

storms, and to come through—the salt of the earth, the light of the world! The power to do it is here—not only the plan, but the power and right to execute it in the bestowal upon men of the holy Priesthood.

God bless the Priesthood and his Church for the comfort and salvation of all flesh. May God speed the day that we shall be prepared to take those steps. The Lord is waiting for this people, and for the world to bring to pass his righteous purposes, and if we shall prepare ourselves, he is ready and willing to lead us to our glorious destiny! May he grant it unto us who now live, if not in our day, in the day of our children, or our children's children—but it shall come; whether to me, whether to you, I cannot say, but it will come to those who are true to the truth! Many may fall away, lose the faith, but those who stand true and faithful shall be victorious, and they shall be the recipients of all these great things. God speed that day I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER CHARLES H. HART

(Of the First Council of Seventy)

When Abraham Lincoln was a child, residing in the wilds of Kentucky, his prayer was: "Lord, bless father, bless mother, bless sister, bless everybody. Teach me to read, and write. Watch over Honey and make him a good dog, and, Lord, keep us all from being lost in the wilderness."

Lincoln himself, brought up under much the same circumstances as Joseph Smith the Prophet, so far as living in the wilderness was concerned, tells us that in his boyhood days there were many bears and other wild animals in the woods. No doubt he knew of his grandfather having met his death by an arrow shot by an Indian in ambush, and how his father, Thomas Lincoln, had avenged the death of his father.

It is something to have a laudable ambition to learn to read and write; but it was of the last verse, in the child's prayer, that I was going to speak—guidance in the wilderness, not only in the literal wilderness, in the woods, but also in other wildernesses in life that we encounter. The children of Israel received guidance in the wilderness, and they needed it, for we learn that although they might have dry passage across the Red Sea, although they might be guided by the pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, and have their thirst quenched by the water which flowed from the rock, at the touch of Moses' rod; although they might be fed on manna, yet they were ready to engage in idol worship, framing the golden calf in imitation of Egyptian idolatry. Miriam, the sister of Moses, was outside of the camp of Israel seven days before she was cleansed of the leprosy which she brought upon herself by rebellion against her great law-giving

brother Moses, and ten of the chosen twelve who went down to spy out the land of promise were unworthy to live, notwithstanding their training in the wilderness. The Lord has been very good to those whom he has sent into the wilderness. Abraham, who was called from Ur, of the Chaldees, into a new land, was promised blessings and received them just as his posterity were promised blessings—blessings to Jacob, meaning, I suppose, his posterity whom the Lord found in the wilderness and led in the wilderness, and guided, and who were precious to him as the apple of his eye, so the scriptures inform us.

And then there was the guidance of modern Israel in their wanderings in the wilderness. And it isn't a bad training, these wilderness-instructing experiences that men may have, that the Latter-day Saints have had—guidance as they passed from the Missouri river to Utah, guidance no doubt to the citizen soldiers called the "Mormon" Battalion in their march through the wilderness, an event being celebrated by the State of Utah just now in the erection of a suitable monument, to cost some two hundred thousand dollars to properly commemorate the march in the wilderness and the behavior of these men upon that march.

But as I said, it is not particularly of the guidance in the wilderness, the physical wilderness, that I wish to speak, although that is of importance, and we have experienced much of it, as indicated by the maps prepared by the Smithsonian Institute and exhibited in the northwest, showing the trail-blazing done by the Latter-day Saints from New York to Oregon, and also to Southern California.

There are other wildernesses, as indicated by the remarks of the brethren this morning. We have the commercial wilderness, the financial wilderness, that men are groping in, and need guidance in, for them to devise ways and means that are honorable in the sight of all men for the support and education of their families. There is the intellectual wilderness in which there is danger of men losing their bearings. When I think of Abraham Lincoln having all together only twelve months of schooling, and that scattered over a period of nine years, and then of what a wonderful English scholar and philosopher he became, I think it is a reproach to some of the present generation who have such splendid opportunities for education and who make so little use of them. It takes our young people sometimes some months, or some years, to get their bearings again after they have gone through the education which is given to them by the current system of education that prevails in our land. If our educational system is what it should be, and our home training is what it should be, how comes it then that there is such lawlessness in the United States? Some one professing a knowledge of the statistics upon the subject has designated the United States as one of the most lawless nations in the world. If we can rear such characters as the prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum, and Abraham Lincoln, who was born only a little over three years after the prophet was born, by proper religious instruction in the

home and by divine guidance, then we may well pay greater attention to the things which will produce such men.

I think it was a great slander upon Abraham Lincoln when his partner published that Lincoln was an infidel. I think nothing could be farther from the truth. In a large work entitled *The Soul of Abraham Lincoln*, written by one who carefully considered the subject, proof is given that Abraham Lincoln was of a strongly religious nature. His own words as quoted by one of his biographers, Mr. Holland, are as follows:

"I know there is a God, and that he hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that his hand is in it. If he has a place, a work for me—and I think he has—I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right, because I know that liberty is right; for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God."

If we would have the sort of a world that the author would have, who was quoted by Brother Widtsoe this morning—a dose of atheism—we would have the sort of a world pictured by Carlyle in one of his chapters entitled, "The Everlasting No," in which he uses this language:

"Thus has the bewildered wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the sibyl cave of destiny and receive no answer back but an echo. It is all a grim desert, this once fair world of his, wherein is heard only the howl of wild beasts, or the shriek of despairing, hate-filled men; and no pillar of cloud by day and no pillar of fire by night any longer guides the pilgrim * * * The whole world is like thee, sold to unbelief, their old temples of the Godhead which for long has not been rainproof, crumble down, and we ask now, 'Where is the Godhead? Our eyes never see him.'"

A doubt-filled world is the picture given, where no faith exists and where atheism prevails.

The explanation of attributing infidelity to Lincoln is given by the author of the book, *The Soul of Abraham Lincoln*. He suggests that it was the contention of the different denominations, many of which were mentioned this morning by Elder Whitney, that may have distracted Abraham Lincoln, just as we know at about the same time it distracted the Prophet Joseph Smith and led him to prayer and to the truth.

I am very grateful to the Lord for his guidance to the pioneers in their wanderings in the wilderness, and in their settlements in the valley, and that the great landmarks have been given to us for our educational system, and for our theological learning and religious training. We are in the happy position of being able to sail between the two extremes of the fundamentalist and the modernist, being able to sail between Scylla and Charybdis, so to speak, without striking the rock on the one hand, or being drawn into the whirlpool on the other.

May the Lord bless us and help us to appreciate all that the restoration of the gospel means to us, and all that the guidance by the

Priesthood has meant to us and to our fathers, and will mean to our posterity, is my prayer, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER REED SMOOT

"I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me,
Confused at the grace that so fully he proffers me,
I tremble to know that for me he was crucified,
That for me, a sinner, he suffered, he bled and died.

"I marvel that he would descend from his throne divine,
To rescue a soul so rebellious and proud as mine;
That he should extend his great love unto such as I,
Sufficient to own, to redeem and to justify.

"I think of his hands, pierced and bleeding to pay the debt;
Such mercy, such love and devotion, can I forget?
No, no, I will praise and adore at the mercy-seat,
Until at the glorified throne I kneel at his feet.

"Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me,
Enough to die for me!
Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!"

Last Wednesday morning I had the great pleasure of speaking to the temple workers, and this song was sung by two of the sisters. Perhaps it was the surroundings, perhaps it was the sweet voices, but I never before heard it when it impressed me so; and I thought to myself how wonderful! how wonderful! And that expression may be made by any member of this Church when contemplating the work of God, beginning with the creation of the world, for it was wonderful. The great plan of the Father, the plan of life and death is all wonderful; and it seems to me that a man must have lost all devotion, all respect for power on earth or in heaven when he takes the position that there is no God, that we come to this earth by chance, that the earth was created by chance, and then that we are here the same as any other life, be it plant or animal. I cannot understand any man whose thoughts run in that channel.

Then how wonderful is the regulation of the universe, causing the seasons to come and go. Mankind can depend upon them, but man has no influence over them; all is directed by a higher Power.

I often think of the organization of the Church; how wonderful it is! It was referred to this morning as being compared with the great German army, when Germany had an army. There is no such comparison, for one is of man, the other of God. One was organized for destruction of life, the other organized for the salvation of men's souls. I feel grateful, my brethren and sisters, for the plan of life and salvation. I never forget to thank my heavenly Father that I was born a member of the Church. I never forget to thank him that that birth came through a mother and a father who have acknowledged him as