

will continue to bless those whom he has called to preside in this great and important work, from the President of the Church to the least and last one who is or who may be called; whether to labor at home or abroad; for this is God's work and not the work of man or men, and it will roll forth even as Daniel declared when he interpreted the great king's dream that it should in time fill the whole earth.

May God bless you in your homes, may he continue to be mindful of you in your labors, that you may be honest with him in all of the possessions and blessings that come to you, that you may remember the Lord—whether in poverty or wealth, it matters not. The Lord will require only a certain amount from each of us. Let us be true and honest and faithful to the end. I pronounce upon you, my brethren and sisters, and upon the Church, the blessings of the Lord, the blessings of Jesus Christ, for this is his Church, and his blessings will continue with his Church and with his people. I pray that his mercies may continue to attend us, and for his spirit to inspire those who speak and pray and sing, and take other parts in this conference, that we may be encouraged and built up in our faith to return to our homes and abiding places after this conference, inspired and blessed and comforted and sustained to serve God and keep his commandments, and work out his mighty purposes according to his will as it has been made known to us, and may the peace and blessing of the Almighty be upon you all, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Elder Orson F. Whitney, will be our next speaker. We all rejoice in the recovery of Brother Whitney's health. On account of being in Europe for some time, he has not had many privileges of speaking to us. He will occupy the balance of the time.

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

THE MARVELOUS WORK AND WONDER

Seven hundred years before the birth of the Savior, a Prophet of God upon the Eastern hemisphere proclaimed the coming forth of a marvelous work and wonder. The reason for its coming forth was given by the Lord through that Prophet as follows:

"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 toward me is taught by the precept of men:

"Therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—Isaiah 29:13, 14.

The angel Moroni, who appeared to Joseph Smith on the night

of the 21st of September, one hundred and one years ago, cited this prediction, among others, as relating to the Lord's work in latter days. He identified those words of Isaiah with the movement which the world now calls "Mormonism."

FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

And what could be more wonderful, more marvelous, than the basic facts upon which "Mormonism" rests?—beginning with the appearance of the Father and the Son to a boy fourteen years of age, announcing the opening of a new Gospel dispensation; then the coming of an angel to reveal the hidden past and future of the American continents, as set forth in that ancient record, the Book of Mormon, containing also the fulness of the everlasting gospel; the coming of another angel, John the Baptist, to confer upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the Aaronic Priesthood, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; the visitation of three other heavenly messengers, the Apostles Peter, James and John, delivering the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the power to bestow the Holy Ghost upon those baptized in the right manner and by the proper authority. By virtue of these priesthoods this Church was organized, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (April 6, 1830), and thus was lifted the ensign for the gathering of scattered Israel, the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that they might be ready to meet their God and King, who is coming to reign literally upon the earth. Subsequently came Moses, to restore the keys of the gathering, to authorize the assembling of the House of Israel; then Elias, repeating the promise made to Abraham, that in him and in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed—a promise fulfilled in the coming of Christ through the lineage of the Hebrew patriarchs, and in the dispersion of Israel among all nations, so that the blood that believes, that has faith in the true God, might be sprinkled over the world, and that out of every nation under heaven might come in the last days some of the chosen people, to build up Zion on this goodly land and prepare the way before the glorious coming of the Lord. Finally the Prophet Elijah, who holds all the keys of the Priesthood, appears and confers upon Joseph and Oliver "the keys to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers," in order that a link might be welded between the living and the dead, between the present and the past, and a work done that will eventually unify and bring together all things in Christ, both in heaven and on earth. What could be more marvelous, more wonderful than this? And yet the wisdom of the world passes it by as a thing of naught.

WORLDLY WISDOM'S ATTITUDE

Wise and gifted men will come into the midst of God's people; they will praise the industry, the thrift, the honesty and uprightness

of the Latter-day Saints; but they seem to have no conception of the more glorious features of the Lord's Work. They praise Brigham Young as a colonizer, as a builder of cities, as the founder of a commonwealth; but they know nothing at all about Brigham Young as a prophet, seer and revelator. Agriculture, mining, and other temporalities, things of earth and time, they appreciate; but they take no cognizance whatever of spiritual things, things pertaining to heaven and eternity.

HORACE GREELEY'S VISIT

Many years ago a famous and prominent personage came to Utah. It was in the days of the stage coach and the pony express, before the transcontinental railroad had crossed the country, before there was even a telegraph line between the Missouri and the Pacific. He was the founder and editor of a great newspaper—the New York Tribune. His word was more influential than that of the President of the United States. Whatever Horace Greeley said was accepted by the American people almost as the word of God. He came here and spent a week or more, had several long interviews with President Brigham Young, and after returning East wrote and published a book entitled "Across the Continent." In it he praised the "Mormon" people for their sobriety and industry. He did not believe that they were robbers and murderers, as he had been told. They were sincere and honest, he said, and had done a wonderful work in peopling the waste and redeeming the desert. But he had not a word to say concerning the glories of our religion. Why was it?

A CATHOLIC COMMENT

I bear in mind another noted visitor, a great scholar, who came here many years after the advent of the railroad. I became well acquainted with him, and we had more than one conversation together. I admired his vast erudition. He seemed to know all about law, literature, science, philosophy, and had a dozen languages at his tongue's end. He said to me one day: "You Mormons are all ignoramuses. You don't even know the strength of your own position. It is so strong that there is only one other position tenable in the whole Christian world, and that is the position of the Roman Catholic Church. The issue is between Mormonism and Catholicism. If you are right, we are wrong. If we are right, you are wrong. And that's all there is to it. These Protestant sects haven't a leg to stand on; for if we are right, we cut them off long ago as apostates; and if we are wrong, they are wrong with us, for they were part of us and came out of us. If we have the apostolic succession from St. Peter as we claim, there was no need of Joseph Smith and Mormonism; but if we have not that succession, such a man as Joseph Smith was necessary and Mormonism's position is the only consistent one. It is either the per-

petuation of the gospel from ancient times, or the restoration of the gospel in latter days."

I replied: "Doctor, I agree with you in almost everything that you have said; but don't deceive yourself with the notion that we 'Mormons' do not know the strength of our own position. We know it better than you do; we know it better than any other people can know it. We have not all been to college; we cannot all speak the dead languages, and we may be ignoramuses as you say, but we know we are right, and we know that you are wrong." I was just as frank with him as he had been with me.

Now what was the position of this learned man? He could not see into the heart of "Mormonism," with all his learning, his dead and living languages, his knowledge of science, law and literature. He could not comprehend this great problem. Why? Because God Almighty had said concerning him and his class: "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." He thought that Joseph Smith had stumbled upon something of which he did not know the true value. A greater mistake was never made, a grosser error never committed. Joseph Smith received his knowledge, his power, and wisdom from on High. He did not stumble upon it; it came by divine revelation, and he knew, better than anyone else, the strength of the "Mormon" position.

AN EPISCOPAL VIEW

Years later I formed the acquaintance of a bishop of the Episcopal Church, a very worthy and scholarly gentleman, whose untimely, accidental death in this city we all deplored. He remarked to me on one occasion: "If Joseph Smith, at the outset of his career, had made the acquaintance of the Episcopalians, he never would have sought any further for spiritual light. But instead, he came upon the Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians; and their conflicting creeds and claims bewildered the boy, compelling him to look elsewhere. Now if he had only become acquainted with Episcopalianism, which has an unbroken succession of authority all down the centuries, he never would have gone to the trouble of organizing another church." Such was this wise man's opinion. "Mormonism" was to him only one more broken off fragment of the ancient Christian faith. He could not grasp the idea of its being the ancient Christian faith restored.

AN ABSURD THEORY

But I think the shallowest and vainest attempt to explain away Joseph Smith and "Mormonism," was made by a learned man who was applying for a Doctor's degree from Yale University. He wrote a thesis, as the basis for his application, taking Joseph Smith and "Mormonism" as his subject. And all that he could say concerning this marvelous work and wonder, was that a boy named Joseph

Smith, being an epileptic, had fallen in a fit and imagined that he saw the Father and the Son; imagined that he beheld angels; imagined that the heavens were opened to him and that he received communications from Above.

Think of it! Here is a great Church organization which challenges the admiration of intelligent men all over the world. I wish I had time to describe it, even hastily—but you know it. This Church was once compared to the German army, in the excellence and perfection of its organization. That was when Germany had an army—but of course no comparison is possible between the work of God and the work of man. This Church is conceded to be a most superior organization, and “Mormonism,” as you all know who have studied it, is replete with doctrines of beauty and sublimity, unequaled anywhere—full of science, full of poetry, full of philosophy, full of truth. And yet this wonderful scheme of religion and this unparalleled system of government, all sprang from the disordered brain of a fourteen-year old boy who had fallen in an epileptic fit! There are some things that do not need answering; they answer themselves. This is one of them.

THE REVEALING SPIRIT

There is only one way to comprehend God and the things of God, and the Apostle Paul struck the keynote when he said:

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”—1 Cor. 2:9-11.

And that is why the Spirit of God is given to every man, woman and child who joins the Church of Christ. We have received that Spirit as a gift from God, because we have done His will. Therefore we “know of the doctrine.” We have had faith, have repented of our sins, have had our sins washed away by baptism, and have received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. That is the key to the situation.

Why couldn't Horace Greeley see what you and I see in “Mormonism?” Why couldn't Dr. Reiner see it? Why couldn't Bishop Spalding or Mr. Riley see it? Because they were without the Spirit that comprehends the things of God. And we, without that Spirit, would be just as short-sighted in our views, would make just as many mistakes as do other men in relation to the Lord's work. It is not our smartness, not our native intelligence that enables us to understand these things. We have come out from the Gentile world. We have their blood in our veins. We are no more intelligent than they, naturally; but we have received something that they do not possess; that is the whole

solution. The credit is not to us; it is to our Father in Heaven, who has given us this precious gift, the power to comprehend him and his purposes, and rightly interpret his word.

ST. JOHN INTERPRETED

Suppose we should open the Bible at the first chapter of St. John, and read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, * * * and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." And then read a little farther on: "No man hath seen God at any time." Who can interpret that? Evidently "the Word" means our Savior, in whom dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He was God in the flesh, and many men saw him; and yet John says, or is made to say: "No man hath seen God at any time." Who can interpret it? Who can explain the apparent contradiction?

THE FATHER AND THE SON

True, it might be shown that when John said: "No man hath seen God at any time," he was referring, not to the Son of God, but to God the Father. This is evident from the text (1:14, 18). But even here the same difficulty arises; for Adam had seen God, Enoch had walked with him, and he had appeared to Abraham, Moses, Aaron, and others, long before "the Word was made flesh" and was called the Son of God "because of the flesh." Joseph Smith saw both the Father and the Son, but the wise world rejects his testimony, and most believers in the Bible adhere to the dead letter of John's declaration, (which may or may not have been correctly transmitted), unheeding the divine admonition: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

A "MORMON" BOY'S WIT

One of our "Mormon" boys out on a mission was confronted with this question. He had just been preaching that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith, when a voice rang out: "No man hath seen God at any time." The boy had his wits about him. "Of course not," said he, "God is a business man—you can't see him at any time; you have to make a special appointment with him." (Laughter.) He answered a fool according to his folly, but that of course is not the explanation.

MOSES EXPLAINS

Read the Book of Moses. That mighty man of God had an experience of which Joseph Smith's was almost the exact counterpart. He wrestled with Satan, and was delivered from darkness. He saw God, and tells how he saw him, in these words:

"Now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I

should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him."

THE SPIRIT SIGHT

That is what John meant when he said: "No man hath seen God at any time." And that is what Paul meant, in saying: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." It means that no man with his natural eyes can see God in his glory. He must use his spirit eyes, the eyes with which he "walked by sight" when a spirit in the spirit world, the eyes that he saw with before coming to earth and receiving his natural eyes. In this second estate, where we "walk by faith," we are not permitted to use at all times our spirit sight. But now and then the Lord chooses one from among men, and gives him that rare privilege. The power of God comes upon such a one, transfigures him, opens his spirit eyes, and constitutes him a seer in the highest sense of the term. Such a man was Moses. Such a man was the brother of Jared, such a man was Nephi, and such a man was Joseph Smith. There have been many such men. They have seen God actually, literally, but it was with their spiritual and not with their natural eyes. "The natural man is an enemy to God;" the natural eye cannot behold him, the natural ear cannot hear him. But the spirit eye can behold him, and the spirit ear can hear him. With the Spirit of the Lord upon us, we can see and comprehend God, so far as he chooses to make himself known. This is the great differentiating feature between the Latter-day Saints and those who have not received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

God grant us the power to retain this precious gift, which comprehends all things, which explains the past, the present and the future, shows us where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going when we leave this life, making manifest the things of God, both of time and of eternity. May we keep the fire burning, the lamp lit, which the Lord has lighted within us, to lead and guide us into all truth, Amen.

President Heber J. Grant gave notice that a free concert will be held in the Tabernacle this evening, to which all are invited. An excellent program of singing has been arranged.

The congregation sang, "Do what is right."

Benediction was pronounced by Elder Byron O. Colton, president of the Roosevelt stake of Zion.

The meeting adjourned until 2 o'clock p. m.

AFTERNOON SESSION

President Heber J. Grant announced at 2 o'clock that the choir and congregation would sing, "O say what is truth?"

After the singing, Elder Franklin S. Harris, president of the Brigham Young University, opened the meeting with prayer.