and endeavor to get them to believe in Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and as the Son of God.

I would like to refer to one or two other passages of Scripture bearing upon this point of the resurrection. Ezekiel, one of the prophets of old, was commanded by the Lord in a vision to prophesy. In the vision he was taken out into a valley of dry bones, and they were very dry, and the Lord asked him the question: "Son of man, can these bones live?" And Ezekiel answered, "Thou knowest." So the Lord said to him:

"Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

"Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

"And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

"So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and beheld a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone,

"And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them.

"Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live."

Now the world would tell you that this did not mean those who were dead literally, but those who were dead in sins, who, because of transgression, had been cut off from the Lord; but the Lord is very specific for we read further:

"So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off from our parts.

"Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

"And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves."

So the Lord was very definite in regard to this matter. There is no mistake about the definiteness of the language at all.

Isaiah, speaking of the resurrection, had this to say, in reference to Israel especially:

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

Hosea has also testified as follows:

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

MODERN TESTIMONY OF THE RESURRECTION

And so have prophesied others of the ancient prophets; and so have testified the witnesses of the New Testament; but in addition to all these we have the witnesses who have lived in our own day. We are not in doubt, the Lord has not left us helpless to grope without the light. We have had in our midst, those who have beheld heavenly beings, messengers who have been sent to reveal the truth, who have passed through the resurrection; who have come forth from the dead, and are alive again. Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris, and others, have testified to the world that they have been in the presence of beings who have come forth from the dead, through the resurrection. These personages lived anciently, and came to the earth again to establish the truth of the everlasting gospel. And the witnesses unto whom they came have testified to all the world that these things are true—that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world, and the first fruits of the resurrection. This testimony is binding on all the world, for these men are reliable witnesses. Men may say they do not believe it; they may say there is no truth in it, but the fact remains that in bearing witness of these truths, the witnesses have complied with the law, and their testimony is now binding on all men. In the mouths of as many witnesses as seemeth good, God has established the truth of all things, and all who reject the testimony of these witnesses do so at the peril of losing their own salvation, for God will not be mocked.

I testify that I know these things are true, and you who are assembled here know they are true. That is our mission and testimony, I repeat, unto all the world, to bear witness and cry repentance, that men may be brought to repentance and receive a remission of their sins through obedience to the principles of the gospel. May the truth spread and righteousness prevail, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang, "The time is far spent, there is little remaining."

Elder Joseph B. White, President of the Hyrum stake of Zion, offered the closing prayer, and the conference adjourned until 10 o'clock Saturday morning.